

**COVERAGE OF TIV/FULANI CONFLICT:
A STUDY OF *DAILY TRUST* AND *VANGUARD* NEWSPAPERS (MARCH
2014- MARCH 2015)**

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**DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND PERFORMING ARTS,
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AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY,
ZARIA**

OCTOBER,2017

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**DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND PERFORMING ARTS,
FACULTY OF ARTS,
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ZARIA**

OCTOBER, 2017

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research dissertation titled: **Coverage of Tiv/Fulani Conflict: A study of *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* Newspapers (March 2014- March 2015)** is a product of my research work and it has never been presented in parts or as a whole by any person or group. All information and quotations are duly acknowledged by means of references.

Omata, Joab Bako

Date

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this dissertation is the original work submitted to the Department of Theatre and Performing Arts, Faculty of Arts, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, by OMATA, Joab Bako, with the Registration Number, P13ARTP8008 for the award of the Master of Art (M.A) Degree in Development Communication.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to God Almighty, the Beginning and the End.

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ABSTRACT

One of the most serious problems facing Nigeria as a country today is the high incidence of the Tiv/Fulani conflict. The conflict has become so rampant that no day passes without an incident of conflict reported in the national newspapers in one part of the country or the other. Thus, it seems that the audacity of the perpetrators increases daily as more lives are lost and properties destroyed. This situation further aggravates other social problems including fear, anxiety and the feeling of general insecurity which limits the effectiveness of national development. What then is the role of the print media in resolving the conflict in order to bring about peace and sustainable development to a growing economy like Nigeria? The aim of this research is to explore ways through which the media, particularly the print media can better deploy effective communication towards conflict resolution. The major objectives are to ascertain how newspapers report the Tiv/Fulani conflict and to examine how these reports have resolved or negatively affected the resolution of the conflict. The researcher interviewed the reporters of both newspapers, which revealed that all newspapers under study see their report as balanced and objective but this was disputed by the Focus Group Discussion, and the analysis of *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* newspapers from March 2014 to March 2015 using their character, word, theme and space, where some reports were seen to favour one party against the other and this has caused death, hatred among members of the community. Others variables include news stories, features, editorials, cartoons and pictures. The social responsibility theory and framing theory were used to underpin this study. The findings of this study reveal that some of the differences in the perspective of the Tiv/Fulani conflict are affected by ideological leanings, sectional loyalties, biases, interest and misinterpretation which have negative effect on the people like hatred and social unrest which eventually leads to poor development. The amount of coverage given to the conflict situation is often determined by the location and ownership of these newspapers. The study recommends that engagement with the people and ethical practices are imperative in order to avoid misinterpretation and wrong framing of headlines and inside stories.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Background to the Study

The Nigeria press has been a vehicle in the sustenance of national issues and a medium of conflict resolution, but none has made this role more decisive than the presentation of conflict. This is because Nigeria is a country divided by religion, and ethnicity, several violent pogroms have over the years been attempted on the two halves, violence and conflict have been reoccurring in the history of Nigeria to such an extent that looking back in history it is hard to see a time Nigeria was not going through one violent agitator or one several dimension from a secessionist movement (Mustapha, 2004).

The media undoubtedly have a major role to play in conflict resolution. This is because individuals, groups and communities usually have cause to disagree on one issue or the other. Except the conflict is quickly resolved, it may degenerate into major crisis requiring peaceful resolution, (Lekan, 2013). This research is against the backdrop that conflict will always occur and it is the responsibility of the press to report or cover them. But the way in which the Nigerian media, especially the print media report conflict and other related issues of national importance is of great concern to many Nigerians.

Nigeria is a country characterized by diverse ethnic groups that are scattered in the six geo-political zones of the country. However, these six geo-political zones are often broadly categorized under south and north. Given the peculiarity of these regions especially in terms of cultural and religious affiliations, most print media emerging from these regions tend to reflect, propagate and uphold values that are cherished in their respective regions, hence, the differences noticeable in newspapers reportage.

The Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) for instance, is the leading ethno-regional organization of the elite of the former Northern Region (Arewa, 2001a; 2001b). The ethno-regional organization of the South West of Nigeria and the South-South also exist. Some are of the view that other ethno-regional groupings were drawn into the claims and counter-claims of ethnic domination and marginalization (Afenifere, 2001; Jacomb, 2001). These relatively recent developments only confirm the fact that 'inter-ethnic rivalry for domination' is a 'fatal affliction' of the Nigerian media process,(Afigbo,1989: 4). In other words, inNigeria, the north and the south produce newspapers, and sometimes, the reportage is geared towards ideological bias. Therefore the research considered the *Daily Trust* from the Northern part and *Vanguard* from the Lagos Ibadan axes. Both papers are widely spread across the country and are known for their vast reportage.In 1998 when the Media Trust Nigeria Ltd, the now publishers of *Daily Trust*, Weekly Trust, Sunday Trust and Aminiya made its debut on the streets, most Northerners were glad and proud that a media that would truly stand the test of time and say the truth to protect the Northern interest had arrived. These initial jubulations were occasioned by the sordid experience the Northern region had had with the Lagos-Ibadan axis press as a result of their imbalance in their objective coverage of events in the Northern part of the country (Saka1998).

Whereas*Vanguard* Media limited, publishers of Vanguard Newspapers was established in 1984 by Mr. Sam Amuka (a renowned, veteran journalist and columnist of the Sad Sam Fame. Sam Amuka was editor of Sunday Times and the First Managing Director of the Punch Newspaper.) He is from Itsekiri land in the present Delta State of Nigeria his maiden copy of*Vanguard*hit the newsstands as a weekly on Sunday June 3rd, 1984 with the motto: Towards a better life for the People. It went everywhere on July 15, 1984. It aims to serve the people

through unflinching commitment to free enterprise, the rule of law and good governance. It represents the Southern part of Nigeria

The mass media are the hub of societal sensitization and may be one of the strongest sources of influence and change. Media, especially the main stream media, is a modern means of passing across information to a large, diverse, and anonymous audience. The mass media include, (Radio, Television and the Internet), electronic and print media comprising newspapers, magazine and periodicals, other variables include bill boards, hand bills, posters, books. Mohammed (2006:27) went further to include compact disk (CDs) digital video disc (DVDS) film new agencies books, comics etc. as subset of the mass media.

The media just like any other concept has numerous definitions by various scholars of Mass Communication. Bittner (1995:30) refers to media as the collective means of communication by which the general public or populace is kept informed about the day to day happening in the society. A check into the concept of mass media reveals a combination of two words 'mass' which is a large number or collection of unidentified people. According to McQuail (2005:43), the term 'mass' connotes strength and solidarity of ordinary people when organized for collective purpose, and media means 'organs or channels'. Hence, mass media is a collection of organs of communication and information dissemination that reach out to a large number of people. The information circulation is not only confined to the public, but the media also serves to coordinate the information flow through government and the people and vice versa. Note that the word press in some usage connotes both categories of the media, the print and broadcast, especially the print.

The prime function of the press in general and the newspaper in particular is to, educate, persuade, mobilize and inform a literate audience, bringing them abreast with events of the time. Klapper (1960:34) noted that “the media is the fourth estate of the realm and it is assigned the responsibility of information, education, enlightenment and entertainment of the general public”. For Thomas Jefferson, a one-time American’s president “the media is the best instrument for enlightening the mind of man and presenting him as rational and social being”. This perhaps explains the role that the media can play in conflict resolution like the Tiv/Fulani Crisis in Benue state of Nigeria. Gujbawu and Kur (2010: 45), say ‘the way and manner conflict is reported by the press may accentuate or attenuate their severity and frequency’.

In Nigeria, the Fulani have continued to clash with sedentary farming communities in Plateau, Taraba, Ogun, Oyo, Sokoto, Nassarawa, Benue, Rivers, Bauchi, Yobe, Enugu, Cross Rivers states and the Federal Capital Territory. The war being fought with the Tiv is fought in Tiv territories of Benue and Nassarawa state, where the Tiv have lived in the last three centuries, farming; rice, yams, cassava, beniseed, soya beans, and keeping their own cattle, the Muturu cows. Benue State and Tivland is said to be Nigeria’s bread basket, with the popular slogan as; “food basket of the nation”. The following communities in Benue state have been reported to have been facing the Tiv/Fulani crisis. Nyiev, TseAnda, Yandev, Dooga, Kpata, Lokobi, Mbagwen, TseZaki, TseKper, Chile, TseKpoku, Sengev, Gbuku and TseYaji. etc. (Tor, Bar and Ene 2014).

Any human community needs peace so that the people can realize both individual and collective goals. It is a well-known fact that most conflicts such as ethnic religious violence, inter-communal clashes and herdsmen and farmers imbroglio usually lead to loss of human lives and destruction of properties. More so, the atmosphere that usually trails such occurrences is

that of uncertainty, fear and looming danger of reprisal attacks. Therefore, in the quest for sustainable development, peace and harmony are non-negotiable factors. Unfortunately, Benue state, which has earned a reputation for been the food basket of the nation, has in recent years, being confronted by different waves of conflicts: chief among them is the incessant clashes between herdsmen and farmers.

The resultant effect of this conflict is that some farmers have abandoned their farmlands which consequently lead to low food production. Also, the productions of cow milk and meat by the herdsmen have also been grossly affected because many cows have been killed. More so, women have also been killed and widowed and children orphaned as a result of this conflict.

With this grim situation at hand, there is need for all hands to be on deck in order to find a lasting solution to this conflict. The idea of national unity and peaceful co-existence needs to be promoted by the media and other related institutions. This is because the press is regarded as the watch dog of the society (Okpoko, 2007: 153). The modern function of the press includes but not limited to, surveillance, correlation, agenda setting, shaping public perception and influencing public policy. After the press has set an agenda and raised the public perception on an issue, these opinions tend to shape some government policies. However, the press in Nigeria seems to be divided on the way forward. A section of newspapers are directly or by inference agitating for strong military action against Tiv/Fulani Crisis because in some cases of the attack, some soldiers are killed in the process. According to Tor, Bar and Ene, (2014).

