

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Conflict, when considered objectively, is an inevitable part of human existence (el-Nawawy and Powers, 2008; Singh, 2014) and a vital determinant of news (Galtung and Ruge, 1965). In recent times however, conflict reporting has come under strong criticism and controversy in media discourses globally. Studies on media and conflict reporting have been polarized along two broad paradigms – the traditional and the new approaches – with each approach distinct and in opposition to the other as suggested by Galtung (1997). These distinctions generate divergent news values and reporting patterns that produce different frames of the news (Bratic, Ross & Kang-Graham, 2008) which in turn shape audience receptions and responses to the news. To most scholars (Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005a; and Lynch & Galtung, 2010) the traditional approach focuses on the action of conflict and by extension tends to encourage conflict escalation and more violence. Scholars see this journalism as ‘war journalism’. War journalism, as summarized by Lynch and Galtung (2010), is characterized by bias towards violence by virtue of focusing on the events taking place in a conflict and their physical details like the number of people dying or the nature of weaponry used. It does not analyse the processes that lead to the conflict including its causes, outcomes and impact on human lives; nor does it take into account the ‘structural’ and ‘cultural’ aspects of violence (Wolfsfeld, 1997c; Galtung 2002; Lynch, 2002; Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005). It is mostly framed in victimizing and demonizing languages in favour of a particular party in the conflict (Bratic et al., 2008).

In contrast, peace journalism – the new paradigm – is the deliberate use of journalism in conflicts to promote a culture of peace by taking an advocacy, interpretative approach that concentrates on

story frames that highlight peace initiatives, tone down ethnic and religious differences, prevent further conflict, focus on the structure of society, and promote conflict resolution, reconstruction, and reconciliation (Galtung, 1986, 1998). In Nigeria, several efforts have been made by various agencies for the Nigerian journalists to adopt and apply peace journalism principles as conflicts spread in different parts of the country. For instance, the conflicts in the North-East, South-South and South-East geopolitical zones as a result of Boko Haram insurgency and Fulani/Herdsmen menace, Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) and Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) conflicts respectively, particularly exemplify this unabated rise in conflict. This thus, necessitates a need for an appraisal of the role of key actors such as the mass media in mitigating their occurrences.

The extent of Nigerian journalists' adoption and application of the peace journalism model in conflict reporting, particularly in the South-East and South-South zones, was examined by analysing the nature of newspapers' coverage and framing of news reports on IPOB and NDA conflicts. Framing according to Goffman (1974, in Zhou & Moy, 2007, p. 80) is the "schemata of interpretation" that enables individuals "to locate, perceive, identify, and label" occurrences. News frames are embedded in the text itself, which are manifested by the inclusion or omission of certain keywords, images, and sentences that "reinforce clusters of facts or judgments" (Entman, 1993, p. 52). The analyses of journalists' news frame in the context of this study were guided by Lynch's (2007, p.12) position that inasmuch as reporters should report, "as accurately and fully as they can, the facts they encounter", they must "consider how these particular facts, as distinct from a practically infinite number of others 'out there', come to meet them, and how they, the reporters, come to meet these particular facts. If it is always the same fact, or the same kinds of facts, what consequences follow, for the nature of representation produced? How does that representation affect the understanding developed by readers and audiences, and their responses? And how do those responses, or assumptions about them, feed into the actions and motivations of the parties in conflict?" These are the appendages peace journalism brings to

conflict reporting spectrum and form the real questions in the peace journalism debate the current study sought to examine vis-a-vis Nigerian newspapers coverage and framing of the conflict situations in South-East and South-South Nigeria.

1.1. Background to the Study

Extant scholarship on conflict reporting was encapsulated within two broad paradigms – old and new paradigms. The old paradigm also referred to as the mainstream or traditional approach has been variously described as “war journalism” (Galtung, 1964), “conflict escalation journalism” (Lynch and McGoldrick, 2005), “journalism of detachment” (Bell, 1998) due to its leaning towards the Sports Journalism zero-sum pattern of conflict coverage. In this sense, war journalism provides a systematic focus “on violence and who wins, like a soccer game, leaving out the invisible effects and the alternatives” (Galtung, 2003). Hence, war journalism constructs binaries between a gloating evil and a suffering victim often in a competitive zero-sum game manner (Wolfsfeld, 1997c; Galtung 2002; Lynch, 2002; Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005). This type of journalism as argued by scholars (see Lynch and McGoldrick, 2005; Lynch, 2005; and Bratic, et al. 2008) is usually episodic, not thematic and often lacking depth in the analysis of the entire conflict life span thus, giving rise to conflict escalation and misguided policies in the conflict resolution.

The new paradigm on the other hand, also known as “Peace journalism” (Galtung, 1964), “conflict-sensitive journalism” (Lynch and McGoldrick, 2005), “journalism of attachment or engaged journalism” (Bell, 1998), “Journalism of greater self-reflexivity and broader inclusiveness” (Lynch, 2005; and Bratic, et al., 2008); “Alternative Journalism” (Bratic, et al., 2008), and “conflict solution journalism” (McGoldrick & Lynch, 2000), is comparable to “Health Journalism” which is concerned with a win-win strategy through an in-depth conflict analysis that declines simplistic binaries such as good/evil and right/wrong (Otufodunrin, 2013) inherent in the old paradigm. Principally, peace journalism aligns with the assumptions of

conflict theory which recognises that conflict exists in all communities but does not regard violence as the natural consequence/outcome or end point of conflict. This new way of conflict reporting (though fraught with controversies that have limited its wide acceptance chiefly due to its perceived affinity to journalism of attachment or engaged journalism (Bell, 1998)) as opposed to the traditional journalism of detachment or objective reporting, has in recent times been advocated as a major approach in de-escalating conflict and the better means of reporting conflict in conflict-torn zones such as Nigeria.

The new paradigm as advocated is perceived as the ideal approach to handling conflicts given the high level of complexities and sophistications associated with most of today's conflict situations. However, the advocacy according to Lynch (1998) portends no radical departure from contemporary journalism practice; rather it requires particularly from the journalists a subtle shift in sourcing and narrative choice: a shift toward citizens and away from elite spokespeople, toward the value of peace rather than the adrenalin rush of conflict, toward mutual benefits rather than unilateral victory. This entails that the journalist, through framing, makes deliberate and conscientious efforts to present conflict narratives in such languages that rather than demonize, will persuade, inform, and educate the audiences on the broad dimensions and dynamics of the conflict while not leaving them out in favour of the elites as news sources, giving them a sense of responsibility and guiding them positively to take decisions that will result in conflict resolutions. Nonetheless, how this new journalistic responsibility is performed in the context of Nigerian conflict situations has been sparingly debated (Adisa, 2003; Alabi, 2010; Funmi, 2011; Opiah, 2011; Kemebo, 2011; Ciroma, 2011; Chiluwa, 2011 and Akinro, 2016).

Elaborating on how conflict is mediated in the Nigerian mass media, Mogeckwu (2011, p.246) in a study argued that based on Anstey's (1991) latent/manifest division of conflict, most of the time, conflict coverage is of the manifest kind as it is 'less intellectually demanding' – it focuses on events and counting dead bodies; it reports facts as presented by spokespersons; and it is

speculative rather than being assertive. But because it sells and attracts audience's attention, such reporting also carries the 'positive incentives' such as career recognition and prestige. In short, it has all the attributes of war journalism (Aslam, 2003). In contrast, reporting on latent conflicts is less attractive but "it is at this level that protagonists are probably more likely to listen to one another and communicate more effectively" (Mogekwu, 2011, p.246). It is at this point where mediation and negotiation, two of the main components of conflict resolution, 'can have a greater chance of working' because the ego, pride, and face-losing threats are still not dominant.

What Mogekwu (2011) observed typifies the dominant pattern of Nigeria media reportage of conflicts and crises. Aliagan (2009) corroborated this observation when he noted that "one newspaper columnist in *The Guardian* went as far as calling for war against all Northerners in Lagos, from beggars to gatemen, cleaners, and gardeners because they were the apostles and soldiers of the new jihad" (*The Guardian*, July, 2009). Adisa (2012) tagged this type of reportage by *The Guardian* a hate media, with ethnic configurations, the type that apparently instigated Rwanda ethnic war in 1994. The same brand of journalism that Akinfeleye (2003) called "socially irresponsible" journalism. Similarly, newspaper reportages of the Biafra, Niger Delta Conflicts as well as other conflicts in Nigeria, according to scholars, had focused on violence, war and kidnapping while the main issues of underdevelopment, exploitation and marginalization, often attributed as the root causes of the conflicts, were relegated to the background (Chiluwa, 2011; and Ramadhan, 2013). This nature of reportage lacks the basic ingredient of broad-based narratives that accommodate the voices of all parties to the conflicts and thus creates room for escalation of the conflicts. Even the reports in themselves are marred by inconsistencies as a result of inaccurate and uninvestigated reports (Aliyu, 2011; Umaru, 2011; Hassan, 2012; Okoro and Okechukwu, 2012) and sensationalism (Okoli, 2011; Aka, 2011; Obor, 2011).

As stated earlier, media's role in defining and/or determining the dimension and direction of conflicts cannot be over emphasized. Hence, Bilici (2013) in recounting the enormous influence the mass media could wield in dousing or escalating tension in conflict situations, noted that "if after publishing of the caricatures in Denmark, unjustifiable attacks were made on the Danish Embassy in Syria, then the seriousness of this situation should be understood." Howard (2003), nevertheless, pointed out that the media do not set out deliberately to end conflict, as this may not be within their power, but through accurate and impartial news reporting, the media contribute greatly to reducing conflicts. It is in this context that this work attempted to determine the extent of adoption and applicability of the peace journalism paradigm as well as the contributions of the media in mediating conflict in two critical conflict situations in Nigeria – the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) conflicts.

1.1.1. The Indigenous People of Biafra and the Niger Delta Avengers in Perspective

What has become known today as the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) began as an agitation against marginalization, discrimination, power imbalance and violent attacks against the people of the Eastern region (mostly Igbos) in Nigeria (Achebe, 2012) as far back as the pre-independence period and has metamorphosed over the years. In retrospect, the cause of IPOB's agitation could be traced back to the early 1960s with Nigeria's independence and the succeeding socio-political intrigues that trailed it. According to history, the perceived tilting of the nation's polity in favour of a particular region – Northern Nigeria –, and the flagrant spate of corruption in the first republic, resulted in the first military coup d'état of January 15, 1966 (marking the entrance of military in Nigeria's political scene). It is important to note that the post-colonial and post-independence era was riddled with series of violent conflicts such as the Census crisis of 1963-64, Federal Election crisis of 1964 and Western Nigeria Election crisis of 1965 etc. (Madiebo, 1980; Achebe, 1983 and 2012). These conflicts played major roles in destabilizing the

fledgling nation's unity and increased the level of mutual suspicion among the various ethnic groups/regions of Nigeria.

The post-independence incidences were as sensitive as they were because according to scholars (Forsyth, 1977; Achebe, 1983; Achebe, 2012; Osuji, 2012; and Ezeani, 2016), the nascent Nigerian nation was already perceived as a mere British contraption for administrative and economic conveniences, particularly the amalgamation of 1914 which popular opinion has regarded as “forced marriage of irreconcilable cultures and ethnic groups” (Forsyth, 1977; and Achebe, 2012). In this arrangement, while the Northern region was seen by the British colonial government as the conservative docile, obedient and compliant group, the people of the Eastern region were the recalcitrant group that must be put under check. With this mindset, the British government according to Achebe (2012) and Forsyth (1977) made concrete plans to hand over power to the compliant North. This development greatly distorted Nigeria's political equilibrium and became one of the causes of several politically motivated conflicts in the country within the first republic after independence.

To further buttress the extent of mutual suspicion and rift between the various regions, the January 15, 1966 coup, which was led by Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu was perceived by the Northerners as a calculated sectional attempt to not only depose but to eliminate mainly the Northern top military officers. The aftermath was phenomenal– counter-coup that recorded heavy bloodbath and ushered in Lieutenant-Colonel Yakubu Gowon. Many top ranking military officers from the Eastern region including Major General Aguiyi-Ironsi and thousands of innocent Easterners particularly the Igbos residing in the North were wantonly massacred, maimed and their property looted in an unprecedented manner (Forsyth, 1977; Madiebo, 1980; Achebe, 2012; and Ezeani, 2016). This thus became one of the immediate causes of the 1967 Nigerian/Biafran civil war.

The war ended in 1970 but the spirit and memory of the war remained albeit in a very subtle manner, as most scholars (Madiebo, 1980; Chiluwa, 2011; Achebe, 2012; Ramadhan, 2013 and Ezeani, 2016) argued that the root causes of the war were largely unaddressed. Consequently, the agitation for the sovereign state of Biafra resurfaced under the name 'Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB)' in 1999. It is worthy of note that 1999 was a period of political transition in the Nigerian polity. It was a period of political liberalization and nascent democracy when the military government relinquished power to the civilians. Some scholars (Chiluwa, 2011; and Othuke, 2015) attributed the rise of MASSOB agitation to the controversial elections that ushered in the President Olusegun Obasanjo's civilian government in 1999 and intensified with the imprisonment of its founding leader Ralph Uwazurike in 2005. However, MASSOB adopted a more peaceful approach in pressing home its agenda than what obtained in the 1960s. The approach adopted was documented by Othuke (2015, p.16) thus:

Confronted with the task of discharging the burden of civil war memory, the young men of MASSOB sought to mobilize history, ethnicity and a parlous economic present to press their claims on an electoral authoritarian regime founded on an ethnic logic. In so doing, they threatened to derail Nigeria's democratization process. Countervailing forces, including civic actors in the Igbo heartland itself, intervened, powerfully illustrating the case that democratization is indeed a long-drawn-out and open-ended process. Properly nurtured, it could progress to the crucial consolidation stage in multi-ethnic states. Even so, the fact that MASSOB's project is presently struggling does not in any way detract from the validity of the grievances that gave birth to the ethnic militia in the first place.

This struggle is currently being championed and amplified by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) formed in 2012 by Mr. Nnamdi Kanu, the founder of Radio Biafra. The activities of this group came to international spotlight with the arrest of its leader by the Nigerian Federal Government on May 30, 2016, and since then, the group has staged pockets of protests (violent and non-violent) for the unconditional release of its leader and for a referendum to determine the independence of Biafran nation from Nigeria.

1.1.2. About the Niger Delta Avengers (NDA)

Similar to IPOB conflict is the NDA conflicts. Over the last twenty years, various political movements and activists have emerged in opposition to the perceived injustices perpetrated against the people of the Niger Delta by the Nigerian government and the oil companies. The first Delta militant group to receive international attention was the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP). Led by the late Ken Saro-Wiwa, the group launched a non-violent campaign in 1990 against the government and Royal Dutch/Shell Petroleum Company to protest environmental degradation and the area's economic neglect. The group's activities led Shell to cease production in Ogoni in 1993. The leader of the group, Saro-Wiwa and eight other MOSOP members, the “Ogoni Nine,” were eventually executed by the military government under General Sani Abacha in 1995.

In 2004, the Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF), an Ijaw – Nigeria's fourth largest ethnic group – militant group led by Alhaji Mujahid Dokubo-Asari emerged. This group threatened “all-out war” against the Nigerian government. With this background, a series of meetings in November 2005 between representatives from the Federation of Niger Delta Ijaw Communities (FNDIC), the Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force (NDPVF), along with fighters from Cult groups such as Klansmen Konfraternity (KK) and Greenlanders led to the emergence of a new group called Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) in January, 2006. There was a deliberate decision also to start using militant force to attack oil installations. MEND thus became a formidable force and “managed to win broad sympathy among the (Niger Delta) community” (Chiluwa, 2011).

The name ‘Niger Delta Avengers (NDA)’ came into Nigeria’s public domain sometime in January, 2016. The first attack credited to it was on February 10, 2016 on the Bonny Soku Gas Line, in Bayelsa State and its activities have since become a subject of discourse in the Nigerian

and international mass media. The Avengers' geographic origin traverses Warri South-West Local Government Area (LGA) in Delta State. Although the area of operations west of Warri between the Benue and Forcados Rivers is a coastal strip of only 30nm long and 30nm deep, it is a militarily challenging riverine and inshore environment of mangrove swamps and wetlands with no road infrastructure.

Specifically, the NDA espouses the following military and political objectives:

1. Cripple the Nigerian economy ('Operation Red Economy');
2. Force the government to negotiate on their demands in a 'sovereign national conference';
3. Re-allocation of Nigerian ownership of oil blocs (in favour of Niger Deltans);
4. Autonomy/self-determination for the Niger Delta

The two typical conflict situations presented above have attracted media attention, but mostly at their initial outbreak, and in turn, scholars (Kurawa; 2000; Ahmed, 2002; Yusuf, 2002; Pate, 2003; Chiluwa, 2011; Auwal, 2015 and Doki, n.d) have also examined how these conflicts and the resultant security challenges have been essentially reported in the mass media. The causes of the conflicts in the two regions share a common denominator – agitation against perceived marginalization and socio-political injustices. While IPOB in South-East seeks self-determination largely due to political alienation, NDA in the South-South seeks economic control of the resources in their region. The mass media as conduit through which the activities of these regions are conveyed to other parts of the country and the world in general become important factor in the handling the conflict situations, because as scholars argue, reports of conflicts from the mass media, have the tendencies to either escalate or diminish conflicts (Okunna, 2004; Galadima cited in Asemah, 2011b; Omenugha, 2013; and Auwal, 2015).

However, the amount of attention given to these two conflicts by the mass media differs diametrically. The IPOB particularly seemed to have received the least attention both in the

media and the academia. According to Punch newspaper online report, of the three major groups seeking self-determination in Nigeria, the federal government seems to be interested in listening to the grievances of only one of them – the NDA – while it has yet to take any concrete steps to address the grievances of MASSOB/IPOB. This according to a social analyst, Mr. Bamidele Akinremi, is another form of injustice by the government against MASSOB and IPOB (Punch, June 11, 2016). Amnesty International Report (2016) corroborated this view by noting that there has been no independent investigation nor has the president instructed the armed forces to comply with international human rights law in responding to IPOB protests (Amnesty Report, 2016), rather the military's 'Operation Python Dance' was launched in the region in November, 2016 to stifle any form of protests by IPOB.

It is imperative to state here that the two conflicts highlighted above have received minimal scholarly attention compared to other conflict situations in Nigeria. Scholars have essentially given full attention to other forms of ethno-religious and political conflicts that have plagued Nigeria as a nation and how they were reported in the mass media. In retrospect, a study by Kurawa (2000) and Pate (2003) revealed how the Nigerian media escalate tensions and promote diversity along ethno-religious lines in the country through their reports. Using the Guardian article of March 2000 which reads: "...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), they illustrate how the media ostensibly frame the 'other' through labeling – "determined Southern Army" and "Northern Troublemakers". Similar reports read thus: "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, 2009). "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.). These news articles apparently emphasised the dichotomies along religious and ethnic blocs between the predominantly Southern Christians and Northern Muslims. The physical violence associated with conflicts was emphasized, while particularly whipping up religious sentiments as a campaign weapon to gain political advantage. Issue-based narratives were downplayed thereby creating broader avenue for hate, division, and by extension heightened tension that escalates violence between the Christian and Muslim blocs in Northern Nigeria. However, there is dearth of literature on how the socio-economic and political conflicts in South-East and South-South regions of Nigeria in particular have been reported in the mass media.

Doki (n.d) explained that these scenarios point to the underlying tribalism that has been the motivating factor in conflicts and the media’s framing of conflicts. Religious differences alone are not the basis for these violent conflicts, 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 (Auwal, 2015; Chiluwa, 2011). Yusuf (2002) observed 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. As a result of this pattern of media reportage of conflicts which tends to create a big chasm between the Christians and Muslims in Nigeria and beyond, Auwal (2015) inferred that from Yusuf’s (2002) illustrations of media reports, it is evident that the media instigate and sustain violent conflicts in Nigeria. In the same vein, Ahmed (2002, p.123) clarified that “as ethno-religious conflicts engulfed the city of Jos in September (2009), *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, 2009.” These reports in addition reinforced the idea of selective attention given to conflict situations and focus on who constitutes news source for the Nigerian journalists. They reflect the basic elements of war/violence-oriented journalism as explained by Galtung – “voice for us” rather than “voice to all parties”.

However, researchers (Iggers, 1998; Roach, 1993; Edeani, 1994; Puddephatt, 2006, and Roberts, 2014) are yet to reach a consensus on the major causes of media’s seeming partisanship and subjectivity in reportage of events, particularly on issues of identity and diversity. Some scholars argue that an attachment to peace will imply that the media take a side in the conflict they report, which conceivably is capable of undermining ethical objectivity (Puddephatt, 2006). Others argue that objectivity has instead served as one of the major professional justifications for media’s contribution to war (Roach, 1993), and has remained one of the greatest obstacles to journalists playing a more responsible and constructive role in public life (Iggers, 1998). This argument stimulated a public quest for an alternative perspective on news coverage of domestic and global issues (Roberts, 2014). Some other scholars and media experts attribute this problem to ownership control (Edeani, 1994), while others see interests of journalists, unprofessionalism, understanding of the issues in dispute and media’s quest for survival and profit maximization as the major causes (Edeani, 1994; Okunna, 2004; Asemah, 2011b; Otufodunrin, 2013; and Omenugha, 2013).

Scholarly views are also polarized on how media ownership influences to what extent the media are objective in reporting conflict. For some scholars (Mohammed, 1994; Udomisor, 2013), private media establishments are particularly believed to heighten fear, tension and possibly escalate conflicts due to their nature of representing conflict situations. Critics of media privatization maintain that entrusting the powerful instrument of the mass media to private

individuals may encourage their utilization for selfish, commercial, political, religious and ethnic purposes to the detriment of national unity, national interest and peaceful co-existence (Mohammed, 1994). Udomisor (2013, p.5) observed that “there is the fear..., 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.” Other scholars on the contrary believe that government media are less objective in their handling of conflicts (Alabi, 2010; Funmi, 2011; Opiah, 2011; Kemebo, 2011; Ciroma, 2011 and Akinro, 2016).

These studies have emphasized journalistic values such as accuracy, fairness and objectivity, as a panacea to resolving conflict but have largely overlooked some other constraints that inhibit journalists from upholding peace journalism principles in conflict reporting – a gap, which the current study is set out to fill. This study is therefore, a response to a global trend in research and practice in conflict prevention in reaction to security threats in the Post-cold war era, particularly ethnically driven internal conflicts (AusAid, 2006; Centre on International Cooperation, 2010; and Singh, 2014). It is inspired by a growing recognition among policymakers and scholars that the news media should be a part of any comprehensive peace-building strategy (United States Institute of Peace, 2008; Singh, 2014). In mediating social conflicts in the context of this study, news stories, an integral part of media discourses, were used as an instrument to determine how the newspapers through framing, mold social actions, attitudes, and perceptions towards the conflicts under study. What makes the current work relevant is that there are few studies looking at the IPOB and NDA conflicts arguably because these conflicts, even though they portend threat to the overall existence of Nigeria, their magnitude is likely not seen as horrendous as the Boko Haram issue; or perhaps, because of the perspective of the ethnic “minority” of the people involved or maybe the pattern or nature of media reportage could also be a factor to the way these conflict situations had been viewed and studied. Therefore, there is need to study them

because NDA holds economic significance to the well being of Nigeria and Biafra has political significance to the unity of the country. These warrant an exploration of how the media cover and frame conflict issues emanating from the groups. The study examined not just whether the media mediated peace or used the old approach but also determined the quantity of coverage and the nature of coverage which could correlate to the significance of the study in scholarship and broader Nigeria as a nation.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Nigeria as a nation has witnessed decades of civil, political and religious conflicts. The climax was the 1967 Nigerian/Biafran civil war. The causes of these conflicts which have given rise to agitations for self-determination by the various ethnic groups in Nigeria are always largely attributed to ethnocentrism, resource control/distribution, marginalisation and religious differences. Up until this period, the agitations for self-determination by especially the Igbo ethnic group – one of the major ethnic groups in Nigeria – still rage on. It becomes a matter of concern that notwithstanding the role of the mass media as agent of unity, and consolidation of mutual existence, the agitations and rate of various forms of conflicts in recent times seem to be on the increase. Media's roles in brokering peace in the face of these agitations are still largely unexplored particularly from news media and conflict reporting perspectives even though peace studies have become an important contemporary field in many parts of the world (Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, 2011).

However, in the search for dialogue and peace as alternatives to violence and war, attempts that have been made to investigate the 'alternative perspective' as reflected in media reports, have been overly focused on conflicts as they occurred in other regions of Nigeria and how the media reportage was perceived by audiences but hardly on how much it represents the majority of

suppressed voices particularly in South-East and South-South Nigeria. This study is an attempt to address this knowledge gap.

How the mass media – newspapers in this instance – have framed these conflicts vis-a-vis the new paradigm of peace journalism in Nigeria therefore, remains a subject of scholarly interest and investigation. Since peace journalism is still emerging and Nigeria is still burdened with conflicts occasioned by these ethnic militias, the need, therefore, arises for an investigation into how the alternative news reportage anchored on the principles of peace journalism has been adopted and applied by the journalists in South-South and South-East Nigeria. Series of conferences, seminars, workshops and symposiums have been organized by different governmental and non-governmental organizations in Nigeria as a build-up to the advocacy for peace in conflict. These were aimed at increasing journalists' knowledge and building their capacities to report conflict sensitively. But since knowledge is not the same as application, it becomes pertinent to determine not only the journalists' extent of knowledge of the principles and assumptions of the new conflict reporting paradigm, but the extent of application of peace journalism principles in conflict reporting. Consequent upon this understanding and since newspaper is seen as a bastion of conflict-sensitive journalism, this study interrogated the extent journalists reporting in newspapers have adopted the emerging new paradigm of peace journalism. How were the various groups in conflict framed in the Nigerian newspapers? What is the journalists' perception and extent of use or failure to use this new paradigm? What possible factors inhibit the everyday applicability of peace journalism principles in reporting conflict in Nigeria especially in relation to the IPOB and NDA conflicts?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

For several decades, several parts of Nigeria have experienced one form of conflict or the other and as an integral part of these respective societies, the media have also been involved, either directly or indirectly in these conflicts. This study focused on the mediatic aspects of the

newspaper framing of IPOB and NDA conflicts. Its main focus was to ascertain the forms or frames within which these conflicts were presented in the Newspapers in relation to the adoption of the peace journalism principles, thus providing the empirical support for the prevalent conflict reporting mode in the country. Specifically, this study sought to:

1. Determine the extent the Nigerian National Dailies covered IPOB and NDA conflicts.
2. Determine the extent of journalists' knowledge of the principles of peace-sensitive reporting.
3. Ascertain the extent Nigerian National dailies adopt/apply the principles of peace journalism in framing the IPOB and NDA conflicts in South-East and South-South Nigeria.
4. Ascertain the journalists' perceptions of peace journalism principles in reporting conflict in South-East and South-South Nigeria.
5. Find out the factors that affect journalists' adoption of the principles of peace journalism in conflict reporting in South-East and South-South Nigeria.

1.4. Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent do the Nigerian National Dailies cover IPOB and NDA conflicts?
2. What is the extent of journalists' knowledge of the principles of peace-sensitive reporting?
3. To what extent do the Nigerian National dailies adopt/apply the principles of peace journalism in framing the IPOB and NDA conflicts in South-East and South-South Nigeria?
4. What are the journalists' perceptions of peace journalism principles in reporting conflict in South-East and South-South Nigeria?

5. What factors affect journalists' adoption of the principles of peace journalism in conflict reporting in South-East and South-South Nigeria?

1.5. Scope of the Study

This work was delimited to an examination of framework of conflict reporting in Nigerian national dailies. The analysis was anchored on the principles and framework of peace journalism. Since peace journalism is an emerging niche in investigative and interpretive journalism in Nigeria, this study was restricted to an examination of how this new form of journalism is adopted in conflict reporting in South-East and South-South Nigeria that aligns to global practices. The study area was delineated to South-East and South-South Nigeria; hence, attention was given to two prominent conflict situations in the region – IPOB and NDA conflicts, particularly because other conflicts like Boko Haram have been extensively dealt with by researchers (Alabi, 2010; Funmi, 2011; Opiah, 2011; Kemebo, 2011; Ciroma, 2011 and Akinro, 2016). Four Nigerian national dailies were selected for the study to represent the major ethnic regions in Nigeria, viz.: *The Sun*, *The Punch* and *The Daily Trust* to represent Igbo – South-East, Yoruba – South-West and Hausa – North respectively (the three major ethnic regions/groups in Nigeria). The fourth newspaper – *The Guardian* – is published in the South-South; therefore, it represented the oil-rich region. Again, all the journalists registered under the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) in South-East and South-South Nigeria constituted the population of this study.

1.6. Significance of the Study

Several studies (Donohue, Olien & Tichenor, 1985; Dickson, 1992; Edeani, 1994; Lee and Maslog, 2005; Bratic, Ross & Kang-Graham, 2008; Chilwa, 2011a; 2011b; Singh, 2014 and Akanni, 2017) have demonstrated the wide use of traditional paradigm in conflict reporting indicating that such use have exacerbated instead of abating conflicts in different climes. What these studies have also pointed out is the few use and adoption of the emerging alternative to conflict reporting – peace journalism, thus, creating a need for ongoing discourse in this

emerging area. In Nigeria, studies detailing the use of this new paradigm are few hence necessitating a scholarly inquiry to this emerging field. This study is therefore, a contribution to the body of embryonic discourses in this area of conflict studies as it concerns Nigeria.

The discourse in conflict reporting has also suggested several indicators that may affect the wide use of the new paradigm in conflict studies. This study adds to this discourse by going beyond the general assumptions to detail other factors that may influence journalists as they mediate peace in conflict reporting.

Uniquely, this study has upheld existing literature from behavioural studies on Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) studies which suggest that knowledge may not necessarily lead to positive attitude and practices. This study therefore demonstrated the disconnect between knowledge of the new paradigm of conflict reporting and the actual practice by the journalists and in this way deepening the discourse in this area of conflict reporting.

For media regulatory agencies and professional bodies, this study could help to position conflict reporting as one of the top priorities for media development in Nigeria, to meet both current and future challenges in research and professional practice in the country. Again, there is a substantial available literature on war and media but empirical studies from a peace journalism perspective looking into media's potential for conflict transformation and resolution are lacking, thus this study based on a peace journalism-inspired content analysis could make an important empirical contribution for media-related institutions in Nigeria.

In terms of the formulation and pursuit of policy, this study made an attempt to contribute to the sparse area of new approaches and strategies in handling conflicts and suggested new possible policies that could be adopted in mediating peace in conflict reporting in Nigeria and by extension in other sub-Saharan African countries.

From a theoretical and methodological perspective, few studies had looked at conflict reporting in great depth in Nigeria. In fact, internal conflicts in South-East and South-South zones of Nigeria in particular and Nigeria in general have had few corresponding studies from media theory perspective. This study is therefore, significant in filling this gap. Moreover, most local studies in the field of peace and conflict have been conducted by linguists and sociologists (See Chilwa, 2011) such works do not adequately cover the role of the media. This is a major gap the current study attempted filling given the media's central position in the society and their prominent roles in reporting, transforming and resolving conflicts.

The significance of this study could also be seen from the practical and training implications specific to Nigeria. The study identified the possible differences that exist in conflicts both in magnitude and context. Findings from the study could support the development of content-specific training and conflict reporting curriculum in the different regions of Nigeria to address the conflicts peculiar to them. From evidence, this research could be useful for advocating increased educational and training opportunities for journalists from state, private sector and international donors to align with their respective regional peculiarities and contexts.

Finally, this study's findings and recommendations could be the basis for further research into re-building the media for greater proficiency in conflict management, transformation and resolution in other turbulent zones of Nigeria rife with Boko Haram, Fulani herders/farmers conflicts and other conflicts.

1.7. Definition of Terms

For the purpose of clarity, the following key terms were defined as follow:

Adoption and Application: This is a deliberate decision to take up and use the principles of peace journalism in the day-to-day coverage of conflicts by journalists.

Conflict Analysis: This is the in-depth interpretation of the cultural, historical and other aspects of conflict for a broader perspective on the conflict situation.

Conflict Dynamics: This means identifying the history, recent causes and internal composition – the different parties, the nature of their involvement, their perspectives, positions and motivations, and the different relationships between them in terms of power, allegiance, and interests in the conflict.

Conflict Formation: This is a way of identifying the parties, goals and issues involved in a given conflict situation from ethnic, historical and cultural perspectives.

Conflict Reporting: This means the manner in which any misunderstanding, disagreement or clash of interest which may or may not result in violence is framed and portrayed in the mass media.

Conflict Resolution: This means to creatively devise a way forward that no one had previously thought of which addresses the underlying issues fuelling the conflict.

Conflict Transformation: This means creatively reframing the underlying causes of conflict dimension and direction such that it will be viewed and approached in a new light, mostly positively.

IPOB: This means Indigenous People of Biafra. It is a secessionist group in South-East Nigeria agitating for the independence of Biafra from Nigeria.

Mediating Peace: This entails the deliberate use of such media language and text that will emphasize non-violence and promote overall mutual understanding, tolerance and co-existence.

NDA: Niger Delta Avengers is a militant group, fighting for the economic as well as political emancipation of the Niger Deltans.

News Frame: This is the interpretive structure that places or sets specific events within a particular comprehensive context.

Newspapers: This means all dailies that have national outlook in circulation.

Peace Journalism: This is a form of journalism that gives depth and breadth to a given conflict situation by analyzing the root causes, impacts and future consequences to all parties involved to enable them understand the implications and resort to a peaceful resolution.

Peace: This is a condition of quietude occasioned by mutual respect and tolerance among members of a given society or outside the society.

Silent Conflict: This is characterized by clandestine and sectarian moves to disadvantage, oppose and dominate the out-group.

Social Conflicts: These are the disagreements or misunderstandings that arise as a result of clash of interests by one or two parties within a given society or between two societies. It can be violent or non-violent.

Violent Conflict: This is conflict that has degenerated to a level where lives and/or property are lost.

War Journalism: This means a form of journalism that encourages or instigates violence due to unfair, unbalanced and one-sided reportage of conflicts.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discussed and analysed studies and literature relevant to media and conflict management vis-à-vis the framework of peace journalism. It firstly, undertook an in- depth conceptual review of conflict, war and peace journalism related literature. Then, empirical studies relevant to the current study were reviewed. The review was finally carried out on theories relevant to the study, thus, conflict theory, social responsibility theory and framing theory were critically reviewed.

2.1.Conflict in Perspective

The United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) number 16 – to “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels” (SDGs, 2015) – was articulated possibly in recognition of the increased rate of conflict globally and the need for additional strategies to halt its devastating effect. From the Middle East (Syria, Tunisia, Lebanon, Egypt, Pakistan, Iran, and Israel) to Africa (Gambia, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria), terrorism and conflicts seem to exacerbate on a daily basis. This by implication suggests the inevitability of conflicts in human societies.

Conflict has been described as an inalienable part of the human condition that promises good or ill, depending on how it is understood and handled (Satapathy, 2001). Satapathy (2001) further explains that conflict refers to a condition in which one identifiable group of human beings (whether tribal, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious, socio-economic, political, or other) is engaged in conscious opposition to another identifiable group because the latter is pursuing incompatible goals. Coser (1956) defines conflict as a “struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure, or eliminate their rivals.” Conflict, according to Rai (2014), is a conscious competition and competitors become self-conscious rivals, opponents or enemies. It naturally occurs as humans engage in daily social interactions to satisfy different needs. In a society, conflict situations stem from social and economic inequalities, class and caste antagonism, ideological clashes, religious and ethnic fanaticism, regional and lingual chauvinism, racial prejudices, clash of economic interests and intolerance. In external terms, they arise from nations clashing with each other for trade and territory, for markets and resources, for racial and religious supremacy, and for ideological and military domination.

Conflict theorists (Karl Marx, Ludwig Gumplowicz, Lester Ward, Herbert Spencer, Wright Mills, Gene Sharp, Alan Sear) see social conflict among any groups in which it is probable for disparity to exist – racial, gender, religious, political, economic and so on. Conflict theorists claim that disparate groups more often than not have contradictory standards and agendas, causing them to vie in opposition to each other. This steady rivalry between groups is the foundation for the constantly shifting nature of society. However, conflict may, according to some theorists, have a positive social function (Karl Marx). It may be the only means by which an exploited or deprived group can assert its rights (Satapathy, 2001). It is believed that violence or the threat of violence may be essential to create stability and maintain peace, although the goal can also be achieved through non-violent means. Hence, a conflict can be violent or non-violent,

fundamental or accidental, manageable or unmanageable. It can also be intra-group/inter-group, dynamic or dialectical.

Looking at the conflict perspective, mass communication study has oftentimes recognized the major force that the media can have in determining a communal outlook about a certain matter, such as conflict. The media repeatedly helps decide what the public sees as the subject matter, its causes and penalty, whether it is important, and what to assure about it (Reuben, 2009). The media can have a very influential role in fueling fire when it comes to certain issues like racism and other social injustices. Conflict theorists therefore, concentrate on who reigns the media and how the media endorses the norms of the upper-middle-class (particularly, white Americans) while lessening the existence of the lower class especially minorities. Some conflict theorists propose that the way media is created causes an uneven socio-economic and socio-political arena (see Sharp, 2011; Sear, 2008). For instance, in political situations, candidates with the most monies available can buy the most media exposure, trash-talk their opponents and take full advantage of their visual existence. The same applies to the representation of the parties in conflict and their appearance in the media; the party with most resources, most likely gets more media exposure and/or coverage. This brings about the biases and disparities in media representations of the different parties in conflict perhaps due to the vested interest by the media to maximize profit as argued by scholars.