After months of tip-toeing around the subject, the Nigerian media reported that from the 8-10th February 2011, armed Fulani herdsmen numbering between 200-500 sacked three districts in Gwer West local government, unleashing an orgy of violence and killing for two days that left scores dead and rendered 20,000 people homeless. The damage to property according to the media was over a hundred million naira. Other versions claimed that the Fulani and

mercenaries had more sophisticated assault weapons than the police. The “*Nation Newspaper of Jan 2014*”, for instance reported that the operation was “similar to the invasion of Borno state by members of Boko Haram”.

Furthermore, even as Nigerians continue to condemn the alleged attack on the convoy of the then governor of Benue State, Gabriel Suswam, by Fulani herdsmen, the associations representing the herdsmen have come out to point fingers at the then state governor himself. Speaking through their umbrella body, Miyetti Allah, Cattle Breeders Association, the herdsmen said that, “Suswam is the architect of the Tiv/Fulani crisis, not just in Benue State, but also in Plateau and Taraba states as well”. They alleged that he has stoked the hostilities against them. The herdsmen claimed that in just three months of the crisis, they had lost 134 of their colleagues and 11,915 cattle to the clashes in the state.

The National Vice-President of the cattle breeders association, Alhaji Hussaini Bosso, told journalists in Minna, Niger State, that their problem in Benue State started when Suswam publicly announced that he did not want them in the state. They said that his statement led to the massacre of their members in the state. Bosso said in Benue, they lost 82 herdsmen and 6700 cattle; in Plateau, they lost 43 herdsmen and 4682 cattle; and in Taraba, they lost nine men and 533 cattle. Bosso claimed that the killings in Benue and Taraba states were carried out by the Tiv; while the Beromo were responsible in Plateau State. He said, “All these atrocities were perpetrated by Tiv people”. According to him, to our surprise, the police were aware, but did not do anything to avert the ugly developments. Not only that, the Police felt unconcerned about the matter, the respective governments of the affected states did nothing. Bosso appealed to the government of the state, to as a matter of urgency, bring to an end to the killing of innocent Fulani herdsmen for peace to reign. As a rider to this statement on peace: the *Peace Bulletin* 2005 stated aptly that:

The media both the print and the broadcast play an important role in diffusing tension, reducing and containing conflicts, it can also do so by being deeply aware of the fragility of a country's social fabric, of the effect being expended at unifying a country's polarized, religion ethicized politics and more importantly, by objectively reporting conflict incidences as they unfold. (p. 5).

Furthermore, according to Otite (2001:56), the level of prominence given to any conflict goes a long way in determining the intensity and duration of such conflict. This means that conflict that are given little prominence despite being a huge challenge for national development such as the Tiv/Fulani Crisis, will only fuel the crisis leaving the perpetrators to continue with impunity.

Conflict by its very nature tends to be attractive for the press. As Owens Ibie (2003:32) puts it "the media are naturally attracted to conflict not just that, conflict is also hard to talk about without engaging the emotions of the discussant". This is largely due to the humanitarian implications, especially when conflict gets violent like the challenge of the Tiv/Fulani Crisis, presenting an objective and balance report of such activities becomes tortuous, almost an impossible task. "The principles of reporting are put to severe test when the nation goes to war", Adie cited by Allan and Zelizer (2004; 3).

However despite the strict principles of journalism, ethnic, tribal and religious affiliation and sentiments may have jeopardized parts of the pillars of journalism which include balance, objectivity and fairness. These sentiments are so strong and widespread, that the sacredness of the in-house policies may be reduced to nothing. Often journalism is in a fix, caught between staying true to the principles of reporting and responding adequately to the realities of conflict. As Allan and Zelizer (2004: 3), aptly state "the media is confronted with often horrific realities of conflict. Any belief that the journalist can remain distant, remain unaffected by what is

happening tends to go out through the window in a hurry”.Demonstrating the character of the press in time of crisis, Pate (2002; VI) cited by RotimeSankore (2006) that:

Nothing defines the character of the press by establishing more sharply than any crisis that pitches the nation against nation or one section of the society against another in times of conflict, the responsibility of the media is magnified through the folds of society demands for more news information and analysis, and therefore its increased capacity to influence, debate and shape public opinion. Every word written or spoken by the media is a potential machete, bullet or bomb in the mind and hand of the victims and perpetrators. This raises serious question on what should be the role of the media in time of war or conflict. The ethical moral and professional obligation is to provide the public with accurate balance reporting that does not distort or suppress information. (*This Day Newspaper*Nov 1, 2001: 5).

Media practitioners most times tend to be biased in the reportage of conflict issues in the society. Individual differences, bribe, among other factors may be regarded as the reasons behind this. Asemah and Edegoh (2012) citing Galadima in Pate (2002) state that; “some of the reasons why a journalist becomes bias during conflict reportage among others may be: ownership, religion, ethnicity, interest, unprofessionalism and regionalism”.This implies that each newspaper in its regional form tries to outsmart the other by protecting the integrity of its region, and at the same time undermining the reputation of the other. Also both sides could be ready to sacrifice the truth for propaganda and sensational coverage.

It is in this light that Anyanwu (2004), posits that, no newspaper in Nigeria be it southern or northern based affiliated is immune from deep sentimental reportage especially as it relates to the coverage of conflict,they all pervert the story to their own advantage. In analyzing the press coverage of conflict, Abubakar (2006) says, “certain issues must be considered, first the ownership structure, in which Nigeria is pluralistic, the ownership structure of the Nigeria media exposes certain issues glaring features which explains why the media view issues differently and

take certain position. Secondly, the distribution of media in Nigeria has a preponderance that favours certain section of the country”.

The coverage of conflict in the Nigerian press tends to be chaotic, but this is not necessarily a bad thing as diversity of views of the press and vast exposure, the audience can establish the objective truth on any conflicting issue. But the policies and practices of the press infringe on some ethical principles of prominence, objectivity and balance, which journalist and the media are to uphold. According to Media World Year Book (2004), a resource guide to the Nigeria Media, “Nigeria has 50 magazines, including newsmagazines, soft- sells and trade journals. The country has also 50 private newspaper including dailies, weeklies, and vernacular. Government owned newspapers numbering 45 while community newspapers are 44”. Newspapers may follow us wherever we go, the biggest challenge for the press is how to appear responsible and win the heart and mind of the readers especially when covering issues on conflict. Thus it is not necessarily absolute objectivity that is craved for in any reportage, but the coverage that reflects the truth in terms of prominence, fairness and balance that will bring about peace and development.

The negative events of conflicts which have undermined progress in Tiv-land are universal. They are by no means only restricted in reality to the Tiv-people. Therefore, conflicts should be discouraged or avoided in all societies. In order to achieve this, it is imperative to foster a climate of good coverage, since conflict is attractive to the press, a common understanding would help and to bring the aggrieved parties together to negotiate for peace. Both the government and the communities have important roles to play in this regard.

1.1 Statement of the Research Problem

Mass media have been at the centre of conflict resolutions, setting agenda towards national integration and tolerance among the diverse people of Nigeria. One of such roles of the media is coverage of issues that bother on the people's perception about their socio-cultural realities, the need for them to live in peace with other citizens of various backgrounds and creating endured mutual understanding among the people for their own growth and development. This is because violence has no doubt been a hindrance to development, it leaves behind casualties, innocent people are killed, people are displaced, properties are destroyed, and crime rate is heightened. If the press as a watch dog of the society can resort to balance reportage with due regard to social responsibility, it will help in reducing the recurrence of violence to the barest minimum. Also bad framing always have negative consequences on the people, Though some literature have expressly accused the media for its involvement as source of hatred (Kurspahic, 2003) and in the emergence and escalation of conflicts (Kalyango & Vultee, 2012; Reuben, 2009), but most of them did not clearly identify how this is done.

However, one of the major challenges for today's print media is the problem of diversity in coverage of issues of security, leading to interests and misrepresentations in the coverage. Various media outfits cover conflict stories based on their operational principles or ideological leanings. More so, the content of some print media outlets have been largely influenced by regional or sectional loyalties. Consequently, this has continued to polarize the conflicting parties thereby making it difficult to reach a sustainable reconciliation. There is therefore an urgent need to review the approaches used by these media outfits especially in the area of covering conflict situations.

It is against this backdrop that this study evaluates the coverage of the Tiv/Fulani crisis by gathering opinions, analyzing *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* newspapers and their roles in controlling the conflict. Also, the study takes a look at the problems emanating from the coverage by the newspapers and the differences in coverage, slant of stories and prominence given to the crisis in the coverage by the two newspapers.

1.2 Aim of the Study

The research explores ways through which print media can better deploy headlines and inside stories towards conflict resolution.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To ascertain how *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* newspapers reported major Tiv/Fulani crisis from March 2014 to March 2015.
2. To determine the dominant frames used by *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard*, in constructing those headlines/stories about the Tiv/Fulani crisis.
3. To ascertain the extent to which newspaper report provides objective and balance information about the attacks to their readers.
4. To examine the extent to which media report of the conflict has enhanced or negatively affected the resolution of the conflict.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions are as follows;

1. How did *Daily Trust* and the *Vanguard* newspapers report major Tiv/Fulani conflict?
2. What are the dominant frames used by *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* newspaper about the Tiv/Fulani crisis?

3. What is the level of objectivity and balance in the newspaper reportage of the crisis?
4. What role do the print media (*Daily Trust* and *Vanguard*) play in resolving the crisis?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study evaluates the coverage of the Tiv/Fulani crisis by *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* newspapers. It becomes necessary to carry out the study because of the need for the media to serve as tools for national integration and cohesion, geared towards peaceful co-existence among the diverse population of Nigeria, and without peace development cannot take place. Also, this study is needed due to the incessant reports of clashes between herdsmen and farmers across the country. The recommendations of this study will benefit the press, the government, conflict resolution experts, development facilitators and the body of knowledge on conflict in Nigeria.

This study will aid in policy formulation and implementation for management of security issues, national integration and crisis management. It also serves as a guide for prevention of future occurrence of ethnic crisis as well as a blueprint for options through which herdsmen can have grazing land. In addition, the press will benefit from this study in the area of professionalism and ethical practices, in line with the journalism code of ethics, while it also serves as a guide for reference purposes for conflict resolution experts towards peaceful resolution of ethnic crisis in Nigeria. For development facilitators, the study improves their efforts at meeting the goal of peaceful society as a support for sustainable development in Nigeria. Furthermore, the study adds to the existing body of knowledge by serving as a research base for development communication scholars, researchers and students.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study deals with assessing newspapers coverage of violent conflict situations, interviewing reporters and via Focus Group Discussion on its effect on some Nigerian communities. The newspapers that are considered are *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard*, both of which are national dailies and published within the period of the study, they represent north and south and they are widely in circulation. It is centered on how effective communication of the print media could bring about peace and development in some Benue state local government. The crisis to be studied is the Tiv/Fulani crisis and the period of study is from March 2014 to March 2015. This period was selected because the crisis was endemic. The study focuses on the crisis between farmers and Fulani cattle rearers in Guma, Logo and Gwer West Local Government Area because it's regarded as the worst hit areas of the state. Benue state is known to have a fertile soil for farming, and the three local governments' areas originated from the different rivers in the state, which are river Guma, river Logo and river Gwer West. Therefore, the availability of the fertile soil and water which has boost agriculture has made the state attractive to the Fulani for grazing.

1.7 Limitation to the Study

The Tiv/ Fulani mayhem has been an issue that has lingered for several years now. Aside Guma, Logo and Gwer West local government area of Benue state, there are other several local government such as, Agatu, Otukpo, Buruku, Obi, Ukum, etc. that are affected by the herdsmen and farmers crisis. Therefore, the three local government looked at is just an aspect; we have for instance, the Agatu-Fulani crisis. The period of 13 months and the few local government areas covered in this study may not be adequate enough to know the broader role the print media has played in combating the menace in the local government left out by this study.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 Review of the Related Literature

Having known that knowledge is accumulated over series of researches, it is important that every study, no matter the field must be based on the building blocks of previous researches, it is to this effect that Wimmer and Domnick (2000) says “a researcher who conduct an investigation without regards to data that have already been done is said to have failed on his research.” Therefore this chapter deals with documented knowledge related to the field of the Nigeria press coverage of conflict especially that of Tiv/Fulani crisis as carried out by other researchers with the attempt to adding knowledge to this fieldsof study.Furthermore two basic theories namely; social responsibility and framing theory will be used for this study.

2.1 Concept of Conflict

When people think of the word conflict, they often think of wars or violence. However, conflict exists at all levels of society in all sorts of situations. Conflict is defined as the pursuit of unharmonious interest and goals by different groups, it is the struggle resulting from incompatible or opposing needs, drives, wishes, external or internal demands, Musaborner (2011). The word conflict, has been derived from the Latin word ‘Confligere’; which means to Strike or attack altogether. In the present world, there are conflicts found everywhere. Each conflict has a reason behind it. These conflicts usually occur when two or more individuals or groups feel they have irreconcilable differences, or they feel that their needs, interests or wants are threatened by the existence of the other groups’ demands. Hence,clashes become inevitable. People all over the world, have different perspectives on life, and its problems, depending upon the environment in which they live.

Conflict hastended to be a universal character in every episode of human history. According to Galadima (2002:56)“conflict is a fact of human existence and it is an opportunity to change.”Thus, since conflict is another issue of life, it then follows that conflict is one destructive engine that runs the society, Olawade (2004). In view of this, it is important to state here that no society or people are immune from conflict, in fact literature on conflict have shown that the phenomenon is not limited to one segment of people or section of the world. Vissrer (1999) assert that “crisis transcends geographical and cultural boundary cutting across race and ideology.” In a similar vein,Luce and Raiffa(1957) posit that,“conflict is a theme that has occupied the thinking of man more and more than any other with exception of God and Love”. Ikpe (2004) went on to say that conflict occurs in different forms of setting and at different levels of human interactions. This means that the major elements of human conflict are incompatibility of goals, opposition in human relations, interdependence and interaction.

2.2 Conflict Theory

This theory is known as the pluralistic concept of the state, is critiqued by another school known as the conflict school. This school argues that the state mediating this theory is not realistic. That there is nothing like harmony in a society, particularly where the means of producing the material things of life are controlled by a few. That this few exercise influence in the society, the state and as such, these interests are reduced into two conflicting interest. The class interest of the controllers of state power and the class interest of those that do not control state power. The press accepts articles from intellectuals and from all classes of people. In Nigeria today, the government may own the media of expression, the press, the radio, and television. The state information service therefore defends the interest and opinions of those in power. Opposition against this interest can be regarded as seditious, as unlawful, as defamatory

and so forth. If the opposition takes an ideological stand that is contrary to the ideological stand of the ruling class that controls the mass media, the crisis deepens. Media practitioners therefore, in the service of the state become helpless, they have no option than to continue in service of the state which controls the mass media, and however there is independent press in the country.

Luckily, in Nigeria despite some worries in some cases, some journalists are developing a critical attitude by relying on accepted ethics of journalism. The Nigeria press organization, a body embracing the newspaper proprietors association, the guild of editors and the union of journalists enunciated the following principles;

- i. That the moral duty of every journalist is to have respect for truth and to publish or prepare for publication only the truth.
- ii. That is the duty of the practitioner to publish only fact never to suppress such fact as he knows, never to falsify either to suit own purpose or any other purpose.
- iii. That is the duty of the journalist to refuse any reward for publishing or suppressing news comments other than salary and allowances legitimately earned in the discharge of his professional duties.
- iv. That the journalist shall employ all legitimate means in the collection of news and he shall defend at all times the right to free access provided that due regard is paid to privacy of individuals.
- v. That once information has been collected and published, the practitioner must, shall observe the universally accepted principles of secrecy and shall not disclose the source of information obtained in confidence;
- vi. That it is the duty of the practitioners to correct any published information found to be incorrect. Akinfeleye (2002).

From the above analysis of concept and theory of conflict, it could be understood that one recurring and constantly present in man's history is his agitations in one form or the other. These agitations most times are in form of conflict which sometimes degenerates into violence. Hence, conflict may become an unimportant part of human existence and could hinder societal development.

In portraying conflict in a negative light, Nwagbara (2004) says, "conflict can be detrimental to the general well-being of the parties involved. It can divert effort from goal attainment, deplete resources especially time and money, can affect the parties involved psychologically". Furthermore it should be known at this point that conflict has a cause and effect in relationship. This means that conflict do not just happen, "certain conditions give rise to it" (Nwagbara, 2004).

2.3 Conflict and Development Communication

The relevance of communication to development is an established paradigm in development studies. It is borne out of the realization that development is humancentered and thus requires communication for its full realization. FAO (1994:5) points out that "communication is the key to human development and the thread that binds people together". This corroborates Moemeka's (1991) view that development efforts cannot be successful without planned communication because its flow determines the direction and pace of dynamic social development. It is the agglutination of communication and development that birthed the word development communication. And how can this be possible in a society were conflict is striving?

Wherever there are people, there always will be conflict. People have to deal with conflict everyday; one could say that when conflict arises, it is because of failed communications. Almost all conflicts involve communication problems, as both have a cause and an effect. Misunderstandings resulting from poor communication can easily cause a conflict or make it

worse. Furthermore, once a conflict has started, communication problems often develop because people in conflict may not communicate with each other as frequently, as openly, and as accurately as they do when relationships are not strained. Thus communication is central to most conflict situations. Listeners may also be sources of communication problems. People often fail to listen carefully. They may assume they know what the other person is saying or will say (because they have heard it before, or they assume that one person is "just like" another person from the same group). Also, when people are in conflict, they often concentrate more on what they are going to say in response to their opponent's statement, rather than listening to their opponents' words with full attention. The result, again, is misunderstandings, and often unnecessary escalation of a conflict, thereby leading to poor communication.

When two or more groups meet in order to resolve an issue or conflict it could be seen as a forum where ideas are shared to end conflict and discuss the way forward that is why Coldevin (1987) notes that development communication mobilizes people to participate in development activities. He defines development communication as “the systematic utilization of appropriate communication channels and techniques to increase people's participation in development and to inform, motivate, and train rural populations, mainly at the grassroots level”. So in order to end a conflict, right communication must take place, so when people are mobilized it is expected that vital contributions are made that is geared towards development or social change, corroborating this fact is Okunna (2002) who sees development communication as the entire process of communication with a specific group of people who require development (target audience), with the purpose of achieving the social change that should change their lives in a positive way, thus giving them better living conditions.

A conflict may arise when two or more people or groups endeavor to pursue goals which are mutually inconsistent. What is typical for a conflict is communication. When communication is closed and there is insincerity, the result is a dearth of information or a proliferation of conscious misinformation. Secretiveness and insincerity grows. Threats and pressure replace open debate and persuasion. (Morton Deutsch: *Konfliktregelung*. München 1976) posits that when neighbours feud, lover's quarrel or nation's war, the predictable remedy prescribed by the voices of reason is communication. The prevailing view is that when faced with conflict, communicating is always the right thing to do. So how has *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* newspaper communicated effectively to end the Tiv/Fulani crisis since both papers were set up to give the society a better life.

The positive role of communication in the amelioration of conflict seems so obvious that the premise is seldom given serious examination. Why should communicating be so helpful? Under what conditions will communication reduce conflict? An attempt to answer such questions will be part of the role the print media has played in communication resolution that has been communicated in order to resolve the Tiv/Fulani conflict. If it is conflict which holds back development, then policymakers should focus on controlling conflict, that is increase military and police interventions to reduce conflict. But if it is low income and high poverty which cause conflict, then the focus should be on direct policy interventions to reduce poverty and human misery. In India for instance, there is evidence that states that had higher incomes and fewer police had less violence than ones that had more police and less income (Justino, 2009). There is also some evidence that level inequalities (inequality between identity groups) can be a factor in causing conflict (Stewart, 2008). This suggests that it is not enough just to have "development" but it must be shared fairly across groups. This could be the reason why some persons are

agitating for allocation of the land for the herders in any area they choose to. So it is important to state here that, the Nigerian government should as a matter of urgency confront the Tiv/Fulani problem with sincerity and purpose. In fact, issues that are so loudly echoed by the numerous states in the country should be subjected to dialogue and conference of ethnic nationalities; since it appears that the phenomenon of herdsmen attack may persist for a long time. There is an urgent need for constant monitoring, dialogue and informed public policy to minimize its negative impact on the country that is budding democracy; in view of this study, *Vanguard* and *Daily Trust* newspaper frames may prompt some conflict behaviour, it is important that understanding of information flows in a conflict prone society like Nigeria is vital to conflict prevention and early cautions

2.4 General Overview of the Press

Mass media are uniquely modern means of public communication and much of the importance is that it is the determinant of whatever decision, perception, public discourse and the political action. However, mass media which comprise newspaper, magazines, radio, television and other means of communication cannot operate in total isolation; in essence, the society is the lifeblood in which they exist, Wimmer (2000). Hence, the media stands as a reflection and heartbeat of the society, the action of any given society is been wheeled by the activities of the mass media. It was in this vein that Jefferson, a onetime president of America, said "...I would rather have a government without a legislature, than a government without a newspaper...." This statement buttresses the effectiveness of mass media in every thriving society. It gives a clearer picture of the place of Mass Media in the society- as 'a fiber that holds together'. Murphy (1977) sums up the importance of communication as "oil, a glue and dynamite".