There are various methods of conflict resolution/management. Every party to a conflict seeks a resolution that best protects its interests. As the second priority in order, where resolution is not possible, an attempt is made to manage the conflict. A conflict can be settled/managed by legal, organisational or institutional means such as judicial settlement, arbitration, mediation, reconciliation, bargaining and negotiation, peacekeeping and peacemaking. These strategies of conflict settlement/management are non-violent in nature. Violent strategies are generally war, sabotage and disruption of socio-economic-political infrastructure, killings of the targeted group

or individuals, and other insurgent activities. But, violent resolution of conflict ends up, more often than not, with the victory of one group and the defeat of its opponent(s). In most cases, however, conflict resolution takes the form of problem-solving by the process of mutual satisfaction of social needs, viz., identity, recognition, participation and control, redistributive justice, security, etc. This constitutes a ‘win-win’ resolution of conflict. Conflicts of this nature have erupted and have left disruptive and devastating impacts on the Nigerian political and economic structure. A closer look will be given to conflict situations in Nigeria particularly in the South-South and South-East geo-political zones in the subsequent part of this work.

2.1.1. Nigerian Conflicts in Perspective: The Indigenous People of Biafra and the Niger Delta Avengers in Focus

Nigeria as a nation has for many decades witnessed diverse forms of conflict situations of different magnitudes and dimensions. The emergence of ethno-regional militias and religious extremist groups like the Shite and Boko Haram as well as the renewed activities of the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), the activities of the Niger Delta Avengers group, and Fulani herdsmen attacks are some of the conflict situations that have continued to trouble the existence of the country over the years (Ayokhai and Naankiel, 2016).

Historically, the Nigerian nation from creation has had a strained relationship among its component ethnic groups. The country Nigeria is made up of three major ethnic groups – Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba – with distinct cultures, religion and in fact general ways of life. Outside the three major ethnic groups, over three hundred minor ethnic groups exist, distinct in their ways of life. Describing the characteristics of the various ethnic groups that resulted in the initial resentment of other ethnic groups particularly against the Igbos, Achebe (2012) stated that:

The Igbo culture, being receptive to change, individualistic, and highly competitive, gave the Igbo man an unquestioned advantage over his compatriots in securing credentials for advancement in Nigerian colonial society. Unlike the Hausa/Fulani, he was unhindered

by a wary religion, and unlike the Yoruba, he was unhampered by traditional hierarchies. This kind of creature, fearing no god or man, was custom-made to grasp the opportunities, such as they were, of the white man's dispensations. And the Igbo did so with both hands. Although the Yoruba had a huge historical and geographical head start, the Igbo wiped out their handicap in one fantastic burst of energy in the twenty years between 1930 and 1950 (p.74).

These basic characteristics of the Igbo culture made it very receptive to changes. The Igbo tribe is typically progressive unlike the North (Hausa/Fulani) that certain cultural traits like central leadership and religion made very conservative and fiercely resisted any Western and/or foreign cultural incursion, especially, Western education from the very beginning of foreign colonialism. The North, therefore, became the most backward region in terms of development and with the lowest literacy rate. Paul Anber (quoted in Achebe, 2012) corroborated Achebe's earlier views by observing that:

With unparalleled rapidity, the Igbos advanced fastest in the shortest period of time of all Nigeria's ethnic groups. Like the Jews, to whom they have frequently been likened, they progressed despite being a minority in the country, falling the ranks of the nation's educated, prosperous upper classes...it was not long before the educational and economic progress of the Igbo led to their becoming the major source of administrators, managers, technicians, and civil servants for the country, occupying senior positions out of proportion to their numbers, particularly, with respect to the Federal public service and the government statutory corporations, this led to accusations of an Igbo monopoly of essential services to the exclusion of other ethnic groups (p.75).

As observed by Anber, the Igbos occupied most management positions at independence, when the British colonial government handed over powers to Nigeria. As a matter of fact, appointments and recruitment exercises and processes in Nigeria in the 1950s before independence, were purely by merit. And so, the Igbos had the upper hand, having had the highest literacy rate at the time (Achebe, 2012; Ezeani, 2016). Achebe (2012) went further to note that although the Yoruba were the first to embrace Western education due to their first contact with western explorers and missionaries, "the Igbos closed up the gap and quickly moved ahead as the group with the highest literacy rate, the highest standard of living and the greatest proportion of citizens with post-secondary education in Nigeria" (p.76). This state of affairs at the early 1960s (early independence period up to the end of the first republic that ended with the

Nigeria/Biafran civil war attracted heavy envy and hatred for the Igbos by other tribes (Forsyth, 1977; Madiebo, 1980 and Achebe, 2012).

The trouble with Igbos was however, manifold and confronted the ethnic group at all fronts. Apart from the rapid growth made by the Igbos that attracted the hatred of other ethnic groups, the British colonial government also felt threatened as it received the fiercest resistance from the Igbos who by nature, had no central traditional institutions. In other words, the Igbos were the most fragmented of the ethnic groups in terms of governance. Leadership was mostly confined within the immediate kindred (Umu nna), hence, it is commonly said that “*Igbo enwe Eze*” (Igbo has no king) and this made British colonial government’s control over the Igbos very difficult. The warrant chiefs that were installed by the British colonial government for administrative purposes were resisted by the people and certain British policies like tax collection/payment and other royalties recorded partial successes in the East unlike what obtained in the North and West. The popular *Aba Women’s Riot* of 1929 was a case in point among the resistances the British policies received in the East. These experiences by the British government compounded the woes of the Igbos as they were largely perceived as the recalcitrant group that needed to be tamed and subdued. Thus, deliberate efforts were made by the British to hand over power to a more ‘docile’ group in the North – the Hausa/Fulani. Achebe (2012, p.48), documented it thus that “the British clearly had a well-thought-out exit strategy, with handover plans in place long before we noticed”. The transition Governor General posted by the British colonial government from Sudan, Sir James Robertson played a key role in installing Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa to become the Nigeria’s first prime minister. The British made certain on the eve of their departure that power went to that “conservative element in the country that had played no real part in the struggle for independence” (Achebe, 2012, p.52). As part of the installations processes, Harold Smith had been selected by Sir James Robertson to oversee the rigging of Nigeria’s first election “so that its compliant friends in (Northern Nigeria) would win power, dominate the country, and serve British interests after independence” (Achebe, 2012, p.50). Although Smith turned down

the offer to fix Nigeria's elections, political power moved to the North nonetheless. It is pertinent to note here that "writers have unanimously admitted that Nigeria was formed by Britain out of irreconcilable peoples" (Forsyth, 1977, p.9); an attempted marriage of irreconcilables (Forsyth, 1977, p.21). The North therefore, maintained this attitude ever since, "that it did not want amalgamation with the South" (Forsyth, 1977, Achebe, 1983, p.20), and clearly demanded that "unless the Northern Nigeria is allotted fifty per cent of the seats in the central legislature, it will ask for separation from the rest of Nigeria on the arrangements existing before 1914" they got their wish, and Northern domination of the centre became an inbuilt feature of Nigerian politics till date" (Forsyth, 1977, p.21).

Within six years of this tragic colonial manipulation, Nigeria was a cesspool of corruption and misrule. Social malaise and political corruption reigned supreme. "Public servants looted nation's wealth, elections were blatantly rigged, the subsequent national census was outrageously stage-managed; judges and magistrates were manipulated by the politicians in power, and the politicians in turn were pawns of foreign business interests" (Achebe, 2012, p.51). Nigerian structure created by the British was replete of an inbuilt power struggle among the ethnic groups. Little wonder the issue of tribal sentiments has been a key ploy for winning and retaining political power/power struggles in the contemporary Nigerian politics. Although, the leaders from Eastern region promoted the original idea of "one Nigeria", they were vehemently objected and opposed by the Northerners led by the Sardauna, Sir Ahmadu Bello and followed closely by the Awolowo clique that had created the Action Group (Achebe, 2012, p.51). This was clearly reflected in the name of the political party formed by the Sardauna. What was supposed to be a national party was called the Northern People's Congress; a name he refused to change to Nigerian Peoples Congress, "even for the sake of appearance" (Achebe, 2012, p.51).

Based on this ethnic/tribal lines already ingrained in the Nigerian political structure and system, the first coup carried out on 15 January, 1966 by Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu from the Northern City of Kaduna (Achebe, 2012, p.65) was tagged an "Igbo Coup". The reasons were

however, not far-fetched, the coup plotters were mainly Igbo junior military officers and the coup incidentally claimed the lives of the Northern top political elites such as the Prime Minister, Tafawa Balewa, the Premier of Northern Nigeria, Sir Ahmadu Bello, and the Premier of Western Nigeria, Samuel Akintola. Achebe (2012) documented that when the news of that military coup trickled-in at Lagos, “there was an initial period of spontaneous, overt jubilation, but in a country in which tribalism was endemic, the rumour of an ‘Igbo coup’ began to find acceptance” (p.66).

It was documented that the weeks following the coup saw Easterners attacked both randomly and in an organized fashion (Achebe, 2012, p.66) across Nigeria, especially in the North. It appeared as an opportunity for Nigerians to take out their resentment on the Igbos who led the nation in virtually every sector – politics, education, commerce, and the arts. According to Achebe (2012), “this group, the Igbo that gave the colonizing British so many headaches and then literally drove them out of Nigeria was now an open target, scapegoats for the failings and grievances of colonial and post-independence Nigeria” (p.67). The hot-blooded anger was however, fanned by British intellectuals and some radical Northern elements in places like Ahmadu Bello University to attack Igbos (Achebe, 2012, p.69). Paradoxically, the roles of the likes of Major General Aguiyi-Ironsi in foiling the alleged “Igbo coup” it was expected, should have sent a counter narrative to the inciting speeches that Major Nzeogwu led an Igbo coup that led to the death of top Northern politicians. Major General Aguiyi-Ironsi and Major Nzeogwu were both Igbo senior military officers but Aguiyi-Ironsi caused the coup not to succeed in the West as much as Ojukwu made the coup fail in the Eastern region. Madiebo (1980), Achebe (2012) and Ezeani (2016) documented that Major General Aguiyi-Ironsi, an Igbo highest ranking military officer crushed the Nzeogwu coup and imposed Decree No.34 – Unification decree thereby eliminating Nigeria’s federal structure and of course, the Northern elites resisted the decree as part of their demands to Ironsi included: the revocation of the unpopular decree 34; the courts-martial and punishment of the leaders of the January 15, 1966, coup; and the discontinuation of any plans to investigate the underpinnings of the May 1966 massacres of the Igbos in the North. All these

documented facts notwithstanding, the negative narrative and media propaganda of “Igbo coup” got the Hausa/Fulanis incensed, unleashing the already deep-seated tribal sentiments and hatred and resulted in the genocide meted out on the innocent Igbo civilians as a pay-back to the coup one of their own – Major Nezogwu – executed. Igbo military officers were also not left out in the planned massacres.

On July 29, 1966, Major General Ironsi was arrested and killed by Captain Theophilus Y. Danjuma in bloody Northern Coup led by Murtala Muhammed. What followed next were brutal massacres of the Igbos that Colin Legum of the Observer (UK) was the first to describe as a pogrom. Thirty thousand civilian men, women and children were slaughtered; hundreds of thousands were wounded, maimed, and violated, their homes and property looted and burned – “and no one asked any questions” (Achebe, 2012, p.111). Achebe (2012) went further to state that “a detailed plan for mass killing was implemented by the government – the army, the police –the very people that were there to protect lives and property. Not a single person has been punished for these crimes” (p.82). It was recorded also that the absence of a concerted plan to address the eruption of violence throughout Nigeria against Easterners, mainly Igbos, and the inaction of the FMG around the refugee problem experienced in the Eastern region as a result of the mass exodus of the Easterners from the North amplified the anger and tensions between the federal government, led by Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon and the Eastern region led by Lieutenant Colonel Ojukwu. Thus, “calls in the East for independence grew louder, and threats from the deferral government grew more ominous, in a vicious cycle” (Achebe, 2012, p.85). Efforts to bridge the already exacerbated tension and the impending doom resulted in peace talks one of such was the agreements reached at Aburi, Ghana by the FMG and the leader of the Eastern region, popularly known as the “Aburi Accord”. But after the non-implementation of the Aburi Accord, the Consultative Assembly in Eastern Nigeria mandated Ojukwu to declare at the earliest practicable date, Eastern Nigeria a free sovereign and independent state by the name and title of the Republic of Biafra on May, 27, 1967 (Achebe, 2012). This was declared on May 30,

1967 with the full backing of the Eastern House Constituent Assembly (p.92) and thus, the battle line was drawn. This was generally regarded as the immediate cause of the Nigeria-Biafra civil war, while other past events like the Nigerian Census crisis of 1963-64, Federal Election crisis of 1964 and Western Nigeria Election crisis of 1965 were all precursors to the 1967 Nigeria- Biafra civil war.

In all of these developments, the media were relatively silent in the build-up to the conflicts but were largely employed as propaganda tools by both the Nigerian and Biafran government at the outbreak of the war. Describing how the mass media featured in the conflicts, Achebe (2012) noted that the Nigeria-Biafra civil war was “arguably the first fully televised conflict in history, it was the first time scenes and pictures - blood, guts, severed limbs –, from the war front flooded into homes around the world through television sets, radios, newsprint, in real time” (2012, p.199). In other words, no account was given of how the media made efforts to dig up the underlying factors to the conflicts; neither did the media perform those mediatory roles before the conflicts were full blown. The media only focused on the high level of brutality, carnage and other humanitarian crises when the war was already raging. According to Osuji (2012), “many local and foreign media houses picked interests in the war. One to ascertain whether Biafran claims were facts or mere fabrications, secondly, to present to the world the accurate situation of things on the ground” (p.53).

With the aid of the mass media, the Federal Military Government embarked on “sustained propaganda to convince the international community that it was prosecuting a just war in order to keep the country together” (Osuji, 2012, p.54). The media were particularly used to feed the public with such information as to believe that the war was in fact not a war per se but a “police action” against the “rebel” leader and that the war would not last more than two days in the first instance and in any event (Madiebo, 1980; Achebe, 2012; Osuji, 2012). The media were used to label opponents as the “troublemaker that needs to be crushed”. The FMG for instance, maintained that it was a total war to crush the “rebels” in South-East Nigeria. Through the mass

media, the Biafran soldiers were labeled as “rag-tag” army and the Biafrans on the other hand, labeled Nigerian Soldiers as “vandals”. Arguably, one could say that the media were used to perpetuate and elongate the life-span of the conflict. While the FMG used the media to assure Nigerians to support her “just cause” as Biafrans would soon be defeated, the Biafrans on their part, channeled their own propaganda efforts towards boosting the morale of the Biafrans that “no force in Black African soil can defeat Biafra” and with such assurances that “grasses, shrubs, and trees would fight for Biafra” (Osuji, 2012, p.55). In all these, no investigative report was carried out by the media to address the grievances of genocide, marginalization, oppression and hatred expressed by the Igbos and neither were the sentiments of Igbo domination as expressed by the Northerners and other regions of Nigeria ever looked into. Thus, the root causes of the conflicts were largely unaddressed.

Radio stations like Radio Nigeria, Kaduna were rather “solely used to issue threats, warnings and vilifications of Biafran supposed internal and international sponsors” (Osuji, 2012, p.56). Osuji (2012) further stated that Radio Kaduna “had neither decency nor ethics in its broadcasting war reports and war propaganda” (p.56). The central role the media played made some scholars to assert that the Nigerian-Biafran civil war was fought on three main theatres: war fronts, media fronts and relief material front (Osuji, 2012, p.59). In most of the sectors, the station gave positive situation reports regarding the advancement of the Federal troops. Even where the Federal troops had suffered major defeat, the station would down play such event, describing it as a tactical withdrawal to vanquish “Ojukwu’s soldiers”. The station hardly ever used the phrase “Biafran Soldiers” but “Ojukwu’s soldiers” or “Ojukwu’s rag-tag army” or “Ojukwu’s rebels” (Madiebo, 1980; Osuji, 2012, p.64). While Chief Tony Enahoro did the job for the Federal Military Government, Chief Uche Chukwumerije did same for Biafrans. Nigerian government through media propaganda and framing played down and covered-up facts of genocide committed by the Nigeria soldiers against Biafrans” (Ezeani, 2016, p.133) even though the United Nations had on December 9, 1948, given approval to the Convention on the

Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (CPPCG) and established genocide as an international crime, crime against humanity (Ezeani, 2016, p.133), almost two (2) decades before the Nigerian-Biafran civil war began. Reacting to the disturbing images of the conflict, Baroness Asquith in the British House of Lords, exclaimed, “Thanks to the miracle of TV, we see history happening before our eyes. We see no Igbo propaganda; we see the facts” (Ezeani, 2016, p.133). A professor at the State University of New York at Buffalo on his part, implored for action to “avert” the worst crime against humanity since “world war II” (Madiebo, 1980; Ezeani, 2016, p.147. Also, Arinze (2011) reacting on the near-silent disposition of the media and international community on the plight of innocent Biafran civilians, explained that it is “...rather strange that the Nigerian-Biafran conflict now appears largely forgotten outside Nigeria. Yet, it ranks in scale with the Khmer Rouge tragedy in Cambodia, and dwarfs the bloody breakup of the former Yugoslavia in terms of lives lost” (Forsyth, 1977, p.1). Forsyth (1977, p.2), further remarked, “... but nothing can or ever will minimize the injustice and brutality perpetrated on the Biafran people, nor diminish the shamefulness of a British government’s frantic, albeit indirect, participation”

Achebe (1983) in his book, *“The Trouble with Nigeria”* enumerated the following as the root causes of most conflicts in Nigeria that need to be addressed:

- i. A failure of leadership;
- ii. Tribalism;
- iii. False image of ourselves;
- iv. Leadership Nigerian style;
- v. Patriotism;
- vi. Social injustice and culture of mediocrity;
- vii. Indiscipline; and
- viii. Corruption.

Popular faith in genuine democracy was compromised from its birth (Achebe, 1983, p.51). In Washington Post of April 13, 1969, Biafra explained its case to include gross inequality in federal allocations; siting of major federal industries, huge irrigation schemes and agricultural projects of revolutionary dimensions were all discriminately done, five steel mills worth 4.5 billion naira on final completion estimated employment capacity of hundred thousand (100,000) by 1990 were sited only in the North and West of the country, major military facilities were all sited in the North” (Achebe, 2012, p.111), up till this moment, what has changed? Yet none of these concerns were genuinely addressed before and still after the conflict engulfed the Nigerian nation. This was a clear case of “silent accomplice” and information blockade on the part of the mass media in particular and Achebe (2012) asked, “is the information blockade around the war a case of calculated historical suppression? Why has the war not been discussed, or taught to the young, over forty years after its end?” (p. 228).

These conflicts have had a significant negative impact on the Nigerian economy and political stability since they emerged. The NDA in particular had a clear mission statement: “to cripple Nigeria’s economy” as a way to drive home their agenda of gaining control over the resources in their region. True to its avowal, since February 14, 2015 when NDA declared what it called “Operation Red Economy,” the group has attacked oil facilities, thus affecting production for export. As at now, some international companies in the region such as Chevron have grounded their operations in the Niger Delta. Equally, Nigerian Oil Minister Emmanuel Ibe Kachukwu (*The Nation Newspaper*, 2015) said “the country's oil production has fallen by 800,000 barrels per day – from 1.4 million barrels per day – due to attacks on the nation's infrastructure, local news reported, many or perhaps most of them at the hands of the Avengers.” Also, the Finance Minister, Kemi Adeosun, confirmed that Nigeria’s oil production had dropped to 1.65m barrels a day, the lowest production in 22 years because of the resurgence of militant activities (*The Vanguard*, 2016).

The outcome of the attacks has also reflected in the rate at which foreign and local oil companies are shutting down operation in the region. Companies like Eni, Exxon Mobil, Shell etc, have all had a fair share of the Avengers's attack. The Avengers did claim responsibility for a recent attack on Chevron's Okan offshore platform, Shell's Forcados oil pipeline and other infrastructure and staff are also being evacuated for safety. The attacks are likely borne out of resentment over amnesty payments drying up and an anti-corruption campaign that has disrupted traditional patronage, as well as concern about environmental damage and the long-held belief that the Delta region does not get an equitable share of oil revenues (*The Nation Newspaper*, 2015). However, while the amnesty failed to address broader concerns about development and political inclusion, Iwilade (n.d) stated that it has improved the lives of former low-level militants by allowing fugitives to return to civilian life and reducing violence in the Delta. And while training has failed to lead to jobs in many cases, it has allowed at least some people to start businesses and families (Iwilade, n.d).

The Nigerian government's initial plan to simply disrupt the endemic godfather system in the Niger Delta by removing corrupt personnel and terminating the funding means for this relationship (amnesty payments and security contracts to demobilised ex-militants) has failed in the short term. President Muhammadu Buhari reduced funding for it by 70% in the 2016 budget, and has spoken of phasing it out entirely by 2018 (*The Vanguard*, 2016). While the rise of the NDA is directly linked to this, it was not a guaranteed outcome of the government's planned "post-amnesty" policy at this point. Many former militants seem to be content keeping their heads low for the time being. Hence, some schools of thought believe that the emergence of the NDA can be seen in this context and is likely linked to the collapse of Tompolo's influence in his home area of Warri South West LGA in Delta state. Tompolo as alleged had been one of the major profiteers of the amnesty payments and inflated security contracts with the Nigerian Maritime Safety Agency (NIMASA). In January 2016, the Nigerian government made an

example of NIMASA's senior officials and their sponsor, indicting them to appear before court on no less than 40 counts of fraud (*The Vanguard*, 2016).

The NDA strategy benefits from the group's relative smallness. Unlike the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), the NDAs do not rely on compromises (MEND fragmented early in its life due to a disagreement over payments of ransom money from the Wilbros kidnappings in 2006); have a unified command, a target-rich but small operating environment, as well as trained personnel. The NDA are active in only two localities: Warri South West LGA (including the fringes of the adjacent Burutu LGA) and the Brass Nembe LGA. Their actions are typically seen to follow government action, more recently preceded by more or less specific threats and usually followed up with multiple attacks against oil and gas targets. Reactions by traditional chiefs in Gbaramatu Kingdom suggest that there is no consultative process or even tacit agreement; the NDA rely solely on themselves. This has allowed the NDA to escalate the conflict to an intensity rarely achieved during the MEND insurgency.

The elitist and purposeful strategy employed by the NDA clearly does not appeal to all. In late May and early June 2016 the Bayelsa-based Joint Niger Delta Liberation Front (JNDLF), for example, issued threats against the military in a more provocative manner (including pronouncing a no-fly zone for the Nigerian Air Force); unknown gunmen attacked an army houseboat near Warri on 1 June, killing as many as 20 persons in the process, and the Monty Pythonesque-named New Delta Suicide Squad (NDSS) went public with a bid to extort private oil and gas facility operators or face acts of sabotage (Chiluwa, 2011).

Unlike the NDAs, the IPOB particularly seemed to have received the least attention both in the media and the academia. According to *The Punch* Newspaper of June, 2016, of the three major groups seeking self-determination, the Federal Government seems to be interested in listening to the grievances of only one of them – the NDA – while it has yet to take any concrete step to address the grievances of MASSOB and IPOB. This according to a social analyst, Mr. Bamidele

Akinremi, is another form of injustice by the government against the secessionist groups (Punch, June 11, 2016). Again, there has been no independent investigation nor has the president instructed the armed forces to comply with international human rights law in responding to IPOB protest (Amnesty Report, 2016); rather, Operation Python Dance was launched in the region in November, 2016 by the same federal government. These strategies by the Nigerian government and media's coverage of same equally reflect Galtung (2004); Lynch and McGoldrick's (2005) postulations about war journalism that narrows the possible avenues for expressed grievances to be debated and negotiated in public sphere in order for peaceful resolution of conflicts to be achieved. Media's role in the entire processes remains vital and paramount.

The current disposition of the Nigerian federal government and the mass media towards the agitations by different sections of the country apparently aligns with the allegation of information blockade around the grievances expressed by these groups such as the IPOB and the NDA under focus. Achebe (2012) particularly posed certain critical questions to buttress the frustrations of the Igbos and indeed other marginalized groups in Nigeria. According to him, it is imperative to determine whether the information blockade around the Nigerian/Biafran civil war was a case of calculated historical suppression? And why has the war not been discussed, or taught to the young, over forty years after its end? (Achebe, 2012, p.228). The aftermath of the conflicts are still with us in different forms and formed the crux of the current study – to ascertain what has changed overtime in terms of media contributions in addressing causes of conflicts through media reportage and framing using key conflict situations – IPOB and NDA conflicts in South-East and South-South Nigeria.

2.1.2. Society, Media and Conflict Reporting: The Nexus

Scholars have long established that there is strong relationship between the society, the media and conflicts as they occur in the society. While we live in a world that is rife with conflicts and crises indicating the inevitability of conflict in human interactions, the mass media on the other hand have soft spot for conflict. It is a cherished news determinant. Conflicts and crises occur in

different forms and degrees, thus, Omenugha (2013), states that 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. 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 (2013). Kofi Anan, the former United Nations Secretary General, cited in Omenugha (2013), 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 mass media play an essential role in democratic societies; all societies feel the need for media which rest on principles of pluralism in public sphere so that they can discuss current problems and find appropriate solutions (Aslam, 2003). Considering the central roles the media play as both mediator and abettor in conflict situations, scholars have come to advocate for that media role that abates rather than abets conflict. Describing the prominent position the media occupy between the society and what occurs within it, conflict inclusive, 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 in particular, with its audio-visual characteristics has the power to stir up feelings of anger, fear and insecurity and these becloud our reasoning (Auwal, 2015). 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 (Utor, 2009, p.124).

From extant literature, mass media are set up not only to serve society the needed information, but also to maximize profit. To achieve this profit goal, scholars observe that the media harp on the sordid, bizarre and the most unusual aspect of the events – whether conflict or not – that occur in the society (Pate, 2011). Sensationalism therefore, becomes a tool for luring audiences. But as noted by Auwal, (2015), 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. Buttressing this point, 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” and most of the media concentrate on bad news (Wilson, 2013, p.14). They are problem focused (Auwal, 2015). The reasons behind the media’s inclination towards conflicts are not far-fetched because as noted by scholars “bad news is good news and this is what sells the paper!” (Galtung and Lynch, 2010; Ersoy, 2010; Pate, 2011; Auwal, 2015; Okigbo, 2015), if it “bleeds”, then it “leads” (Ersoy, 2010). Omenugha (2013, p.6) observes that “in crises situations, headlines are sensationalized to make sales in the Nigerian media.” The author exemplifies thus: “*BokoHaram* strikes Kano, killing two Igbo businessmen” and “How Christian youths killed my driver – Dr. Zainab Kwaru,” to mention a few.

The mass media therefore, play a tripartite function in conflict situations in the society:

- Informing the public about the conflict, action and effect;
- Recommending solutions to government thereby influencing policies towards resolving the conflicts;
- Tracing the root causes rather than mere description of the act of conflict.

However, contrary to these expected tripartite function of the media in the society, scholarly evidences have on the average shown that the media have been used as tools to inflame grievances and accelerate the escalation of violent conflicts (Adisa, 2012, Edeani, 1994). Historically, news media often have been used in promotion of wars and conflicts. News media helped the Allies further their goals in World War I (Creel, 1920; Lasswell, 1927; Bernays, 1928) and enabled manipulation of the masses by Nazis (Jowett and O'Donnell, Cole, 1998; Thomson, 1977). Common justification to some of these misuses is what scholars call "the 'security dilemma' syndrome which is one such process where the media can intentionally, (as in the case of propaganda machine) as was the case both in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, or unintentionally, act as vehicle to escalation" (UNESCO, 2004, Adisa, 2012). The media in this instance becomes a weapon at the disposal of the political elites to unleash terror on the perceived opponent, often the economic and political minority depending on the conflict dynamics and dimensions.

In an effort to synthesize existing work on the relationship between media and conflict, Eytan Gilboa (2006) argues for a new framework to examine the relationship between media and conflict, suggesting that scholars need to investigate the specific influence that different media can have at each stage of conflict: prevention, management, resolution and reconciliation. Accordingly, at each level of the conflict, media have specific functions and dysfunctions, all of which collectively influence the public attitudes, negotiations and policies that guide the initiation, conduct and resolution of wars. Some of the functions and dysfunctions of media in the four stages of conflict include: awareness, apprehension, learning, mobilization, instigating opposition, perceptions of legitimacy or illegitimacy, confidence-building and destruction,

dramatization and sensationalizing, and the creation of realistic or high expectations (el-Nawawy & Powers, 2008). How the Nigerian media have fared in the discharge of either the functional or dysfunctional roles of the media in the conflicts under study is the major focus of this study.

2.1.3. The Media and Conflict Management

The mass media have been adjudged by conflict resolution experts as indispensable tools for the management of crisis. Nwosu, (2004, p.15) affirmed that:

The mass media are considered to be very important in conflict management because they are information merchants, conduits or carriers of various shades and colours of information. And in times of conflicts, or even wars, adequate or inadequate management of information is considered to be a critical factor in the emergence, escalation or reduction of tension points at various levels, tensions which depending on how they are managed, can determine the end or continuation of conflicts.

Giving support to Nwosu's view, Obot (2004, p.103) opined that "conflict, being a communicative behaviour, can only be resolved through a communication process, often made easier or more effective through the utilization of the mass media..... When used with a high sense of social responsibility, the mass media can be indispensable in conflict resolution".

Furthermore, Obot (2004, p.107) asserted that:

In resolving conflict in modern societies, the mass media to a great extent provide a rendezvous for all the interest groups or aggrieved parties to 'sit' and express their minds on issues in contention. This will be possible by providing and guaranteeing every citizens easy access to media facilities. All the groups in a conflict have to be represented in news and other programmes in which issues in conflict are discussed. The fact that divergent views are represented in the news or discussion programmes usually goes a long way to calm frayed nerves.

Much as the media is said to wield the power of managing/resolving conflicts, conflict resolution experts have however contended that the mass media can as well trigger or escalate conflicts. Anyanwu (2011, p.114) opines that "the mass media are double-edged swords. In the wrong hands, they can cause more havoc either by paying too much attention or simple inattention". Burke, paraphrased in Anyanwa (2011, p. 114) asserts that the latter is all that is required for the triumph of conflict. Obot (2004, p.103) confirms the above views by stating that "the mass media

are by themselves social structures and can either serve as tool for conflict exacerbation or vehicle for conflict resolution”. The mass media could be perceived as an institution of society that contribute to peaceful resolution of crisis, in reality, we find that the mass media often either consciously or unconsciously contribute to the escalation of conflict (Nwosu, 2004, p.15). Anyanwu, (2011, p.110), further asserts that the mass media can generate and escalate conflicts through inciting coverage, inadequate reporting, none reporting etc, while conflicts can be resolved/managed by the mass media through objective, balanced, adequate, non-sensational, and surveillance reportage.

Most times, those aggrieved are provided with alternative platforms in the media to air their grievances instead of taking to arms. Studies (Onyebuchi, 2010; Ngene, 2010 and Noble, 2011) have shown that through adequate, balance and objective reportage, people who hitherto would have taken to arms to express their displeasure are informed, enlightened and most importantly convinced to seek the option of dialogue or legal redress. This form of media conflict reporting that provides alternative platforms which open up communicative spaces for peaceful dialogue and negotiations is akin to what scholars refer to conflict sensitive journalism. It was further described by Adisa, (2012) and Howard (2003) when they observed that a conflict sensitive journalist applies conflict analysis and searches for new voices and new ideas about the conflict. He or she reports on who is trying to resolve the conflict, looks closely at all sides, and reports on how other conflicts were resolved. A conflict sensitive journalist takes no sides, but is engaged in the search for solutions. Conflict sensitive journalists choose their words carefully.

Adisa (2012), further explained that conflict sensitive journalism also abhors only reporting what divides the parties in a conflict as well as avoid the use of words like “terrorist”, “extremist” or “fanatic”. According to Raza, and Dickson (2013), only bad journalism uses emotional and unnecessary words: massacre, mutilated, atrocity. It emphasizes the violence with words such as “mutilated bodies”. This reportage takes sides; it describes the event from the point of view of the army spokesperson; the news is full of blame and accusations with no proof; it takes the

government side. And of course, the power of languages in shaping public perception of conflicts cannot be overemphasized. Chilwa's (2011) study has particularly shown that "there is a systematic ideological bias to the media that is traceable to the linguistic choices and choice of vocabulary made by individual journalists and media houses they represent" (p.104). The choice of one word to the exclusion of another clearly indicates not just personal power structures with socio-political implications (Matheson, 2005). These languages portray journalists as taking sides and making the other side seem impossible to negotiate with, which directly or indirectly prolong the conflict. In that wise, a journalist that is conflict sensitive will identify and label people what they are called either before the emergence of the conflict or during the conflict. Failure to do so certainly generates the same kind of reaction by Achuzia (2015) in *The Vanguard Newspaper* report of November 9, 2015 to the statement credited to former president Olusegun Obasanjo thus: "**Miscreants**, being that we were parading the road, barricading Government Houses, destroying property and other places, is that the reportage from the **toxic media**? If that is the reportage, it means that the media have misrepresented what they saw or what they heard" (emphasis mine). The impact of this kind of comment of course, is the deepening of the dissent disposition to an already established stance on the conflict by the misrepresented party.

Adisa, went further to explain that this is the ideal which most journalists often ignored but instead resort to the following:

- ❖ Media mostly just follow events. They don't explain what led to those events.
- ❖ They concentrate on bad news of conflict and are silent on peace process.
- ❖ They are often sensational and emotional in tone.
- ❖ Who are the news makers? They tend to focus on powerful people, political leaders, the rich and the famous who live in town and cities.
- ❖ They often reinforce stereotypes.

- ❖ When telling every story, they not only choose who and what to include inside the frame but who and what to leave out (2012, p.8).

Furthermore, as part of the social responsibility function, Uchem (2003, p.255), writing on the role of the media in times of crisis, asserted that:

what is to be done therefore when a conflict arises is to bridge the gap arising between the two parties who have found them hauled into the terminal flood of the dialectic process.... What the mass media need to do is to quickly study their situation and package effectively, information responsibly that emphasizes the common grounds they still share together or could share to bring them back once more to a synthesis. Such useful and important information or communication on the areas that unite while leaving out those that divide is all that is needed to end conflict and reconcile the actors on the line of divide.

The assertion by Uchem (2003) above sums up the basic assumptions of peace journalism model.

2.1.4. Concept of Peace Journalism

Peace journalism as explained by Roberts (2014) is a journalism that offers a more balanced perspective of war and conflict than that provided by the dominant mainstream media. For instance, peace journalism aims to construct realities from all sides, and to reveal less visible causes and effects of war and violence, such as their cost in terms of the dead and disabled, and of the destruction of social order and institutions, while refraining from dehumanizing the enemy. Similarly, Tehranian (2002, p.12), sees peace journalism as a kind of journalism and media ethics that attempts ‘to transform conflicts from their violent channels into constructive forms of conceptualizing news, empowering the voiceless, and seeking common grounds that unify rather than divide human societies’. In other words, peace journalism rather than emphasizing what divides opposed parties, (as is common in mainstream media war coverage) seeks to uncover any possible areas of agreement between them. It offers analysis of what caused the conflict and tries to suggest how it may be resolved or transformed in cases where resolution is impossible or too difficult. As such, it may include peace advocacy journalism, which shares

many of its characteristics but with an explicitly articulated point of view that aims above all to persuade.

Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) give the following definitions: “peace journalism is when editors and reporters make choices – of what stories to report, and how to report them – which create opportunities for society at large to consider and to value non-violent responses to conflict.

According to them, Peace journalism:

- uses the insights of conflict analysis and transformation to update the concepts of balance, fairness and accuracy in reporting;
- provides a new route map tracing the connections between journalists, their sources, the stories they cover and the consequences of their journalism – the ethics of journalistic intervention;
- builds an awareness of non-violence and creativity into the practical job of everyday editing and reporting (Lynch and McGoldrick, 2005, p.5).

Similarly, Kempf (2007) opines that peace journalism combines journalism with peace as an external aim. It understands itself as ‘a normative mode of responsible and conscientious media coverage of conflict that aims at contributing to peacemaking, peacekeeping, and changing the attitudes of media owners, advertisers, professionals and audiences towards war and peace’ (Shinar, 2007, p.2).

In peace journalism, the imperativeness of giving voice to the voiceless and to effectively disseminate the messages supporting peace and non-violence cannot be overemphasized. According to Lynch and McGoldrick, (2005a) ‘...journalists need to be able to draw upon a deep understanding of how conflicts develop and how people can respond to them in ways likely to reduce the risk of violence’. The literature review on peace journalism shows that its advocates see it more as part of mainstream media, mainly because of how conflicts are perceived by the media. Conflict, as stated earlier, is considered as one of the main attributes of

what makes the news (Galtung and Ruge, 1965; Harcup and O’Neil, 2001; Moge kwu, 2011). Conflict also exists in societies in many forms at various levels. Armed conflicts or wars between countries for instance, might be ‘special occurrences’ which demand greater experience and knowledge of the journalists to be reported but the events that lead to their escalation into violence are usually day to day happenings that should be reported.

The concept of peace journalism expressly states that if the media covers events in a more positive frame, that is, a common-ground frame and a solution-seeking frame, they will reduce conflict between the parties. Although there are some objections to peace journalism from conventional journalists, communication academics and media are beginning to accept peace journalism news values. That is why framing is a crucial concept for peace journalism. Most of the advice of peace journalism is on news framing as Maslog and Lee (2005) aptly posit that, “theoretically, peace journalism is supported by framing theory” (p. 313).

2.1.4.1. Peace Journalism Advocates that:

- ❖ Mass Media must remain neutral and set agenda for peace in conflict situations. Instead of politicians manipulating societies by using media channels or setting their own agendas for their own benefit, the media need to set the agenda individually and to take a position in favour of solutions. The media, but not with the initial purpose of making money, must provide more educational information to citizens; opening up the various facets of the conflict situation to enable the citizens make decisions for peace.
- ❖ Journalists need to look at situations with a multiple perspective. If journalists are framing issues using a peace journalism perspective (which is people, solution, peace, truth orientated) they will contribute to a solution and peace in a conflict situation. “The choices that journalists make – what stories to report, what sources to use, and how to structure narratives – have a dramatic impact on reader attitudes and beliefs” (Carter, Thomas, and Ross, 2008, p. 8).

- ❖ As Entman (1993) argues, “Framing essentially involves selection and salience”. That means gatekeepers (editors, reporters) make this selection and create this salience. Editors can select either a negative or positive side – the “Other” – and make it more salient in the news. Editors also have the opportunity to use more conflict and anti-solution frames instead of peace and solution frames. Gatekeepers therefore have an important role to play in peace journalism.
- ❖ One can notice that elite-oriented news sources are dominating the mass media and alternative discourses are always extinguished by gatekeepers. Consequently, these alternative discourses keep their silence in society. However, peace journalists support giving voice to the voiceless in their news coverage.

From the thesis of peace journalism articulated above, it could be inferred that peace in itself can be either positive or negative depending on the opportunities made available by all concerned to attaining it. In view of this, Galtung (1996) argues that peace has a ‘fatal connection’ with war – he terms the mere ‘absence of war’ or ceasefire as ‘negative peace’. On the other hand, ‘positive peace’ is the condition in which other ‘non-violent’ ways are available to the society to deal with conflict. ‘In positive peace, aspects of structural and cultural violence are exposed, and challenged, and this requires openness and inclusiveness in public spheres, to allow monitory democracy’ (Lynch, 2013, p. 50). If conflict is defined in terms of ‘human relationships’; peace is defined ‘not as the absence of conflict, but as the absence of violence’ (p. 50). Metaphorically, peace can be seen not merely as a stage in time or a condition; it is a dynamic and social process of constructing peace – a phenomenon that Lederach (2003) calls ‘conflict transformation’.

During the conflict process, media coverage of conflict is an important aspect. Consequently, Galtung, (1998) suggests a peace journalism frame rather than a war journalism frame for media practitioners in times of conflict. Galtung’s concept of peace journalism was expanded by McGoldrick and Lynch (2000), who made 17 proposals for media practitioners covering conflict.

These proposals suggest the inclusion of solution-oriented framing, reporting long-term effects of conflict, giving voice to the voiceless, reporting all sides, using ordinary people as news sources and using fastidious language. The opposite approach would be conflict-oriented framing; that is, reporting the short-term effects of conflict, giving voice to elites, reporting only one side and using inattentive language (McGoldrick and Lynch, 2000). In other words, the manner and nature of frame given to a particular conflict situation, to a large extent, determines the dimension and direction the conflict takes in the long run. Peace journalism therefore, as observed by Maslog and Lee (2005) is theoretically supported by framing.

Aslam (2003) further explains that the new paradigm calls for change in many aspects: change in the definition of who practices peace journalism (Keeble, 2010); change in journalism practices that are more cognizant with the principles of conflict resolution (Verbitsky,); change in the journalist's ethics towards a wider global audience (Ward, 2005); change in finding common allies and developing synergized strategies in a more diverse media (Hackett, 2007); change in the news value system that determines what makes the news (Lynch and Galtung, 2010); and change revenue sources to sustain peace journalism and journalists (Lynch, 2011). Peace journalism frames stories in a way that encourages a journalist to analyse conflict, be creative and offer non-violent possible solutions (Aslam, 2003). The goal of peace journalism 'is to clarify, unveil, and reveal reality to enable others to draw normative conclusions (Lynch & Galtung, 2010, p.52).

2.1.5. Mediating Peace or Conflict Through Media Framing

The choice of words and their organization into news is important especially in reporting on the conflict process. The media have a great responsibility in choosing the words and setting the agenda for discussion. Kent (2003) gives an example from the Bosnia war on media framing:

‘Media framing’, in essence, the underlying language, key terms, labels and phrases used to describe events, played a critical role in establishing how the actual problem of Bosnia came to be defined, particularly through selection of language and decisions about balancing and what kinds of evidence would be reported. The resultant framing, by obfuscating important issues about responsibility for the war and the manner in which it was conducted, limited potential policy options to ineffectual and inappropriate options (p. 3).

As Entman (1993) stated, “framing in this light plays a major role in the exertion of political power, and the frame in a news text is really the imprint of power – it registers the identity of actors or interests that completed to dominate the text” (p. 55). Another common frame in media is the “otherness” frame. The mass media through a given frame play up and make obvious the ‘otherness’ in others and by extension, deepen possible existing dichotomies. According to First (2001), “examining the representation of Arab citizens as the ‘Other’ in the last decades reveals that they suffer from a ‘double otherness’: “Not only is the Arab citizen a minority in Israeli society, but his nationality and loyalty to the country are questioned” (cited in Neiger and Zandberg, 2004, p. 433). “Otherness frame” further divides rather than unite people, societies and cultures especially in conflict situations. Because of the “otherness frame” and other conflict frames in media, there is an urgent need to develop peace journalism news values in conflict reporting.

Another similar example comes from Aburaiya, Avraham, and Wolfsfeld’s (1998) study, which found that “Arab citizens were given little coverage in Israel’s Hebrew-language media, and that their protest was covered within the frame of ‘security matters and subversive activity’” (cited in Neiger and Zandberg, 2004, p. 433). Most of the people in Israel use this frame in order to perceive Arab citizens. Peace journalism does not advocate, neither do peace journalists accept this one-sided picture; they try to show all sides of the picture, to show how conflict unwillingly causes problems. Similar trend could be observed with the Nigerian journalism in the face of the several ethnic, religious and political conflicts that have erupted in Nigeria over the years – from the census crisis of 1962, Kano crisis, Nigeria/Biafran Civil war, Jos crisis, Niger Delta

Militancy, Boko Haram insurgency and the current Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) uprising. Unfortunately, there is yet to be a comprehensive empirical study chronicling the nature of framing given to these conflicts and how they relate to the escalation or amelioration of the crises situations in South-East/South-South Nigeria in particular and Nigeria in general.

The elites of society have a significant effect on journalists and their framing; and a lot of research has been conducted to support this thesis. Entman (1993) gives various examples of how elites affect journalist's frames on certain issues:

...in the pre-war debate over U.S. policy toward Iraq, there was a tacit consensus among U.S. elites not to argue for such options as negotiation between Iraq and Kuwait. The news frame included only two remedies, war now or sanctions now with war (likely) later, while problem definitions, causal analyses, and moral evaluations were homogeneous. Between the selected remedies, however, framing was contested by elites, and news coverage offered different sets of facts and evaluations (p. 55).

Beyond the influence of the elite class in shaping how the journalists and indeed the mass media frame issues, journalists for several other reasons are sometimes aware of how they frame issues, and vice versa. The reasons according to Edeani, (1994) could be such factors as ownership structure, newspaper policy, education level, knowledge, culture and beliefs could all be important elements that shape media framing of issues. The number of these elements may be increased, but the important point is to understand how issues are framed and how people think about those issues.

Peace journalism has developed the position that journalists, editors or mass media have the power to affect public opinion. It is obvious that media are efficient in agenda-setting, news framing, gate-keeping and silencing some radical voices in the society. Thus highlighting the basic assumptions of the media effect theories (Agenda-setting, Framing, Gate-keeping and Spiral of Silence) with their common view on public opinion formation and the power the media to influence people's perceptions of events and possible choices/decisions they make regarding

such events. The position of peace journalism is similar to these four theories: it adopts the opinion of the possibility of using this “power” of the media for positive purposes, when wanted. If the media have the power to set the agenda, set the frame, provide dominant discourse and support the status quo, they could use this power in a positive way, especially in conflict situations. This is why peace journalism gives more responsibility to the journalists and editors in conflict zones for helping the peace process.

Media frame from the foregoing is a necessary precursor to either peace or violence mediation in conflict reporting. It can foster peace as much as it can escalate violence in conflicts. Lynch and Galtung (2010, p.18) maintain that ‘both violence and peace are texts. Whether they are (newsworthy) events depend on the context’. Lynch further overarches this paradigm to apply to the overall framing of news when he talks about the value of peace journalism being its ability to ‘throw up’ the stories that are ‘unusual to the norm’ and that makes the ‘good bits of journalism’ (Lynch, 2007, p.3). The first implication for journalists therefore, is to make ‘peace’ a news value. Communication for peace is seen as a subset of communication for development. Similarly, the concern of Peace journalists should not be only to resolve crises but also to guide their reports towards preventing crises and ensuring reconciliation for development.

2.1.6.1. Components of Mediating Peace: Mediatized Recognition

Simon Cottle (2006) offers an approach grounded in the “mediatized recognition” of oppressed or marginalized groups in order to better understand the role that media can play in the processes of cross-cultural reconciliation. Placing the concept of *recognition* at the heart of the media contribution to reconciliation, Cottle argues that the capacity of media to recognize isolated, denigrated, and discriminated cultural “Others,” on their own communicative terms, becomes central in determining how, when, and what function the media play in negotiating cross-cultural tensions. Moreover, expanding upon the deliberative necessities of a trans-cultural dialogue,

Cottle points to the importance of new media to counter the “rationalist bias within much contemporary theorizing” (2006, p.10).

While rarely discussed in the context of peace journalism, the concept of mediatized recognition may be helpful in explaining precisely how and why news media can play a constructive role in the cultural and political conflicts. For Cottle, media are a critical means by which cultural antagonisms can be outlined and negotiated in contemporary conflicts: “In today’s mediatized societies it is probably inevitable that the media will be seen as a key, possibly principal, means by which cultural differences and agendas can be publicly recognized and acknowledged” (2006, p.19). Howard (2002), further agrees that media that make an effort to provide equal recognition to all social and political groups, particularly the ones that have often been underrepresented and marginalized, can contribute to the peaceful integration of these groups into the overall structure of the civil society: “With this recognition emerges a journalism that is sensitized to conflict resolution techniques, and seeks to maximize understanding of the underlying causes and possible solutions” (Howard, 2002).

2.1.6.2. Conciliatory Media

Research has shown that audience members will try to get more information from the media to enhance their understanding, particularly during times of conflict as underpinned by the assumptions of Media System Dependency Theory. Therefore, el-Nawawy and Powers (2008) argue that a conciliatory media can help alleviate tensions grounded in stereotype and myth and enhance a global understanding of events in ways that encourage open-mindedness among audiences. “By making available space or air time for expression of grievances, the media encourage an essential part of the healing process. During the period of reconciliation and rehabilitation, the media can also serve to empower groups that had previously been voiceless” (Gardner, 2001, p.10).

Echoing the same thought, Botes (1996) was cited in Aho (2004) as saying that “media are sensitive towards the task of promoting tolerant and diverse viewpoints” (p.14). Drawing from a case study of Australian media coverage of the Howard government’s treatment of illegal immigrants, Cottle isolates seven characteristics of media that best serve a conciliatory function:

1. “image to the invisible;”
2. “claims, reason and public argumentation;”
3. “public performance and credibility;”
4. “personal accounts and experimental testimonies;”
5. “reconciling the past, towards the present;”
6. “media reflexivity;” and
7. “bearing witness in a globalized world” (Cottle, 2006).

el-Nawawy and Powers (2008) further expatiate these characteristics. Thus, the first characteristic, “image to the invisible,” entails the capacity of a media to expose an event or act that had previously been “hidden” by governments and corporations. The “claims, reason and public argumentation” function is similar to that described by proponents of “deliberative democracy,” where public officials and opinion leaders describe and defend their decisions in the public sphere, opening them to challenges and questions. The third characteristic, “public performance and credibility,” speaks to the ability of a media to interview or challenge a guest live, where the responses are *de facto* authentic, unable to be censored or scripted. Space for “personal accounts and experimental testimony” is important in that “former ‘Others’ are enabled to put their individual experiences into the public domain,” conversations that allow for “stories and personal accounts of pain, suffering and injustice” to “fragment reductionist stereotypes of the collective ‘Other’”. Similarly, a media that creates space for communications that “reconcile the past” with an eye to the present “assist in the public process of acknowledging the deep trauma and hurt,” contributing “to an ongoing process of reconciliation and cultural accommodation.” The media reflexivity quality refers to a media’s ability to examine, praise and

criticize both other media coverage, as well as one's own, in a process that pedagogically encourages more critical approaches of media consumption among viewers. Finally, perhaps as a summary of the previous characteristics a media's ability to "bear witness in a globalized world," where content focuses on the dynamics of historical and contemporary injustices, "can help dismantle historically anachronistic images of the 'Other'" and change the "consciousness and politics of understanding that conditions our responses and ability to interact with today's globalized world".

Needless to say, Cottle proposes these characteristics as an ideal, arguing that the more media are able to approach news with such criteria in mind, the more effective the process of recognition is, and thus the higher the media's ability to lessen antagonisms between different cultures (Cottle, 2006). Utilizing the limited academic literature on peace journalism (see Cottle, 2006; Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005; Howard, 2002), el-Nawawy and Powers (2008) developed an eleven-point typology of media that best serve a conciliatory function as follows:

- i. Providing a public place for politically underrepresented groups.
- ii. Providing multiple viewpoints on a diversity of controversial issues.
- iii. Representing the interests of the international public in general rather than a specific group of people.
- iv. Providing firsthand observations from eyewitnesses of international events.
- v. Covering stories of injustice in the world.
- vi. Acknowledging mistakes in journalistic coverage when appropriate.
- vii. Demonstrating a desire towards solving rather than escalating conflicts.
- viii. Avoiding the use of victimizing terms, such as martyr or pathetic, unless they are attributed to a reliable source.
- ix. Avoiding the use of demonizing labels, such as terrorist or extremist, unless they are attributed to a reliable source.
- x. Abstaining from opinions that are not substantiated by credible evidence.

- xi. Providing background, contextualizing information that helps viewers fully understand the story.

They argue that when a media organization embodies such characteristics, it can work towards debunking cross-cultural stereotypes, creating a general culture of tolerance, injecting a multicultural knowledge into the public sphere, and working to produce reconciliation among cultural antagonists.

2.1.7. Elements of Conflict/Conflict Analysis

There are four elements of conflict analysis:

- ❖ **Profile of Conflict-** Conflicts are often complex in nature and rooted in multidimensional causes and factors that interact and overlap, especially for violent conflicts. To put conflict in appropriate context requires an analysis of the conflict. What are the political, economic, security, governance and socio-cultural context? What are the emerging political, economic, religious and social issues?
- **Causes of Conflict-** identifying the proximate and structural causes of conflict is also important for conflict reporting. Since conflicts involve a balancing of vectors of power to produce effects, it embodies the levels of potentiality, dispositions and powers, or manifestations. The structure and levels of conflict need to be understood and nuanced by the journalist. For instance conflict potentiality is the space or opening within the society of possible conflicts. The realm of potential opposing vectors of power must be understood and identified early.
- **Actors of conflict-** actors to a conflict are most times multiple with multilayered perspectives, interest and agenda. They can be individuals, groups and institutions engaged in as well as being affected by conflict. The journalist needs to identify all these

implicit and explicit actors to segregate their profile and possible consequent actions.

This will also help the journalist in the following area:

- Understand the stated interest of actors involved;
 - Hidden agenda of actors involved;
 - Relationships of various other actors and their perceptions of such interrelationships;
 - Resources the conflict actors have at present in order to realize their agenda; and
 - Actors who are interested in peace through negotiations (Lloyd, 2012, p.12).
- **Dynamics of conflict** – Men and women experience many of the same phenomena during armed conflict such as we now have in Nigeria: loss of livelihoods and assets, displacement, physical and mental injury, torture, the death and injury of loved ones, sexual assault and enforced disappearances. Yet we see that these factors affect men and women in different ways because they are differently embodied and symbolize different things to their community and those that attack them (Mazurana & Proctor, 2013). These different dimensions of the factors of conflict need to be clearly understood and reflected. Such that the windows of opportunities for conflict resolution by the various actors can be explored. The purpose is to identify through investigative journalism the current trend of the conflict and the implication to the wellbeing of all those affected in the conflict and in this way determine the objective reason that can be recognized by the actors involved in the conflict as common grounds for peace.

2.1.8. What Makes Reporting War-Oriented: Old Approach to Conflict Reporting

War Journalism according to Adekunle, (2014) leads – or leaves – readers and audiences to overvalue violence, as a response to conflicts and crises while Peace Journalism on the other hand, creates opportunities for society at large to consider and value nonviolent, developmental

responses. This observation marks the clear point of departure between the two concepts – peace and war journalism. War journalism according to critics tends to neglect the root causes as well as the complex dimensions of conflicts while focusing attention on the effects of conflict in the long run. To this end, the former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan elaborates on the point 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 the inequalities, the corruption, the ethnic tensions and the human rights abuses that form the root causes of so many conflicts” (cited in Goretti, 2007, p.21).

Extant literature on media and conflict reporting globally has shown a reasonable amount of scholarship to this effect. el-Nawawy and Powers (2008) for instance observes that there is indeed an impressive amount of literature on media coverage of conflicts especially in the Middle East, most of which is focused on Western – especially US media, apparently because until recently the Western media had dominated the global flow of news on conflict. Most of these studies, dating from the early 1960s to mid-1980s, show that Western media coverage of conflicts was characterized by disproportionate favouritism and qualitative inaccuracy towards a given conflicting Nation that is of interest to the US or vice versa (Kressel, 1987). Recent studies similarly show that the media produce destructive coverage (Wolfsfeld et al., 2008) that misleads public understanding of conflicts (Philo and Berry, 2004). Generally, this knowledge has been followed by increasing concern over how the mass media can play a constructive role that can help in resolving conflicts and promoting peace. This concern, however, caused an immediate confrontation in the form of an ethical challenge as to whether or not journalism, as an objective and public interest-based profession, should be attached to peace in reporting conflicts (el-Nawawy and Powers 2008).

Locally, scores of scholars have considered how conflicts are mediated in Nigerian mass media, especially the print (see Okoro and Okechukwu, 2012; Umaru, 2011; Chiluya, 2011; Aka, 2011; Obor, 2011; Funmi, 2011; Opiah, 2011; Kemebo, 2011; Alabi, 2010, etc.). These scholars

examined the central role the print media in particular played as a key actor in the conflict because as argued by scholars, the media as impartial, neutral third party facilitates direct negotiation (Coser, 1975; Ramadhan, 2013).

The mass media is an important agent of socialization that plays strategic roles in conflict resolution or escalation. Describing what could aptly go for the old approach of reporting conflict, Enwere (2013) observes that in this era of globalization and its current struggle for power and hegemony, the mass media has adopted the use of Machiavellian principles of 'double morality' in reporting domestic and international conflicts. This method according to him has created more discord than collaboration in conflict situations. Another great challenge facing the media is the ascendancy and the use of stereotype and prejudice not only by the conflict actors but also by the media to narrow down the perceptions of the parties, so as to determine the outcome of a given conflict and influence the process of its resolution. This has created psychological wars, fears, anxieties, frustration and hatred that increase the intensity of aggressive behaviours and attitudes, which prolongs the life span of conflicts (Enwere, 2013).

The socializing role of the media should present to the people the broad narratives and dimensions of conflict especially its consequences both in the short and long term and by so doing, help them in making informed judgments and possibly decision for peace. This is done by providing information on wide range of conflict issues and the best possible alternatives of resolving them. But this role according to Enwere (2013) is most often jeopardized by the consistent portrayals of images of violence and destructive acts of terror by the media during periods of intense violent conflicts. The display of the destructive power capabilities of the actors as well as pictures of bloodshed, killings and damaged properties and infrastructures not only creates fear and anxiety in the political system but also tacitly influences the actors to carry out more acts of violence to balance terror and maintain hegemonic influence in the crisis situation. Thus, reprisal physical attacks increase and also become instruments of vengeance in the hands of conflict actors (Enwere, 2013). Terrorists and other criminal elements as well as conflict

opportunists seize the opportunity of media harp on the act of violence and havocs to perpetrate more violence.

Research evidence supports this view by projecting the finding that there exists a web of interdependence between media and the operations of violent conflict actors. The conflict entrepreneurs and actors depend on the media to give widespread coverage of their terrorist attacks and actions, which are implicitly directed at the political system so as to put pressures on the policy makers or targeted groups to meet the demands of the conflict actors. On the other hand, the media hanker after violent acts because such terrorist actions fit into their strategic marketing plan of attracting wide audience and readership which invariably leads to maximization of profits (Enwere, 2013). Perhaps, as result of the dominant news value in mainstream media news coverage, the mass media ordinarily begin to seek for exclusive and bizarre scenes to report the moment a conflict erupts even if those scenes do not serve any purpose for the society. Also during conflicts, the media exaggerate casualty figures without credible and reliable sources, such as the police. Even when they report from the same conflict spot or police press release, they still give conflicting figures of casualty. These days, very few newspapers quote police sources; most times they quote unreliable sources and thereafter hide behind background and deep background forms of attribution (Adisa, 2012, p.9).

These unethical practices still subsist unabated. The formation of different associations of journalists such as National Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ), Association of Christians Journalists, Muslim Media Group etc and segregation into Southern and Northern press axis are not helping matters. These unnecessary classifications, most times, affect and determine the direction of news of many newspapers and magazines on national issues. The tension and violence experienced during the Sharia launch was not due to the complaint of non Muslims who live in Zamfara but due to the editorial contents of some newspapers and magazines that betrayed the ethic of the profession. According to Aliagan (2009), “one newspaper columnist in the *Guardian* went as far as calling for war against all northerners in

Lagos, from beggars to gatemen, cleaners, and gardeners because they were the apostles and soldiers of the new jihad”. No doubt, this was a clear hate media, with ethnic colouration, the type that apparently instigated Rwanda ethnic war in 1994 that claimed over 500,000 lives. The same brand of journalism that Akinfeleye (2003) tagged “socially irresponsible” journalism and about which he offered this advice, “Let the press focus their activities and news coverage and presentation in the new millennium more on the promotion, protection and preservation of our national interest and sustainable democracy”. According to Howard (2003), the media does not set out deliberately to end conflict, as this may not be within its power, but through accurate and impartial news reporting, the media contributes greatly to reducing conflicts.

However, the opponents of Peace Journalism conversely, raise a number of objections. According to them Peace Journalism is an unwelcome departure from objectivity and towards a journalism of attachment; it mistakenly assumes powerful and linear media effects; it is a normative model, rooted in the discipline of peace research, that fails sufficiently to take into account the constraints imposed by the actual dynamics of news production (including professional values and organizational imperatives), and hence, may have little to offer journalists in practice (Lynch, 2007; Hanitzsch, 2004). Equally, Wolfsfeld (1997) raised critical points against the operationability of peace journalism model in conflict reporting. His points essentially suggest that there is an inherent tension between news values and peace:

A peace process is complicated; journalists demand simplicity. A peace process takes time to unfold and develop; journalists demand immediate results. Most of a peace process is marked by dull, tedious negotiations; journalists require drama. A successful peace process leads to a reduction in tensions; journalists focus on conflict. Many of the significant developments within a peace process must take place in secret behind closed doors; journalists demand information and access (Wolfsfeld 1997, p.67).

Following Mandelzis’s (2006) observations, Lynch concludes that: If journalists on either side had paid more attention to conflict issues and their effect on human needs, their reporting would have been more accurate. This would have meant bringing readers and audiences ‘bad news’ in the form of drawing attention to continuing settlement-building, but it would potentially have

been more conducive to peace, ultimately, by problematizing this phenomenon and (thereby) incentivizing an effective political response. Going by these arguments, one may be forced to demand an explanation on whether what is presently being practiced by the Nigerian mass media could be regarded as Peace Journalism (Teranian, 2009). Or, something similar to what Herman and Chomsky (2008) regard as the dominant American media as comprising a single propaganda system in which "money and power are able to filter out the news fit to print, marginalize dissent, and allow the government and dominant private interests to get their messages across to the public" (p.15). The reports of the Nigerian media on crises most especially Boko Haram insurgency are often one-sided; sometimes what the media considered good for the public and not what the stories really are; most often what sells the media and not what promotes the media vision on the social responsibility goals; and what the powerful influential including the governments, politicians and their political allies, corporate organization and conglomerates as well as media owners, considered favorable to their political, social and economic gains (Adekunle, 2014).

Adekunle (2014) went further to state that internal conflicts do not occur spontaneously but tend to have a history. Nigerian media due to the prominent position they occupy as the fourth estate of the realm, should have a deeper understanding of the existing political structures, the participants of the conflict as well as the changes preceding the outbreak of violence. The media can therefore, not only influence society before the conflict by recognizing and properly addressing the issues but also afterwards. Kuusik (2010) emphasizes that Mass Media have the ability to accelerate and magnify fears or reduce them. Nigerian Media therefore need to defuse tensions before they even reach a critical point and keep a critical eye on government, opposition and society. By supplying credible information and reaching a large audience, the media help in managing conflicts. They also need to encourage reconciliation and societal development after

the crises. These according to proponents of peace journalism are the necessary ingredients for peace journalism.

2.1.9. Peace and Conflict Analysis in Media Reportage: A cursory Look at Elements of News

Analyzing the Structure of Foreign News, Galtung and Ruge, (1965) identified five key factors of newsworthiness in the coverage of international conflict in the Norwegian press. These are:

- Threshold: A big story is one that has an extreme effect on a large number of people.
- Frequency: Events that occur suddenly and fit well with the news organization's schedule.
- Negativity: Bad news is more exciting than good news.
- Unexpectedness: If an event is out of the ordinary it will have a greater effect.
- Unambiguity: Events whose implications are clear make for better copy.

Galtung later adapted this basic insight to propose a “four-factor news communication model”. According to him, negative events befalling elite individuals in elite countries, were top stories while positive processes, benefiting non-elite groups in non-elite countries, were non-stories (Galtung, 1998). Roberts, (2014) went further to illustrate Galtung's observation using a classic example viz.:

A friend on the London Guardian newspaper had spent weeks compiling a feature on efforts to alleviate the growing literacy crisis in sub-Saharan Africa. It was pulled at the last minute in favour of musings on the just-announced divorce of Hollywood stars Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman.

By implication, the feature story on sub-Saharan Africa was dumped for a Hollywood star's divorce story simply because the former concerns a non-elite group in a non-elite region according to Galtung's categorization. This contravenes the tenet of peace of peace journalism – giving voice to the voiceless and giving equal representations to the ordeals and/or travails of all irrespective of class, region or race. Lynch (2007) gives clear distinctions on Peace journalism and war journalism. According to him, War Journalism is:

- Violence/war-orientated
- Propaganda-orientated
- Elite-orientated
- Victory-orientated

In this kind of journalism, violence seems to ‘make sense’ and often appears to be the only solution. These are the cases even when journalists strive so hard to be ‘neutral’ and ‘objective’ because what journalists think of as ‘objective’ reporting actually consists of a set of conventions which predispose news about conflict in favour of war journalism (McGoldrick, 2006).

And peace journalism itself is therefore:

- Peace/conflict-orientated
- Truth-orientated
- People-orientated
- Solution-orientated Lynch, (2007, p.7)

Roberts, (2014) points out that any journalist knows a news story is supposed to answer six basic questions – who, what, where, when, why and how. When covering conflicts, these correspond roughly to what peace researchers call ‘conflict dynamics’. According to Francis (2002), any statement of the dynamics of a conflict must identify “its history, recent causes and internal composition – the different parties, the nature of their involvement, their perspectives, positions and motivations, and the different relationships between them in terms of power, allegiance and interest” (Francis, 2002, p 28). By this yardstick, peace journalism, with its preparedness to encompass a broader range of parties, across the conflict formation, is clearly more accurate than war journalism, and preferable as a form of representation (Lynch, 2007). Roberts, (2014) looking at the buildup to war in Iraq, and US and UK’s role, observes that the small amount of reporting that included America’s appetite for oil, and the longstanding policy of successive US governments to secure control over access to global supplies, gave a more accurate representation of conflict dynamics than the majority of reporting that omitted these factors.

However, media scholars have made cases to justify the reason why the media tend to cover conflict superficially. According to Adisa (2012, p.8), it is “due to the history-on-the-run nature of news” that makes media’s conflict discourse not to be exhaustive most often. Eti (2009) opines that it is so because reporting does not capture the entire life circle of a particular conflict situation. The beat reporter is constrained by stiff dead-line factors and must strive to meet this demand. To holistically address the various stages and dimensions of conflict therefore, Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall (2005) proposed the idea of “conflict mapping”. This according to Wehr (1979) is an understanding of the origins, nature, dynamics and possibilities for resolution of the conflict. Adisa, (2004) highlights the necessity of conflict mapping when he writes that “our survival hinges on how we manage the various stages and features of conflict that is fuelled not only by seemingly incompatible interests and values but also by the roles often played by media” (p.6).

As a result of the stated reasons which are of course the basic news elements, coverage of today’s conflicts is dominated by a style of ‘war journalism (el-Nawawy and Powers, 2008). Mass media are both structurally and institutionally inclined to offer “escalation-oriented conflict coverage” (Kempf, 2002). As Tehranian (2002) notes, “the world’s media are still dominated by state and corporate organizations, tied to the logics of commodity and identity fetishism. Such media generate political or commercial propaganda that constructs hostile images of the ‘Other’ while creating a ‘global fishbowl’ whereby the excesses of the world’s wealthiest are on tantalizing display to the vast numbers of desperately poor” (Tehranian, 2002). Along the same lines, Shinar (2003) argues that the media’s professional standards, which thrive on drama, sensationalism and emotions, are more compatible with war than with peace: “War provides visuals and images of action. It is associated with heroism and conflict, focuses on the emotional rather than on the rational, and satisfies news-value demands: the present, the unusual, the dramatic, simplicity, action, personalization, and results” (Shinar, 2003). Thussu (2003) equally argues that the continuous demand for news in an environment that is dominated by 24/7 satellite

television had led to “sensationalization and trivialization of often complex stories and a temptation to highlight the entertainment value of news” (p.23). Knowing that audiences are likely to tune in more often in times of conflict, news media have little incentive to locate and focus on areas of cooperation in conflicts, and often overstate the proclivity for “violence to break out at any moment” in order to maintain viewership and audience attention (Thussu, 2003). Thus, in times of war, today’s mainstream media often tailor their coverage in ways that construct an ideologically aligned narrative that reinforces the attitudes and opinions of their target national or regional audiences (el-Nawawy & Powers, 2008).

2.1.10. A Close Look at Journalistic Objectivity

Rosen (1994) defines objectivity as the value of fairness. It is the ethic of restraining your own biases; the idea that journalism cannot be the voice of any particular party or sect. Kinsey (2001) describes it also as an effort to report the facts without developing – or at least without revealing – an opinion about them. McGoldrick (2006) went further to question, but what to do about the subjective aspects of the job? Why this story, and not another? Then, once you have decided that, why interview this person, or use that organization as a source of information and not another? These questions point to the fact that the choices facing reporters and editors are endless. This issue was defused, as the methods of objective journalism hardened into industry conventions, by the habit of indexing – projecting such basic decision into an external frame of reference that was not, apparently, of the journalist’s own making.

Journalism’s criteria of newsworthiness, factuality, and its routines of newsgathering anchored in bureaucratic institutions with designated spokespeople and prescheduled routines, are mutually constitutive. Taken together, they tend to ensure routine and privileged access for bureaucrats and agency officials, who provide the “hard facts”, credible claims and background information for objective reporting” (Hackett and Zhao, 1998, p.78). For these reasons, a bias in favour of official sources is probably still the single most widespread convention in global news.

Lynch and McGoldrick argue that there are three ways in which news said to be objective fuels further violence: “their conventions of objective reporting in particular, are predisposed towards war journalism”; their ‘natural drift’, as it were, is to lead us- or leave us- to over value violent, reactive responses to conflict, and under-value non-violent, development ones; there is:

- a bias in favour of official sources;
- a bias in favour of events over process;
- a bias in favour of ‘dualism’ in reporting conflicts (Lynch and McGoldrick, 2005, p.209).

These observations defuse the concern that peace journalism “could compromise the integrity of journalists and confuse their role as neutral disseminators of facts” (Loyn, 2003). This concern is all the more justified because some supporters of peace journalism seem all too inclined to underrate values like objectivity, neutrality and detachment (e.g. McGoldrick, 2006; Peleg, 2007) and to lump peace journalism together with other terms (eg. Shinar, 2007, p.4) ‘that refer to advocacy models of reporting – such as the ‘journalism of attachment’ (Bell, 1997), ‘victim journalism’ (Hume, 1997), ‘justice journalism’ (Messman, 2001), and ‘engaged journalism’ (Lynch, 2003).

Art.3 of the 1978 UNESCO Media Declaration, for instance, states that , “the mass media have an important contribution to make to the strengthening of peace and international understanding and in countering racialism, apartheid and incitement to war”, (UNESCO, 1979, p.102). Also, the numerous ethical codes for journalists that apply in almost all the countries of the world give expression to similar self-imposed obligations and contain the obligation to act for peace and against any kind of war propaganda (Becker, 2004; Kempf, 2007).

While in principle conflict is open to interpretation, as either a competitive (win-lose) or cooperative (win-win) process (Deutsch, 1973), conventional war discourse, as initiated by

political and military elites and adopted by mainstream journalism and its public, is all about the questions: “who is the aggressor?” and “how can he be stopped?”(Kempf, 2007). Whether deliberately or not, by adopting this particular perspective, societal discourse reduces conflict to a zero-sum game and becomes a motor of conflict escalation (Kempf, 2003). He went further to maintain that “only if it goes beyond such win-lose scenarios can journalism contribute to the transformation of war discourse into a more constructive form of discourse which is guided by questions like: “what is the problem?” and “how can it be resolved?” Broadening the perspective on conflict and opening it to peaceful alternatives, therefore, is the very essence of de-escalation oriented conflict coverage, a first step of peace journalism (Kempf, 2007, 2003). Loyn (2007) pointed out that “...reporting and peacemaking are different roles. Peacemaking is simply not the journalist’s role”. It cannot be the function of journalism to mediate between conflict parties, to sit down at a negotiating table with them and moderate their disputes (Kempf, and Jaeger, 2005). Journalism and the media do, however, play an essential role in the societal construction of reality that can be fulfilled in different ways: through the type of news coverage chosen they can give an impetus either to the escalation or to the de-escalation of conflicts (Kempf, 2007).

However, peace journalism model has been criticized and accused of encouraging journalists to “get involved” in the stories they are covering and trying to advocate an agenda at the expense of being objective (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005). Even though objectivity has often been regarded as an essential journalistic value, several contemporary scholars have considered absolute objectivity to be a myth (Tuchman, 1972). Maintaining journalistic objectivity can be particularly hard in situations where “...editors and reporters are caught up, whether they like it or not, in the loops and coils of conflict and political process” (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005). In this context, Bell (1997) said: “When I report from the war zones, or anywhere else, I do so with all the fairness and impartiality I can muster,... but using my eyes and ears and mind and accumulated experience, which are surely the very essence of the subjective” (Bell, 1997). It is

also important to note that peace journalism authors are not calling for journalists to sanitize their coverage of conflicts, nor focus solely on calls for peace and cooperation. Rather, advocates argue that journalists describe violence in terms of its political, economic and social motivations, rather than a natural or inevitable consequence of otherwise uncontrollable events. By exposing violence as either a dire or irresponsible choice for dealing with an existing conflict, peace journalists can encourage non-violent responses to conflicts that are otherwise viewed through a highly politicized lens (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005). Yet, as of now, peace journalism is neither a tested means to reduce violent tensions in the world, nor has it been adopted by many, if any, mainstream or even mass-consumed media outlets (el-Nawawy and Powers, 2008), although there are testimonies of its efficacy in some countries.