More so, in the late 40s and early 60s, Everett Rogers' theory of diffusion of innovation was explicitly achieved by the holistic use of the mass media strategy to expand economic activity which was being equated with development and a set of modernizing variables. Schramm (1964) also sees the mass media as a means by which the masses would eventually break free of their stupefying bonds of traditionalism termed as anti-developmental. Mass media was not only used as a tool for diffusion of innovation or incorporation of western values, but also used by developing countries to protest, agitate and turn down oppressive tendencies of the West.

Before the popularization of the mass media in Nigeria, there were other means of communication known as the traditional communication, which incorporated the Gongman, town criers, Horman, ministrel, storyteller, traditional leaders, social groups, and the dissemination of information was through the aforementioned local channels. The incapability of the traditional system to reach a wider audience either in terms of number and population was a great challenge the mass media overcame. Nonetheless, the traditional system, which also forms the basis for diffusion network may see the mass media in its universality that opens a 24 hours vista of communication to the anonymous, heterogeneous society and large audience across national and international frontiers.

2.5 Mass Media

Mass media in its ubiquitous nature have various facets, variously defined by different scholars. But for the purpose of this research, the researcher would be analyzing the definition of McQuail (2000), who sees Mass Media "as a means of communication that operated on a large scale, reaching and involving virtually everyone in a society to a greater or lesser degree". He also speculates that mass media is an organized means of communicating openly and at a

distance to many receivers within a short time. It implies therefore, that the mass media are impersonal communication sources that reach large audience.

Drawing from McQuail's description of mass media, it is obvious that the guiding principle behind his elucidation of mass media is strictly the modernization theory where every action or activities is top-down vertical, the messages are only passed down to unknown and large audience without due recourse to their needs, history and even responses. The impersonal communication gives no platform for interest, trial, evaluation and adoption of innovation. The innovation is been passed through the mass media which information are in all sense persuasive because the individuals are reduced to mere objects whose voices are not considered important but annihilated, erased and sidelined, (as seen in Authoritarian media theory). The media in this context is not positioned to the engagement and direct participation of the down trodden but only transmit messages to the oppressed or 'persuasibles' projecting the voiceless people as simply passive recipients.

McQuail's position of Mass Media is such that it has immense power over the society because their impact would not be constrained by other competing social and psychological influences on individuals, due to its large scale coverage and organized pattern of communication. The interests and needs of the receivers are not put into play, no means of interaction in small scale setting, centralization of information and absence of horizontality. He defined mass media as the strength and solidarity of the ordinary people when organized for collective purpose. Thus, the definition no doubt has been the dominant paradigm and has been practiced widely since the mid-18th centuries to date as the conventional Mass Media. The model on media effects, conceptualized the impact of mass media on individuals as direct,

powerful and uniform, simply reinforcing the powerful view of the media effect, the magic bullet theory and hypodermic needle theory.

2.6 Press Framing

The concept of framing presupposes the way news content is shaped and conceptualized by journalists, which has the capacity of creating a corresponding effect on the audience. Entman (1993) summarily says, “Framing refers to selection and salience”.

This means the way the Nigeria press frame their report when covering conflict could either bind the nation together or plunge the nation into irreparable division. Tejumaiye (2005; 150) amplified this view saying, “the influence and power of the press in building the nation or destroying a nation state particularly a complex multicultural and multi-linguistic society such as Nigeria is possible with its framing”.

2.7 Press Freedom

The free press and the freedom to publish and distribute information require the liberty to invest in information as a marketable commodity. Okoye (2007) notes that, “press freedom is an essential ingredient of the democratic culture. The higher the degree of press freedom the greater the degree of democracy its citizens enjoy”. It is the system of journalistic practice that is free from both external and internal control. Ndolo (2005) defines a free press “as the press that is free from government and the reason for such a press is to form stability of government and to the economy growth and quality of life”. According to Onagoruwa (1985), press freedom is the right of the press to publish without being subjected to any form of intimidation, molestation or blackmail. For Okoye (2007), press freedom is the liberty to gather, hold, express and

disseminate information and opinion without official or unofficial restrictions via written and unwritten laws.

Since press freedom has to do with the liberty to distribute or disseminate all forms of information without any form of censorship, it is very important in every society; in fact any society that cherishes development must appreciate and accept press freedom. Okoye (2007), observe that “if there is no press freedom at any time, it is not only journalist that will be hurt, but the entire society will bear the brunt of it”. The import of Okoye’s assertion, is that press freedom is not only important to media practitioners it’s also important to the society at large. Jacdonmi (2008) says that “press freedom is an essential element of every Free State and modern democracy as the survival of any democratic government depends on the volume of flow of information and opinion. Okoye (2007), observe thus;

In every society freedom of the press is essential to transparency, accountability, good governance and rule of law, It cannot be suppressed without due consequences for social cohesion and stability when it is sacrificed. Whatever the reason involved, the chances are that, conflict is not far down the road”. (p. 17).

Therefore, from the above it could be deduced that the press freedom is vital because it will enable us to have a strengthened democracy, vital in crucial development of a nation, press freedom leads to the exposure of corrupt public officials, it also help to reduce conflict, in that democracy and national stability are enhanced by policies of openness, which engender greater public trust in their representatives.

2.8 Benue State (Tiv)

Benue is a state in the mid-belt region of Nigeria with a population of about 4,253,641 in the 2006 census, Idoma and Tiv, are spoken predominantly. There are other ethnic groups, which includes: Igede and Abakwa, Jukun, Hausa, Akweya and Nyifon. With its capital at Makurdi,

Benue is a rich agricultural region; some of the crops grown there are potatoes, cassava, soya bean, guinea corn, flax, yams, sesame, rice, and ground nuts. It has 23 local government areas. History has it that the Tiv emerged into their present location from the Southeast. “Coming down”, as they put it, they met the Fulani. The earliest recorded European contact was in 1852, when Tiv were found on the banks of the Benue.

In 1879 their occupation at the riverbanks was about the same as in 1950. British occupying forces entered Tivland from the east in 1906, when they were called in to protect a Hausa and Jukun enclave that Tiv had attacked. The Tiv Nation is known to be very populous arguably ranking as number four in the country. Tiv people have always been committed to the unity and progress of Nigeria. The Tiv have in the past, demonstrated this commitment right from the colonial period when the fore fathers fought alongside others for world peace and laboured under strenuous circumstances to build and sustain Nigeria’s colonial infrastructure. The Tiv provided labour on the tin mines, on the Jos Plateau and were responsible for much of the agricultural produce which sustained the colonial enterprise. In post-independence Nigeria, the Tiv have continued to contribute to the country’s food security and were at the forefront of fighting a three year civil war (1967-1970) with innumerable loss of Tiv lives in order to keep the country together.

Given the faith in the unity of the country, the Benue people have lived in peace with other Nigerians especially their nationals in the Middle Benue Valley and even allowed non indigenes to settle amongst them as family. The Tiv have never left their ancestral lands to attack, annex and occupy their conterminous neighbours and their land.

In the legal History of Benue State, there is no document and or instrument whatsoever that can be identified to have created, designated or set aside any portion of land for purposes of grazing in Benue State. No such law or instrument can be found under the laws of the federation.

Map of Benue State



Source: 2017, fingermasterweb.com (retrieved 14 august 2017)

2.9The Fulani

The Fulani people are located mostly in northern part of Nigeria. With a population of over 30 million, they have the largest population in West Africa because of their intermarriages and constant interaction with different peoples. The Fulani are said to have migrated from Chad, Cameroun, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso and Guinea. The Fulani is an ethnic group of the West

African savannah. Some of them live in town and cities and engage in farming and trading. A large portion of them are cattle herders. Though the series of event called the Fulani Jihad, the Fulani conquered a greater part of northern Nigeria areas between 1804 and 1810 (Horton, 1972, Adeleye 1971, Last 1976). Among the places they did not conquer were many areas in central Nigeria, in present day plateau, Benue, Taraba, Nasarawa and Kogi state. The frequency and depredations of Fulani slave raids helped to make central Nigeria, despite its vast farming lands of the sparsely populated region of Nigeria, Udo, (1989: 22- 23). The British conquered northern Nigeria in the first decade of the 20th century. Thus they brought an end to Fulani rule in the area and to their depredation in central Nigeria. The Fulani were said to have been peaceful in moving around with their cattle, but as time passed, communities begin to have issues with them over their cattle trampling on their farm lands eating up and destroying their farmlands.

2.10 Fulani/Benue Crisis, How it Started

The Tiv people of the middle region share a long history of peaceful co- existence with the Fulanis of the northern Nigeria. The two groups are known to be involved in business relationships for a very long time. Oral account among the Tiv people has it that the Tivs and the Fulanis were at one point in time bosom friends, who lived and tended cattle together, when the Tiv decided to migrate to the middle belt region, they demanded for their cattle from the Fulanis which they later obliged. After the successful migration, the Tiv who are known for their deep penchant for meat, upon the next meeting with the Fulanis declared “munchi”, meaning “I have eaten it”, a name that has stuck with them for years. Unfortunately the once convivial relationship has become a vinegary one almost at all points when these former bed mates meet, there tends to arise a confrontation. The major issue behind the crisis is traceable to conflicts over grazing fields and farm lands placing pastoralists and farmers on a constant collusion, James Uzundu cited in Nigerian News World (2013).