2.1.11. Media as Key Actors in Conflict Prevention and Peace Building

It is widely acknowledged that the media operating in a conflict context have the capacity to escalate conflict by accentuating differences, highlighting confrontation or providing a platform for dissenting voices. On the other hand, the media are also able to de-escalate conflict by utilizing their expansive platform to campaign for peace, by altering their language and avoiding, to some extent, covering issues that can intensify violence, and also by providing a platform for alternative voices (Ramadhan, 2013). The need to examine media's role in conflict becomes even more expedient considering the apparent changes described by Tumber and Webster (2006) in terms of a move from the traditional forms of "industrial war" towards mass-mediated conflicts, or "information wars," placing the varied media outlets and technologies at the center of discussions of how to best navigate and understand contemporary international conflict.⁹ Accordingly, media organizations are increasingly being treated as "actors" within international conflicts, able to shape and refine opinions of people and even governments (el-Nawawy & Powers, 2008).

However, scholarly criticisms seem to favour more the argument that the media tend to be biased in reporting conflict as a result of vested interest particularly as regards wooing audiences. Thus, the media worldwide are known for sensational reporting of events as a strategy to attract readers/audiences (Ramadhan, 2013). Many media institutions are profit driven and thus, their approach is to ensure that they spread news and information that not only appeal to but also excite readers/audiences; in a conflict context; this kind of reporting has the potential to increase tensions, which may lead to physical violence.

The media are subject (in the build-up to war) to massive propaganda from the parties involved, and are often without their own knowledge representing the necessary link between the propaganda machinery and the audience; “if they are not aware of this potential role themselves, the danger of playing a role as a catalyst for propaganda will be even greater” (Hoijer, Nohrstedt and OHosen, 2002, p.4). Hence, Lynch and McGoldrick (2005, p. XVII) admonished that “when covering conflicts, we can tread down to find solid ground beneath our feet, by studying and applying what is known and has been observed about conflict, drawing on the overlapping fields of conflict analysis and peace research. We can use this knowledge to help use decide for ourselves what is important, and to identify what is missing from what we are told by interested parties” (p. XVIII). Failure in carrying out the underlying study creates further gaps thereby extending the chances for resolution. Lynch (2007) describing the root cause of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict observes that journalists rather than problematizing the conflict, were caught up in what Leah Mandelzis (2006) identified as “euphoria syndrome” in which the use of terms such as “peace process” and “peace agreements” created an unrealistic discourse.

Explaining how a given media text could conjure up a particular feeling, positive or negative towards a given representation of conflict scenario, Liere (2015) wrote:

... Imam Samudra was looking at pictures of headless infants from Afghanistan on the internet. It was 2001. The US was bombing the Taliban. Reports about civilian casualties (‘body counts’) were published on the internet...Imam Samudra came across these war-pictures and was shocked by what he saw there and made a decision: he would avenge the children (p.16).

He further wrote “Imam Samudra became one of the architects of the Bali-bomb that killed 202 people in October, 2002” (Liere, 2015, p.16). Samudra’s story raises the question of the impact of pictures of violence that are shown on the internet, in newspapers, magazines, used by fund-raising campaigns of NGOs etc. For Samudra however, the shocking pictures of violence did not encourage peace but instigated more violence. This of course shows, according to Fowler (1979) that there is generally a response from the media that reflect divergent ways of perceiving things especially when social norms are infringed upon or the legitimacy of the institutions of control is challenged. Hence each part of a media text is representing an event in a particular way or point of view, selling up identities in a particular way and setting up relations (eg. between politicians and the rest of us) in a particular way (Fairclough, 1995a).

2.1.12. Challenges to Peace Building in Conflict Reporting: Inconsistencies in Media Coverage of Crises

Among the major problems created by the mass media in conflict reporting is the issue of feeding the media audiences with inconsistent information on a given conflict situation. Studies by media scholars have unveiled the high level of inconsistencies inherent in media reports of events as they occur. Pate (2011), for instance observed in his study, that Nigerian newspapers gave conflicting report of Jos crisis. Furthermore, Okoli (2011) in a study of mass media coverage of the Niger Delta crisis revealed that Channels Television gave a better report of the Niger Delta crisis than NTA. Okoli confirmed that unlike NTA, Channels Television was always reporting the crisis in their daily reports. Affirming Okoli’s revelation, Aka (2011) found that the media, particularly the broadcast media gave different dimension of coverage to the Niger Delta crisis. Aka’s finding is in consonance with the finding of Obor (2011). Obor, in his study of media coverage of the Niger Delta crisis revealed that the Rythm FM reported the crisis more than Treasure FM, Port-Harcourt (2011).

Hassan's (2012) study equally shows that the mass media have so far reported the Boko Haram crisis differently. He affirmed that there are discrepancies in newspapers, magazines, and broadcast media reportage of the Boko Haram crisis. Aliyu (2011) agreed with the finding of Hassan that the Boko Haram insurgency has received different forms of media reports within the period under study. Aliyu's finding was in line with the finding of Okoro and Okechukwu (2012). They unveiled in their study that the Nigerian broadcast media have so far reported the Boko Haram insurgency differently. Alabi's (2010) study corroborated the above assertion that government owned media has not been as objective as the privately owned media in their coverage of crisis in Nigeria. Funmi (2011) agreed with Alabi's finding that private owned broadcast media have been more objective than government owned in their reportage of conflicts in Nigeria. Similar study by Opiah (2011) revealed that Raypower FM was more objective than FRCN in their reportage of the Niger Delta crisis. Kemebo (2011) also found that AIT was more objective than NTA in their reportage of the Niger Delta crisis. He further affirmed that AIT was always careful in reporting the Niger Delta crisis. Ciroma (2010) upheld the findings of Opiah and Kemebo that the privately owned media were more objective than government media in their coverage of the Niger Delta crisis.

The studies reviewed above show the high level of inconsistencies in media coverage of conflicts in Nigeria. These findings further question the accuracy, objectivity, and factuality of what the various media report. For instance, in the case of the abducted Chibok School girls in Borno State, Nigeria in 2014, the manifest register of the students will always be there to give accurate data/record of the number of girls enrolled in the school at the time of the abduction. If the record shows 200, it is expected that the media report it as such, but the common practice is to get media reports like "about 190 school girls" or "more than 200 school girls" and so on across the different media outfits. These conflicting reports end up getting the audiences confused in the long run thereby causing a barrier to any meaningful contributions to solving the problem

reported. This gap in understanding according to Lynch and McGoldrick (2010) also explains persistent mis-interpretations of the real dividing lines in this debate. There is no dispute over a journalist's duty to "truthfulness" as Loyn misleadingly suggests. Reporters should report, as accurately and fully as they can, the facts they encounter. where peace journalism goes further is to call on them to consider how these particular facts, as distinct from a practically infinite numbers of others 'out there', come to meet them', and how they, the reporters, come to meet these particular facts. If it is always the same facts, or the same kinds of facts, what consequences follow, for the nature of representation produced? How does that representation affect the understanding developed by readers and audiences, and their responses and how do these responses, or assumptions about them, feed into the actions and motivations of parties to conflict? These are the real questions in the peace journalism debate (Lynch and McGoldrick, 2010). Other media reports over sensationalize the conflicts, amplifying the gory details for attention. This not only result in inconsistency but also fan the ember of reprisal attacks and terrorism. Ekunno (2011) in view of this nature of reporting argued that by adhering strictly to the principles of terrorism is a sure way of glorifying, arming, and fueling terrorism activities or crisis. He contends that in such scenario, there should be a paradigm shift in pattern of media reportage.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

Theories to explain warfare and social conflict are vast, complex and contentious, drawing from multiple disciplines including but not limited to anthropology, economics, history, human geography, mass communication, sociology and so forth (Berberlogu, 2005). In an attempt to flesh out the most viable and relevant justification for the investigation of media coverage of key conflict situations in South-East and South-South Nigeria, discussions of the theoretical framework centred around the media framing theory, social responsibility theory and conflict

theory. These theories are adjudged to be most suitable and relevant in the study of media and peace journalism.

2.3.1. Framing Theory

The framing theory, as observed by Coleman (1999), was first introduced by sociologist Erving Goffman in the 1970s to “systematically explain that humans use their ingrained expectations to make sense of their lives.” He cited Severin & Tankard (1992) as stating that events are framed or given a field of meanings within which they can be understood. Tuchman (1978) supported the above when he also attributed the concept of framing to the work of Erving Goffman on frame analysis with specific reference to his 1974 book, *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*. Goffman used the idea of frames to label "schemata of interpretation" that allow individuals or groups "to locate, perceive, identify, and label" events and occurrences, thus rendering meaning, organizing experiences, and guiding actions (Myles, 2009, p.13).

In the area of media research, media framing can be approached from both sociological and psychological roots. Sociological framing focuses on "the words, images, phrases, and presentation styles" that communicators use when relaying information to recipients while psychologically driven media framing research generally examines the effects of media frames on those who receive them (Drunkman, 2001; Iyengar, 1991). In the field of communication, framing defines how news media coverage shapes mass opinion. To be specific, framing refers to behavioral or attitudinal outcomes that are due to how a given piece of information is being framed in public discourse (Kaswe, 2010, p.32). Framing theory is of the assumption that the way media frame words impacts on public understanding of the issue and consequently determines their responses. Fairhurst and Star (1996, p.2), assert that “a frame refers to the way media and media gatekeepers organize and present the events and issues they cover, and the way audiences interpret what they are provided. Frames influence the perception of news by the

audience.” Scheufele (2004) asserts that “many of the images and opinions held by the audience members have in fact been created by prior media coverage. Entman (1993 in McQuail, 2007, p.378) summarised the main aspects of framing by saying that “framing defines problems, diagnoses causes, makes moral judgments and suggests remedies.” Entman further asserts that a very large number of textual devices can be used to perform the above mentioned framing activities. These devices include using certain words or phrases, making certain contextual references, choosing certain pictures or films, giving examples as typical, referring to certain sources and so on.

Several studies have been conducted by scholars to illustrate how media framing of public discourses shapes, defines, and determines to a large extent the dimensions and public perceptions of such discourses. Entman (1993), for instance, illustrated this, when he analysed US reporting of two similar air tragedies in which military action caused the deaths of large numbers of civilians. One was the Korean aircraft (KAL 007) shot down in 1983 by a Soviet plane; the other was an Iranian civil flight (Iran Air 655) shot down in 1988 by a US naval vessel Persian Gulf. The events were reported quite differently, in ways that reflected both ethnocentrism and the international tensions of the times. The manner of reporting, in words, tone and problematizing, constituted different frames, which largely influenced the perception of the public on the events. Also, research into the 1991 Gulf War showed that framing of news encouraged the audiences to endorse military rather than diplomatic solutions (Iyengar and Simeon, 1997, in McQuail, 2009 p.513). Similarly, the way and manner AIT and NTA frame their reports on the Boko Haram crisis can impact on the audience understanding of the crisis. The media’s choice of words, pictures, slants, story angles etc in reporting the crisis can influence audience understanding and perception of the crisis.

This is so because it has been upheld in scholarship that the mass media play a central role in awakening our consciousness to the happenings around us. This is the information function of the media which Gavilán (2011) explained within the principle of ‘mediation’ – media as a mediator between man and society, between the outside world and the audience. The media performs this function through a careful selection, inclusion and/or exclusion of certain events and structuring them in a way that best suites what the media considers is of interest and relevance to the audience. In other words, the media frames stories around a given event to serve a particular interest. This by implication presents the crucial role news frames play in conveying media messages. Through framing, the media constructs images that are manipulated over time to delegate certain issues, people, events, as more prominent than others, and as such requiring more attention or inattention (Gavilán, 2011).

In specific terms, scholars highlighting framing as an indispensable part of news reporting have come up with various discourses explaining the choice of frames in news reporting. By way of definition, Gitlin (1980) explained that:

Media frames are persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse, whether verbal or visual. Frames enable journalists to process large amounts of information, to assign it to cognitive categories, and to package it for efficient relay to their audiences (cited in Wolfsfeld, 1997, p. 33).

Entman (1993, p. 52) further clarified that “to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.” By selecting and highlighting certain facts while excluding other information, the media can create frames that can have a powerful impact on public opinions and audience interpretations of issues and events (Price and Tewskbury 1997). According to Gamson and Modigliani, a frame is a central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events, weaving a connection among them... the frame

suggests what the controversy is, about the essence of the issue (1987). Framing, for Parenti (1993), is “...achieved in the way the news is packaged, the amount of exposure, the placement (front page or back, lead story or last), the tone of presentation (sympathetic or slighting), the accompanying headlines and visual effects, and the labeling and vocabulary” (p. 201).

The choice of these frames is informed by certain factors, prominent among them being the normative news values as well the professional training, political inclination, ownership structure and national ideology of the journalist(s) and the media stations. According to McLeod, Kosicki & McLeod (2002) media frame issues based on journalist’s individual values, ideological constraints, and market forces. News media can frame issues in these five different ways (Price and Tewksbury, 1999):

- a. Conflict;
- b. Personalization;
- c. Values;
- d. Consequences; and
- e. Responsibility.

Again, the polysemic and complex nature of issues/events necessitates framing for interpretation and possible direction in the mental processing of such issues by the audience. Media emphasis on certain aspects of issues makes these aspects more accessible or salient to the audience, and therefore, more likely to be used in the audience’s decision making or their subsequent evaluations of issues (Shen, 2004). Valkenburg, Semetko and de Vreese (1999) categorize four common news frames which the media use in order to affect people’s interest in news articles. These are: Conflict, human interest, responsibility and economic consequences. Framing therefore, becomes a necessary means to an end in terms of bolstering the overall comprehensibility of a given mediated complex phenomenon in the human society.

Evidence of the impact of framing on information delivery and processing by the journalists and audiences respectively was highlighted by scholars (Sieff, 2003, p. 263, Gamson et al., 1992, Entman, 1993; Severin and Tankard, 2001) by way of careful selection, emphasis and interpretation of events, the burden of processing is reduced for the audience and the level of cognition is arguably enhanced. Although there are debates on the effects of media, the media do have the effect of creating public opinion among people who do not have an opinion on issues/events. Woo, (1996, p. 68) documents that previous studies (Graber, 1988; Iyengar, 1991; Entman, 1993) suggest that there are circumstances in which news framing may be particularly influential on audience framing, viz.: when news media are the main source of information; when there is little direct experience or personal history that provides alternative information; and when independent cognitive frames of the audience are absent or weakly developed. Thus, the media although they may not entirely succeed in determining people's stream of thoughts as argued by scholars, may actually succeed in shaping people's world view especially when it remains the only source through which the people access and encounter the world.

However, as crucial as framing is in the interpretation and analysis of issues, and notwithstanding the factors that have made news framing almost inevitable in media reportage, media critics often suggest that media through framing fall guilty of imbalance in reportage and lack of objectivity that often result in inaccurate and misleading portraits of issues, peoples, and events (Stephanous, 2007) largely because the news media create, reinforce, and promote specific ways of seeing the world (Jones, 2012). This issue of creating and reinforcing stereotypes through framing was at the heart of the controversies surrounding the Western media representation of the less developed countries from the early 1970s. The representation was often viewed by the 'Third World' countries to be negative and recurrent because foreign media often play up apparent hegemonic-subservient relationship between the Global North and Global South. Hirchi, (2007) posits that particular region's representation of others is mostly articulated within the framework of a binary oppositional dynamics with the superior media classifying the

lesser as undesired space of barbarism and tyranny. This pattern of classification as also expressed by Hall (1997, p.226), further shapes the mental image and perceptual systems of one segment of the media audience about the 'others' thereby creating the binary opposition of 'otherness'. Through framing, events are constructed, discourses are structured and meanings are developed (Gavilán, 2011; Gamson 1989, 1992, Gamson, Croteau et al. 1992). For instance, Anderson (1988) suggested that "the American media create a distinction between 'we' and 'them' in its coverage of Latin America; 'they' are uncivilized, violent and evil, while 'we' represent culture, order and goodness" (cited in Neiger and Zandberg, 2004, p. 431). Brookes (1995) observed that through framing, the Western media in particular "... contributes to the naturalization of the West's role in Africa as leader, mediator, bringer of peace and democracy and giver of aid as invertible common sense" (p.480).

Framing effect is said to take place when the frame in communication influences the audience's frame in thought. Framing effect therefore refers to the behavioural and attitudinal outcomes that are not due to the communication (message) itself but rather to the language, narrative and interpretation to communication (Druckman, 2011). Based on this theory, this study examined how the Nigeria media frame IPOB and NDA related conflict news; it evaluated the ethical implication and by so doing find out whether the media aid or discourage the conflicts through their coverage. The theoretical interpretation offers a strong hypothesis according to McQuail (2010, p. 511) that an audience will be guided by journalistic frames in what it learns. Framing theory, which explicates how media describe events vis-à-vis how individuals cognitively file events in their everyday and overall lives, is therefore central to this study. The basis of framing theory therefore, is that the media focus attention on certain events and then place them within a field of meaning. This field of meaning can have an effect on the audience's beliefs, attitudes and behaviours by connecting a particular meaning or interpretation on an issue. Therefore, Frames connote interpretive devices that people use when making sense of the world around

them and helps in making the difficult task of processing complex and often cumbersome information about their social world much simpler, by focusing their attention only on certain features that they feel are important.

2.3.2. Social Responsibility Theory

This study will also be anchored on the Social Responsibility theory of the press, the choice of which is informed by the fact that the journalists operating in a free democracy are to function without restrictions but with vested responsibilities. This includes freedom to access any information that is of interest to them. However, the responsibility clause attached therein implies that the media owes a duty to the public – to sensitize and galvanize them to fully embrace any course that is of common good including peaceful co-existence.

Historically, Social Responsibility Theory was propounded by F.S. Siebert, T.B. Peterson and W. Schramm in 1963. The idea however, owes its origin to the Hutchins Commission on Freedom of the Press, set up in the United States of America in 1947 to reexamine the concept of press freedom. The Commission saw the Social Responsibility Theory as being a ‘safeguard against totalitarianism’ and extreme freedom, as guaranteed by the Libertarian Theory. Hutchins’ main goal was to make the owners of the press responsible and still maintain freedom of the press. The basic assumptions of the Social Responsibility Theory as articulated by Siebert, Peterson and Schramm (1956) justify its suitability for the current study. According to Siebert et al. (1956):

...the power and near monopoly position of the media impose on them an obligation to be socially responsible, to see that all sides are fairly presented and that the public has enough information to decide; and that if the media do not take on themselves such responsibility it may be necessary for some other agency of the public to enforce it; freedom of expression under the social responsibility theory is not an absolute right, as under pure libertarian theory. One’s right to free expression must be balanced against the private rights of others and against vital social interests.

The theory therefore, challenges the journalists to strive at all times to keep the public properly informed (amongst other duties) within the ambits of the journalistic code of ethics and legislations.

In comparison with other normative theories of the press, the Social Responsibility theory is relatively a new concept which came to challenge the recklessness of libertarianism and ushered in responsibility. It details the key journalistic standards that the press should seek to maintain. As summed up in McQuail (2000, p.150), among others, the media have an obligation to the wider society and media ownership is a public trust; news media should be truthful, accurate, fair, objective and relevant, and the media should follow agreed codes of ethics and professional conduct. By this treatise, media ownership is a form of stewardship rather than unlimited private franchise. In other words, the media are established to serve the interests of the public rather than personal interests (Omenugha, 2008). Yet the quest for personal aggrandizement seems to have infiltrated the practice of journalism in Nigeria and beyond. Uche (1989, p.147) recalled the public accusation of Nigerian journalists as “politically and financially corrupt as one can find individual Nigerian journalists who will take money or gifts for doing special favours...” Such acts of irresponsibility are not limited to Nigeria only. The media mogul Rupert Murdoch is often accused of running a media empire where journalism of convenience is the order of the day. Sparks (1999) makes it clear that:

Newspapers in Britain are first and foremost businesses. They do not exist to report the news, to act as watchdogs for the public, to check on the doings of the government, to defend the ordinary citizens against abuses of power, to unearth scandals or do any of other fine and noble things that are sometimes claimed of the press. They exist to make money just as any other business does (p.50).

Driven by such commercial interests, journalists throw ethics to the winds in the bid to achieve fame and success. As Hanson (2005, p.140) recounts:

The Washington Post credibility suffered a major blow when the paper discovered in 1981 that a Pulitzer Prize – winning story by reporter Janet Cooke was fabricated. And in the spring of 2003, the young New York Times reporter Jayson Blair created shock waves

throughout the news business when it was revealed that he had fabricated or plagiarized at least 36 stories for the nation's most prestigious newspaper.

These major findings run parallel to the major principles of Social Responsibility theory upon which the peace journalism model is anchored. "Thou shall not fabricate. No exception, no excuse" is a cardinal rule in journalism practices in general. But news commercialization could possibly make journalists commit the cardinal sin of journalism – fabrication – through inaccurate, unfair and biased news reports – a contradiction to what news *ought* to be (Omenugha, 2008).

Nkem Fab-Ukozor listed the following as the standard criteria for judging news:

- Consequence/impact;
- Prominence;
- Proximity;
- Timeliness;
- Action;
- Novelty;
- Conflict;
- Human interest; and
- Currency.

Of all these, consequence is the most important criterion in determining news value. This is because it has to do with news events that affect the lives of the largest number of people. Going by the ethics for ethical journalist, the mode of selection of any news event should be based on considering the benefit or utility of such event to the greater majority first; his profession coming second; his organization and then lastly, himself.

Peace journalism it could be inferred from the foregoing expands on journalism principles to include a more nuanced rigorous reporting that can challenge prevailing prejudices and stereotypes embracing a holistic approach in reporting conflicts in particular and in this way help

promote understanding, reconciliation and healing (Lloyd, 2012). In line with this principle, scholars maintain that peace journalists must as a matter of responsibility bring to bear all experiences and skills garnered in the course of training and practice to package conflict reports. Such reports have to investigate more deeply; question mainstream perceptions; and remain constantly on the alert to ensure that the story is not coloured by their prejudice. These are indicators of sensitivity in conflict reporting. Lloyd (20012, p.9) emphasized the positive nature of peace journalism stating that “conflict sensitive journalism goes to the field; it listens to the affected and the ignored. It assesses their needs, hears their views and examines their ideas for alternative approaches and reports them”. Conflict sensitive reporting is about making choices in terms of ‘what’ to report and ‘how’ to report in conflict (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005a, p.50). These choices create opportunities for society at large to consider and to value non-violent responses to conflict. Lynch and Galtung (2010, p.52) stressed that ‘selection is the issue, the criteria applied and the codes and the context in which event is placed and interpreted’. Looking at these definitions it is easy to understand that conflict reporting is an expansion of routine journalistic reportorial responsibility. Thus, in doing so, an additional framework for more comprehensive reporting of conflict in a context that will provide possibilities for peaceful resolution of conflict is added. It involves media coverage of conflict in a way that will de-escalate the conflict by presenting the dimensions, dynamics as well as the power relations in the conflict. It also involves reporting all sides and giving voice to the muffled minority voices to state their case and in this way promote the common value of peace without compromising the duty to inform (Dunu, 2016). The practical application of the concepts further demonstrates the link as it argues for the journalist to include the following:

- Expanding the Agenda: This means broadening the mainstream scope of who and what is considered news source and newsworthy. The socially responsible peace journalism news conflict frame should include people (especially women, minorities and marginalised groups) who are often ignored in the report, so that the media give space to all voices in

the community especially those who are affected by the conflict, not just the powerful (advocates and elites and government). By including more voices and views the media challenge stereotypes and polarization;

- Accommodating the Conflict Complexities: The complexity of the conflict should be reflected in a clear narrative that is continuous, building from the development of the various aspects of the conflict to its present state. Such reflective narratives have the capacity to deepen the understanding of the multiple layers of the conflict, making the news stories more interesting and realistic. Journalists can go beyond the usual conflict narrative of this side versus the other side and expose the complexities and actors involved;
- Avoid spinning – Spin has become an integral part of the provision of information by most interests in positions of authority during conflict. Instead of just relying on them, the journalist should be aware of the multiple frameworks which may be applicable to a given story in order to set the spin in context rather as the whole truth. To achieve this, the journalist should include more choices in the selection of the sources and voices to be heard and in the widening of perspectives of the story. Instead of merely following the agenda of the powerful, the conflict reporter should be more proactive, by reflecting the causes, sources as well as the impact of conflict;
- Realities and Responsibilities – Responsibility, has to do with obligations to the people we report as journalists. It is operating within the ambits of the law and mindful of journalistic ethics. The most basic responsibility is to protect sources. Be more in-depth and analytical, providing all sides of the story. By doing this, the conflict reporter disaggregates rather than lumping everybody together. In trying to reflect diverse opinions the journalist show what people from different sides have in common and

expose the shifting range of views within monolithic groups; reclaim and reflect core values like accuracy, balance and inclusivity (Tahir, 2009).

The theory is an off-shot of Libertarian Theory and was propounded by F.S. Siebert, T.B. Peterson and W. Schramm in 1963. The Social Responsibility theory takes the stance that the social roles of the press-of enlightening the people, promoting the democratic process, safeguarding the liberties of the individual, etc. should take precedence over its role of servicing the economic system (Oloyede, 2005).

Although this theory falls short in the areas of expressing over confidence on the media and media operators in meeting their responsibilities using the ‘self-righting’ process and overly underestimated the power of profit-orientation and competition in driving the media to selfish ends; the theory is adjudged most suitable for this study given the intents of this study. One of which is ascertaining how the legislations on freedom to access information have perceptibly enhanced journalism practices in Nigeria, in satisfying the public’s information needs. The social responsibility theory recognizes the media’s right to scrutinize and criticize the government and other institutions but not without responsibility to preserve democracy by properly informing the public. The media and media operators are not free to do as they will; they are obligated to respond to society’s needs. The theory therefore, challenges the journalists to strive at all times to keep the public informed (amongst other duties) within the ambits of the journalistic code of ethics and legislations.

2.3.3. Conflict Theory

Fundamentally, the conflict theory holds that human beings by nature are both psychologically and biologically inclined to war. Human beings are social beings that constantly associate and engage with one another in continuous social contracts and interactions. Such social interactions are borne out of interests (personal and/or group) and when conflicting interests meet, crises result. Taylor (2014) explains that this is due to “selfish genes” that motivate groups of people –

usually governments but also a country's general population, or tribe or ethnic group – to increase their power and wealth. The theory was founded by Karl Marx, and later developed by theorists such as Max Weber, etc

Singh (2014) highlights three typologies of conflicts to explain their causes. These are: primordialism, instrumentalism, and constructivism. Primordialism stems from ancient hatreds between ethnic groups based on religious, racial and/or regional differences. While instrumentalism holds that conflict is driven by power and wealth seeking elites actively manipulating ethnic identities (Fearon & Laitin, 2000). Constructivism on the other hand holds that ethnicity is a socially constructed identity and as such, dynamic, amenable and changeable (Yang, 2000). Constructivists operate on the ontological assumption that actors are shaped by the socio-cultural milieu in which they live (Conteh-Morgan, 2005). These typologies largely explain the fact that conflicts are either 'manufactured' (instrumentalist view); an inevitable 'outcome' or 'product' of history and social structures/processes (constructivist view); or an 'inborn' and 'inherited' human trait (primordialist view); if not a product of all these three variables (Singh, 2014, p.15). Given the multi-layered, complex phenomenon that conflict is, it therefore, becomes very difficult if not completely null to attribute or attach a given conflict exclusively to a particular cause while eliminating other potential, underlying variables. Chirot (2001) buttresses this point that it is theoretically difficult to explain why some conflicts "turn genocidal" while others are seen as "moderate and move towards resolution" (Chirot, 2001). Hence, Conflict theory advocates a comprehensive and holistic investigation of a given conflict in order to broaden the perspectives therein for commensurate actions towards its resolution.

Conflict theory therefore, investigates the process by which groups develop their strategies and decide upon the character of conflict. It also takes into account the motivation and perceptions of individual leaders and decision makers. Also, conflict theory deals with the situational context or environmental setting which generates conflict among warring factions. Conflict theory emphasizes the role of coercion and power, a person's or group's ability to exercise influence and

control over others, in producing social order. It states that a society or organization functions so that each individual participant and its groups struggle to maximize their benefits, which inevitably contributes to social change such as changes in politics and revolutions. The theory is mostly applied to explain conflict between social classes, proletarian versus bourgeoisie; and in ideologies such as capitalism versus socialism. There are radical basic assumptions (society is eternally in conflict, which might explain social change), or moderate ones (custom and conflict are always mixed). The moderate version allows for functionalism to as an equally acceptable theory since it would accept that even negative social institutions play a part in society's self-perpetuation.

Conflict theory can be used to explain the media's influence on audiences by looking at who controls the media and how such control influences what the media feed the members of the public. The vast majority of media is owned and controlled by society's elite (or bourgeoisie in conflict theory terminology) (Ragasa (2014). For this reason the media is a tool of those in power to further their agenda which is to keep the poor divided and ineffective. According to conflict theory, the poor (proletariat) will continue to be exploited until they revolt together and overthrow the rich who profit at the poor's expense. Knight (2012) explains that due to the slant power dynamics in favour of the elites in the society, the uninformed audiences are less media literate and are likely more easily influenced by the media. Advertisement and propaganda therefore, become easy ploy to manipulate and economically exploit the gullible audiences by the elite class while at the same time while veiling the hegemonic undercurrent in the media content they consume (Knight, 2012). Based on this point of view conflict theory argues that the mass media simply reflect, and often even exacerbate the many conflicts and class dichotomies within different groups in our society. Therefore, as opposed to functionalists, conflict theorists believe that the mass media serve to reinforce the distance and discord between genders, different races and ethnicities and social classes, rather than promoting social harmony (Singh, 2014). To what extent this assumption is consistent with the Nigerian mass media framing of the

major ethno-economic conflict ravaging the South-East and South-South Nigeria perhaps indirectly pitched against the Nigerian government Military Joint Task Force (MJTF) remain the central focus of the current study.

Despite Singh's (2014) typologies of conflicts, whether taken from the constructivists or primordialists' points of view, scholars have maintained that there are peaceful and creative ways of dealing with them except when such conflicts are deliberately politically instigated by influential elites in the society as argued by the instrumentalists (Chiot & Seligman, 2001; O'Sullivan, 2001). Thus, Mouffe (2000) proposed the idea of "agonistic pluralism"; an idea that underscores the importance of constructing or representing the opponent 'them' in such a way that it is no longer perceived as an enemy to be destroyed, but an 'adversary' whose ideas are opposed, and whose right to hold and defend those ideas are recognised, even respected" (pp.14-15). Mouffe's idea of agonistic pluralism supports the notion of public sphere where even conflicting views are welcomed and constructively debated. This could avoid pent up tensions and aggressions resulting in violent outcomes. Innovative and evolving conflict prevention measures such as those espoused by Mouffe are vital: the deadly trend of intra-State conflicts since the 1990s have only added to the existing perplexities surrounding group conflicts characterised by territorial disputes, competition for natural resources, and ethnic disagreements. Such conflicts count for more deaths, destruction, and displacement than any other type of conflict in the world today (Chiot & Seligman, 2001; O'Sullivan, 2001).

The "Galtung Triangle", comprising direct violence, indirect violence, cultural violence and structural violence, gives further insights into the different forms and manifestations of conflict. Structural violence is invisible. It is characterised by politically repressive or economically exploitative systems embedded within the local, national and international structures. There is no direct perpetrator-victim contact. However, harm results from structures of inequality, such as huge disparities of income or wealth, or highly unequal patterns of land ownership (Galtung, 1969). Similarly, cultural violence is invisible and it divides by content such as religion, law,

ideology, language, art, empirical/formal science, cosmology (deep culture); and by carriers, which include schools, universities, and media (Galtung, 1990). Galtung's models lead us to some preliminary observations about Niger Delta and Biafra. The conflict situations within the two regions have the underlying structural and cultural factors that have resulted in both direct and indirect violence as described by Galtung. Direct violence has been experienced and/or meted against the regions since independence. Verbal violence on the other hand is more prevalent, especially when parliament is sitting, and during the general elections, when debate can degenerate into hate speech, including racial slurs (Kant, 2012) and this is mostly, transmitted through the media.

Structural violence seems to be the major, ever-present form of violence in the various regions of Nigeria and the key cause of conflict among the various ethnic groups. The South-South and South-East geo-political zones have always expressed their dissatisfaction over the apparent marginalisation, neglect and victimisation by the system – the former claim they are the targets of 'legalised' exploitation and environmental degradation through oil exploration by the Nigerian government while the latter assert that they suffer economic and political marginalization (Boege, et al., 2013; Naidu, 2005; 2008; 2013). This Nigerian experience as observed by scholars is similar to what Galtung (1990) observed in Fiji. Galtung (1990) observed that for a country like Fiji, where the two major races – Indo-Fiji and Indigenous Fijians – see each other as oppressors, Galtung's focus on structurally-orientated (indirect) violence instead of actor-orientated (direct) violence is significant. If the Fiji media understand and portray violence as structurally-orientated, it is possible that instead of seeing the 'other' as the oppressor or enemy, people may come to realise that to a certain level, they are perhaps the victims of a flawed system. As Grewal, (2003) puts it, violence exists because of the structure. The actors merely carry out that violence. This point is quite pertinent to Nigeria given that direct or physical violence is rare whereas structural violence has been prevalent. The consequence of unaddressed

structural violence is physical violence, which tells us where conflict-reducing efforts should be directed.

While conflict is generally portrayed as a negative development, it can potentially be beneficial and achieve some positive outcomes and transformations depending on how such conflict situations are framed by the mass media. For instance, the incessant militants' attack on the oil installations in the Niger-Delta region resulted in amnesty programmes that greatly empowered the youths within the South-South region to acquire foreign education. Naidu (2005, p. 370) sums it up well by pointing out that without conflict, constructive structural transformations in societal relationships and culture would not have been possible.

2.3. Review of Empirical Studies

Scholars have undertaken studies to essentially examine how both Nigerian and global conflicts were reported in the media and how such reportage facilitated their resolutions or otherwise. Evidence from such studies suggests that the mass media could be instrumental in conflict escalation or de-escalation depending on the nature of framing and angle of reportage of the various parties in the conflicts. In a Study of American Newspaper handling of conflicts within the United States, Donohue, Olien and Tichenor (1985) found out that the pluralism or diversity of interests within community(ies) in conflict generated more coverage of the conflict within that community. The pluralism in vested interests in the communities in conflict becomes the necessary intrigue in media coverage of such conflicts, thus lending credence to 'drama' as a key news determinant. The focus of the media coverage of the conflicts as reported in Donohue, Olien and Tichenor's (1985) study by implication was on the actions of the conflict but not necessarily on the root causes of the conflicts, thereby emphasizing that which divides the parties in conflict.

Dickson (1992) observed that the coverage of the 1983-1987 US-Nicaraguan conflict by two of America's most influential newspapers – The New York Times and the Washington Post –

focused mainly on the means of achieving stated US foreign policy goals rather than on the appropriateness of the policy itself in helping to resolve the conflicts. Existing divergent viewpoints on the conflict were not reflected in the news reports. This finding reflects the inherent bias in media coverage that makes pursuit of peace in conflict situations a mirage. However, Edeani, (1994) noted that the problem of bias in conflict reporting is more pronounced in the foreign media. He further explained that foreign media coverage, including coverage of conflicts, tends to: be less than adequate in frequency and volume, to emphasize sensational and negative news, and to lack meaningful background and interpretation. Nonetheless, when a mass medium is sufficiently strong economically to assert its independence, the tendency is for it to apply moderation, balance and constructive analyses of events as a contribution to the resolution of conflicts (Edeani, 1994, p.31). However, in their study of how 21 American newspapers covered controversial issues, Lacy, Fico and Simon (1991) reported that “prestige newspapers are more likely to cover both sides of community controversy with better balanced news” (p.363).

Edeani (1994) undertook a study to determine how far newspapers and news magazines made efforts to contribute toward the resolution of the conflicts within the African region. He measured the extent of coverage, how the news stories, editorials and commentaries were presented. The study found that conflict situations were fairly reported in the dailies and the weekly news magazines, conflict stories were emphasized, and professional standards of balance, constructiveness and responsibility were also exhibited. However, the standards were not equally applied as Nigerian conflict story coverage took preeminence over other West African nations. This finding suggests that the element of proximity in news reportage takes precedence over any mass media coverage of events within and outside its geographical location.

In general terms, Edeani’s (1994) study found that certain factors like the prevailing political systems and political culture, the level of economic strength and independence enjoyed by the

press, the ownership structure, and the level of professional education and training of journalists, usually condition the press in the performance of its functions. The study further reveals that the nature of the audience, the importance of the event in relation to the interest of the audience, the time of the recurrence of the event, and the status of the particular medium in relation to other media with which it competes for the attention of the audience are also important determinants in conflict coverage (Edeani, 1994, p.28).

Lee and Maslog's (2005) study was the first study to offer an empirical approach to the topic that has received mostly philosophical and normative discussion and to operationalize Galtung's classification of war and peace journalism. Based on a content analysis of 1,338 stories from 10 English-language newspapers, the study focused on four Asian regional conflicts involving India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and the Philippines. It examined how news on these conflicts were framed as war journalism or peace journalism based on Johan Galtung's classification. Data generated suggest that, overall; the news coverage of these conflicts is dominated by a war journalism frame. The Indian and Pakistani coverage of the Kashmir issue shows the strongest war journalism framing whereas the coverage of the Tamil Tiger movement and the Mindanao conflict by the Sri Lankan and the Philippine newspapers reveals a more promising peace journalism framing. The three most salient indicators of peace journalism are the avoidance of demonizing language, a nonpartisan approach, and a multiparty orientation. The war journalism frame is supported by a focus on the here and now, an elite orientation, and a dichotomy of good and bad.