According to Prof. Iyorwuese Hagher, January 10, 2013, an executive director of the Africa leadership institute, Dayton, Ohio, narrated that, “the crisis started on 23rd June 2001. Mr. Iortim Umande, an unarmed Tiv farmer, found Fulani cattle eating up his crops. When he tried to drive the cattle out of his farm, the Fulani took out his sword and killed him.” Consequently, this led to reprisals and counter reprisals by both the Fulanis and the Tiv till date. Though, according to another source, the National Vice-President of the cattle breeders association, Alhaji Hussaini Bosso, “their problem in Benue State started when Suswam publicly announced that he did not want them in the state. They said that his statement led to the massacre of their members in the state, and hundreds of their cattle were said to have been killed.

2.11. Report on Communal Crisis in Agatu Local Government Area of Benue state. 2/5/ 2013 by National Emergency Management Agency(NEMA)

There has been a case of communal crisis among the Agatu and Fulani people in Agatu Local Government Area of Benue State. The Agatu people alleged that the Fulanis attacked them in the night and this lead to loss of many lives, houses, farmlands and personal effects of the people. It was reliably gathered that the state government had made efforts to settle the differences between the two ethnic groups through dialogue but to no avail. The incident has being a continuous one which often results to colossal loses by both parties. However, the latest one is worse and there are two camps with over six thousand (6,000) people being displaced.

The assessment from NEMA North Central reveal that in eight villages over 500 houses were affected, about 24 people feared dead. The zonal officers, SEMA officials and the Red Cross personnel had made efforts to intervene, but they could not do so, based on the advice of the security officials in the areas. The worrisome part of the crisis is the inability of the zonal officers and other stakeholders to render assistance to the IDPs, most of whom are women, children, and the aged.

The clash between Fulani herdsmen and their mercenary counterpart which occurred on 28th March, 2013, the official of NEMA in conjunction with Benue State Emergency Management Agency (BSEMA) immediately proceeded to inspect the burnt houses and where the displaced people are taking refuge. The affected communities are as follows; Mbayer-Mbalagh, Yandev, Mbawa and Tyoshin ward

The Tiv farmers and Fulani cattle rearers accused each other of damaging/destroying farms and stealing cattle. The inability of the two warring ethnic groups resulted into vicious attack and counter-attack on each other, thereby leading to wanton destruction of lives and properties in various villages/communities in the three Local Government Areas of the State. Consequently, over nine thousand three hundred (9,300) persons are on camps. The remaining populations are taking refuge in the homes of relatives in the nearby suburbs. In view of the destruction to lives and properties during the crisis, the affected families and the various communities may need some support from the Federal Government to rebuild their houses.

**Communal Crisis Between Otobi and Ijegwu Communities of Otukpo and Obi Local
Government Areas of Benue State.**

The clash between the two communities claimed four lives, displaced a total of 471 persons and destroyed 231 houses in Ojantelle village in Otukpo. The entire community of Ojantelle Otukpo was completely destroyed. This includes their farmlands, stored food stuffs and cash. All the houses were razed down by fire. The entire community is now homeless and was residing with host families in the neighbouring village. In view of the destruction of lives and properties, the affected families may need support from the Federal Government to rebuild their houses.

Herdsmen attack 2014

Nature of disaster

Fulani nomads attacks in Kwande Local govt area

Date of occurrence 8th October 2014

Ten (10) kindred were affected

Maav, Ugbe/Ilyon, Ijorou, Yaav, Kendev, Nzaau, Mbaigbe, Mbakpe/Mbanav, Mbadura,
Mbaikyor-Ityurun

Number of persons displaced 3,897 IDPs

Number of deaths---- 10

Nature of damages ---- land and crops

Herdsmen Attacks In Guma, Logo, Buruku And Ukum Local Government Areas Of Benue State

Following the report received on the 24th June, 2016 by the NEMA North Central Zonal Office on clashes between Fulani Herdsmen and farmers in four (4) Local Government areas of Benue State requesting for Federal Government assistance to the victims, an assessment team was constituted and sent to Benue State to carry out an On-the-Spot assessment to determine the level of damages incurred. The clashes affected twelve (12) communities in four (4) Local Government Areas of the State namely; Guma, Logo, Buruku and Ukum. The teams of officials from NEMA, North Central zone arrived Makurdi on the 30th June, 2016 and were received by

the Executive Secretary State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) Benue State Mr. Boniface Ortese.

Guma Local Government Area:

The teams arrived and were received by the community head Mr. Cosmos Ucho, who narrated the incidence which he said, started since March 2014. The recent clash between the herdsmen and farmers occurred on the 20th June, 2016. The NEMA officials in conjunction with State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) officials immediately proceeded to assess the affected communities. Two Thousand Five Hundred and Fifty Four (2,554) persons were affected and displaced, ten (10) lives lost and properties worth millions of naira were destroyed. Four (4) communities were affected in Sangev ward area of Guma and these are: Tyulen, Tseghem, Mbashion, Segev.

The team also visited/inspected some of the camps settled by the Local Government officials. One of the camps is the Tseiko Primary School, located in Tyulen community. The Principal Relief Officer sympathized with the affected communities. He asked for God's protection, preservation and guidance upon the lives of the people. There is urgent need for intervention to alleviate the plight of the people as most of their sources of livelihood are destroyed leaving them in a dreadful and completely prostrate state.

Logo Local Government Area

The NEMA team and State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) arrived the camp at Gaambe Tiev NKST Science Primary School Anyiin Logo and were received by the community head Mr. John Umenger, who welcomed and thanked the team for the response. He

explained that their communities have been under severe attacks by Fulani Herdsmen which started on the 13th – 29th June, 2016 and it is still ongoing.

The severe herdsmen attacks which started by 2:30am on the 13th June, 2016 resulted in killings in Tombo district area of Logo Local Government caused massive destruction of properties, while many people sustained various degree of injuries and were taken to nearby clinics for treatment. About eleven (11) persons lost their lives immediately after the attack. The Fulani group is suspected to be behind this act because their boys have been found in the cause of the action. Twelve thousand three hundred and thirty four (12,334) persons were displaced and affected. Three districts with five villages were affected, these are: Mbazaar, Mbawyen, Myendyer. This has left the victims overwhelmed and totally handicapped with women, children and the aged being the worst hit.

Buruku Local Government Area:

The NEMA team and the Executive Secretary of State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) Benue State, Mr. Boniface Ortese with some other staff arrived Buruku Local Government area to assess the damages incurred. Most people are living in host communities either with relatives or in the Catholic Church. The Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Asue narrated their misfortune stated that, there has been series of attacks by the herdsmen which resulted to killing of 45 people and massive destruction of properties worth millions of naira. The people of Buruku who are great farmers and are now living in fear of further attacks, as a result they are unable to farm against the next harvest season. Two Thousand Seven Hundred and Fifty Four (2,754) persons were displaced, two communities were seriously affected these are: Agwabi, Tombo Mballagh.

The activities of the herdsmen and their herds of cattle pose serious threat to security in the area, the Parish Priest of St Mathias Catholic Church Rev.Fr. Asue said NEMA is timely to see the destructions and nefarious activities of the herdsmen in the area themselves. The destructions of the towns' farmland by the herdsmen have imposed untold hardship on the people of the community who are mainly farmers. The attack is still ongoing so some areas are not accessible. The Principal Relief and Rehabilitation Officer thank the people for welcoming his team and prayed for God's guidance upon them to prevent further attacks. He urged the victims to be prayerful and very soon all these problems will be in the past and they will be free from the Fulani attacks.

Ukum Local Government Area:

The NEMA team and officials of the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) arrived Afia Council Hall Area of Ukum Local Government and were received by the Commissioner for Agriculture Hon. Tersoo Kpalai. He narrated briefly the unfortunate incidents that befell the people of Ukum, who have been living peacefully with the Fulanis over the years. This situation is ongoing. Massive destructions of properties worth millions of naira, farm lands and unharvested crops are on-going. Killings and loss of lives of one hundred and seven (107) occurred while four thousand, five hundred and eighty three (4,583) persons were displaced and affected. The situation is pathetic giving the poor living condition of the victims. Most of the areas and communities that were affected are; Vaase, Gbeji, Mbawaa.

Most of the affected persons (victims) came from Tar village that share boundaries with Wukari, Taraba State. Some of the victims have been in Gbeji Community area of Ukum. The Hon. Commissioner commended National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) for the

humanitarian works going on all over the country and prayed also for God's protection and guidance. He further appealed for government assistance for the affected people to enable them recover from their losses saying the destroyed properties cannot be recovered but the relief assistance from the Government will go a long way. In view of the magnitude of the disaster, the affected victims (persons) will need support from the Federal Government in other to alleviate the level of their sufferings. The observations include:

1. The attack is ongoing
2. It is observed that the team discovered some existing camps across the Local Government Area.

It concluded that, the Executive Secretary appealed to the victims to continue to be patient with the present issue of Fulani herdsmen attacks which will soon be over as the Federal Government is seriously looking into the matter of the problem which is not peculiar to Benue State only and a bill will soon be passed into law in that effect where there will be restrictions. Federal Government should support the entire communities affected because the magnitude of the damage is beyond the capacity of the State and Local Government. The Director General may wish to consider and approve relief items to provide succor for the affected victims of the various disasters, please. The following materials were recommended for immediate intervention. Food Items includes:, 1,200 bags of rice, 600 bags of maize, 600 bags of guinea corn, 600 bags of millet, 300 cartons of Indomie, 100 cartons of milk, 100 cartons Milo, 100 cartons of 3-in-1 tea, 100 bags of sugar, 100 kegs of palm oil, 100 kegs of vegetable oil and non-Food Items are 1,000 pieces of blankets, 1,000 pieces of nylon mats.

With the level of damage and magnitude of the disaster which may be beyond the capacity of the State/Local Governments affected, the Federal Government through National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) should provide succor to the victims in order to alleviate their present condition. And communicating development in this affected state should not cease as it may be a veritable tool in ending the conflict.