Bratic, Ross and Kang-Graham (2008) studied the coverage of Bosnian conflict. It examined the role of journalism in time of violent conflict within the peace journalism framework using the Open Broadcast Network (OBN) as a case study. The study found that the news media can play a role in transformation of conflict depending on certain variables. The OBN's case indicate that

the media could deliberately pursue peace journalism by resisting the traps of war journalism – modeling reconciliatory coverage, ethnically integrating the newsroom, and shifting the focus of news away from problems toward solutions. Like Edeani's (1994) findings, inexperience, inadequate journalistic education and training imposed significant conceptual and practical limitations on OBN's practice of peace journalism in Bosnia. However, the study lacked methodological grounding.

Chiluwa's (2011a) study examined how social and political crises are constructed, represented/mediated in the Nigerian print media headlines. The study shows that news headlines are instrument for molding social actions, attitudes and perceptions and are also used as an ideological tool for social criticism. Some of the headlines exaggerated the crises and indeed misinformed the general public about the identities and activities of certain people as well as the state of security in Nigeria. Findings from the study indicate that social crises are often as a result of fear of ethnic domination, discrimination, or religious persecution and when such fear becomes so overwhelming, it then manifests in conflicts, hostility and violence (p.90). In Nigeria, social crises have been as a result of religious intolerance, boundary disputes, resistance to a perceived injustice/exploitation and other political reasons (p.90). Chiluwa (2011a) observed a prevalent pattern of reporting crises in Nigeria which according to him reflects what we called "overstatement of conflicts and misrepresentation of identities" which rather than mitigate the tension already generated, heightened them. Such news headlines as "Kaduna Massacre: Sharia will Split Nigeria". "The faithful slaughter one another in the planned introduction of Sharia law in Kaduna State" (The News Magazine, March, 2000). He explained the implication of the construction of the situation in Kaduna as framed by the News Magazine thus: "Kaduna massacre (the situation), functioning as the theme of the report is to be perceived as an unusually painful and violent mode of killing. This discourse strategy captures how the news reporter perceives the event and the tendency of the report to heighten tension".

Other such overstated headlines include: “Bloodbath in Kano, Taraba? Hundreds of Nigerians perish in Osama Bin Laden riots in Kano City. But “a different circumstance, ethnic clashes between Tiv and Jukun deepen and lead to the death of 16 soldiers in Benue State” (The News Magazine, 2001). Other headlines on the other hand, tend to misrepresent certain persons and the tendency to misinform the world about their identity or activities. At this point, this study shows how the construction of some members of the Niger Delta emancipation movements as “militants” tends to blur their mission and legalizes their killing by the police (p.96). The word “militants” according to him assumes a meaning that generally demeans the Niger delta struggle against lack of socio-economic development and many years of neglect by the Nigerian government, especially with the rise of some criminal groups in the region. So the word “militants” is used to confuse legitimate struggle and sponsored criminal activities. He concludes that “in the interpretation of crises in Nigeria, it is quite clear that the Nigerian press have not altogether taken an ‘unbiased’ posture”.

Chiluwa (2011b) in another study using Critical Discourse Analysis examined the role of the media in manipulating public opinion and people’s perception of the roles of the Joint Military Task Force in the Niger Delta Crises. Chiluwa (2011b) observes that representation in the media presupposes that media texts constitute points of views and value judgments about social events, situations and relationships. Hence, representation comprises versions of social reality that mirror the position and purpose of the people that produce them; this is usually reflected in the choices that are made about what is foregrounded or left in the background, included or excluded, made explicit or left implicit in the text (Fairclough, 1995a, van Dijk, 1991). He observed that Nigerian press is sympathetic of the activities of JMTF in spite of obvious condemnable killings of the insurgents and attacks of the civilians. At a point, the media exclusively focused their attention on the security situations in Delta region, particularly the attacks on oil pipelines and kidnapping of oil workers, neglecting perhaps the more important causes of the crises.

Adisa (2012) in a study using content analysis examined the extent of newspaper coverage of the Jos conflict, the story frames, and the level of compliance with conflict sensitive journalism practice. Using theories of conflict, the study found that locational factor determines the level of attention given to conflicts by newspapers. The newspapers were partially conflict sensitive and reflect plurality about the conflict as substantial sources of their facts were based on journalists' observation and views of one party in the conflict. The study finds that although both newspapers represent/reflect the views of all parties involved in the conflict (26%), significant number of report reflect only the views of one party (13%) while relying on government officials and other news agency as sources of news 24.7% and 18.2% respectively. Adisa's (2012) study therefore recommends that journalists should as a matter of importance seek out other parties and points of views of those involved in the conflicts and suggested journalists using the legal instrument of Freedom of Information (FOI) and embedded journalism for a first hand information. This study however, was deficient methodologically because it adopted only one approach where mixed methods would have been more suitable. Again, conflict sensitive or peace journalism framework was not clearly adopted.

Bilici (2013) used survey to assess media roles in promoting peace through an analysis of public perception of mass media reports of crises in Nigeria. These were assessed through a peace journalism lens. It was found that the pattern of media reports of crises in Nigeria is out of the context of peace journalism, rather propaganda, stereotype and biased reports future prominently thereby escalating crises.

Franks (2013) in a study, finds that while media may not be successful in resolving violent conflicts, the power of the media to set public agenda and shape policies have been largely felt in conflict situations. According to his studies, media reportage of the Biafran war, famine and the attendant starvation galvanized opinion in a dramatic way "... if the Sun and the Sketch hadn't succeeded in reporting the Biafran famine, there would be NO Biafran crisis today so far as the

British public is concerned... they created the crisis or created our awareness of the crisis” (2013, p.48). This brings to the foreground the role media play in stimulating public response in conflict situations. Buttressing Franks’ findings, Kouchner (cited in Franks, 2013) opines that “where there is no camera, there is no humanitarian intervention”. The images culled up through media representations not only creates the feelings of empathy on the audiences, on the neutral ground, but as well, whips up sentiments and urge for vengeance on those that identify with the victims represented as Franks posits (so not only are the pictures critical in the story gaining a wide exposure, they are also crucial in provoking a response to the story) (p.49).

Ozohu-Suleiman (2014), sought to determine how the coming of Aljazeera English and Press TV provided alternative perspective in the global news sphere from the war journalism that describes the attitude of the dominant media to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. The study adopted the peace journalism model to examine how Aljazeera English and Press TV have responded to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict in the recent past compared to BBC World and CNN International. Findings show that similar patterns of war journalism are reproduced in the alternative perspective with counter-demonizing language and disagreements on the identity of terrorists. Peace journalism contents in the alternative perspective, as in the dominant perspective, are engendered more by events of the peace process and peace propaganda than by the much ideated conciliatory media. Ozohu-Suleiman (2014) observes that locating these characteristics in the theoretical premise of peace journalism, it can be deduced from early studies that the Western media were engaged in war –, propaganda and victory-oriented coverage of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Such a war journalism approach to a conflict is often devoid of the transformational nature of the conflict and less attentive to the opportunities that could exist for peace (Buller, 2011).

Singh (2014) examined conflict reporting in Fiji. The study assessed the extent such factors as journalists’ level of professionalism and diversity, national media legislation, and media

ownership structure, impact on journalism in conflict reporting. Triangulation was adopted as research methodology in the study, thus, content analysis of print media's coverage of the Fijian 2006 general elections, survey, document review and in-depth interview were adopted in the study. Findings from the study returned overall peace journalism reading in Fiji's media conflict reporting. Singh's (2014) thesis developed an important peace journalism framework that aided the current study. According to Singh's (2014) study, the selection, elimination, modification and finalization of the peace/war journalism indicators outlined by previous scholars resulted in a more manageable and focused coding category. This was adopted for the current study with 16 indicators specific for application in IPOB and NDA conflicts (details in chapter 3) (see Appendix F)

Auwal (2015) attributed subjectivity, sensationalism and bias in the presentation of news and views as factors undermining the contributions of the media in conflict management and resolution. While there is no doubt that they have great potentials to resolve crises, they equally demonstrate ability to create conflicts (Sobowale, 1983). Media's impact on the escalation of conflict is more widely recognized than on peace building (Auwal, 2015, p.155). These studies have emphasized journalistic values such as accuracy, fairness and objectivity, as a panacea to resolving conflict but have largely overlooked some other constraints that inhibit journalists from upholding peace journalism principles in conflict reporting.

Nwankpa and Onyekosor (2015) using content analysis assessed the level of prominence, portrayal of militancy, format of presentation and language of reports and studied MEND and under the framework of interpretative reporting. Akinro's (2016), study on the other hand examined conflict reporting strategies against the backdrop of the Peace and war journalism model proposed by a Norwegian scholar, Johan Galtung. The approach adopted was content analysis of two Nigerian National Dailies, Vanguard and Punch, and two US dailies, New York Times and Washington Post, from February 1st 2014 to May 29th 2015. The study found that the

Boko Haram crisis was discussed as a global issue and related to the war on terrorism. However, the newspapers did not provide sufficient contextual and background information about the crisis. The media did not play active roles in conflict management, as advocated and were involved in partisan reporting of incidents in the crisis.

Choi and Piazza's (2016) study found that countries with large Internally Displaced Populations (IDPs) are more likely to experience a higher rate of suicide terrorism. After demonstrating this, the study tests four intervening factors hypothesized to drive the relationship between IDPs and suicide attacks: IDPs are expected (1) to increase the pool of potential suicide recruits, thereby lowering the labor costs for suicide terrorist groups; (2) to increase local ethnic conflicts that foster a favorable environment for suicide terrorism; (3) to worsen the human rights conditions in countries, prompting aggrieved people to support suicide terrorist tactics; and (4) to raise the counterterrorism and policing costs of the state, enabling terrorists to plan and execute suicide attacks. Results from negative binomial regression and Tobit models show evidence for the IDPs-suicide terrorism connection. When recursive models are employed to evaluate the effects of four intervening variables, the results most consistently support human rights violations as a significant and substantive mediator between IDPs and suicide attacks.

Akanni (2017) investigated newspaper coverage of the oil-induced conflicts in Niger-Delta in 1995, 1999, and 2002 in the lens of conflict sensitive journalism. The study was anchored on the framing theory and content analysis (quantitative and qualitative) was used. Three newspapers (*Vanguard*, *ThisDay* and *Observer*) were used based on ownership structure. Findings show that the newspapers followed similar pattern of focusing attention on official statements through official sources (53.3%) and less on investigation and public opinion (3% and 3.3% respectively). The study was deficient as it failed to address issues on news story focus/subject matter as well as other conflict-sensitive journalism indicators as it set out to do (stated in research question 3). Again, the qualitative content analysis was completely excluded in the analysis.

Okoro, Ajaero, and Nwachukwu (2017), explored and compared the application of the concepts of war and peace journalism in selected Nigerian newspapers' headlines. Daily trust, The Nation, This Day and the Sun were studied. Conflict theory was used as the basis. Different dates were studied for the different newspapers but there were no basis for comparison clearly stated. The said theory was not actually used. Finding revealed that the headlines predominantly focused on war journalism (82%) however, the parameter of analysis were not clearly stated and independently examined.

Institute for Security and Development Policy (2018), carried out an in-depth analysis of the conflicts in northern Shan State as a sub-region within Myanmar. The study examined the local conflict dynamics at play in northern Shan State, the historical roots of the conflicts, patterns of change that have occurred over time, and the impacts of the conflicts on society, to provide a more nuanced understanding of the complexities of the conflict(s). The data for the study draws on a focus of field research and archival sources. The primary information was generated from over 30 interviews conducted with diverse groups of actors in northern Shan State, Tagon and Chiang Mai from August 2016 through November, 2017. The historical analysis adopted in the study, analyzed how armed conflicts in northern Shan State have evolved from 1949 to 2017. Findings from the study revealed a significant continuities with previous phases, which includes not only the enduring salience of ethnic armed resistance against the central government, but also the antecedents to patterns of alliance formation and competition, splits and mergers as well as the presence of Tatmadaw-allied militias, witnessed to the present day. The study concluded that several factors such as concentration of armed groups as well as competing interests in resource revenue makes northern Shan prone to violent conflicts.

Prager, and Hameleers' (2018) study explored the role perceptions of Colombian journalists and their compatibility with the principles of Peace Journalism. The study aimed at providing an in-depth insight into journalists' role conceptions. The study anchored on the Grounded Theory,

conducted 16 semi-structured interviews with Colombian journalists, of which four took place via Skype and 12 in person in Bogotá and Medellín. The researchers adopted a purposive and snowball sampling techniques in contacting the interviewees with adequate consideration of professional diversities to include journalists from TV, Radio, Newspapers and Digital projects of different generations and experiences with conflict by the journalists sampled. The data collated were recorded and fully transcribed and organized with the programme NVivo. The data were coded following the approach of thematic analysis. The results indicate that journalists hold a very active stance and want to influence and engage the public with their work, closely identifying with the role of the public mobilizer. It was concluded in the study that the concept of Peace Journalism is indeed compatible with the role perception of Colombian journalists. The main features of the concept of Peace Journalism have been embraced by the interviewees. This includes a stronger focus on contextualizing, proposing solutions, giving voice to the voiceless and turning away from the practice of only offering a voice to the elites. The study further highlighted the obstacles that constrain the Colombian journalists to include: highly concentrated ownership structures, continuing security concerns and the spread of misinformation. It recommended that Peace Journalism needs further development of its potential for the Colombian market.

Ahmed, Cho and Jaidka (2018), examined how geopolitical proximity influences framing of social conflicts in news coverage and social media discussions within the context of 2013 Little India riot in Singapore. Two major objectives were set for the study, viz.: to determine (a) how geopolitical proximity to an event influences the way the issue is discussed and (b) whether and how the issue is differently framed across traditional and social media. The researchers adopted a quantitative content analysis approach in conducting the study, thus, a manual content and automated linguistic analyses were conducted on 227 newspaper news articles and 4,495 tweets, respectively, across the 10 countries selected. Key findings from the study suggested that

newsmakers in traditional media and users in social media applied different frames in their discussion of the Little India riot while geopolitical proximity played varying roles across mediums. While traditional media followed the traditional hypothesis of geopolitical proximity in international news coverage, Twitter seems less constrained by geopolitical boundaries of news making allowing citizens to bypass press censorship in an alternate information system. According to the researchers, the findings by implication raised important questions about the authority of traditional media in influencing audience behavior and attitudes in the contemporary dynamic media and communication environment. The researchers therefore, recommended that since the way social media present and discuss the Little India riot is not consistent with the traditional media's coverage, future scholars should take alternative avenues of political discussions into account while analyzing media effects. The limitations of the study were highlighted to include: focus only on newspapers and not other media channels like television which could yield a different result; inclusion of non-English language tweets and articles could have added further value to the claims; China, a close strategic partner of Singapore, was excluded due to the unavailability of Twitter data; and perhaps, discussion of a riot has a greater potential to go viral as compared to mundane political issues.

2.4. Summary of Literature Review

The literature reviewed centered on the concepts of conflict and media approaches to conflict transformation and resolution which could be peace or war oriented. The issue of conflict-sensitivity in language use, information sources, in-depth analysis and extensive coverage as the core prerequisites to conflict transformation in the practice of peace journalism globally were reviewed. The theoretical underpinnings to the current study were also reviewed. The literature review revealed a common trend – an apparent media attraction to elite sources, lack of contextualization, journalists' partisanship and the use of media by certain powerful elements to mobilize groups and flare up war hysteria. An examination of related studies in this area seems

to suggest the relatedness in relevance and significance between previous studies and this work. A strong thread running through the various literature on peace journalism in conflict reporting is indicative of the fact that peace journalism is an extension of the conflict resolution precepts through the mass media which is still regarded in many quarters as an evolving phenomenon. However, the war-oriented journalism still dominated the pattern of newspaper reporting and framing of conflicts across the globe. What the above discourses in conflict sensitive/peace journalism seem to underscore therefore, is that peace journalism is a type of peace and conflict management approach grounded in a conceptual or theoretical framework of conflict analysis and transformation through a deliberate strategic communication that is people-oriented and solution-focused. The need therefore exists to ascertain whether the principles that foreground the practice of conflict reporting as explicated in various studies from other countries are replicated in the current approach to conflict reporting in Nigerian conflicts. Consequently, the current study probed to ascertain to what extent the Nigerian journalists are orientated towards conflict-sensitive/peace journalism approach or war/violence approach to conflict reporting of the IPOB and NDA conflicts in South-East and South-South Nigeria.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter undertook a detailed holistic description of the research methods adopted in this study. Thus, this chapter is divided into subheads as follows: Research Design, Area of Study, Population of Study, Sample and Sampling Procedure, Sample Size, Instrument for Data Collection, Measureable Variables, Pre-test and Validation of research instruments and Method of Data Analyses and Presentation.

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a mixed approach for a more elaborate data collection. Consequently, the study adopted a Quantitative Content Analysis and Survey research approaches in order to attain the set objectives.

Given the set objectives of the study, Content analysis was considered apt because it not only deals with manifest media contents, but also gives room for a scientific systematic analysis of the manifest contents. According to Ajala (1999), content analysis is a “systematic, objective and quantitative procedure devised to examine the manifest contents of recorded information” (p.26). Neuendorf (2002) gave similar explanation that content analysis is a “systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics” (p. 1). Also Okigbo (2015, p.11), observed that “content analysis is a unique communication research method suitable for the qualitative and quantitative study of a wide range of manifest communication media and products such as news or feature stories, ads, editorials, lyrics, websites, twitter feeds, etc.” Although these scholars have suggested that a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to content analysis

will yield more robust data, the present study was delimited to the use of only quantitative content analysis.

The use of content analysis was designed to help the researcher determine how the selected Nigerian national dailies with ownership spread across the major regions in Nigeria covered the IPOB and NDA conflicts. The scientific nature of content analysis and the ready data that it offers media scholars informs its popularity in the world of quantitative media research, hence, the choice for the current study.

On the other hand, the survey method was considered appropriate for the study because of the benefits which survey can offer the social researcher. Chief among these benefits, as explained by Harman et al (1989), is:

The ability to gather equivalent information from a large number of individuals quickly and economically, by asking the same questions to each and recording the answers in standardized form; it is possible to capture group dynamics amongst the various categories of respondents... (p. 35-36).

The current study sought to determine the extent of journalists' knowledge and application of the peace journalism model in their coverage of the conflicts under study. Beyond their knowledge and application of the principles under consideration, the study attempted to ascertain their perceptions as well as the factors that constrain or boost their adoption and application of the peace journalism principles in their day-to-day coverage of conflicts in South-South and South-East Nigeria. Hence, the choice of survey research method to complement the findings of the media contents analyzed using the Content Analysis research approach.

3.2. Area of Study

The study area comprised two geo-political zones of Nigeria – South-East and South-South. There are 11 states in South-East and South-South Nigeria, viz.: Abia, Akwa-Ibom, Anambra, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Ebonyi, Edo, Enugu, Imo, and Rivers. These zones were selected because the nexus of the current research work is on two major conflicts affecting the South-East

and South-South Nigeria – the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and the Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) conflicts respectively.

3.3. Study Population

Population according to Silverstone (1980, p.76) ‘is the totality of any group of persons or objects, which is defined by some unique characteristics.’ The population was presented in two folds. For the content analysis, the population comprised news stories contained in Nigerian national daily newspapers. While all the registered journalists under the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) in South-East and South-South Nigeria formed the study population for the survey research.

3.4. Sampling Frame

The sampling frame consisted of all the Nigerian National Daily Newspapers as presented in the table below:

Table 2:
Sample of Nigerian National Daily Newspapers

1.	Business Day
2.	Nigerian Compass
3.	The Daily Champion
4.	The Punch
5.	The Guardian
6.	The Blueprint
7.	Daily Times
8.	Daily Independent
9.	Daily Trust
10.	The Nation
11.	Leadership
12.	The National Mirror
13.	Nigerian Tribune
14.	The Daily Sun
15.	ThisDay
16.	The Vanguard

Source: <http://www.w3newspapers.com/nigeria/>

3.5. Sample and Sampling Procedure

Multi-stage sampling technique was used in getting the samples for both the content analysis and survey. To delineate the study population for the content analysis, four Nigerian national daily newspapers were purposively selected. In order to have a fair and balanced representation, locational factor was considered in the sampling, and thereafter tagged, independent variable and used to measure dependent variables which include news items (news story, feature story, news analysis), and the extent of conflict sensitive journalism displayed in the four newspapers. The

newspaper selected therefore, represent the regions of the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria – Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa – as well as the oil-rich region of the country (South-South) going by their publishers. Thus, *The Sun*, *The Punch*, *The Daily Trust* and *The Guardian* Newspapers were selected as shown in table two below. This decision was made based on the argument that media location/environment of media operations influences the amount and nature of attention they give to issues as they occur within the area (Okigbo, 2015; Adisa, 2012; Edeani, 1994). These newspapers were also selected on the basis that they have wider circulation or national outlook and are more frequent in publication (Dragomir & Thompson, 2012; mediaReach OMD Nigeria, 2005; Osewa, 2005). They all also have online versions for online readership and this is important because due to the pervasiveness of internet, Nigerian audiences are now conscious of reading online version of newspapers (Dragomir & Thompson, 2012). January, 2014 to December, 2016 editions of the newspapers were analysed as the periods represented the initial, advanced, and escalated stages of the IPOB and NDA conflicts.

Table 3:

Sample of Selected Nigerian National Daily Newspapers

	Newspaper	Ownership/Location
1.	The Punch	West
2.	The Guardian	South-South
3.	Daily Trust	North
5.	The Daily Sun	South-East

Similarly, purposive sampling technique was used to delimit the survey population. As stated earlier, all the registered journalists under the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) in South-East and South-South Nigeria formed the study population. However, some states appear to be the hub of the conflicts under study, hence, Delta and Anambra States’ Journalists were studied to

represent South-South and South-East zones respectively. Record from the 2016 NUJ register showed that the population of journalists from the two states is five hundred and eighty two (582) as shown in table 4 below:

Table 4:

Sample Distribution of Selected Journalists in South-East and South-South Nigeria

S/N	State	Geo-Political Zone	No Of Registered Journalists
1	Anambra	South-East	297
2	Delta	South-South	285
	Total		582

Since the conflicts under study erupted within a certain period, 2014- date, all news stories carried by the selected newspapers were content-analyzed from 2014 to 2016. Therefore, random sampling technique was used in selecting the newspaper issues in the continuous and constructed weeks (2014-2016) (this was elaborated in the subsequent sections); while census technique was used for the survey given the manageable size of the population under study. This decision is supported by Poindexter and McCombs, (2000, p.192) assertion that “a census is more appropriate for studies that cover a shorter period of time with a manageable population...”

3.6. Quantitative Design – Survey

To generate quantitative data on the journalists’ perceptions, adoption and application of the principles of peace journalism in their coverage of the IPOB and NDA conflicts, survey research methodology was employed. The sample for this research design was the registered journalists under the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) in two selected states: Anambra and Delta States. These states were purposively selected to represent South-East and South-South Geo-political zones of Nigeria respectively because they are the hub of the conflicts under study. The impact of the conflicts is mostly felt in those two states. On the other hand, a journalist is defined in this

study as a person who gathers and/or produces news, information and opinion for public consumption, and one who makes decisions directly affecting news content (Donsbach & Klett, 1993; Weaver & Wilhoit, 2012). Thus, the survey questions were administered to all reportorial and/or editorial staff involved in producing news, opinions and features in the selected newspapers. Due to the manageable size of the population of journalists in the states, census technique was adopted for the distribution of the research instrument. Thus, 297 journalists were studied in Anambra State while 285 journalists were studied in Delta State giving a total of 582 to be surveyed.

3.6.1. Data Collection Instrument

The instrument used for the data collection for the survey was structured closed-ended questionnaire. Survey questionnaire is an effective way of gathering “information about the characteristics, actions, or opinions of a large group of people” (Pinsonneault & Kraemer, 1993, p. 77). Isaac and Michael (1997) note that survey questionnaire is used to: “answer questions that have been raised, solve problems that have been posed or observed, assess needs and set goals to determine whether or not specific objectives have been met, establish baselines against which future comparisons can be made, analyse trends across time, and generally, describe what exists, in what amount, and in what context” (p. 136). The items in the questionnaire addressed the variables related to the research questions developed for this study.

The questionnaire was divided into four sections. The researcher gleaned from the works of Malhotra (2006), Weaver and Willnat (2012) and Singh (2014) in the formulation of the survey questions. Malhotra particularly, advises that questions should be organised around topic areas and asked in a logical order. Further questions were derived from the literature review to address key contemporary media conflict issues at the local, regional and international levels. At the local level, there is little research on how Nigerian journalists’ socio-cultural biases, religious beliefs and other demographic factors might be affecting their work, even though this is

acknowledged as a topic of interest in other multi-ethnic societies. The same can be said about research to gauge Nigerian journalists' insights into current debates on media, conflicts and society, both local and global. This includes their understanding of, and openness toward, contemporary concepts in journalism, including conflict reporting (Singh, 2014). These were the issues addressed in the questionnaire.

The first section therefore, sought the respondents' demographic data, which include: age, gender, educational qualification, media affiliation and years of work experience. The second section sought to establish the respondents' level of knowledge and application of peace journalism principles in their journalism practice regarding conflict reporting. The third section consisted of questions that addressed the issues of respondents' perceptions of peace journalism model in conflict reporting. The fourth section was made up of questions that attempted to find out the pressures faced and/or factors that constrain or boost the journalists' application of peace journalism principles in conflict reporting.

3.6.2. Measurable Variables

The questions in the questionnaire design were grouped into different sections based on the peace journalism framework as stated earlier. The main independent variables are the typical basic socio-demographic variables such as age, gender, educational qualification, and course of study. The major dependent variables that were used to elicit data include:

- Knowledge of Peace Journalism Principles;
- Adoption and Application of the Principle;
- Journalists' Perception of Peace Journalism.

Knowledge of Peace Journalism Principles ... was measured by respondents' expressed view on the indicators of peace/war journalism.

Adoption and Application of the Principle... was measured by the respondents' scope and depth of coverage of conflicts in their reportage.

Journalists' Perception of Peace Journalism.... was measured by the respondents' disposition to the assumptions of peace journalism in conflict reporting.

3.6.3. Pre-Test and Validation of Research Instrument

Twenty respondents were used in the pre-test and validation of the research instrument. The pre-test was conducted for the following reasons:

- ❖ To determine if the items in the instrument are best suited to address the measurable variables;
- ❖ To test the validity of the field instrument;
- ❖ To use the data generated to adjust possible ambiguities that might be observed in the course of administering the questionnaire during this pre-test phase. All ambiguities noticed during the pre-test were eliminated prior to the data collection phase.

3.7. Quantitative Design – Content Analysis

The choice of content analysis was predicated on the belief that quantitative content analysis is the most appropriate method for establishing the general pattern and nature of media contents (Newspaper in this instance). This approach enabled the researcher to establish, among others, how the newspapers framed their coverage of a given conflict situation. Content analysis therefore, enabled the researcher to highlight the frequency of newspaper coverage of IPOB and NDA related conflicts and by so doing, establish the level of prominence attached to such critical conflicts that portend much to the overall economic and political viability and existence of Nigeria. Beyond the prominence attached to the conflicts stated above, it enabled the researcher to determine how the conflict stories were framed particularly within the framework of peace journalism. As stated earlier, four national dailies' news reports on IPOB and NDA related

conflicts were analysed in this study. In order to get the sample for this study, one (1) continuous week and one (1) constructed week from January 2014 to December, 2016 for each of the newspapers were used. The researcher therefore, content analysed 168 editions in all. That is:

⊙ 7(editions) X 2 (weeks) X 3 (years) = 42 editions.

⊙ 42(editions) X 4 (newspapers) = 168 editions.

These editions in the weeks constituted the sample size and were selected using simple random sampling technique. This sample size is approximately estimated at 15.38 percent of the entire population, which is adequate to make a representative judgment for the entire population. This is supported by Wimmer and Dominick's (2011) postulations that a sample size between 10 percent and 25 percent is recommended as acceptable when determining sample size in content analysis.

3.7.1 Coding Instrument

The coding instrument used was the coding sheet specifically designed for this study. Numerical codes were assigned to each content category (as discussed in section 3.7.4) to represent the individual variables. These were carefully coded in the coding sheet.

3.7.2. Study Time Frame

The time frame for the study was January, 2014 to December 2016. This period covered in the study represented the most recent experience to existing studies that focused on the war aspect of media coverage of conflicts – IPOB and NDA conflicts in this instance. The period also represented the initial stage (representing the build up to the emergence of IPOB and NDA) (December 2014-May 2015); the advanced/developed stage of the conflicts (May 2015- October, 2015) and the escalation stage of the conflicts (November 2015- December 2016).

3.7.3. Unit of Analysis

The Unit of Analysis according to Poindexter and McCombs, (2000, p.192) “is the communication component that is actually coded for analysis”. In view of the above definition therefore, news stories (only) in the selected Nigerian national dailies between 2014 and 2016 constituted the instrument for eliciting data in this study. Newspapers generally contain items such as news, advertorials/advertisements, cartoons, editorials, articles, photos, etc. However, it is important to note here that the researcher was not interested in analyzing the individual items that appeared on the newspapers under study, but in analyzing the news stories. The content analysis covered one constructed week and one continuous week within the periods under study as explained earlier. This is translated into three (3) constructed weeks and three (3) continuous weeks for each newspaper for the three years. It therefore means that for the four (4) newspapers, the researcher worked with twenty four (24) weeks. The newspaper stories were sourced in the newspapers’ publishing firms/offices and the Nnamdi Azikiwe and Federal University Ndufu-Alike-Ikwo Universities’ libraries newspaper archives.

3.7.4. Content Category

This research sought to establish among others:

- i. The amount of attention given to the coverage (stories on IPOB and NDA conflicts, the length of the stories);
- ii. The nature of frame in the news coverage (i.e. the main subject matter, issues highlighted and representation of the parties in conflict); and
- iii. The newspapers’ disposition (i.e. war-oriented, peace-oriented, balanced mostly or hard to say).

Therefore, for this particular IPOB and NDA investigation, the researcher devised a specific coding scheme based on the works of Galtung (1998, 2006); Lee and Maslog (2005); Frohardt and Temin (2003); and Youngblood (2009, 2011). Success recorded by scholars in other climes

(Singh, 2014; Ozohu-Suleiman, 2014; and Ersoy, 2010) informed the choice of this coding scheme to study the peace journalism model within a Nigerian conflict context. Basically, the study juxtaposed war and peace journalism based on Galtung's classification (see Kempf, 2003) to compare the extent and approaches to framing in media coverage of the conflicts.

Specifically, the researcher in the current study teased out the following content categories from the previous studies mentioned above for the purpose of the Nigerian conflict under study:

Category 1: Newspaper ID

i.	<i>The Sun</i> -	1
ii.	<i>The Punch</i> -	2
iii.	<i>The Daily Trust</i> -	3
iv.	<i>The Guardian</i> -	4

Category 2: Frequency of Conflict News Stories

i.	<i>The Sun</i> -	1
ii.	<i>The Punch</i> -	2
iii.	<i>The Daily Trust</i> -	3
iv.	<i>The Guardian</i> -	4

Category 3: News Story Focus

i.	Education	1
ii.	Entertainment/sports	2
iii.	Politics	3
iv.	Religion	4
v.	Business/Economy	5
vi.	Health	6
vii.	Conflict	7

Category 4: Conflict News Story Focus

i.	IPOB conflict	1
ii.	NDA Conflict	2
iii.	IPOB and NDA conflicts	3
iv.	Other Conflicts	4
v.	None conflict story(ies)	0

Category 5: Placement

i.	Front page main story	1
ii.	Back page main story	2
iii.	Inside pages stories	3

Category 6: Length of Story

i.	Short (Less than 200 words)	1
ii.	Medium (between 201-499)	2
iii.	Long (More than 500 words)	3

Category 7: Photo Usage

i.	Yes	1
ii.	No	0

Category 8: Quoted Source(s) in Stories

i.	President/Vice President	1
ii.	Speaker	2
iii.	Minister(s)	3
iv.	Governor(s)	4
v.	Other Government Officials	5
vi.	Expatriate(s)	6
vii.	NGOs	7

viii.	Unofficial (woman/man on the street)	8
ix.	Military Officer	9
x.	Others	10
xi.	No Source	0

Category 9: No of Source(s) Quoted

i.	One	1
ii.	Two	2
iii.	Three	3
iv.	More than 3	4
v.	No Source(s)	0

Categories 10: Indicators of War Journalism

S/N	Indicators of War Journalism	Yes (1)	No (2)	Can't Say (3)
i.	Reactive			
ii.	Visible effects of war			
iii.	Elite-oriented			
iv.	Zero-sum-oriented			
v.	Two party-oriented			
vi.	Differences-oriented			
vii.	Partisan stories			

Category 11: Use of Languages

i.	Victimizing	1
ii.	Demonizing	2
iii.	Emotive	3
iv.	Empowering	4
v.	Neutral	0

Details of all of these variables are clearly explained in the coding sheet and coding instruction (Appendices B & C).

3.7.5. Inter-coder Reliability

Coding reliability addresses the issue of consistency. In view of this, three coders were recruited and trained for the proper coding in line with the defined categories above to ensure decision agreement. This is because according to Poindexter and McCombs, (2000, p.199), “when coders fail to agree in their coding decisions, the reliability of the content analysis study is diminished”. The inter-coder reliability was calculated using a Coefficient of Reliability formula as proposed by Holsti, (1969), cited in Poindexter and McCombs, (2000) thus:

$$C.R = \frac{2M}{N1+N2}$$

Where;

C.R. = Coefficient of Reliability

M= Number of Coding Decisions Agreed On

N= Total Number of Coding Decisions Made by Each Coder.

Since a rule of thumb for an acceptable coefficient of reliability is 80 percent or above; the researcher trained the coders and clarified areas of disagreement until the required acceptable percent was attained. In other words, each coder coded the same 296 news stories and reached the decisions shown below:

$$C.R = \frac{3(296)}{2+4+5}$$

$$C.R = \frac{888}{11}$$

$$C.R = 80.72$$

3.8. Data Collection Phase

The data collection was conducted in two phases. The data collection in the first phase took place in the months of July and August 2017. Three trained coders were used for this purpose. The second phase involved administering the questionnaire to the journalists in the two states in the Month of September, 2017.

3.9. Method of Data Analysis and Presentation

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for analyzing the coded quantitative data. This was in order to obtain frequencies, and simple percentages for easy data interpretations. The outcome of the quantitative data was presented in tables and charts.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSES

This chapter addressed the presentation and analysis of data generated in the field, using various statistical approaches. As stated earlier in Chapter one, this study sought to establish how the Nigerian journalists mediate peace – adopt and apply the principle of peace journalism – in reporting conflicts (IPOB and NDA conflicts in this instance). Since mixed research methodology was employed in the data collection, the data presentations and analyses were in two parts, starting with the presentation of data generated from survey then the other generated from content analysis.

4.1.Quantitative Data Analysis: Survey

The analysis of the survey instrument was carried out as follows:

- Response Rate
- Data presentation on the demographic variables of respondents;
- Data presentation on the Journalists' Coverage of Conflicts;
- Presentation of the Respondents' Awareness of Peace Journalism Principles;
- Data presentation on the Extent of Application of Peace Sensitive Reporting Principles; and
- Journalists' Level of Sensitivity in Conflict Reporting.

4.1.1. Response Rate

A total of 582 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the respondents with Anambra State having a total of 297 copies and Delta State 285 copies. Out of the 297 copies of the questionnaire distributed to respondents in Anambra State, 245 copies were returned. In Delta State, out of the 285 distributed copies, 211 copies were returned. Therefore a total of 456 copies of the questionnaire were returned representing 78.4 percent return rate which is illustrated in the table below. This return rate according to Fincham, (2008); Altman and Bland (2007); Nwuneli, (1991) and Babbie, (1990) is considered a high return rate to base the analyses because according to them, higher response rate yields more accurate survey results and missing data are not random.

Table 5:

Questionnaire Distribution and Return Rate

States	Copies administered	Copies returned	Percentage returned
Anambra	297	245	82.5%
Delta	285	211	74%
TOTAL	582	456	78.4%

However, it is important to note that among the returned copies of the questionnaire, some questions were not answered by the respondents. This could account for variations in the frequencies presented in the figures and tables that follow.