2.12 Conflict Resolution

Since to a large extent conflict is inevitable, therefore there is need to resolve and manage conflict in order to have headway in a society. This is seen by Miller (2003: 8), “as a variety of approaches aimed at terminating conflicts through the constructive solving of problems, distinct from management or transformation of conflict”. Miller (2001:21) indicates that, by conflict resolution it is expected that the deep rooted sources of conflict are addressed and resolved, and behaviour is no longer violent nor are attitudes hostile any longer while the structure of the conflict has been changed. Mitchell and Banks (1996) use conflict resolution to refer to;

- An outcome in which the issues in an existing conflict are satisfactorily dealt with through a solution that is mutually acceptable to the parties, self-sustaining in the long run and productive of a new positive relationship between parties that were previously hostile adversaries.
- Any process or procedure by which such outcome is achieved.

Putting these ideas together it can be said that in principle; Conflict resolution connotes a sense of finality where the parties to a conflict are mutually satisfied with the outcome of a settlement and the conflict is resolved in a true sense.

Where conflict management is the process of reducing the negative and destructive capacity of conflict through a number of measures working with parties involved in that conflict. Best (2006:95) posit that there is a term sometimes used synonymously with resolution, “conflict regulation” it covers that entire area of handling conflict positively at different stages including those effort made to prevent conflict. Burton (1990) further opines that, the term is used to connote the containment of conflict is through steps introduced to promote conditions in which collaborative and valued relationship control the behaviour of conflict parties. Thus the word conflict management is perhaps an admission of the reality that conflict is inevitable, but that not all conflicts can always be resolved. Therefore what can practitioners do to manage and regulate them? For instance a peace resolution organized by a non-governmental organization called Women Environmental Programme, (WEP) (2013), provided the Fulanis and farmers with an opportunity to bare their minds. This was underscored by the picture presented to the WEP team, in which the Fulanis complained that they were heavily taxed for grazing after they had paid homage to chiefs, youth and vigilante groups in Guma Local Government Area of Benue State, but at the end of the meeting no action was taken. Many are of the view that the Fulani herdsman will continue to clash with Tiv farmers as long as they graze their cattle in densely populated areas. (Nigeria news watch 2013).

2.13 The Role of the Media in Conflict Resolution

The media can play a role in resolving and managing conflict by performing their function of watch-dog of the society. There is no conflict so great that it dominates the freedom of a nation and its people which cannot be settled by the media (Anyanwu, 2004:113). So the media is a veritable tool in conflict resolution, as Obot (2004) went further to state that, the mass media serve as a tool for conflict exacerbation or vehicle for conflict resolution. The growing

recognition of the role the media can play in escalating conflict living many people to wonder how this same media can play a constructive role in conflict resolution. Audience perceptions about conflict are as a result of framing about that conflict in the media. Anyanwu (2004) in the same vein asserts that “the media can both generate and solve conflict. This is to say the media in conflict situation cannot operate as neutral towards peace. It must be decisive when faced with such situation”.

Though there is an assertion that media and its content are controlled and used for specific purposes (as seen in political economy theory of the media),one may not really agree to this idea because the perception that journalist should be neutral should overcome. The media as a key player in the conflict must report in a way to promote peace. In view of this Obot (2004), assert that while covering conflict, the mass media should exhibit high level of social responsibility. Abubakar (2006) is of the view that, as nation builders, especially during the time of conflict the media is vital so that they could help in reducing the tension among the citizenry rather than escalating it. The roles of the media in conflict resolution as summed up by experts: Wimmer and Dominic (2006), McQuail (2005), are as follows:

- Communicating the process of negotiations to the constituencies involved and providing a forum for ongoing dialogue.
- Media content should promote national interest rather than ethnicity or religious sentiments.
- Promoting and ensuring accountable and transparent government in the society.

To this end, media can equally encourage balancing of power through helping the parties to get to the negotiating table; media generally set an agenda for the audience by placing

prominence on a particular issue and constant reportage of that issue. Its content can strengthen a weaker party as well as weaken a stronger party in the eyes of the public. This function can encourage parties to negotiate when they otherwise might not have done so (Akonmaye, 2014:38). As Wimmer (2004) rightly puts it, the media can also help to reduce suspicions through their reportage of contested issues and increase trust through reporting of stories that illustrate that accommodation is possible. This is so as it is to a great extent believed that lack of trust between parties contributes to conflict activities.

2.14 Problem of the Press in Reporting Conflict

Objectivity is very important, though sometimes hard to achieve due to the fact that it may be difficult to detect. A more comprehensive guide line for balance press coverage of crisis is provided by Egbon (1994), as follows;

- Suppression of the truth might create a false sense of security.
- Sensationalism that could over blow the crisis should be avoided
- Press freedom must be limited where national survival is threatened or where press freedom conflict with constitutional right is.
- Collective national interest must supersede parochial ethnic and individual interest.

In order to resolve this kind of report, fanatical and bias judgments of journalism must be reduced to the barest minimum especially considering the heterogonous nature of a society like Nigeria. It is against this backdrop that Galadima (2002; 66) posits that, avoiding the use of value laden expression such as “freedom fighters, ethnic militia, Hausa-Fulani domination, Islamist militants, religious fanatic etc,” will go a long way in avoiding or mellowing down volatile

situations. To conclude this, Gambo (1994) cited in Galadima and Enighe (2001) advice that “there is need for the press to rise to the challenge of constructive and balance journalism”.

Some Pictures of the conflict



FIG 1. Massacre in Gwer West



FIG,2; Massacre in Guma



FIG,3; Fulani man with a gun



FIG; 4 David mark in Agatu



FIG,5; Destroyed village in Guma

Source; 2015 field work internment source on Benue Genocide

2.14 Resolving the Tiv/Fulani Crisis

A special meeting on the incessant clashes between Tiv Farmers and Fulani herdsmen was convened on Saturday, 26th May, 2012 by His Excellency, Rt. Hon. Dr. Gabriel Torwua Suswam, the then Executive Governor of Benue State in the Banquet Hall of Government House Makurdi.

The meeting was chaired by His Excellency, Dr. Gabriel Suswam, the Executive Governor of

Benue State, and attended by His Eminence, Alhaji Sa'ad Mohammed Abubakar¹¹¹, the Sultan of Sokoto; His Royal Majesty, Orchivirigh Alfred Akawe Torkula, Tor Tiv; the Emir of Gombe, and other traditional rulers from Benue and Nasarawa states. The Nasarawa state delegation was led by the Secretary to the State Government, Alhaji Hamza Elayo. Other delegations to the meeting include the Tiv Cultural Association, Taraba State; the Fulani Community in Benue state; Miyetti Allah Fulani Cattle breeders Association Nasarawa state; the Christian Community in Benue State led by the Catholic Auxillary Bishop of Makurdi Diocese, Rt. Revd. William Avenya and the Bishop of the Church of Nigeria(Anglican Communion) form Makurdi Diocese, Rt. Revd. Nathan Nyom.

2.15 Deliberations

The various participant and delegations to the meeting-the Sultan of Sokoto, the Tor Tiv, representative of the Ochi'doma, Traditional Rulers in Benue and Nasarawa states, the Nasarawa state government delegation, the Christian Community in Benue state all took turns to make presentations in the meeting. The meeting among others noted the following:

1. The convocation of the special peace meeting was a clear indication of the commitment of the leaders and all parties to ensuring an end to the perennial clashes between Fulani Herdsmen and Tiv Farmers.
2. That the problem under discuss was not one between the people of the two states but rather a conflict between the farmers and herdsmen of Tiv and Fulani ethnic groups respectively.
3. The need for peaceful co-existence of the two tribes who need each other in their main economic pre-occupations of farming and animal keeping.

2.16 Resolutions

After an exhaustive deliberation of all issues the meeting resolved as follows:

- i. The meeting called for immediate ceasefire in the crisis and directed the Fulanis and Tiv to demobilize their militias' at the border communities and desist from carrying dangerous weapons.
- ii. Both the Fulani and Tiv who have incurred severe loses over the past months should forget the past and as part of the sacrifices to bring about peace.
- iii. The meeting emphasized the need for dialogue by all the political and traditional leaders to create better understanding of the issues.
- iv. Conflict resolution committees should be set up immediately at all levels to swing into action to nip in the bud any potential or real threat to peace and security within the localities.
- v. The meeting resolved that the Fulani and Tiv communities must live in peace henceforth and anybody engaged in any act capable of breaching the peace should be arrested and treated as common criminals in accordance with the laws of the land.
- vi. A committee of three Traditional Rulers from the Border Communities in Benue and Nasarawa respectively including Ter Nagi, Ter Guma and Ter Makurdi (Benue) and the Chiefs of Kwandare, Adudu and Akpanaja was constituted and directed to meet soon to work out details of implementing the resolutions reached at the meeting.
- vii. His Excellency, Dr Gabriel Suswam offered to assist the borders surveillance teams in the discharge of their duties.
- viii. The Governor of Benue State and his Nasarawa State Counterpart to receive the report of an earlier committee set up on the crisis on Wednesday 30th May, 2012 at

Yelewata. Similarly, the Sultan's Committee on Farmers clashes with Fulani Herdsmen should resume sitting and submit its report to the Sultan as soon as possible.

- ix. Cattle rustling by Tiv youths shall henceforth be considered a criminal offence and treated as such. Similarly, Fulani Herdsmen should desist from taking laws into their hands but should report their grievances to their host Traditional Rulers.
- x. Security agencies from both Benue and Nasarawa states to undertake a fact-finding operation to identify possible camps of militia with the view to dislodging same and to henceforth be proactive in their operations to avoid reoccurrence of the conflict.
- xi. They called on the Federal Government and the National Assembly to as a matter of urgency provide grazing areas for Cattles as well as animal tracks to reduce the incidence of the conflict between Herdsmen and Farmers.
- xii. Fulani Herdsmen should respect traditional and constituted authorities and seek to be in harmony with their host communities.
- xiii. Fulani Ardors should be appointed in communities where they do not exist to create channels of communication.
- xiv. The meeting commended the Facilitator, His Excellency, Dr Gabriel Suswam, the Sultan of Sokoto and all delegations for the numerous sacrifices made to attend the meeting. (Nigeria News World, 2013).

2.17 Critique/ Identification of Gap

The power of the media in the last 21st century society cannot be over-emphasized. Besides the fact that they have become pervasive, the media have continued to exert unprecedented influence on their users today, because “in many ways we are reliant and dependent upon regular contact with the mass media for information, opinion, entertainment,

ideas and a range of other resources, which are deeply bound up with our continuing attempts to maintain a coherent sense of who and where we think we are” (O’Sullivan, 1998: -03). In other words, the media act as powerful agencies capable of shaping and directing public and private understanding of the world and awareness of the social, economic, moral, cultural, technological and political affairs. In this manner, the media have been termed ‘consciousness industries’, involved in the manufacture or management of the public sphere of consensus and consent (O’Sullivan, 1998:19).

Therefore, it can be said that the media also play valuable role in shaping public perception of conflict, which in turn, creates a corresponding effect on their audience. More so, the media can play a role in exacerbating the conflict through ominous reporting, and can also ameliorate violent conflict situation by setting agenda for the promotion of peace and harmony in the coverage especially in relation to Tiv/Fulani crisis in Benue state.

Although the media have contributed in no small measure in the coverage of Tiv/Fulani crisis, there seem to be dearth of scholarly works dedicated to the study of the mass media and Tiv/Fulani crisis in Benue state. Corroborating this assertion, Alali (2003) laments that’,

Even though Africa has experienced so many issues of conflict which has resulted to so many injuries and death, there has been a dearth in scholarly literature on media coverage of conflict in so many parts of Africa. The inadequate published research in this subject area is alarming because one would expect that the high incidence of conflict would warrant serious scholarly endeavours to determine how reports in the media are framed (p.93).

Nevertheless, the few available empirical literatures on conflict resolution and media enhancement in some geographical location of the matter, shows that the media is very effective in checkmating conflict activities. However, an objective coverage of its activities will go a long

way in bringing about peace in a given country. It also shows that most media organization have not been objective in their coverage of conflict activities in the world and follow a nearly similar pattern in their coverage of conflict activities.

In an article by Bello Emmanuel titled “How to Resolve Fulani Herdsmen, Farmers Clash” he posit, one of the ways to resolve the ongoing clashes between farmers and Fulani herdsmen is to provide the latter with grazing ranches across the country as obtained in some countries faced with similar challenges, that this would greatly reduce the incidence of cattle rustling by farmers and continuous attacks on villages by Fulani herdsmen. Currently, scores of villages and towns in Benue, Nasarawa and Taraba states are embroiled in internal conflicts due to attacks from Fulani herdsmen, who have continued to complain that their cows are being stolen. He further stated that, the problem can be resolved with the provision of ranches in the communities. He said, “In the past, the identifiable group that are involved in this crisis are the Tiv farmers and Fulani herdsmen, and argued that the vocations they engage in is inclined towards conflict. He stated further that cattle have to eat grass, and planted yam looks attractive. When you have cattle moving around in 21st century Nigeria, we have to think outside the box. Not to forget that there are other variables playing out too”.

In a related development Sen. Ben Murray- Bruce, on Information Nigeria posted by Niyi Jimme on July 27, 2015, said, if the herdsmen stopped moving around looking for pasture, they will not encroach on farmlands, a situation that often leads to clashes in northern parts of the country, that they government can do well by providing them with ranchers. With all this suggestions, it has been reported by some of the community members that the then president, Goodluck Jonathan and governor, Gabriel Suswam as they were trying other means, did not pay

attention to what these persons said, that was why Jime David in 2014 wrote, “Tiv/Fulani, “we are Experiencing the Consequences of a Failed Government”, he stated that, where there is no security of lives and properties of the citizen, as in the case today in Nigeria and Benue State at the moment. It means that the state has failed and there is no governance. He then assured the people that other security effort have been taken to ensure that the killings comes to an end. The issue with all the above statement is that there is no detail and any follow-up on how to resolve the conflict, they are all statement that have not been backed by concrete actions towards resolving the conflicts.

In a research by Tenuche and Ifatimehin (2009), with the title “Resource Conflict among Famers and Fulani Herdsmen; Implications for Resource Sustainability”, They stated that ‘access to land is a major cause of the conflict in Benue State valley region, adding that there is need for the state to review the existing laws at it relates to accessibility to land by members of the community. According to them, the issue is key to resources sustainability in Nigeria as majority of its citizens require land for farming and Grazing. They further call on government to ensure that there is equity and accessibility to arable and grazing land to avert constant conflict. Similarly, Adeyiga Adebayo, a 300L student of Ogun state university, did a 10 page research on the topic “Fulani Herdsmen and Farmer Crisis in Nigeria; Problems and Solutions” which also made a song and dance about ranch and grazing, that there is need to analyze the root cause and activities of the farmers and herders. These writings are not detailed in their findings and so they are not able to give in-depth modalities on how the problem could be solved. Okeke Tochukwu Linus in 2014 did a study on “Use of Social Media in Crisis Situation; (A Study of Benue/Fulani Crisis in Benue State University Student)”. He dwelt more on the creation of awareness about the crisis, and recommended that, “since crisis is inevitable, social media is a viable tool in

gathering, dissemination and management of information. He stressed that information can be managed in order to prevent conflict from escalating”.

In an article written by Adisa (2012) “Conflict Sensitive and Newspaper Coverage of Jos Conflict”, he is of the view that locational factor determines the level of attention given to conflict by the newspaper. He advises that if a newspaper can be conflict sensitive, it can go a long way in resolving the crisis activities in the country. He however came to a conclusion that the newspapers were partial in reporting conflict and reflects plurality about the conflict as substantial sources of their facts were based on the media, observation and views of one party in the conflict.

His investigations are focused on how the media can help in the restoration of peace in a conflict situation in their coverage. Therefore, it lacks the investigation on how the print media could be favourable or unfavourable when it comes to conflict resolution activities like that of the Benue state.

In a related development a research was conducted by Asemah (2012), titled, “Mass Media Agenda and Conflict Resolution in Jos Plateau State”. He concluded that broadcast media in Plateau state have promoted peace in the coverage. According to him, “findings reveal that the media in Plateau State have been setting agenda for peace. Majority of the discussants identified the Nigeria television authority, Jos network centre and the Plateau State radio and television corporation, as the major electronic media that have been in the limelight for the promotion of peaceful co-existence among different groups in Plateau State” (p 2). The research is of the view that media have not been objective in their reportage of conflict activities in the state due to some

factors. Also, the print media have used bias words and pictures to show the extent and the impact of the crisis in the state and it has gone a long way in aggravating the crisis.

The investigation is based on frequency of coverage obtained in the broadcast media. It failed to familiarize the reader with approaches that have been taken to resolve conflict in the state and how the print media especially newspapers have aided in conveying those activities to the public.

A memo was submitted by Dr. Magdalyne Mbadzendan Dura in 2014, a delegate representing Benue State, to committees on National Security and law Judiciary, Human Rights and Legal Reforms, She wrote on the title “Building consensus towards combating communal crises in Nigeria; the Fulani Herdsmen/Tiv Farmers Conflict in Perspective”. In it, she buttressed in detail the consequences of the crisis and concluded with some measures to end the crisis, that the Federal Government should set up a judiciary panel of enquiry into the killing that has taken place in Tiv and Idoma land with a view to establish the remote and immediate causes of the conflict and finding a lasting solution. Also, that the bill on designation of grazing reserves and stock routes in the senate house of representative should be dismissed. A presentation was done by Prof. Tor Iorpuu in Utako in March 22, 2014, on the Benue Liberation Alliance, he gave a statistics of people who have been killed, properties destroyed, it’s worth and some of the lapses of the security agencies, He ended by giving recommendation that the borders into Nigeria be closed immediately by the Federal Government, and that the government should ban open air grazing across the country.

A special meeting was held by a Peace Community on 5th April 2014, on the incessant clash of Tiv/Fulani crisis in which 14 points agenda was raised to combat the menace.

Several other researches have been carried out on the effect, causes, implications with some press meetings and briefings.

Despite all these measures, and the 14 point agenda meeting that was held by some important personalities, in a resolution meeting, till today the problem still persist. It has been discovered by the researcher that there is no substantial scholarly work on the Tiv/Fulani crisis and also all the reports have failed to make it participatory by involving the most affected. There have not been a thorough evaluation and follow up to all that was said. Evaluation and follow up, and root investigation are parts of the core aims of development communication. This entails doing everything possible to ensure that efforts at resolving conflict situation are people based. Therefore if the media position on conflict is clearly defined and judged, the people of the society will accept peace initiative that comes with conflict resolution. So the research is set out to seek people's opinion, the role *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* Newspapers have played in the coverage of Tiv/Fulani crisis from March 2014- March 2015, the resolutions that were made by scholars and members of the public, in bringing about peace and maintaining the harmony and sanctity of the society, and to suggest ways media coverage can resolve conflict for a conflict free society.

2.18 Daily Trust and Vanguard Newspapers

The *Daily Trust* newspaper is published alongside *Weekly Trust* newspaper, as an innovative, versatile newspaper. Together, they constitute the largest circulating newspapers in northern Nigeria. *Daily Trust* was established in January 2001 and was the first daily newspaper from the federal capital territory (Abuja). The *Daily Trust* newspaper is printed and published by Media Trust Nigeria Limited, a publication of the media trust Nigeria Ltd. It is a private

publishing company chaired by Kabiru Abdulahi Yusuf, a senior journalist who started with the *Weekly Trust* in March, 1998, (newspaper has different editors for different columns), with Mohammed Maina Gimba, Is'haq Modibbo Kawu, Habbeeb Idris Pindiga as part of the former editors, and Mannir Dan Ali who is the editor in chief of the *Daily Trust*. The company is located at Utako district Abuja and published several newspapers in English language. Trust has other publications such as Tambari, which started in April 2009, the Aminiya which is a Hausa edition started in March 2006. It also publishes Kano chronicles and Kilimanjaro, which is a magazine. They represent the widest circulating newspapers in northern Nigeria. Even though the paper is produced locally in Nigeria, it is distributed locally and internationally.