4.1.2. DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

As state earlier, this study is inspired by Johann Galtung's model for peace and war journalism. The Nigerian journalists were therefore, sampled to explore their level of adoption and application of peace journalism principles in their day-to-day coverage of conflicts particularly, the IPOB and NDA conflicts in South-East and South-South Nigeria respectively. Consequently,

the findings from the questionnaire are exclusively journalists' responses. In other words, no journalist who is duly registered with the umbrella body of journalists (Nigerian Union of Journalists) within the study area – Anambra State, South-East and Delta State, South-South Nigeria – was unsampled. The respondents' demographic variables were measured using items 1-5 of the questionnaire (*see Appendix A*). These variables which include: sex, age distribution, academic qualification(s), media affiliation and years of experience, are presented below respectively:

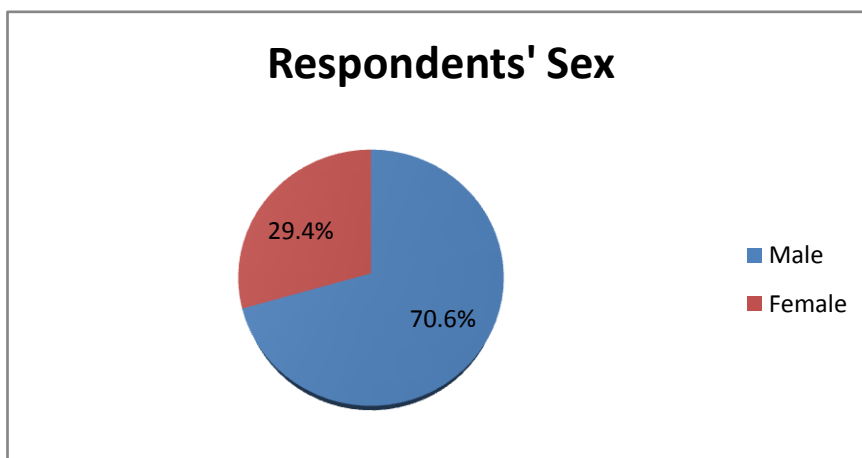


Figure 1: Respondents' Sex

The data above show the gender distribution of the respondents. From the figure, while almost three-quarter of the respondents are males (70.6%), only slightly over one quarter (29.4%) are females. The data show the disparity between male and female journalists sampled. This finding further reinforces the findings in extant literature (eg. GMMP, 2015; IMP, 2016) pointing to the uneven distribution of gender in the news media establishments in Nigeria.

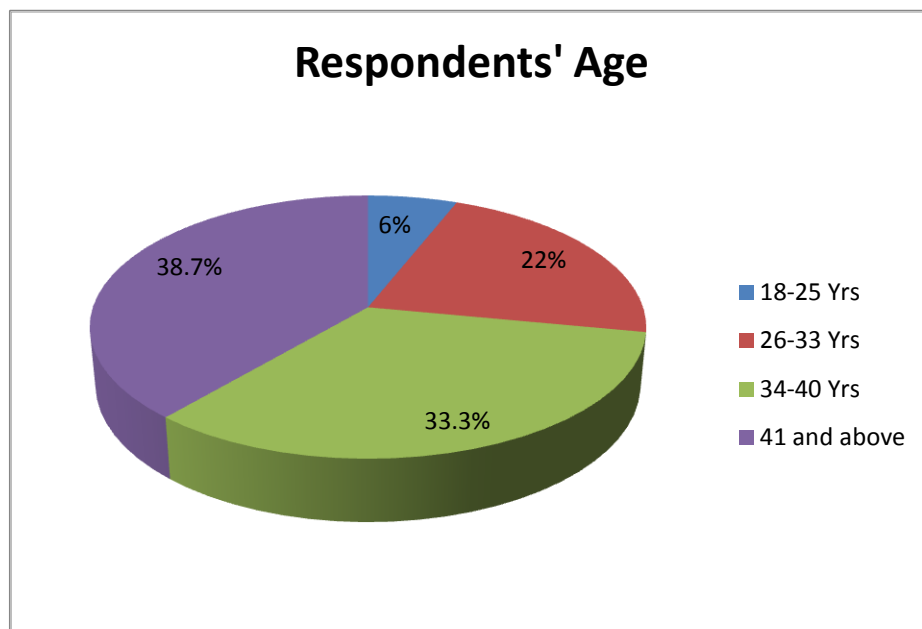


Figure 2: Respondents' Age Distribution

The data above show the age distribution of journalists sampled in the study. The findings indicate that 38.7% of the respondents are above 40 years; 33.3% are between 34-40 years; those within the age bracket of 26-33 constitute 22% of the population while 6% fall within the age bracket of 18-25. This points to a near even distribution of the different age brackets in the journalism profession and practice but with the older journalists greater in number. It also shows that majority of practicing journalists are within the age range of 34 to above 41 years. This finding is instructive considering the assumed important place age and/or years of experience occupies in reporting conflicts. The older journalists are likely to have witnessed or outlived the evolutionary stages of the various agitations that culminated to the conflicts under focus; hence, are likely to be more knowledgeable about the nuances and the dynamics of the IPOB and NDA conflicts under study.

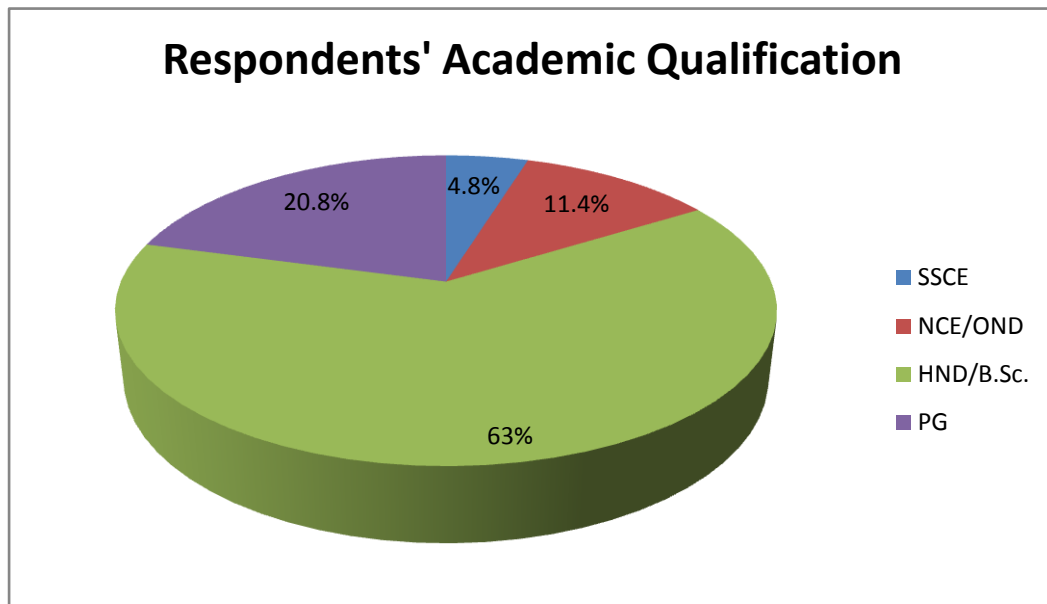


Figure 3: Respondents' Academic Qualification

The data above represents the respondents' academic qualification(s). The data indicate that majority of the respondents (63%) have either obtained a HND, B.Sc. or BA. Less than one quarter, 20.8% have obtained a post graduate degree. Only 11.4% obtained either NCE or OND while an insignificant few, 4.8% have SSCE. The implication of this finding is that the respondents are mostly graduates and most likely to be more knowledgeable about new trends in the field of journalism as they emerge.

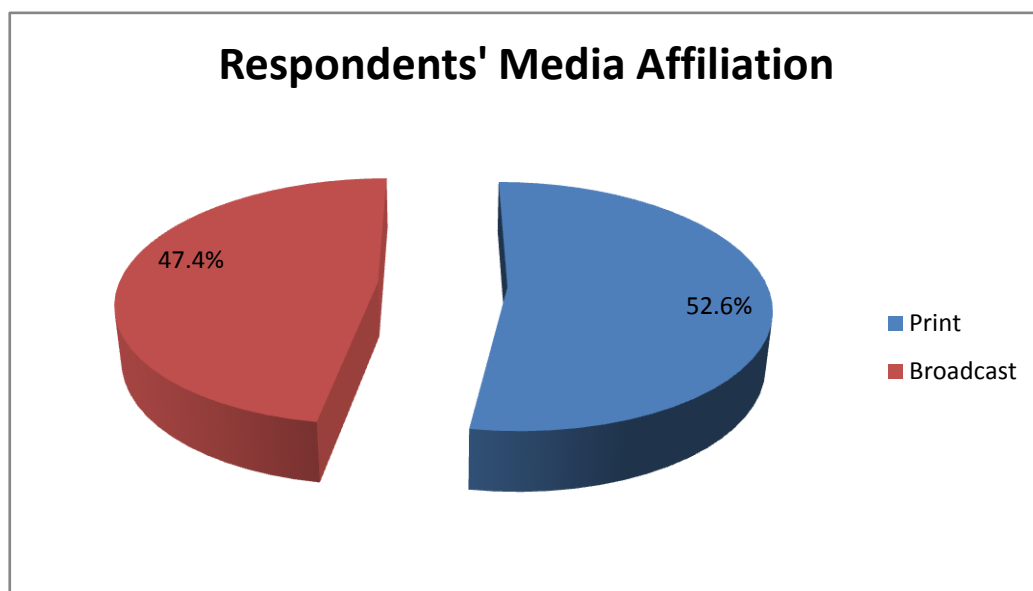


Figure 4: Respondents' Media Affiliation

Figure 4 presents data on the journalists' media affiliation. The data show that majority of the respondents (52.6%) are practicing journalists in the print media while 47.4% work with the broadcast media.

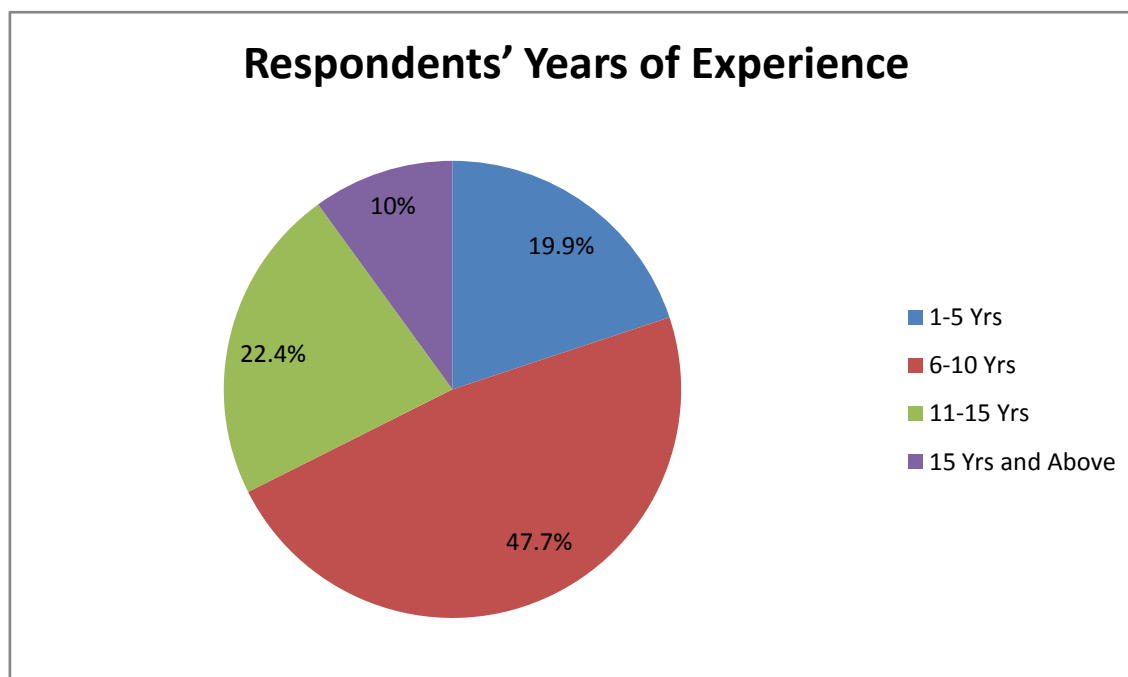


Figure 5: Respondents' Years of Experience

The figure above presents data on the respondents' years of experience in the journalism profession. Almost half of the sampled population, 47.7% have had between 6-10 years work experience, this is closely followed by almost one quarter of the population (22.4%) that have between 11-15 years work experience; 19.9% have between 1-5 years work experience, while 10% have 15 years and above work experience. This finding suggests that more than three-quarter of the respondents (80.1%) have practiced journalism for more than six years thereby pointing to the possible journalists' robust experiences in covering the IPOB and NDA conflicts – that erupted in 2015 and 2016 respectively – having witnessed the emergence of the two conflicts in focus.

4.1.3. Journalists' Coverage of Conflicts

In this section, the study presented data that explored the nature and extent journalists in South-East and South-South Nigeria cover conflict-related events. The intention is to establish the

degree of specific conflict issues covered, the location, stage of conflict covered and the duration of coverage.

Table 6:

Respondents' Coverage of Conflicts

	Frequency	Percent
No	90	19.7
Yes	366	80.3
Total	456	100.0

Table 6 presents data on respondents' coverage of conflicts. The table shows that more than three-quarter of the journalists sampled have covered conflicts and conflict-related issues. This is represented by the 80.3% that affirmed this position while less than one-quarter (19.7%) has not covered conflicts and conflict-related incidences.

Table 7:

Primary Beat of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Sports	44	9.8
Politics	50	11.2
Economy	19	4.3
Fashion/Entertainment	13	2.9
Conflicts	10	2.2
Crime	12	2.7
Education	19	4.3
General Beat Reporter	280	62.6
Total	447	100.0

Table 7 sought to unravel the core beats that are routinely covered by journalists in South-East and South-South Nigeria. Findings show that although there are specific special beat reporters,

almost two-third of the respondents (62.6%) are general beat reporters. This is followed by reporters that cover the political beats (11.2%), 9.8% cover sports beat, 4.3% focus on the economy and education respectively, 2.9% specialize in fashion/entertainment, 2.7% cover crime-related issues, while a very minute number (2.2%) cover conflict beats. This finding clearly shows that of all the news beats, conflict-specific beat has the least attention. It also indicates that although many journalists cover conflicts as shown in table 7 above, they are not specifically assigned to conflict beats as their primary beats. This finding suggests the low specialization among practicing journalists in South-East and South-South Nigeria. It could also not be unconnected with the risks or hazards, and difficulties associated with covering conflict and conflict-related events as well as the high level of special skill and training that is required for one to be proficient on the beat that makes it almost a dreaded area to cover by journalists (Pate, Oso and Jibril, 2017), hence, it has the least number of journalists on it.

Table 8:

Specific Area of Conflict Coverage

	Frequency	Percent
Niger Delta Avengers	87	22.1
Indigenous People of Biafra	83	21.1
Other Conflicts	223	56.7
Total	393	100.0

Table 8 presents data on the specific conflict area(s) covered by the journalists. The findings indicate that majority of the journalists (56.7%) cover other conflict areas other than the two major conflict areas that formed the focus of this study. 22.1% cover the conflict related to Niger Delta Avengers while 21.1% cover the Indigenous People of Biafra conflicts. This finding could be understandable because NDA and IPOB conflicts are just one among the many conflicts that have beset Nigeria in recent times.

Table 9:
Respondents' Stage of Conflict Coverage

	Frequency	Percent
Pre-stage	50	12.7
Early Stage	103	26.2
Advanced Stage	55	14.0
Resolution Stage	38	9.7
All of the Above	147	37.4
Total	393	100.0

The table above shows the stage(s) of conflict respondents cover. The data presented indicate that more than one-third (37.4%) of the respondents are actively involved in covering all the stages of the conflict, i.e. pre-conflict stage, conflict early stage, advanced stage and the resolution stage. However, more than one-quarter only get involved at the early stage of the conflict; 14% cover the advanced stage of the conflict, 12.7% cover the pre-conflict stage while only few, 9.7% cover the resolution stage. From the table above, it is clear that majority of the journalists (62.6%) are only involved at some point in the different stages of conflict coverage but not all the stages.

Table 10:
Respondents' Duration of Conflict Coverage

	Frequency	Percent
Long	129	35.2
Very Long	88	24
Short	129	35.2
Very Short	20	5.6
Total	366	100.0

Data presented in the table above show the duration of conflict coverage by journalists. Findings from the data indicate a degree of evenness between long and short periods of conflict coverage.

Specifically, the response for long period is (35.2%) while that of short period also records a tie at 35.2%. This evenness might be an indication of the nature of these conflicts as they occur. They are ever dynamic and in state of flux. Some may occur and last for a short period of time while others may linger for a long period. Though the data indicate that majority (59.2) cover conflicts for a lengthy period which could be a reflection of the coverage of all the stages as shown in table 9. The remaining percentage that is near to half of the journalists however, attests to a minimal coverage.

4.1.4. Journalists' Application of Peace Journalism Principles

This section examined some of the crucial variables in the study. It evaluated the extent of journalists' awareness and application of the key principles of peace journalism in reporting conflicts. This was evaluated based on the parameters of the key principles that undergird the applications of peace journalism as espoused by scholars like Galtung and Ruge, McGoldrick, Lynch and Lloyd. This section therefore, sought to establish journalists' level of awareness and knowledge of peace journalism principles. The extent these journalists apply these principles were also measured.

Table 11:

Respondents' Awareness of Peace Journalism Principles

	Frequency	Percent
No	28	6.1
Yes	399	87.5
Not Sure	29	6.4
Total	456	100.0

The table 11 above measured the journalists' awareness of the peace journalism principles. Greater majority 87.5% affirmed awareness of peace journalism principles. Only a few number, 6.1% were not aware of the principle while 6.4% were not sure about it. This finding is an

indication of the seeming wide penetration of the principle of peace journalism among journalists in South-East and South-South Nigeria.

Table 12:

Source of Respondents' Awareness of Peace Journalism

	Frequency	Percent
Government Agencies	93	20.8
NGOs	90	20.1
Foreign Agencies	58	13.0
All of the Above	174	38.9
Can't Say	32	7.2
Total	447	100.0

Table 12 show data on journalists' awareness of peace journalism principles. Slightly over one – third of the respondents gain their awareness of peace journalism principles from Government Agencies, Foreign Agencies and Non-governmental Organizations. 20.8% gain awareness from Government Agencies only, 20.1% from Non-Governmental Organizations only, 13% gain theirs from Foreign Agencies while 7.2% can't state their source of awareness of the peace journalism principles. This is indicative of a combined effort for capacity building by different agencies in collaboration with government in an attempt to indoctrinate journalists with new trends and practices of reporting in the profession.

Table 13:

Distribution of Respondents' Extent of Application of Peace Sensitive Reporting Principles

	Respondents' Extent of Application of Peace Sensitive Reporting Principles (%)	Respondents' Assessment of Professional Colleagues' Extent of Application of Peace Journalism Principles in Conflict Reporting (%)
Very Large Extent	15.6%	19.6%
Large Extent	62.3%	31.9%
Small Extent	14.5%	19.1%
Very Small Extent	7.7%	29.5%
Total	100 (n=456)	100 (n=455)

Table 13 above sought to examine the extent of respondents' application of the peace journalism principles as well as how the journalists rate their professional colleagues' application of the principles. Findings generally revealed a significant level of application as about three-quarter (62.3%) of the respondents admit to applying the principles to a large extent, 15.6% apply it to a very large extent, while on the reverse, 14.5% and 7.7% apply it to small extent and very small extent respectively. Further assessment of the extent of Nigerian journalists' application of the peace journalism principles in conflict reporting through the lens of the populations sampled revealed almost evenly distributed responses along the line of application and verse versa. Thus, While 51.5% affirm application to a large extent, 48.6% reveal application to a small extent. These findings corroborate the data in tables 11 and 12 which show that the respondents are aware of peace journalism principles and by extension, apply them in their day-to-day conflict reporting.

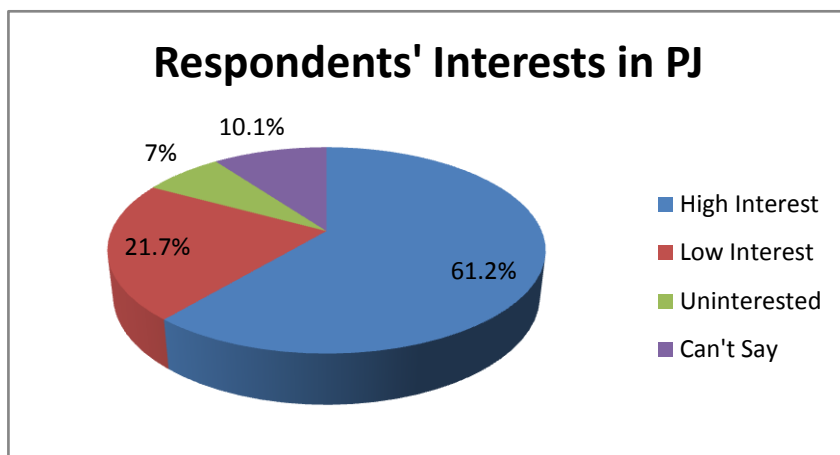


Figure 6: Respondents' Level of Interest in the Application of Peace Sensitive Reporting Principle.

Figure 6 presents data on respondents' level of interest in the application of peace sensitive reporting principles. Findings from the table shows that majority of the respondents 61.2% have high interest in the application of peace journalism principles. 21.7% have low interest while 7% are altogether uninterested in the application of peace journalism principles. 10.1% couldn't say if they are interested or not. However, the finding is consistent with findings in tables 11 and 13. The respondents are not just aware of the peace journalism principles but apply them with very high interest.

Table 14:
Specific Indicators of Peace Journalism Principles
In my reports, I usually ...

S/N	PJ Indicators	SD %	D %	U %	A %	SA %	Total %
i.	Anticipate and report on the conflict before it aggravates or grows more acute.	21.7	9.9	.2	37.7	30.5	100 (n=456)
ii.	Report on the aftermath of the conflict/war, such as the implementation of a peace treaty, the observance of the ceasefire or reconstruction processes.	10	20.1	5	43.4	21.5	100 (n=456)

S/N	PJ Indicators	SD %	D %	U %	A %	SA %	Total %
iii.	Report the damage done to society and culture caused by the conflict.	26.3	9.4	5	35.3	23.9	100 (n=456)
iv.	Report the psychological damage done to the victims.	20.2	11.6	12.3	35.7	20.2	100 (n=456)
v.	Discuss the actions and reactions of local people and civilians.	19.1	4.4	6.8	39.0	30.7	100 (n=456)
vi.	Discuss areas of agreement and similarities between the conflict parties.	14.3	10.3	2.9	40.1	32.5	100 (n=456)
vii.	Discuss the roots and causes of the conflict.	12.7	7	12.5	26.8	41	100 (n=456)
viii.	Discuss possible outcomes and potential consequences of the conflict.	7	15.4	3.3	37.9	36.4	100 (n=456)
ix.	Give voice to as many conflict parties as possible.	15.8	10.1	9.4	30.5	34.2	100 (n=456)
x.	Report what has been/could be done by people; highlight how people are coping and suggest solution	7	9.2	7	38.2	38.6	100 (n=456)

The table 14 above presents data on the specific indicators of peace and war journalism as espoused by Galtung, (1991) and Singh, (2014). The variables specifically measured the application of these principles by the journalists sampled. In other words, it measures how the journalists reflect the peace journalism principles in their day-to-day coverage of conflicts. A breakdown of the findings indicates that the respondents' opinions were almost even in their assessment of the level of proactiveness or otherwise of the journalist in reporting conflicts; however, with some degrees of ambivalence. For instance, while 31.6 percent disagreed that

journalists anticipate and report on the conflicts before it aggravates or grows more acute, majority 38.2 percent expressed contrary view. On whether journalists report on the aftermath of the conflict/war, such as the implementation of a peace treaty, the observance of the ceasefire or reconstruction processes, about three-quarters of the respondents (64.9%) affirmed this, while 30.1 percent disagreed, 5 percent were undecided. Another indicator measured whether the journalists report the damage done to society and culture by the conflict; majority 59.2 percent affirmed this, while slightly more than one-third (35.7%) of the respondents maintain that the reports focused on rather the physical effects of the war like counting the civilian casualties/number of deaths. 55.9 percent agreed that journalists report the psychological damage done to the victims, while 31.8 percent on the contrary were of the view that the reports focus more on the material damage of the conflict like the number of buildings damaged. Again, 69.7 percent agreed that journalists in their reports discuss the actions and reactions of local people and civilians, while 23.5 percent disagreed to this, but were of the opinion that they discuss more on the actions and reactions of leaders (political, military, etc.).

Furthermore, majority, 72.6 percent agreed that journalists in their reports discuss areas of agreement and similarities between the conflict parties, rather than discuss differences (e.g ideological, military) between the conflict parties, a view which was expressed by almost one-quarter (24.6%) of the respondents. Majority, 67.8 percent also agreed that journalists report in a format that presents the news stories in such a way as to expose the roots and causes of the conflict, rather than treat the superficial aspects (immediate causes) that end up presenting one party as winning and the other as losing as upheld by 19.7 percent of the respondents while 7 percent were undecided. Almost three-quarter (74.3%) of the respondents agreed that they discuss possible outcomes and potential consequences of the conflict, while 22.4 percent disagreed and affirmed that journalists in their conflict reports, draw a clear distinction between good and evil, that is, representing one party as the victims and the others as the villains. 64.7 percent agreed that they give voice to as many conflict parties as possible, while 25.9 percent

agreed to the contrary that they give voice to only the elites, opinion leaders, military officers, government officials, etc. Majority, 76.8 percent also affirmed that journalists report what has been/could be done by people; highlight how people are coping and suggest solution. On the contrary, 16.2 percent agreed that journalists rather report wrongs committed; emphasize helplessness of some people by portraying them as powerless and weak.

The findings in this table largely uphold the peace journalism indicators as the dominant principle being practiced by journalists covering conflicts in South-East and South-South Nigeria. This also supports the findings of Ersoy, (2014) and Singh, (2014).

Table 15:

Distribution of Respondents' Extent of Facts Verification in Conflict Reporting

	Respondents' Extent of Facts Verification in Conflict Reporting	Extent Respondents' Facts are Distinctively Different from those in public domain
Very Large Extent	44.5%	16.7%
Large Extent	36.8%	34%
Small Extent	.2%	36%
Very Small Extent	18.4%	13.3%
Total	100 (456)	100 (=456)

As a follow up to the indicators of peace and war journalism in conflict reporting, data presented in table 15 examined the extent respondents verify their facts of the conflict before reporting and the extent such facts are distinctively different from those already in public domain. Findings indicate that more than three-quarter (81.3%) constituting the majority verify their facts before reporting on the conflict. Further breakdown of the responses show that almost half (44.5%) of

the respondents affirmed that they verify their facts before reporting to a very large extent, this is followed by those who admit that they verify to a large extent while on the contrary, 18.6 percent verify to a small extent. This finding goes on to show that journalists sampled still uphold the conventional ethics and principles of journalism – principle of being truthful, accurate, and factual in reportage. \

The data presented in table 15 above took a step further to ascertain not only the extent journalists verify their facts in conflict reporting but to what extent such facts are distinctively different from those already available to the public. Responses were evenly expressed along the sides of large extent and small extent (50.7% and 49.3% respectively). However, a breakdown of the responses shows that the verified facts are not significantly different from the facts already known to the public. This response is represented by the majority, 36 percent who were of the opinion that the journalists' facts are only distinctively different from those out there to a small extent, 34 percent maintain that it is distinctively different to a large extent, while 16.7 percent and 13.3 percent were of the opinion that it is distinctively different to a very large extent and very small extent respectively. This finding leaves further question on the significant leading roles journalists play in feeding the public with such information about the conflict which is different from already known facts, which will in turn aid their decision making for a peaceful resolution of conflicts.

Table 16:
Respondents' Sources in Conflict Reporting

	Frequency	Percent
Government Officials	46	10.1
Ordinary Members of the Public	244	53.5
Military/Security Personnel	54	11.8
Elites	112	24.6
Total	456	100.0

Table 16 presents data on the journalists' sources of information in conflict-reporting. Findings indicate that the ordinary members of the public constitute the sources of information. This view was expressed by 53.5 percent of the respondents. Almost one-quarter (24.6%) observe that the elites are the sources of information in conflicts, 11.8 percent point to the military/security while the least opinion was on the government as sources of information in conflict. This finding again supports the data in table 14 which shows that journalists' conflict reports are people-oriented rather than elite-oriented; all pointing to the peace journalism indicator.

Table 17:
How Respondents' Framing of the Party(ies) in Conflict Feed into the Actions and Motivations of conflict parties

Framing Implication	Frequency	Percent
Stirs Up Feeling of Revenge	47	10.3
Gives Sense of Victory to a Particular Conflicting Party	76	16.7
Quells Possible Outbreak of Violence	273	59.9
Can't Say	60	13.2
Total	456	100.0

The data in table 17 explored how the journalists' framing of the conflict parties feed into their actions and motivations. Findings from the data indicate that such framing quells possible outbreak of violence. This view was expressed by the majority, 59.9 percent. 16.7 percent on the other hand indicate that the framing gives sense of victory to a particular conflicting party. 10.3 percent were of the view that it stirs up feeling of revenge in the people while 13.2 percent could not say what effects journalists' framing has on the people. The findings in this table largely collaborate the findings in table 14 that measured the specific indicators of peace/war journalism adopted by journalists in South-East and South-South Nigeria, which largely points to the peace journalism indicator as the dominant principle in journalists' reports in the region.

4.1.5. Journalists' Level of Sensitivity in Conflict Reporting

This section explores the level of journalists' sensitivity in reporting conflicts. The main idea is to establish the level of compliance to the principles of peace journalism.

Table 18:

Journalists' Sensitivity in Reporting Conflicts

S/N	Before you report to what extent do you...?	Very Large Extent (%)	Large Extent (%)	Very Small Extent (%)	Small Extent (%)
i.	Listen and observe	72.8	23.9	3.1	0.2
ii.	Look for the untold stories	50.7	39.7	9.2	0.4
iii.	Be on the alert for hidden agendas	42.1	46.3	9.4	2.2
iv.	Be aware of your own prejudices	46.9	36.6	9.4	7.1

	When you report, to what extent do you ensure that you	Very Large Extent (%)	Large Extent (%)	Very Small Extent (%)	Small Extent (%)
i.	Do no harm	59	34.2	2.9	3.9
ii.	Show the bigger picture, without blaming anyone	44.3	46.1	5.5	4.1
iii.	Use language & labelling that is neutral	30.9	40.4	23.7	5
iv.	Challenge stereotypes	28.5	34.6	32.7	4.2
v.	Focus on common needs	26.5	50	21.3	2.2
vi.	Open up creative possibilities for healthy solutions	49.6	26.3	9.9	14.6

Data presented in table 18 above measures journalists' level of sensitivity in conflict reporting. Findings show that majority exhibit high level of sensitivity before they write their reports. A breakdown of the findings indicates that 96.7 percent of the respondents listen and observe to a large extent before they report, while 3.3 percent do this to a small extent. Again, 90.4 percent look for the untold stories before they report to a large extent, while 9.6 percent do same but to a small extent. 88.4 percent are on the alert for hidden agendas before reporting to a large extent while 11.6 percent observe this to a small extent. Equally, 83.5 percent attempt to be aware of their own prejudices before reporting to a large extent, while 16.5 percent are aware of their prejudices to a small extent.

The data in table 18 above further showed the extent journalists ensure sensitivity when reporting conflicts. Findings indicate that 93.2 percent of the respondents state that they ensure that their reports do no harm to the parties reported about. While 6.8 percent make such considerations to a small extent. Similarly, 90.4 percent are broad-based in their report, in other words, they show the bigger picture without blaming anyone to a large extent, while 9.6 percent do same but to a small extent. In the use of language and labeling that is neutral when reporting, majority, 71.3 percent put that into consideration to a large extent, while 24.2 percent do same to a small extent. 63.1 percent challenge stereotypes when they report to a large extent, while 36.9 percent do same to a small extent. Majority, that is, 76.5 percent focus on common needs to a large extent when they report conflicts, and 23.5 percent put that into consideration to a small extent. Slightly above three-quarter of the respondents (75.5%) attempt opening up creative possibilities for healthy solutions to a large extent while 24.5 percent consider this to a small extent. These findings coincide with the findings in tables 14 and 15. The findings point to the slant towards peace/conflict sensitive journalism by journalists reporting the IPOB and NDA related conflicts in South-East and South-South Nigeria respectively.

Table 19:

Distribution of Respondents' Assessment of Suitability of Peace Journalism Principles to Respondents' Style of Reporting and Journalists' Sensitivity in Conflict Reporting

	Suitability of Peace Journalism Principles to Respondents' Style of Reporting	Respondents' Assessment of Journalists' Sensitivity in Conflict Reporting
No	19.3%	46.3%
Yes	53.7%	37.1%
Can't Say	27%	16.7%
Total	100 (n=456)	100 (n=456)

The data in the table 19 above probed to ascertain the consistency and/or suitability of the peace journalism principles to the journalists' conventional style of reporting. Responses generated

indicate that slightly above half of the respondents (53.7%) answered in the affirmative. 19.3% answered to the contrary negating the suitability of peace journalism principles to the conventional style of reporting, while more than one-quarter (27%) of the respondents could not say whether it is suitable or not to their style of reporting. This response corroborates the findings in tables 12 and 16 which indicated awareness and high interest to apply the peace journalism principles in conflict reporting. However, the significant margin of responses pointing to the unsuitability of the principle to the journalists' conventional style of reporting is perhaps not unrelated to the seeming peripheral knowledge of peace journalism principles in Nigeria in particular, as literature document that it is still an emerging phenomenon in Nigerian journalism practice.

Data in the table further examined journalists' appraisal of Nigerian journalists' compliance to conflict-sensitive journalism in their coverage of conflicts. Findings show that majority of the respondents gave negative assessment of journalists maintaining sensitivity in conflict reporting. 46.3 percent held this view. 37.1 percent were in the affirmative, while 16.7 percent could not say whether journalists are conflict-sensitive in their reports. This finding is contrary to findings in tables 11, 13 and 14 which largely agreed to journalists upholding peace journalism principles more than the war journalism principles.

Table 20:

Respondents' Visit the Scene of Conflict and Consider the Effects of Their Framing on People in Conflict Situations

	Whether Respondents have been to the scene of Attack before reporting the Incident	Consideration of the Effects of Framing on People in Conflict Situations
No	25.9	11.4
Yes	74.1	72.8
Can't Say	-	15.8
Total	100 (n=456)	100.0

The data in table above geared towards ascertaining the authenticity of journalists' reports whether they are scene or armchair reporters. Majority of the respondents 74.1 percent answered in the affirmative that they visit the scene of attack before reporting the incident, while 25.9 percent on the contrary do not necessarily visit the scene before filing the reports.

Table 20 above further examined journalists' consideration of effects of their framing on people in conflict situations. Majority of the respondents 72.8 percent affirmed that they put the people into consideration in framing conflict stories while 11.4 percent responded to the contrary. 15.8 percent could not say if such considerations are made or not. The finding is also suggestive of the conflict-sensitivity of the journalists in framing their conflict stories.

Table 21:

Respondents' Frequency of Consideration of the Effects of Conflict Story on People before Reporting

	Percent
Almost Always	59.6
Sometimes	25.7
Once in a While	2.2
Rarely	8.6
Never	3.9
Total	100.0

As a follow up to the questions in table 20 above, data presented here sought to ascertain how often journalists consider the effects of their framing of conflict stories on people before reporting. Majority, 59.6 percent maintain that they make such considerations almost always. 25.7 percent stated that they make such considerations sometimes. 8.6 percent rarely do, while 2.2 percent do once in a while. Meanwhile 3.9 percent never make such considerations. The respondents in this last category perhaps are simply ruled by the demands of the job to deliver news stories within a given deadline without necessarily putting the readers into consideration in the first place.

Table 22:

Respondents' Opinion on the Influence of Ethnicity, Politics and Religion on Newspaper Coverage of IPOB and NDA Conflicts

	Frequency	Percent
True	286	62.7
False	38	8.3
Can't Say	132	28.9
Total	456	100.0

Findings in the table above largely attribute the nature/pattern of journalists' coverage of IPOB and NDA conflicts to the influence of ethnicity, politics and religion. This view is expressed by

the majority, 62.7 percent. Only a few 8.3 percent did not completely agree to this while 28.9 percent were undecided. This finding is consistent with the findings of Adisa (2012) and Edeani (1994) that the element of affiliations in news reportage exerts great influence on journalists' angle of coverage of events. Thus, the nature or pattern of newspapers coverage of issues is closely associated with journalists' affiliations in terms of religion, ethnicity and politics among other factors.

Table 23:

Extent of Editorial Policy Influence on the Respondents' Conflict Reportage

	Frequency	Percent
Very Large Extent	200	43.9
Large Extent	141	30.9
Small Extent	34	7.5
Very Small Extent	68	14.9
Can't Say	13	2.9
Total	456	100.0

Similar to the findings in table 22 above, majority 43.9 percent maintain that editorial policy influence journalists' report on conflict to a very large extent. 30.9 percent stated that it influences to a large extent. On the other hand, 14.9 percent established that it influences to a very large extent while 7.5 percent said the influence is to a small extent. However, 2.9 percent could not say to what extent editorial policy influence journalists' reportage of conflicts.

4.2. Content Analysis of the Selected Newspapers

This section presents data on content analysis. As explained in chapter three above, four national dailies were purposively selected based on locational factors to elicit data for the study's set objectives which among others is to determine how the selected newspapers report the IPOB and NDA conflicts within the lens of Peace Journalism framework. The analyses of journalists' news frame in the context of this study was guided by Lynch's (2007, p.12) position that inasmuch as (old approach to conflict reporting advocates that) reporters should report, "as accurately and fully as they can, the facts they encounter"; they must "consider how these particular facts, as distinct from a practically infinite number of others 'out there', come to meet them; and how they, the reporters, come to meet these particular facts. If it is always the same facts, or the same kinds of facts, what consequences follow, for the nature of representation produced? These are the appendages peace journalism brings to conflict reporting spectrum and form the real questions in the peace journalism debate the current study is contributing to (Lynch, 2007).

The newspapers analysed include: The Daily Sun, The Punch, The Daily Trust and the Guardian newspapers. The unit of the study was exclusively news stories reported in the selected newspapers from 2014 to 2016. Therefore, all other contents of the newspaper which do not fall within this category were not included in the analysis. A breakdown of the findings is presented in tables and charts below:

4.2.1. Study Time Frame

The time frame for the study was January, 2014 to December 2016. Within this period all the stages of conflict: the initial stage (representing the build up to the emergence of IPOB and NDA--December 2014-May 2015); the advanced/developed stage of the conflicts (May 2015-October, 2015) and the escalation stage (November 2015- December 2016) were represented.

Table 24:

Frequency of News Stories Covered by Sampled Newspaper (2014-2015)

Newspapers	<i>Daily Trust</i>	<i>Daily Sun</i>	<i>Guardian</i>	<i>Punch</i>	Total
Education/Technology	18	31	23	26	98(7.3%)
Fashion/Entertainment	5	6	10	7	28(2.1%)
Politics	75	98	90	104	367(27.1%)
Sports	10	16	11	14	51(3.8%)
Religion	25	12	16	10	63(4.7%)
Business/Economy	50	71	88	81	290(21.5)
Health	9	16	20	12	57(4.2%)
Conflict	88	79	48	31	246(18.2%)
Crime	23	48	38	42	151(11.1%)
Total	(22.4%) 303	(27.9%) 377	(25.5%) 344	(24.2%) 327	(100%) 1351

Table 24 presents data on the frequency of news stories covered by the selected newspapers. Findings show that a total of 1351 news story were reported in the sampled newspapers. Breakdown of the findings indicate that majority of the news stories focused on politics (27.1%). This is closely followed by Business/Economy related news stories (21.5%). Next is conflict related stories given at 18.2 percent. Crime related stories had a share of 11.1 percent. Education/Science and Technology accounted for 7.3 percent of the total news reports. Religion and Health accounted for 4.7 percent and 4.2 percent of the total news stories respectively, while sports and fashion/entertainment had the least percentage of 3.8 percent and 2.1 percent respectively. The data presented therefore, indicate that politics and business/economy received the highest attention across the sampled newspapers.

Table 25:

Frequency of Conflict News Stories Covered by Sampled Newspapers (2014-2015)

Newspaper ID	Frequency of Conflict News Stories
<i>The Daily Sun</i>	79 (32.1%)
<i>The Punch</i>	31(12.6)
<i>The Daily Trust</i>	88(35.8)
<i>The Guardian</i>	48(19.5)
Total	(n=246)100

Table 25 above presents data on the conflict-related news stories covered by the sampled newspapers. As shown in table 24 above, conflict-related news stories accounted for a near insignificant margin (18.2 percent) of the total news reports carried by the newspapers studied. The data presented in table 25 is therefore, a breakdown of how the conflict-related news stories reflected in the individual newspapers. Findings indicate that *The Daily Trust* Newspaper has the highest number of conflict related stories given at 35.8 percent. This is closely followed by *The Daily Sun* Newspaper given at 32.1 percent. 19.5 percent of the news stories emanated from *The Guardian* newspaper while *The Punch* has the least number of conflict stories given at 12.6 percent. This finding largely illustrates the prevalent situations in the areas where these newspapers are domiciled. Though *The Daily Trust* newspaper's (which is located in the northern part of Nigeria, outside the ambit of the study area) high coverage of conflict stories could be understood within the context of violent conflicts within that region since 2009 occasioned by the activities of the Boko Haram sect and herdsmen/farmers' clashes. *The Daily Sun* which has the second largest number of conflict stories is located in South-East Nigeria which has also witnessed some unrest due to the IPOB and MASSOB agitations likewise the South-South Nigeria where *The Guardian* represents. The South-West has recorded fewer

uprising compared to the other zones which could have accounted for the least volume of conflict stories published in *The Punch* Newspaper that is based in that region.

Table 26:

Cross-Tabulation of Newspaper ID and News Story Focus

Newspaper ID * News Story Topic Cross-tabulation					
		News Story Topic			Total
		IPOB Related Conflict	NDA Related Conflict	Other Conflicts	
Newspaper ID	<i>Daily Sun</i>	6 (7.6%)	7 (8.9%)	66 (83.5%)	79 (100%)
	<i>The Punch</i>	1 (3.2%)	10 (32.3%)	20 (64.5%)	31 (100%)
	<i>The Daily Trust</i>	3 (3.4%)	5 (5.7%)	80 (90.9%)	88 (100%)
	<i>The Guardian</i>	1 (2.1%)	5 (10.4%)	42 (87.5%)	48 (100%)
Total		11 (4.5%)	27 (11%)	208 (84.5%)	246 (100%)

Previous table has shown the frequency distribution of conflict stories. This table is a cross-tabulation of conflict news story focus in the sampled newspapers. Since there are different conflict situations in the country, this table specifically sought to determine the extent each of these newspapers covered the specific conflicts under study within the study time-frame. The data show that *The Daily Trust* newspaper covered more conflicts-related incidents than the other newspapers. While *The Daily Trust* has 35.8 percent of the total conflicts covered by all the four newspapers, *The Daily Sun* had a score of 32.1 percent. *The Guardian* had 19.5 percent while the least conflict-related stories emanated from *The Punch* Newspaper given at 12.6 percent. A breakdown of the findings further revealed that while *The Daily Trust* has the highest number of conflict reports, the reports barely focused on either the IPOB related conflicts (3.4%) or the

NDA related conflicts (5.7%), rather, the reports focused more on other conflicts which accounted for 90.9 percent of its total conflict-related reports. Similarly, *The Daily Sun* newspaper has the second highest number of conflict-related reports as stated earlier, but these reports focused more on other conflicts (83.5%) rather than on IPOB related conflicts (7.6%) and NDA related conflicts (8.9%). In *The Guardian* newspaper, other conflict-related stories accounted for 87.5 percent of its total conflict-related reports, while IPOB and NDA related conflicts accounted for 2.1 percent and 10.4 percent respectively. *The Punch* newspaper was not dissimilar to other newspapers' pattern of conflict focus. Therefore, other conflicts accounted for 64.5 percent of its total conflict reports while the NDA related conflicts received more significant coverage than other newspapers at 32.3 percent. IPOB related conflicts accounted for just 3.2 percent of the newspaper's conflict reports. This finding shows that IPOB related conflicts got the least attention and coverage. NDA related conflicts also received minimal coverage when compared to the attention given to other conflicts like the Boko Haram insurgency and the Xenophobic attacks in South-Africa as well as the herdsmen and farmers' clashes in different parts of the country.

However, it is instructive to note that across all the four newspapers, the NDA-related conflicts received more coverage and /or attention when compared to the IPOB related conflicts thereby, corroborating the earlier assertion that of all the conflicts in Nigeria, the IPOB related conflicts are the most under-covered and/or under-reported and by extension, received the least media attention.

Table 27:

Prominence Attached to Conflict News Stories

Conflict News Story Placement	Frequency/Percent
Front Page Main Story	54 (22%)
Back Page	2(.8%)
Inside Pages	190 (77.2%)
Total	246(100%)
Length of Conflict News Story	
Short (Less than 200 Words)	137(55.7%)
Medium (Between 201-499 Words)	53(21.5%)
Long (More than 500 Words)	56(22.8%)
Total	246(100%)
Use of Photo Illustration	
No	212 (86.2%)
Yes	34(13.8%)
Total	246(100%)

In the composite table above, the study sought to determine the level of prominence attached to conflict stories in the sampled newspapers by examining the conflict news story placement, the length of the conflict story and the extent of photo illustration used. The data on placement revealed that majority of the conflict stories were buried in the inside pages of the newspapers. This is as seen in the 77.2 percent of the coded stories placed in the inside pages. Less than one-quarter of the stories (22%) made it to the front pages while a very insignificant number (.8%) were placed on the back pages.

While the data on length of the conflict news stories show that majority of the stories (55.7%) were less than 200 words, thus, are short stories while 22.8 percent were more than 500 words (long), 21.5 percent were between 201 to 499 words which was categorized as medium length story. This finding is an indicator that majority of the conflict stories lacked depth which is an

essential element in giving detailed background to the stories reported to enable the audiences form better opinions and make informed decisions and/or judgments. This observation falls below the tenet of peace journalism as pointed out by Singh, (2014) that in peace journalism, the length of the story is important because it enables journalists to provide as much background information as they can that will in turn aid the audience to understand the dynamics of the conflict. Hough (1995) corroborates this by asserting that “...longer stories, (are) often more important stories” (p. 303).

The data on the use of photo to illustrate the conflict news reports show that majority of the conflicts stories (86.2%) were without graphic illustrations while only 13.8 percent were illustrated using photographs. This finding by implication indicates that less prominence was attached to the conflict stories published. This is because evidences abound that photographs make news stories more visible and attractive to the readers and as well increase the credibility of the news, which thus has a stronger effect on the readers (Singh, 2014; Ersoy, 2014).

Table 28:

Conflict News Story Sources

Sources	Frequency	Percent
President/Vice President	22	8.9
Speaker	4	1.6
Minister(s)	7	2.8
Governor(s)	10	4.1
Other Government Officials	25	10.2
Expatriate(s)/Professionals	12	4.9
NGOs	9	3.7
Ordinary People (Woman/Man on the street)	32	13.0
Security Personnel	67	27.2
Community/Village Head/Spokesperson	28	11.4
Spokesperson, Military and Community Leader	3	1.2
Others	7	2.8
No Source	20	8.1
Total	246	100

Next, the study sought to determine the frequency distribution of the various sources used by journalists in the coverage of the conflict stories. The findings show that the security personnel

constitute the greater percentage of the quoted sources in conflict news stories; this is given at 27.2 percent. This is closely followed by unofficial sources (women/men on the street) (13%). Community/village heads/spokespersons constituted 11.4 percent of the quoted sources while other government officials make up 10.2 percent of the quoted sources. Other sources include the presidency (8.9%), Expatriates/professionals (4.9%), Governors (4.1%), NGOs, (3.7%), Ministers and others, (2.8% respectively), Speakers of the National Assemblies and Military/Community Leader/Spokesperson combined constituted 1.6 percent and 1.2 percent respectively, while unidentified sources constituted 8.1 percent of the reported conflict stories. This finding goes on to show the elite-oriented nature of the newspapers coverage of conflicts as against the people-oriented principles advocated in peace journalism. These findings in addition reinforced the idea of selective attention and focus on who constitutes news source for the Nigerian journalists. They reflect the basic elements of war/violence-oriented journalism as explained by Galtung – “voice for us” rather than “voice to all parties” especially the affected ordinary men and women on the streets.

Table 29:

Number of News Sources Quoted

Sources Quoted	Frequency	Percent
One	102	41.5
Two	90	36.6
Three	16	6.5
More Than 3	16	6.5
No Source(s)	22	8.9
Total	246	100.0

In most of the news stories reported, majority of the news sources quoted is one person represented by 41.5 percent as shown in table 29 above. 36.6 percent were stories where two

sources were quoted. Stories with three and more than three sources quoted were 6.5 percent each, while 8.9 percent had no quoted sources. This finding is a pointer that most of the conflict stories reported are usually one-sided as one person's views or opinions are reported to represent the generality of the people. As also found by Singh, (2014), from the perspective of peace journalism, a single attributed source in a news story is non-representative and problematic, hence, journalists are encouraged to look at the events in multi perspectives and the ideal way to report an event from a multi perspective dimension by increasing news sources in order to allow them give voice to all conflict sides and opportunity to find out truth about the conflict.

Table 30:

A Cross-Tabulation of the Newspapers and the Indicators of War/Peace Journalism in Newspapers Coverage of Conflicts

Newspaper ID	Indicators of War/Peace Journalism													
	Reactive		Visible Effects of War		Elite-Oriented		Zero-Sum Oriented		Two-Party Oriented		Differences Oriented		Partisan Story	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<i>The Daily Sun</i>	79 32.1%	0	61 24.8%	18 7.3%	63 26%	14 6%	77 31.3%	2 .8%	62 25.2%	17 6.9%	76 30.9%	3 1.2%	65 30.8%	13 6.2%
<i>The Punch</i>	27 11%	4 1.6%	20 8.1%	11 4.5%	23 9.3%	8 3.3%	15 6.1%	16 6.5%	23 9.3%	8 3.3%	17 6.9%	14 5.7%	12 5.7%	19 9%
<i>The Daily Trust</i>	63 25.6%	25 10.2%	76 30.9%	12 4.9%	48 20%	40 16.3%	76 30.9%	12 4.9%	40 16.3%	48 19.5%	58 23.6%	30 12.2%	46 21.8%	11 5.2%
<i>The Guardian</i>	46 18.7%	2 .8%	30 12.2%	18 7.3%	37 15%	10 4.1%	46 18.7%	2 .8%	43 17.5%	5 2%	46 18.7%	2 .8%	38 18%	7 3.3%
Total	215 87.4%	31 12.6%	187 76%	59 24%	171 70.3%	72 29.7%	214 87%	32 13%	168 68.3%	78 31.7%	197 80.1%	49 19.9%	161 76.3% (211)	50 23.7

The table 30 above is a cross-tabulation of the indicators of peace/war journalism as contained in the conflict news reports presented by the newspapers. The data measured the specific indicators of peace and war journalism in the conflict news stories reported. General finding points to the war journalism indicator as the predominant pattern of reportage given to the conflicts reported. Specifically, 87.4 percent of the news reports were reactive, while only 12.6 percent were not reactive; 76 percent were reported in such a way that it portrayed the visible effects of war, while 24 percent were not presented in such manner. While 69.5 percent were elite-oriented, 29.3 percent were people-oriented, and 1.2 percent could not be assigned to a group. Majority of the stories were also zero-sum oriented, while only 13 percent were not framed to reflect such orientation. 68.3 percent were two-party oriented, while 31.7 percent were multi-party oriented. 80.1 percent highlighted and emphasized the differences of the parties in conflicts while 19.9 did not. Also, 65.3 percent were partisan-oriented, 20.4 percent were not, while 14.3 percent could not be readily assigned a category.

A close analysis of the specific newspapers' coverage reveals that *The Daily Sun* Newspaper has the most reactive conflict news stories given at 32.1 percent followed by *The Daily Trust* Newspaper, 25.6 percent. *The Guardian* recorded 18.7 percent while *The Punch* has the least reactive stories given at 11 percent. On the other hand, majority of the news report in *The Daily Trust* Newspaper emphasized the visible effect of the war; 30.9 percent of the news report showed this. This is followed by *The Daily Sun* given at 24.8 percent. The *Guardian* newspaper has 12.2 percent while the *Punch* has 8.1 percent.

The Daily Sun Newspaper also has the highest number of elite-oriented conflict news stories 26 percent while *The Daily Trust* has 20 percent. *The Guardian* has 15 percent while *The Punch* has 9.3 percent. *The Daily Sun* Newspaper and *The Daily Trust* Newspaper were almost even in framing their conflict stories in such a manner as to present a particular group as winning and the others as losing.

In other words, the zero-sum orientation frame was emphasized as shown by 31.3 percent and 30.9 percent in the two newspapers respectively. This is followed by *The Guardian* Newspaper's report given at 18.7 percent and then *The Punch* newspaper represented by 6.1 percent. *The Daily Sun* newspaper's news report were also more two-party oriented as shown by 25.2 percent, closely followed by *The Guardian* newspaper given at 17.5 percent. While *The Daily Trust* was 16.3 percent, *The Punch* recorded the least in two-party orientation frame at 9.3 percent. Again, *The Daily Sun* newspaper topped the chart with differences-oriented frames at 30.9 percent followed by *The Daily Trust* Newspapers at 23.6 percent. *The Guardian* newspaper recorded 18.7 percent while *The Punch* newspaper had 6.9 percent. *The Daily Sun* newspaper was equally more partisan in reporting the conflicts (30.8 percent), than other newspapers. *The Daily Trust* newspaper recorded 21.8 percent in this regards. *The Guardian* had 18 percent while *The Punch* newspaper had the least score of 5.7 percent. It is important to note that *The Punch* newspaper has recorded the highest number of non-partisan story given at 9 percent. This finding suggests the seeming neutrality of *The Punch* newspaper in its coverage of conflicts particularly the IPOB and the NDA conflicts in South-East and South-South Nigeria respectively. The findings however, coincide with Moge kwu's (2011, p.246) study which found that most of the time, conflict coverage is of the manifest kind as it is 'less intellectually demanding' – it focuses on events and counting dead bodies; it reports facts as presented by spokespersons; and it is speculative rather than being assertive.

Table 31:

Use of Language

	Frequency	Percent
Victimizing	45	18.3
Demonizing	62	25.2
Emotive	33	13.4
Empowering	29	11.8
Neutral	77	31.3
Total	246	100.0

The study next sought to determine the tone of coverage of these conflict stories to determine extent of peace or war oriented pattern. Data on this score show that, more than one-quarter of the stories, 31.3 percent were presented in a neutral language; 25.2 percent were reported using demonizing language, 18.3 percent were presented in a victimizing manner, 13.4 were emotive, while stories that are empowering recorded 11.8 percent. This finding point to an even distribution in the tone of coverage of these stories, since a sum of the negative language patterns of use (Victimizing and Demonizing were 43.55 while the positive language pattern (empowering and neutral were 43.1%). This further indicates a balance in the use of language in conflict coverage in the South-East and South-South.

Though, further breakdown of this finding clearly shows that stories that were not empowering or gearing towards proffering solutions to the conflicts were in the majority 43.5 percent thereby buttressing the findings in table 30 pointing to the prevalence of war journalism indicators in reporting Nigerian conflicts. It clearly goes against the tenets of peace journalism which entails that that the journalists through framing makes deliberate and conscientious efforts to present conflict narratives in such languages that rather than demonize, will persuade, inform, and educate the audiences on the broad dimensions and dynamics of the conflict while not leaving them out in favour of the elites as news sources, giving them a sense of responsibility and guiding them positively to take decisions that will result in conflict resolutions.

4.3. Analysis of Research Questions

Four research questions were posed for the current study. The questions include:

1. To what extent do the Nigerian National Dailies cover IPOB and NDA conflicts?
2. What is the extent of journalists' knowledge of the principles of peace-sensitive reporting?
3. To what extent do the Nigerian National dailies adopt/apply the principles of peace journalism in framing the IPOB and NDA conflicts in South-East and South-South Nigeria?
4. What are the journalists' perceptions of peace journalism principles in reporting conflict in Nigeria?
5. What factors affect journalists' adoption of the principles of peace journalism in conflict reporting in South-East and South-South Nigeria?

4.3.1. To what extent do the Nigerian National Dailies cover IPOB and NDA conflicts?

The first research question sought to establish in the first place, the extent the Nigerian National Dailies cover IPOB and NDA related conflicts. This investigation is necessary when we consider the assumptions that some conflict situations, although portends grave danger to the overall existence of Nigeria as a nation may not receive adequate coverage.

Data addressing this research question were generated from both the survey and the quantitative content analysis. Thus, the findings were presented in tables 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 24, 25 and 26. The findings largely indicate that journalists reporting in the various newspapers evidently cover conflicts. However, the conflicts covered are largely other conflicts that are unrelated either to IPOB or NDA. In other words, both the IPOB and NDA related conflicts received very minimal attention. It was also evident from the finding that compared with the NDA related conflicts, the IPOB related conflicts received the least attention in the newspapers analysed and corroborated

by the survey responses. The overall data answered the research question with the indication that the Nigerian National Dailies sampled covered the IPOB and NDA related conflicts to a very small extent. This is clear in the level of prominence and frequency of coverage of the conflict stories.

4.3.2. What is the Extent of Journalists' Knowledge of the Principles of Peace-Sensitive Reporting?

Research question two sought to ascertain the extent journalists are aware of the key principles of peace journalism and if they are aware, whether the awareness translates in their desire to apply them or their actual application. Research question two was specifically addressed by the data emanating from the survey. The data were presented in tables 11 and 12. The data revealed that the journalists are aware of these principles. Their awareness is drawn from a seeming combined effort of different capacity building agencies perhaps, through seminars, workshops, symposia, conferences, etc. Greater majority expressed interest to apply the principles as they consider these suitable to their styles of reporting. These findings therefore, are indications that the journalists are not only aware of the principles of peace/conflict-sensitive journalism but also apply the principles in conflict reporting.

4.3.3. To what extent do the Nigerian National dailies adopt/apply the principles of peace journalism in framing the IPOB and NDA conflicts in South East and South-South Nigeria?

Research question three explored the extent the select national dailies adopt the principles of peace journalism in their coverage of conflicts, specifically; the IPOB and NDA related conflicts in South-East and South-South Nigeria. Data from the survey addressed this question and was substantiated by the data from the quantitative content analysis based on the understanding that it is only through a manifest evidence that the extent of adoption and/or application could be determined. Thus, figure 6 and tables 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 28, 29, 30 and 31 of the

content analysis addressed the question. The findings revealed that contrary to the responses generated from the survey in an attempt to answer the research question two, the data from the content analysis show low level of adoption as the manifest evidences from the newspapers analyzed indicate an inclination towards the war journalism principles. The indicators of war journalism topped the charts with high margins as opposed to the high positive results recorded in the survey responses.

4.3.4. What are the Journalists' perceptions of peace journalism principles in reporting conflict in Nigeria?

The research question four ascertained the journalists' perceptions of peace journalism principles in reporting conflicts in Nigeria. Since the question dealt on perceptions, survey questionnaire was employed as instrument for eliciting information needed. The data addressing the question were thus presented in tables 19, 22, and 27. The finding indicated favourable disposition towards the principles as majority consider it suitable to their current styles of reporting. Thus, they claimed to adopt and apply them in the coverage of IPOB and NDA as well as other related conflicts. This test on perception also extended to journalists' appraisal of other Nigerian journalists' compliance to conflict-sensitive journalism in their coverage of conflicts. Findings show that majority of the respondents gave negative assessment of journalists maintaining sensitivity in conflict reporting. 46.3 percent held this view. This finding is contrary to findings in tables 12, 14 and 18 which largely agreed to journalists upholding peace journalism principles more than the war journalism principles

4.3.5. What factors affect journalists' adoption of the principles of peace journalism in conflict reporting in South-East and South-South Nigeria?

Research question five interrogated the factors that affect journalists' adoption and application of the peace journalism principles in reporting the IPOB and NDA related conflicts in South-East and South-South Nigeria. Data in tables 22 and 23 addressed this research question. The findings largely attribute the nature/pattern of journalists' coverage of IPOB and NDA conflicts to the influence of ethnicity, politics and religion on the newspapers' coverage of IPOB and NDA conflicts as shown in table 22 similar to the findings of Adisa (2012) and Edeani (1994). Data further show that majority of the journalists (74.8%) maintain that editorial policy influence journalists' report on conflict to a very large extent as shown in table 23. The finding is understandable since journalists, irrespective of journalistic ethics, still have some affiliations and affinities that tend to, in one way or the other, shape their perceptions of issues and events as suggested by (Edeani, 1994; Singh, 2014); their reports in turn, pass through other scrutiny through the gate-keeping processes that also shape the final outcome of the news reports. The finding however, contradicts the data in table 18 which seems to suggest that journalists discard their own affiliations, biases and prejudices in reporting conflicts.

4.4. Discussion of Findings

The data analyzed in this study were obtained from 456 copies of the questionnaire distributed to registered journalists in South-East and South-South Nigeria and Content Analysis of news stories on IPOB and NDA related conflicts reported in the selected newspapers from 2014 to 2016. The central research question of this study, as earlier stated, revolved around exploring the nature and pattern of coverage given to IPOB and NDA related conflicts in some select Nigerian national dailies within the lens of peace journalism framework; with the sole aim of determining the extent of application of the key tenets of peace journalism given the complexity and pervasiveness of conflicts in today's Nigerian socio-political and ethno-religious milieu.

The discourse on peace journalism in this work was anchored on the principles of framing, social responsibility and conflict theories as already explained in chapter two of this work. These theories essentially hold that human beings by nature are both psychologically and biologically inclined to war due to their constant association and engagement with one another in a continuous social contracts and interactions. Such social interactions are borne by interests (personal and/or group) and when conflicting interests meet, crises result. Taylor (2014) explained that this is due to “selfish genes” that motivate groups of people – usually governments but also a country’s general population, or tribe or ethnic group – to increase their power and wealth. Nevertheless, the manner in which news stories emanating from such inevitable conflicts are framed, generate some kind of influences on the audience's frame of thought. This possible effect journalists’ framing of news stories will have on the audiences therefore refers to the behavioural and attitudinal outcomes that are not due to the communication (message) itself but rather to the language, narrative and interpretation to communication (Druckman, 2011). Consequently, the journalists with this consciousness must uphold the social responsibility reposed in them as the custodians of and the conduit through which information get to the public. Based on this theory, this study examined how the Nigeria media frame IPOB and NDA related conflict news. The study evaluated media’s framing implications and by so doing attempted to determine whether the news media apply the principles of peace journalism or otherwise and by extension, aid or abate the conflicts through their coverage. The basis of framing theory therefore, is that the media focus attention on certain events and then place them within a field of meaning.

The theories further stipulate that the journalists operating in a free democracy are to function without restrictions but with vested responsibilities. This includes freedom to access and disseminate any information that is of interest to them and the public. However, the responsibility clause attached therein implies that the media owe a duty to the public – to sensitize and galvanize them to fully embrace any course that is of common good including

peaceful co-existence. Peace journalism, it could be inferred from the foregoing, expands on this journalism principle to include a more nuanced rigorous reporting that can challenge prevailing prejudices and stereotypes, embracing a holistic approach in reporting conflicts in particular and in this way help promote understanding, reconciliation and healing (Lloyd, 2012).

However, the theories and other available literature show that peace journalism is still an emerging phenomenon in Nigerian journalism practice and as result, still shrouded in some misconceptions or misapplications as can be gleaned from the discord between the survey and content analysis data generated in this study.

4.4.1. Findings

The study used more than one research design, therefore the findings move from one research design to the other.

Major Findings from the Survey

- i. The sampled journalists were predominantly males within the age bracket of 34 to above 41 years. They are mostly educated.
- ii. Majority work in the print media with over six years work experience in the profession.
- iii. Majority has covered conflict and conflict-related issues.
- iv. There is an indication of low specialization among practicing journalists in South-East and South-South Nigeria. Majority are general beat reporters.
- v. IPOB and NDA conflicts recorded low coverage. IPOB had even a lower score.
- vi. The sampled journalists do not cover the entire life cycle of the conflicts but only get involved at some points in the different stages of conflict.
- vii. There is high level of awareness of peace journalism principle and a significant level of application.

- viii. The awareness largely draws from combined efforts for capacity building by different agencies in collaboration with government. In other words, there is a sign of attempt to indoctrinate journalists with new trends and practices of reporting in the profession.
- ix. The survey data indicated a peace journalism reading in conflict reporting by journalists in South-East and South-South Nigeria.
- x. Ordinary members of the public constituted the journalists' major sources of information.
- xi. Factors like ethnicity, political and religious affiliations as well as editorial policies exert some sort of influence on conflict reporting among the sampled journalists.

Major Findings from Content Analysis

- i. Frequency of conflict stories was low within the period of study.
- ii. Daily Trust Newspapers had higher number of conflict news stories than the other newspapers sampled.
- iii. IPOB and NDA conflicts received very minimal coverage compared to other conflicts like Boko Haram, Herders/Farmers' clashes and Xenophobic attacks in South Africa. However, compared to IPOB, NDA related conflicts received more significant coverage.
- iv. There was low level of prominence attached to the conflicts in terms of Placement of conflict news stories, length of conflict news reports and use of photo illustrations in reporting the conflicts.
- v. There was an indication of elite-orientation rather than people-orientation in the nature of the newspapers' coverage of conflicts as advocated in peace journalism.
- vi. War journalism reading emerged significantly in the content analysis.
- vii. There was an indication of balance in the use of language in conflict coverage in South-East and South-South Nigeria.

A close examination of the findings from the survey and content analysis data demonstrate substantial levels of correlation between these data, particularly on the level of attention and/or coverage given to IPOB and NDA conflicts within South-East and South-South Nigeria respectively. However, there is a clear ambivalence in the data generated in the survey and content analysis in terms of peace and war journalism orientations in conflict reporting. In essence, there is a discord in the data generated from the two research approaches with the survey data upholding a peace journalism orientation among journalists in South-East and South-South Nigeria, while the content analysis data returned a war journalism orientation in the conflict news stories reported.

Breakdown of the findings on the journalists' demographics revealed that majority of the sampled journalists were males (70.6%) with the females accounting for slightly over one-quarter of the entire respondents. This finding by implication suggests that the pre-existing trend in journalism as has been elaborately discussed and debated in literature still persists in today's journalism. Several studies have found that the males predominate in every sphere of journalism, studies like Dunu & Okafor, (2016); Endong, & Ekpenyong, (2015); Singh, (2014) and the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), (2010) all reveal no significant change in women participation in journalism. This becomes even more pronounced in some sensitive aspects of journalism like the special beats under which conflict and crises reporting could be categorized. Women remain largely under-sampled.

The demographic data also show that majority of the journalists sampled are well over 30 years. Thus, about 72 percent of the journalists are above 33 years. This also suggests that the journalists are more likely to have acquired higher education and possibly, more training and perhaps, well versed in the history of the conflicts under focus.

As already inferred from the journalists' age demographics, further investigation revealed that majority of the journalists have obtained at least a first degree, as shown by the 63 percent of the

respondents with slightly less than one-quarter (20.8%) who also obtained more than a first degree. This implies that the journalists in South-East and South-South Nigeria are predominantly graduates. Corroboratively, the study further finds that majority of the journalists have had over six years work experience in the profession. 90 percent of the respondents expressed this view. This finding is, perhaps, an indication of the robust experiences the journalists have had on the field and the likelihood to have imbibed and /or assimilated the ethics of the profession through a possible on-the-job or in-house training. Majority of the journalists also work in the print media, (52.6%) affirmed this. These findings slightly contrast with Singh's (2014) finding which show that Fiji journalists are aged below 30 years, mostly trained on the job with likely no university qualifications and having less than six years work experience. With this understanding, it becomes a lot much easier to cross-examine and juxtapose the journalists' survey responses with the manifest contents of the selected newspapers as discussed below.

The section on journalists' coverage of conflicts reveals that the journalists mainly do not have special beats as majority of them (62.6%) report on the general beat. In other words, they fit-in wherever incidences that require media attention occur. Very few of them have designated special beats. Interestingly, crime and conflict-related beats have the least percentage of journalists specifically designated to cover them. This situation may not be unrelated to the complexities and level of sophistication as well as special skills/training required to operate in crises terrains as also observed by Pate, Oso and Jibril (2017) and Edeani, (1994). However, 80.3 percent, constituting the majority admit to cover conflicts and conflict-related incidents. Though the conflicts covered are less within the confines of either IPOB or NDA related conflicts, rather, they are predominantly on other conflicts as affirmed by more than half of the respondents (56.7%). While 22.1 percent cover NDA-related conflicts, slightly fewer number (21.1%) cover IPOB-related conflicts.

These findings from the survey data significantly correlate with the content analysis data. In table 24 for instance, data showed that conflict-related stories accounted for only 18.2% of the

total news reports in the sampled newspapers. Also in table 26, the data yielded high newspaper focus on other conflicts rather than the two conflicts under focus – IPOB and NDA. Even the two newspapers – the Daily Sun and the Guardian – located within the South-East and South-South regions that are considered the hub of the conflicts under study, yielded no different result. IPOB-related conflicts accounted for only 7.6 percent of the total number of conflict stories reported in Daily Sun newspaper, while NDA-related conflicts scored 10.4 percent of the total number of conflicts reported in Guardian newspaper. With these findings, Singh's (2014) assumptions of the possibility of the domestic media being more culturally sensitive and perceptive about local tensions than international media were contrary to the findings of this study. The current finding defied this assumption. In other words, the thesis of localization as possible determinant of heightened sensitivity in handling local conflicts did not suffice in the current study as the newspapers located within the study area (Daily Sun and Guardian) also recorded war journalism readings as well as under reporting of the conflicts under focus.

Further investigation shows that these journalists who cover conflicts do not cover all the stages of the conflicts. In other words, while more than one-quarter (26.2%) cover only the early stage of the conflict, 14 percent cover the advanced stage of the conflicts. Others cover the pre-stage (12.7%) and 9.7 percent cover the resolution stage. Only 37.4 percent of the journalists claim to cover the entire stages of the conflict. The data presented go a long way to support the general view that conflict reporting in Nigeria is inclined towards the war journalism principles as it appears to be episodic rather than thematic (see Dunu and Okafor, 2017; Okoro, Ajaero, Nwakwu, 2017; Akanni, 2017; Auwal, 2015; Ozohu-Suleiman, 2014; and Chiluwa, 2011a; 2011b). It does not follow the entire life cycle of the conflict. Thus, it could be deduced that majority of the journalists that cover conflicts undertake the coverage impulsively rather than deliberately and continuously as to unravel all the covert aspects of the conflicts for a better response and resolution.

Similarly, the duration of their coverage is almost even along the divides of long and short durations (59.2% and 40.8% respectively). While majority (59.2%) claim to cover the conflicts for a long time, a significant number on the other hand cover it for a short period of time. This by implication indicates that report emanating from such journalists may likely be shallow or lacking in depth as they had short period of time to give background to the conflict reports.

An attempt to determine the extent of journalists' adoption and application of the principles of peace journalism show that majority of the respondents claim to be aware of the concepts/principles of peace journalism as shown by 87.5 percent that answered in the affirmative and their awareness largely comes from both government and non-government agencies as well as other foreign agencies. This could be attributed to the series of seminars, workshops, symposia, conferences, etc. that have been organized by the above named bodies for a heightened awareness on how to use the media as a tool in conflict management and transformation. Although such trainings and/or capacity building may not have been directly tagged "peace journalism" the underlying objectives bear the imprint of peace journalism and conflict-sensitive reporting. This could have informed the claim by majority of the journalists to be aware of the principles of peace journalism and through some special governmental and non-governmental agencies both local and foreign. The respondents (62.3%) not only claim to be aware of the peace journalism principles, but also apply them in their day-to-day conflict reporting to a large extent as shown in table 13. Majority also expressed interest in the application of peace sensitive reporting principles. This view was expressed by 61.2 percent. However, a good number, about one-quarter have low interest or uninterested altogether.

On the specific application of the principles of peace journalism in reporting conflicts, there was a remarkable ambivalence between the journalists' expressed views in their survey responses and the findings from the content analysis. While the findings from the survey largely inclined towards the peace journalism indicators similar to Singh's (2014) findings, the reverse was the case in the content analysis. For instance, the survey data records agreement to the indicator of

proactiveness in reporting conflicts. However, the data are not significantly overwhelming as they were almost even with the number that disagreed to that, thereby corroborating the content analysis data which significantly revealed high level reactiveness in reporting conflicts. The manifest evidences largely point to the fact that journalists neither report the entire life cycle of the conflicts nor follow-up the entire processes to a logical conclusion or final resolution. As el-Nawawy, (2014) also observes, it is not enough to report and initiate a ceasefire in violent conflicts, rather a deliberate attempt must be made to ensure that all outcomes of the resolution agreements are adequately implemented to the latter. About 64.9 percent of the respondents affirm that they follow-up these processes, but the findings in content analysis revealed otherwise as there was little or no manifest evidence from the selected newspapers indicating that such processes mostly formed part of the published news stories within the study period. This finding is consistent with Akinro (2016) observation that most conflict reports in Nigeria are bereft of sufficient contextual and background information about the conflicts.

While the journalists affirmed that their reports focused on the collective damage done to the society and culture by the conflicts, their reports as represented by the news stories analyzed was to the contrary. The manifest evidence indicated that they focus on the physical damages such as the number of dead bodies seen, number of buildings and/or vehicles destroyed, number of women raped and the number of persons injured and displaced, etc. (Compare tables 14 and 30). Similarly, the journalists majorly claimed stronger affinity with the affected ordinary citizens in conflicts, as indicated by 69.7 percent of the respondents in table 16. They also agreed that the ordinary people on the street constituted the majority of their news sources of information (53.5%); and that they give voice to as many conflict parties as possible, (64.7%) held this view. Conversely, the manifest contents revealed that the news reports were elite-oriented with mainly one-source of information. Ordinary people on the street rarely expressed their views as the military or police formed the bulk of journalists' sources of information and often from one source thereby reflecting Dickson's (1992) one-party oriented and zero-sum orientations findings

in the newspapers he studied. Other studies Wilson & Devere (2013), Lee and Maslog (2005) also recorded war journalism readings for single-source, elite-orientated indicators. Singh (2014) thus concluded that these commonalities betray a certain predilection for single sourced, elite-orientated stories that are focused on the present. It therefore, reinforced the earlier point about certain transcending traits in news media culture and practice, regardless of country or region. As Singh (2014) opined, “the strong preferences for single sources and elite spokesperson contradict professional journalistic norms of objectivity, fairness and balance” (p.165). Scholars like Lynch and Galtung (2010) further observed that media in developing countries seem to gravitate towards people of rank and authority rather than ordinary people as sources of information, although the same could be said of media in developed countries.

The heavy-reliance on elite sources reveals a major contradiction in news media ethos. In terms of newsworthiness and credibility, “elite sources might make sense but from an ethical viewpoint, such lopsided coverage contradicts the principles of media balance and objectivity” (Singh, 2014, p.178) as observed in this study. However, the reasons for this recurring decimal are not far-fetched. Previous studies (Lee and Maslog, 2005; Lynch and Galtung, 2010; Wilson & Devere, 2013; and Singh, 2014) have attributed this situation to the prevailing uncondusive working conditions particularly with regards to meeting up deadlines with limited materials. These conditions leave the Journalists on crossroads. They become “willing victims” in that they readily use elite sources and the bureaucracy, who provide a ready supply of news that enable them to meet story quotas and production deadlines due to a steady stream of stories from easily accessible sources. The politicians, bureaucrats, and other elites on the other hand are able to secure sustained media coverage and the media organizations are able to optimize operating costs thereby upholding the postulations of the conflict theory.

All other indicators of peace journalism in table 14 were largely upheld by the respondents, yet the manifest document revealed otherwise (see table 30). This reinforced Lee and Maslog’s (2005) findings in their study of four Asian regional conflicts involving India, Pakistan, Sri-

lanka, Indonesia and the Philippines that the reported news were dominated by a war journalism frame. The three most salient indicators of peace journalism as found in their study are avoidance of demonizing language, a non-partisan approach, and a multi-party orientation differed slightly in the current study as a multi-party orientation, non-elite orientation and multi-party orientation topped the chart. While the war journalism frame that ranked most was the reactivity, zero-sum orientation and a dichotomy of good and bad, i.e. difference orientations in the current study.

From the findings above, an inference could therefore, be made that from these ambivalence in the respondents' claimed pattern/nature of conflict reporting and what they actually report, there is the likelihood that they have not fully assimilated or rather understood these principles and their possible applications, thereby resulting in some misconceptions, misunderstanding and misapplication. They are still following the old approach to conflict reporting under the guise of new approach – peace journalism, though, the reasons are not entirely unconnected to the prevailing factors mitigating against the effective operations of the journalists as earlier observed in literature.

Other activities of the journalists are pointers to their drive towards the principles of peace journalism like verification of facts before reporting which they do to a large extent. 81.3 percent indicated this. They also consider the effects of their framing on people in conflict situations (72.8%), all of which gear towards quelling possible outbreak of violence (59.9%) (See tables 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21). As shown in table 18, journalists listen and observe; look for the untold stories; be on the alert for hidden agendas; and guide against their own prejudices to a large extent, all before reporting the conflicts. And when they report, they strive to do no harm; show the bigger picture without blaming anyone; use language and labels that are neutral; focus on common needs; and open up creative possibilities for healthy solutions, all to a large extent. Unfortunately however, all of these are yet to reflect in the news stories made available to the public as the journalists claim. Rather, the content analysis data as presented in tables 30 and 31

show that languages used tend to accentuate differences and in most cases instill fear rather than persuade and inform the people on the broad dimensions of the conflicts and the possible consequences on the society. Similar to Ozohu-Suleiman (2014) and Bilici's (2013) findings, the newspaper reports adopt propaganda, demonizing language and biased reports that are out of the context of peace journalism.

On the other hand, the journalists perceive other journalists in other conflict areas as not being conflict-sensitive in their coverage of conflicts as affirmed by 46.3 percent of the respondents (see table 19), although the peace journalism principles are very suitable to their journalistic orientation and style of reporting, the respondents equally expressed their neutrality in reporting conflicts thereby upholding their earlier views in table 18 of being aware of their own prejudices. Thus, in their reports of IPOB and NDA as well as other parties to the conflicts, they attempt to be neutral and express no sympathy to any of the parties in conflict.

The respondents further averred that ethnicity, politics and religion wield great influence on newspaper coverage of conflicts (see table 22). 62.7 percent expressed this view. Besides that, editorial policy is not left out in exerting certain degree of influence on newspaper coverage of conflicts as shown in table 23 where 74.8 percent of the respondents upheld this view.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This final chapter summed up the current study by synthesizing the major discourses that emerged in the course of the study, proffered recommendations and outlined the research implications of the findings.

5.1. Summary

This study was conducted to ascertain the extent journalists in South-East and South-South Nigeria mediate peace in reporting IPOB and NDA conflicts within the ambits of peace journalism framework espoused by Galtung (2002). The results of the study would be significant contributions to the very limited references on peace journalism as emerging phenomenon in journalism practices and mass communication literature in Nigeria.

Three media communication theories provided the framework for the discourse in this study. These included: the Framing, Conflict and the Social Responsibility Theories. These theories have tended to form a basis for most of the general discourses on media framing and/or representations in journalism practice. Their relevance to the study is illustrated in the insightful explanations of the inevitability of conflict in human social interactions and the possible effects of framing in the conflict transformation, management and resolution as already discussed in chapter two. The literature reviewed, centered on the issue of conflict-sensitivity in language use, information sources, in-depth analysis and extensive coverage as the core prerequisites to conflict transformation in the practice of peace journalism globally.

The literature review revealed a common trend – an apparent media attraction to elite sources, lack of contextualization, journalists' partisanship, the use of media by certain powerful elements

to mobilize groups and flare up war hysteria (Chiluwa, 2011; Ramadhan, 2013; Singh, 2014; and Ersoy, 2014) and the issue of peace journalism principle being too idealistic. These trends, especially as regards media's focus on the primordial angle of conflicts, scholars argue, may have accounted for the apparent under-reporting or under-representation or total neglect of the underlying causes of conflicts as observed from the data analysed in this work. Again, the inclinations towards elites as news sources, scholars argued, result in misrepresentation of sensitive issues bordering on gender, economic status/class as well as other demographics within the groups in conflict (Chung, 1999; Gaunder, 2008). In terms of conflict reporting research, the literature also showed strong research focus on content analysis. The gaps in the literature informed the study's mixed methodological approach; a strategy used in an attempt to find out the correlation between manifest contents and journalists' practice of peace journalism principles in conflict reporting.

Survey approach was employed to ascertain journalists' views of peace journalism application through a structured questionnaire. And content analysis of news stories was used on the other hand as instrument to determine the journalists' application of the peace journalism principles as reflected in the manifest newspapers' reports (in four selected newspapers between 2014 and 2016) through a peace journalism framework. The respondents of the study were five hundred and eighty two (582) registered journalists in South-East and South-South Nigeria under the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) – the umbrella body of practicing journalists in Nigeria. The study thus, examined not just whether the newspapers mediated peace or used the old approach in reporting the IPOB and NDA conflicts in South-East and South-South geo-political zones of Nigeria, but also determined the quantity and nature of coverage given to the social conflicts and by extension accentuates their significance in scholarship and to broader Nigeria as a nation. The data were analysed using simple frequencies and percentages with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (v 20), while the results were presented in tables and pie charts.

The findings on the journalists' demographics revealed that the journalists sampled are predominantly males (70.6%), above 30 years of age (72%), and have obtained at least a first degree (83.8%). They work mainly in the print media outfit (52.6%) with over six years work experience (80.1%). These data emanating from the study support previous study on male dominance of media practice globally and in Nigeria while profiling the educational status of most practicing journalists in Nigeria to show that they have higher educational qualifications with relatively good number of years of working experience. The implication of this finding from the demographic data is the expectation that the journalists would have easily acquired the new approach in conflict reporting. In contrast however, the reverse was the case, as majority of them did not apply the principles of peace journalism in reporting the conflicts.

The data further show that though 80.3 percent of the journalists cover conflicts and conflict-related incidents, they mainly cover conflicts as part of their routine assignment and not as special beats. This is so, since (62.6%) report on the general beat. Again, findings indicate that the conflicts covered are less within the precincts of either IPOB or NDA related conflicts, they are predominantly on other conflicts as affirmed by more than half of the respondents (56.7%). While 22.1% cover NDA-related conflicts, slightly fewer number (21.1%) cover IPOB-related conflicts. It was therefore, revealed that of all the major conflicts in Nigeria, the IPOB conflicts received lesser media attention and coverage. On the specific application of the principles of peace journalism in reporting conflicts, there was a remarkable ambivalence between the journalists' expressed views and the findings from the content analysis. While the findings from the survey were largely inclined towards the peace journalism indicators, the reverse was the case in the content analysis. Thus, it was deduced that the conflict news reports do not follow the entire life cycle of the conflict and majority of the journalists that cover conflicts undertake the coverage as they come rather than deliberately and continuously as to unravel all the covert aspects of the conflicts for a better response and resolution. That notwithstanding, there is high level of awareness of the principles of peace journalism among the journalists in the region that

this study covered. This particular finding clearly demonstrates that knowledge and awareness do not equal practice as suggested by the Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) studies.

From the findings of this study, it could be extrapolated that there is the likelihood that the journalists have not fully assimilated or rather understood these principles and their possible applications, thereby resulting in some misconceptions, misunderstanding and mis-application while not ruling out the influence of other intervening variables like journalists' safety and security, editorial policies, ethnic, religious and political affiliations, conditions of practice as well as the assumption that peace journalism principle is rather idealistic.

5.2. Conclusion

To recap, conventional journalism is said to place a premium value on conflict as news, but often eschewing complex explanations (Wolfsfeld, 1997). This study investigated such claims in Nigeria, where the national media stand accused of ill-serving the country by allegedly misreporting the ethno-religious and socio-political conflicts that have long threatened the unity of Nigeria as a nation. In whatever perspective it is viewed, conflict is a critical issue, and research evidences have linked the latent and overt social and political tensions to the country's vicious cycle of marginalization, public opinion suppression, prolonged instability and stagnant growth. This has stopped the country from reaching its full potential since independence (Naidu, 2005, 2008, 2013).

This research, as stated earlier, was inspired by a growing recognition among policymakers and scholars that the news media should be a part of any comprehensive peace-building strategy (Singh, 2014; United States Institute of Peace, 2008). We found from literature that peace or conflict-sensitive journalism falls within the new paradigm of conflict news reporting. However, the principles of peace journalism in conflict reporting as espoused by scholars (Galtung, 1986, 1998; Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005a; and Lynch & Galtung, 2010) were not upheld in the conflict news stories of the Nigerian newspapers sampled in this study. A

critical analysis and the discussion of the data presented above, offered a wide range of results, and brought to the foreground the disconnect between knowledge of peace journalism principles and the pragmatic translation of same in every day journalism practice among the journalists in South-East and South-South Nigeria.

The findings in this study did not differ from other findings in literature concerning journalists' adoption and application of peace journalism principles in conflict reporting globally. Findings from the study also seems to align with recent discourse in conflict reporting concerning the idealistic nature of peace journalism which could account for the challenges that journalists face in adopting it for covering conflicts in Nigeria. What this study also found is that conflict reporting in Nigeria is treated by the journalists as one of the general reporting beats but not as a critical area that requires special and in-depth attention. This, by extension, hinders quick resolution of the conflicts as the real issues or underlying causes of the conflicts are largely unaddressed.

From the survey data, it could be inferred that the journalists who claimed to be conflict-sensitive in their handling of the IPOB and NDA conflicts are perhaps, merely upholding the core principles of their professional code of practice, such as balance, fairness and objectivity, rather than actively promoting peace as Lee and Maslog (2005) have also opined. Thus, deductions are made here that the Nigerian media pattern of handling conflicts is yet to be a reflection of a conflict transformation and peace building media as being advocated, despite the increased spate of ethno-religious and socio-political conflicts that continuously threaten the peace and unity of Nigeria since independence. It is reaffirmed here that although, journalists on their own may not deliberately set out to end conflict as it may not be within their powers to do so (Howard, 2009), but, can achieve positive results in deflating conflicts. Because, according to Adisa, (2012) and Howard (2003):

A conflict sensitive journalist applies conflict analysis and searches for new voices and new ideas about the conflict. He or she reports on who is trying to resolve the conflict,

looks closely at all sides, and reports on how other conflicts were resolved. A conflict sensitive journalist takes no sides, but is engaged in the search for solutions. Conflict sensitive journalists choose their words carefully.

5.3. Recommendations

From the key findings in this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. There was over-reliance on elite sources in content creation and usually from single source perspective. This is contrary to peace journalism principles. It is therefore, recommended that journalists in Nigerian newspapers need to consider a more broad-based approach when it comes to sourcing news especially in conflict situations.
2. Again, this research in line with peace journalism principles suggested that the premium value placed on physical actions in conflicts, and the focus on the immediate, violent effects of conflict, could be harmful especially in multi-ethnic societies such as Nigeria. Journalists should therefore, embrace a holistic approach in reporting the conflicts while laying particular emphasis on peace initiatives and the things that unite the parties in conflict.
3. Although the issue of media legislation falls outside the remit of the current study, there is still need for the re-examination of the existing media laws in Nigeria. Notwithstanding the fact that the passage of the freedom of information bill into law in 2011 has further liberalized the media landscape in Nigeria, the extent of adoption and application of such law is still infinitesimal as observed by Dunu and Ugbo, (2014). The inhibitory clauses in the law pertaining to curbing inflammatory and hate speeches may be an albatross to journalists' access to vital information that may lead to unveiling the conflict entrepreneurs within the conflict region studied.
4. It is imperative that the Nigerian media profession has to up the ante in terms of training and capacity building. Evidently, Nigerian journalists are mostly educated up to degree level but are lagging in the area of training especially in specialized reporting.

5. Equally, there is need to lift professional standards by media regulatory agencies and professional bodies, address condition of service issues and demonstrate accountability through contextual, culturally sensitive and responsible journalism. There is need therefore, for both content-specific and structural interventions as opined by Frohardt and Temin (2003) to further strengthen the capacities of journalists to function in line with contemporary challenges arising from complexities and sophistications in global terrorism and other local conflicts as the world get increasingly globalized.
6. It is recommended that journalists receive constant specialised training in reporting sensitive issues, as part of the curriculum, or by means of specific workshops and seminars, particularly in conflict torn zones in Nigeria. A basic course in conflict reporting theory should be included in university curricula generically, incorporating peace journalism principles. This could provide a framework for journalists to produce content that is inclusive of all conceivable angles concerning an issue, rather than just the ethnic element. It could enable grassroots people to express their views about events and issues that affect them directly, especially if they are in the front lines of conflict. It would also require paying more attention, and giving more space, to people who condemn violence and offer solutions. The recommendation is made on the premise that specific demands on media systems vary from country to country. In multi-cultural societies such as Nigeria, journalists deal with political differences, ethnic tensions, social conflicts, cultural sensitivities, developmental challenges and religious dichotomies. Journalists covering these complex issues need not only practical skills but also philosophical and contextual knowledge taught in university curricula (see Deuze, 2006). Besides improving the curriculum content of the training programs in universities, providing affordable and accessible university education for journalists should be a

priority. There should be a scholarship in journalism and media to attract a greater pool of interested applicants.

7. There should be increased rate of awards and citations, as well as other incentives to recognize and reward excellence and commitment in journalism. This can particularly go to those outstanding journalists covering conflict zones and who have consistently used the medium of newspaper to drum messages of peace and overall conflict resolution.
8. Government, non-governmental agencies as well as other private research funding grants as obtained in other climes could be adopted. Research could be funded in such areas as strengthening the credentials of peace journalism as a research agenda and for media reform advocacy especially in the face of conflict reporting.

5.4. Suggestions for Future Research

Peace journalism as a concept, although has long existed in the journalism lexicon, it is still an emerging phenomenon in the context of Nigerian journalism. There is a substantial available literature on war, conflict and media especially in other climes, but empirical studies from a peace journalism perspective looking into media's potential for conflict reduction are lacking. This therefore, suggests that research on peace journalism in conflict reporting is still relatively new, especially with regards to the Nigerian experience and as such great opportunities abound for more research in this area. Researchers could examine many different dimensions of peace journalism in conflict reporting based on the findings of this study.

This study has suggested that journalists reporting conflicts should broaden their scopes in terms news sources and conflict news stories angle such that the reports become true reflection and representation of the diverse views of the parties in conflict or conflict stakeholders as defined in peace journalism principles. Future research could be conducted in this important area. For example, conflict stakeholders' perception of news media representations of the issues in

conflict, environment of conflict and parties in conflict could be researched on by other scholars. This is to further bring to foreground the dominant approach to and/or pattern of conflict handling by journalists in conflict zones because the scope of the current study was the journalists and their adoption/application of peace journalism principles. It did not bring in the audience's angle, thus, the need for a more extensive study to take into account the audience's views on media coverage of conflicts and how such contribute to the overall resolution of the conflicts.

It was also found in this study that the quantity of conflict news story in the select Nigerian national newspapers were very minimal compared to other newspapers' news story focus as well as other contents, although the study's unit of analysis was limited to news stories only. Further research could undertake a holistic and in-depth analysis of all the elements or contents of a newspaper to include: editorials, features, articles, advertorials, cartoons, etc. The purpose of such a study would be to identify the forms in which conflict-related reports are mostly presented.

Another important area which this study did not focus on, and where future research could be conducted is diversity and professional capacity of Nigerian journalists in conflict reporting. These key factors to journalists' proficiency on the job have been researched in other climes but falls outside the focus of the current study within the Nigerian conflict reporting context. Future research could therefore, examine problems of news room diversity and challenges of professional training available to journalists especially those reporting in conflict-torn zones. Such a study could also extend to an examination of the influence of some socio-demographic factors such as journalists' cultural background, work environment, institutional laws, politics, media ownership and religion in conflict reporting. The current study concentrated more on the examination of journalists' adoption and application of peace journalism principles, without taking a critical look at the possible inhibitors to the application of the principles as experienced by the journalists.

This study concentrated on conflict news stories reported in newspapers and another focus on journalists in South-East and South-South Nigeria only. Other researchers could expand the study scope to accommodate more newspapers and/or study other geo-political zones other than those captured in the current study. More importantly, researchers could also examine the application of peace journalism principles in other media like the radio and television stations and of course, the Internet to find out how conflicts are mediated in those other channels. These audio-visual channels could be a veritable alternative place for peace activists to create a dialogue platform between the parties to the conflict and as such, need to be investigated.

Finally, this study did not examine media legislation and its influence on journalists. This study's findings and recommendations could be the basis for further research into-rebuilding media in other turbulent zones of Nigeria rife with Boko Haram, Fulani herders'/farmers' clashes and other conflicts.

5.5. Limitations of the Study

This study is not without some limitations. Therefore, the various inevitable limitations herein need to be acknowledged. Firstly, the content analysis dealt with only four newspapers, this could be expanded to yield more robust result. Similarly, two states were selected from the two regions studied due to the key conflicts within the regions which the study focused on, i.e. the IPOB and NDA conflicts in South-East and South-South Nigeria respectively, inclusion of more states or comparing regions, could yield data.

Again, the focus the current study was on news stories for manageability. Including other newspaper items or contents may have provided broader perspectives and possibly, yielded different results. The survey questionnaire on the other hand, was close-ended and as such somewhat limiting respondents' space for expression. It perhaps, gave room for a predetermined answer that allowed the respondents no room for explanations or elaboration. The researcher,

however, attempted to remedy this limitation through an in-depth analysis of the manifest newspapers' conflict-related news reports as created by the respondents.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

Department of Mass Communication,
Nnamdi Azikiwe University,
P.M.B. 5025, Awka,
Anambra State.
20th April, 2017.

Dear Respondent,

I am Ugbo, Gregory Obinna, a PhD student of Mass Communication in the above named institution. I am conducting a study on **Newspaper Coverage and Framing of IPOB and NDA Conflicts in South-East and South-South Nigeria**. Please I request you kindly respond to the items in this questionnaire geared towards assessing how the journalists frame news stories on Indigenous People of Biafra and Niger Delta Avengers agitations to determine whether such framing promote peace or exacerbate the agitations. Your confidentiality is guaranteed as this is strictly for academic reasons.

Yours Sincerely,

Ugbo, Gregory Obinna.

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Section I: Journalists' Demographics

1. **Sex:** A. Male B. Female
2. **Age:** A. 18-25 B. 26-33 C. 34-40 D. 41 and above
3. **Academic Qualifications:** A. FSLC B. SSCE C. NCE/OND D. HND/BA/BSc E. PG
4. **Media Affiliation:** A. Print B. Broadcast

5. **Years of Experience:** A. 1-5 B. 6-10 C. 11-15 D. 15 and above

Section II: Journalists' Coverage of Conflicts

6. What is your primary beat? A. Sports B. Politics C. Economy D. Fashion/Entertainment E. Crime F. Education
7. Have you covered conflicts before? A. Yes B. No
8. If yes, which conflict? A. Niger Delta Avengers B. Indigenous People of Biafra C. Boko Haram D. Other conflicts
9. What stage of the conflict did you cover? A. Pre-stage B. Early Stage C. Advanced Stage D. Resolution Stage
10. How long did you cover the conflict? A. Long B. Very Long C. Short D. Very Short

Section III: Journalists' Awareness of Peace Journalism

11. Have you heard of Peace journalism before? A. Yes B. No C. Not Sure
12. If yes, how often do you hear about Peace Journalism? A. Very Often B. Often C. Rarely D. Never
13. Through what means do you hear about it? A. Government Agencies B. Non-Governmental Organizations C. Foreign Agencies D. All of the above E. Can't Say.
14. To what extent have you shown interest to understand and apply the principles of Peace Journalism? A. Very Large Extent B. Large Extent C. Small Extent D. Very Small Extent E. Can't Say.

Section IV: Journalists' Knowledge and Application of Peace Journalism Principles

Kindly mark [✓] the option in the following statements that best describes your position (SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, U= Undecided, A= Agree, SA= Strongly Agree).

15. In my reports, I usually ...

S/N		SD	D	U	A	SA
i.	Anticipate and report on the conflict before it aggravates or grows more acute.					
ii.	Report on the aftermath of the conflict/war, such as the implementation of a peace treaty, the observance of the ceasefire or reconstruction processes.					
iii.	Report the damage done to society and culture caused by the conflict.					
iv.	Report the psychological damage done to the victims.					
v.	Discuss the actions and reactions of local people and civilians.					
vi.	Discuss areas of agreement and similarities between the conflict parties.					
vii.	Discuss the roots and causes of the conflict.					
viii.	Discuss possible outcomes and potential consequences of the conflict.					
ix.	Give voice to as many conflict parties as possible.					
x.	Report what has been/could be done by people; highlight how people are coping and suggest solution					

16. To what extent do you verify your facts of the conflict before reporting? A. Very Large Extent B. Large Extent C. Small Extent D. Very Small Extent
17. To what extent is the fact distinctively different from other facts out there? A. Very Large Extent B. Large Extent C. Small Extent D. Very Small Extent
18. Who are usually your sources? A. Government Officials B. Ordinary Members of the Public C. Military/Security Personnel D. Elites

19. Do you consider how your framing of the conflict party(ies) affects the people? A. Yes B. No C. Can't Say
20. What do you consider the possible effect of your framing on the party(ies) in conflict? A. Stirs up feeling of revenge B. Gives sense of victory to a particular conflicting party C. Quells possible outbreak of violence D. Can't say

Section V: Journalists' Level of Sensitivity in Conflict Reporting

21. Before you report to what extent do you

S/N		Very Large Extent	Large Extent	Very Small Extent	Small Extent
	Listen and observe				
	Look for the untold stories				
	Be on the alert for hidden agendas				
	Be aware of your own prejudices				

22. **When you report,** to what extent do you ensure that you:

S/N		Very Large Extent	Large Extent	Very Small Extent	Small Extent
	Do no harm				
	Show the bigger picture, without blaming anyone				
	Use language &				

	labelling that is neutral				
	Challenge stereotypes				
	Focus on common needs				
	Open up creative possibilities for healthy solutions				

Section VI: Journalists' Perception of Peace Journalism Principles

23. Do you consider the Peace Journalism Principles as suitable to your style of reporting conflicts? A. Yes B. No C. Can't Say
24. Would you say that the Nigerian Journalists have been conflict sensitive enough in covering IPOB/NDA conflicts? A. Yes B. No. C. Can't say
25. Would you say the newspaper reports express sympathy to the public? A. Yes B. No. C. Can't say
26. Would say the newspaper reports express sympathy to the government? A. Yes B. No. C. Can't say
27. Would you say that the newspaper reports express sympathy to IPOB or NDA? A. Yes B. No. C. Can't say
28. How often do you consider the effect of conflict story on the audience before reporting it? A. Almost always B. Sometimes C. Once in a while D. Rarely E. Never
29. It has been claimed that ethnicity, politics and religion have influenced the Newspaper coverage of IPOB/NDA. What is your position on this claim? A. True B. False C. Can't say

30. What news selection criteria/criterion mainly determine(s) your choice of reporting conflict?
31. To what extent does the house style or editorial policy of your media organization influence your reportage of conflict? A. Very Large Extent B. Large Extent C. Small Extent D. Very Small Extent E. Can't Say.
32. When reporting about IPOB/NDA which sources do you consider most accurate? A. IPOB/NDA members B. Military Personnel C. Government Officials D. Eye Witnesses E. Others, Specify.....
33. Have you ever been to the scene of attack before reporting the incident? A. Yes B. No
34. Has anyone censored what you report about IPOB or NDA? A. Yes B. No

APPENDIX B

CODING SHEET

Newspaper ID

The Sun – 01
The Punch – 02
Daily Trust – 03
The Guardian – 04

Frequency of Conflict

News Stories

The Sun – 01
The Punch – 02
Daily Trust – 03
The Guardian – 04

Placement

Front Page – 01
Back Page – 02
Inside Pages – 03

Photo Illustration

Yes – 01
No – 02

No. of News Story Sources Quoted

One– 01
Two – 02
Three – 03
More than 3 – 04
No Source(s) – 00

Subject

Education – 01
Entertainment/Sports – 02
Politics/Governance – 03
Religion – 04
Business/Economy – 05
Health – 06
Conflict – 07
Security/Crime – 08
Others – 06

Conflict News Story Focus

IPOB Conflict – 01
NDA Conflict – 02
IPOB and NDA Conflicts – 03
Other Conflicts – 04

Use of Language

Victimizing – 01
Demonizing – 02
Emotive – 03
Empowering – 04
Neutral – 00

Length of Story

Short (less than 200 words) – 01
Medium (between 201-499 words) – 02
Long (more than 500 words) – 03

Conflict News Story Sources

President/Vice President – 01
Speaker of NHA – 02
Minister(s) – 03
Governor(s) – 04
Other Government Officials – 05
Expatriate/Professionals – 06
NGOs – 07
Ordinary People (woman/man on the street) – 08
Security Personnel – 09
Community/Village Head
Spokesperson – 10
Spokesperson, Military and Community Leader – 011
Others –

Indicators of War/Peace Journalism

Reactive – 01
Visible Effects of War – 02
Elite-oriented – 03
Zero-sum-oriented – 04
Two-party -oriented – 05
Differences oriented – 06
Partisan stories – 07

S/N	Newspaper Title	Subject	Frequency of Conflict News Stories	Conflict News Story Focus	Placement	Length	Photo Illustration	Conflict News Story Sources	No. of News Story Sources Quoted	Indicators of War/Peace Journalism	Use of Language

APPENDIX C

CODING MANUAL

General instructions to coders:

1. The subject categories and their appropriate codes (01, 02, 03, etc) are provided on the top of the coding sheet; enter the appropriate codes in the appropriate columns.
2. Carefully read and examine every news story before deciding on the appropriate code to enter.
3. All aspects of a news material **MUST** be taken into account while making coding decisions; i.e. headlines, photographs, page placement, and length of the news stories must all be carefully examined and then viewed collectively before deciding on the category that is most appropriate for it.
4. Where more than one category appears to apply to a particular content, choose the category that seems to be **MOST** appropriate to the category being examined. For instance, where a conflict news story appears to be reactive and proactive at the same time, care should be taken to decide which is more dominant – whether its reactive character is more pronounced than the proactive feature and vice versa.

INTERPRETING THE CONTENT CATEGORIES

Newspaper ID: This is to be interpreted as the name of the newspaper being coded. It is identified by simply observing the masthead of a publication where names like “Daily Sun”, “Daily Trust”, “The Nation” and “The Guardian” are boldly written.

Subject: This is to be interpreted as the subject matter or focus of the news story. For instance, a news story maybe addressing education related issues or health or politics and so.

Conflict News Story Focus: This is to be interpreted by the subject matter of the conflict news story. Is the story focusing on IPOB related conflict? Is it on NDA related conflict? Is addressing both IPOB and NDA related conflicts? Or is it focusing on other conflicts outside NDA and IPOB?

Placement: This is to be interpreted as the page on which a conflict news story is placed in a newspaper publication thus: Front Page, Back Page and Inside Page.

Length of News Story: This is to be interpreted by observing how long a particular news story appears. Stories that are contain less than 200 words should be considered as ‘Short’, stories that are between 201 to 499 words should be coded as ‘Medium’ while stories that are more than 500 words should be considered as ‘Long’ story.

Photo Illustration: This is to be interpreted as whether a news has a pictorial or photographic attachment to further explain the news content or not.

Conflict News Story Sources: This is to be interpreted as the character(s) or name(s) mentioned as the informant or the originator of the news story. This could be the President, the Vice

President, Governor of a state, the military, police or other security agencies, community leaders or spokesperson, ordinary man or woman on the street as eyewitness, etc. There could also be no source mentioned at all in the news report and should be coded as such.

Number of Sources Quoted: This is to be interpreted by observing how many names were mentioned or whose accounts of the conflict were reported. This could be one person, two persons, three persons or more or even no source at all mentioned in the news story.

Indicators of War/Peace Journalism: This is to be interpreted as the orientation direction of the conflict news stories. Specifically, a story should be coded as:

- i. **Reactive:** if the event is reported after the conflict has happened without any indication that it is either a follow-up report; fails to provide in-depth analysis, or relates back to historical events and vice versa.
- ii. **Visible Effects of War:** if the news story emphasizes of the physical effects of the conflict like the number of people killed, the number of houses burnt, the people displaced.
- iii. **Elite-Oriented:** if it focuses on official sources- government officials, politicians, military figures, bureaucracy and institutions as information providers; ignores ordinary people.
- iv. **Zero Sum-Oriented:** if it emphasizes on who is winning in the conflict and vice versa.
- v. **Two-party –oriented:** if it emphasises on two major parties, with a focus on what divides them; win/lose, winner-take-all, zero-sum approach; ostracizes smaller parties.
- vi. **Differences Oriented:** if it paints the picture of dichotomies between good and bad; victims and villains; accepts stark distinctions between ‘self’ and ‘other’ and places blame; focuses exclusively on the suffering, fears and grievances of only one party.

- vii. **Partisan Stories:** if it is biased for one side/party, usually on the basis of ethnicity, religion, ideology or other forms of kinship and affinity.

Use of Language: this is to be interpreted as when a conflict news story uses a Victimizing, demonizing, divisive, provocative, emotional language; tells only of wrongs committed; over-emphasises helplessness of some people by portraying them as powerless and weak, which is disempowering and limiting.

APPENDIX D

LIST OF NIGERIAN NATIONAL DAILIES

S/N	NEWSPAPER	YEAR ESTABLISHED	LOCATION
1.	<i>Blue Print</i>	2011	Abuja
2.	<i>Business Day</i>	2005	Lagos
3.	<i>Compass</i>	2008	Lagos
4.	<i>Daily Champion</i>	1988	Lagos
5.	<i>Daily Times</i>	1926	Lagos
6.	<i>Business Hallmark</i>	2009	Lagos
7.	<i>Independent</i>	2001	Lagos
8.	<i>Leadership</i>	2005	Abuja
9.	<i>National Daily</i>	2009	Lagos
10.	<i>National Mirror</i>	2008	Lagos
11.	<i>New Nigerian</i>	1964	Kaduna
12.	<i>Next</i>	2004	Lagos
13.	<i>People's Daily</i>	2008	Abuja
14.	<i>Premium Times</i>	2011	Abuja
15.	<i>The Authority</i>	2014	Abuja
16.	<i>The Guardian</i>	1983	Lagos
17.	<i>The Nation</i>	2006	Lagos
18.	<i>The Sun</i>	2001	Lagos
19.	<i>This Day</i>	1995	Lagos
20.	<i>Tribune</i>	1949	Ibadan
21.	<i>Trust</i>	2001	Abuja
22.	<i>Vanguard</i>	1983	Lagos

Source: <http://www.w3newspapers.com/nigeria/>

APPENDIX E

LIST OF NEWSPAPER EDITIONS SELECTED

S/N	NEWSPAPER EDITIONS	S/N	NEWSPAPER EDITIONS
1.	Monday, January 20, 2014	29.	Sunday, December 11, 2016
2.	Tuesday, July 8, 2014	30.	Monday, March 21, 2016
3.	Wednesday, April 16, 2014	31.	Tuesday, July 8, 2016
4.	Thursday, April 3, 2014	32.	Wednesday, May 18, 2016
5.	Friday, March 21, 2014	33.	Thursday, August 11, 2016
6.	Saturday, October 25, 2014	34.	Friday, April 29, 2016
7.	Sunday, October 5, 2014	35.	Saturday, June 25, 2016
8.	Sunday, September 28, 2014	36.	Sunday, July 3, 2016
9.	Monday, September 29, 2014	37.	Monday, July 4, 2016
10.	Tuesday, September 30, 2014	38.	Tuesday, July 5, 2016
11.	Wednesday, October 1, 2014	39.	Wednesday, July 6, 2016
12.	Thursday, October 2, 2014	40.	Thursday, July 7, 2016
13.	Friday, October 3, 2014	41.	Friday, July 8, 2016
14.	Saturday, October 4, 2014	42.	Saturday, July 9, 2016
15.	Sunday, July 19, 2015		
16.	Monday, December 21, 2015		
17.	Tuesday, March 24, 2015		
18.	Wednesday, October 21, 2015		
19.	Thursday, February 12, 2015		
20.	Friday, September 4, 2015		
21.	Saturday, May 30, 2015		
22.	Sunday, April 19, 2015		
23.	Monday, April 20, 2015		
24.	Tuesday, April 21, 2015		
25.	Wednesday, April 22, 2015		
26.	Thursday, April 23, 2015		
27.	Friday, April 24, 2015		
28.	Saturday, April 25, 2015		

APPENDIX F

Indicators of Peace/War Journalism from which Content Analysis Coding Categories were derived

Content Analysis Coding Categories			
S/N	Indicator	War Journalism	Peace Journalism
1.	Orientation	Focuses on Official sources-government officials, politicians, military figures, bureaucracy & institutions as information providers; ignores ordinary people	Covers perspectives from beyond the usual 'official sources'; community members, common people's contribution recognized & valued
2.	Sources	Uses one source/propagates viewpoints of single party/parties	Uses multiple sources and presents different viewpoints
3.	Context	Event reported with a closed space/closed time orientation; fails to provide in-depth analysis, nor relate back to historical events; tends to write sensational statements rather than promote audience thought.	Event reported with open space/time orientation; discussed as part of a bigger picture rather than occurring in isolation; reports address underlying issues & promote audience thought.
4.	Partisanship and balance	Biased for one side/party, usually on the basis of ethnicity, religion, ideology or other forms of kinship.	Balanced reporting that transcends the ethnic or ideological; fair, accurate, neutral reporting that presents all sides equally.
5.	Majoritarianism/consociation	Emphasis on two major parties, with a focus on what divides them; win/lose, winner-take-all, zero-sum approach; ostracizes smaller parties.	Multi-party focus; avoids portraying conflict as consisting of only two parties contesting the same goal(s) with win-lose outcome; highlights cooperation, power-sharing; reveals common ground and shared goals
6.	Language	Victimizing, demonizing, divisive,	Disavows emotive

		provocative, emotional language; tells only of wrongs committed; over-emphasises helplessness of some people by portraying them as powerless & weak, which is disempowering & limiting.	words; favours empowering language; reports what has been/could be done by people; highlights how people are coping; suggests solutions.
7.	Reference to race/religion	Undue and unwarranted racial and/or religious references that could unnecessarily aggravate tensions.	Avoids undue and irrelevant racial and/or religious references.
8.	Opinionated	Journalist opinion in news. Portrays opinion/claim as an established fact.	No journalist opinion in news. Avoids making opinion or claim seem like an established fact.
9.	Fearmongering	Content creating undue fear; cultural violence (e.g. hate speech); threatening language.	Content does not create undue fear.
10.	Good/bad dichotomy	Dichotomies between good and bad; victims and villains; accepts stark distinctions between 'self' and 'other' & places blame; focuses exclusively on the suffering, fears and grievances of only one party.	Avoids good-bad labeling; discusses the positive and negative actions and behaviour of both parties; coverage picks up, explores & reports peace initiatives.

Source: Singh (2014)

APPENDIX G
NEWSPAPER CUTTINGS