However, *Vanguard Newspaper* was established in 1983, by veteran Journalist, Sam Amukapemu. The vanguard is a daily newspaper published by vanguard media based in Lagos Nigeria. It is one of Nigeria's oldest and popular newspapers. The newspaper covers local news, national news, politics, business, sport, education, health, Niger Delta region, entertainment, environment and a host of other issues. It first came to limelight in June 1984. The publisher Sam Amukapemu was a former reporter with Daily Times. The Vanguard newspaper first came out as a Sunday paper in 1984 but started producing daily news on July 15 1984 (Daramola, 2003). The objective of the paper according to its publisher was to serve in the Vanguard of a better life for the people of Nigeria.

From the outset, the paper began as a Limited Liability Company, known as Vanguard Media Limited which means, limited to free enterprise, the rule of law and good governance. It has other subsidiary papers like Sunday Vanguard and Weekend Vanguard.

The newspaper circulation is wide, reaching all nooks and crannies of Nigeria. The circulation today is complimented by the most sophisticated Global readership through the internet, <http://www.ofbis.com/vanguard>. The first editor of the newspaper, Mr. Moyiwa Adetuba who only edited it for one year, others have come in person of Mr. Akitoye Akiode (1985-1991), Mr. Frank Aigbogun (1991- 1998) and Mr. Gbenga Adefaye, took over in 1998 etc. and the current editor Mr. Miden Bayagbon from 2008 till date.

2.19 Functions of Newspapers

Newspaper as established is part of the dominant mass medium for a long period of time.

Newspaper role according to Sambe (2008) include:

1. Inform readers objectively about what is happening in community
2. To comment on the news in order to bring development in focus
3. To provide the means whereby persons who want to sell goods or services can advertise their product.
4. To campaign desirable civil project and to help eliminate undesirable conditions.
5. To give readers a portion of entertainment through such advises as civic strips, cartoons, special features.
6. To serve readers as a friendly counselor information bureau and champion of their rights.

McQuail (2000) divided the mass media into two; print media and electronic media, the print media are the newspapers, magazines, books, journals and other adjunct that have similar characteristics. Electronic media on the other hand include Radio, Television and Internet. He also mentioned responsibility of the mass media such as;

- Surveillance of the environment
- Correction
- Continuity
- Mobilization

Sambe (2008) also notes that, “apart from other functions such as educating, informing and entertaining the people, newspaper as a mass medium has contributed to the growth of our country”. He observed that right from the time of colonial rule to date, newspapers have been playing the role of watchdog of the various governments for the general good of the people.

2.20 Theoretical Framework

Dennis McQuail (2005) defines a theory as set of ideas of varying status and origin which seeks to explain or interpret some phenomenon. Theories in research help a research work to be grounded. A theory therefore should be simple and explainable. The theoretical frame works that are used for this study are the Social Responsibility and Framing Theory.

2.21 Social Responsibility Theory

The social responsibility theory is an offshoot of libertarian theory. The theory sprang up in the middle of 20th century. Okunna (1999) describes it as a modern theory because it was born in the twentieth century. According to McQuail (1987) the social responsibility theory owes its origin to an initiative- commission on Freedom of the press. Its main impetus was a growing awareness that in some important aspect, free market had failed to fulfill the promise of the press and to deliver expected benefit to the society.

The theory has a wide range of applications since it covers several kinds of private print media and public corporations of broadcasting, which are answerable through various kinds of democratic procedure to the society. The theory has thus tried to reconcile independence with obligations to society.

The theory emerged because the press sometimes abuses the freedom which they enjoy as a result of the free press. Under a free press, there is supposed to be a flow of objective information that will allow citizens to make intelligent political decisions and other decisions affecting their lives. The excesses and distortion in yellow journalism and sensationalism did not allow these objectives to be achieved. The press engaged in sensationalism, invasion of privacy, defamation of character and other negative activities that fell short of the idealistic libertarian goals. As a result the negative activities by the press are due to press freedom. This theory owes its origin to the report of a private commission of enquiry, the Hutchins commission of the USA in 1947 and was set up to look into criticism of the press. The committee after its meeting made it clear that freedom and responsibility go hand in hand and that the press should be periodically reminded of its responsibility, Peterson, Siebert and Schramm (1956), later expand the theory thus:

Freedom carries concomitant obligations and the press which enjoys a privileged position under a government is obliged to be responsible to society for carrying out certain essential task of mass communication in contemporary society. To the extent that the press recognizes its responsibilities and make them basis of operational policies, the libertarian system will satisfy the needs of the society. To the extent that the press does not assume its responsibilities some other forces must see that the essential functions of communication are carried out. (p.15).

To this end, the social responsibility theory rest on the notion of free press acting responsibly. The press, which enjoys a privileged position under the government, is obliged to be

responsible to the communication in contemporary society. The theory implores media practitioners to ensure representation of all facet of the society. This means that it is obligatory for the journalist to ensure that his good image is maintained in the society and should consider the coverage of rural areas as part of the responsibility. The press is supposed to be responsible for the presentation and clarification of the goals and values of the society. If on the other hand the media fails to do just that, then the government agency should be used to ensure that they are forced to that. For example we have the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), which is saddled with the responsibility of regulating radio and television industries in Nigeria. Thus, when the electronic media for example act irresponsibly it is the duty of the NBC, to ensure that the right thing is done. The essence of the social responsibility theory is that media have an obligation to behave in certain ways that promotes social cohesion in the society, thereby underscoring the fact that freedom without responsibility is dangerous. Notably social responsibility cannot adequately or effectively be realized without media ethics in relation to practice and lawfully embraced by practitioners. Oluagbade (2003) defines communication ethics “as the basis for conforming to recognized standard”. Of course one of the points of communication ethics is to prevent good men from bad. Ethics emphasizes responsibilities of media in the packaging of their contents. Among such responsibilities of the media in the packaging of the content as noted by Schramn (1979), include:

- The media as watchman
- The mass media widen horizon
- Mass media can focus attention
- The media raise aspirations
- Can create a climate for development

- Partake in the decision process and
- The media touch all facet of human existence.

McQuail (1987:116) summarizes the functions of the media thus;

An assumption that the media do serve essential function in the society, especially in democratic politics, a view that the media should accept an obligation to fulfill these functions mainly in the sphere of information and the provision of a platform for diverse views, but also on matters of culture; an emphasis on maximum independence of media consistent with their obligation to society. (p. 116).

According to McQuail (1987), the principles of the social responsibility theory are:

- i. Media should accept and fulfill certain obligation to society;
- ii. These obligations are mainly to be met by setting high or professional standards of informativeness, truth, accuracy objectivity and balance;
- iii. In accepting and applying these obligations, media should be self-regulating within the frame work of law and established institutions;
- iv. The media should avoid whatever might lead to crime violence or civil disorders or give offence to minority groups.
- v. The media as whole should be pluralist and reflect the diversities of their society, giving access to various points of views and granting all the right to reply.
- vi. Society and the public following the first named principles have a right to accept high standards of performance and intervention can be justified to serve the public good.
- vii. Journalist and the media professionals should be accountable to the society as well as to employers and the market.

This is an acceptance of the view that there are certain standards of performance in media work that can be stated and should be followed. In short, media ownership and control is to be viewed as a kind of public stewardship, not a private franchise and there is pronounced shift away from the relation about end characteristics of the free press theory and from optimism that the “free market place of idea” will really deliver the individual and social benefits. Nevertheless, there are some misgivings about the application of the main principles of the social responsibility theory. For instance, Ciboh (1998) believes that it is not a parallel theory. He insists that:

Social responsibility itself is not a parallel theory. It might in fact, be said that all operational system are socially responsible if they satisfy the norms, codes and prerequisites in a particular society. When a press system does not mirror its country’s political philosophy, it is then irresponsible. A social responsibility philosophy does not exist alongside or in addition to authoritarian, libertarian and communist theories, but in fact a part or on outgrowth of any or all of these other (p.59).

Castly (1973), supports the above assertion by saying that, “so far social responsibility is still a theory than practice”. However in spite of the misgivings about the application of social responsibility, it has continued to retain a centre stage in most discourse on communication and the mass media. One good thing about this theory is that, it reminds the journalist of his responsibility to the society. When a journalist enjoys press freedom, he should not see it as an opportunity to do wrong thing. The social responsibility theory reminds the journalist of his duty to the society. He must not sensationalize stories use the media to cause confusion in the society. Thus the theory posits that although the press has all the right to criticize any institution including the government it must be responsible enough to maintain the stability of the society (Daramola, 2003). In so doing a responsible press should provide a full truthful comprehensive and intelligent account of the day’s event in the context which give them meaning and not in a

way that will create pandemonium in an already tensed society like Nigeria. Hence all reportage should be coined in such a way that it will be of the general public interest.

Sometimes, the government may need to intervene to safeguard the public interest, (McQuail 2000; 170-172). Galadima and enighe (2001) could not agree in totality. Therefore there is no freedom absolutely for the Nigeria press. Consequently, freedom enjoyed by the press in any society has equal moral and legal responsibility.

In this study, the theory posits that, although the press must report, they should try as much as possible to cover the truth as regard to Tiv/Fulani Crisis activities, causalities, sponsors etc. These reports should be done in a way that it will be in the interest of the public and not reported with partisanship coloration. The social responsibility theory moves beyond the simple “Objective” reporting (facts reporting) to “Interpretative” reporting (investigative reporting). The total news should be a complete facts and truthful, but the commission of the freedom press stated that “No longer giving facts truthfully rather than give a necessary analyzed or interpretative report on facts with clear explanations”.

The theory helped in creating professionalism in media by setting up a high level of accuracy, truth, and information. The commission of press council also included some tasks based on social responsibility of media.

The theory is criticized for being too problematic to adhere to, especially as newer technologies spring up, giving more people the power to capture, cover and share any given information they deem fit without recourse to its consequences on the audience. Typical example where such happens is the social media platforms. The theory also subjects journalist into a

dilemma of some sort that see them covering up stories which the public supposed to be aware of.

2.22Framing Theory

The concept of framing is related to the agenda-setting tradition but expands the research by focusing on the essence of the issues at hand rather than on a particular topic. The basis of framing theory is that the media focuses attention on certain events and then places them within a field of meaning. Framing is an important topic since it can have a big influence and therefore the concept of framing expands to organizations as well. Lippman (1922) in Yusuf (2011) states that, “the media help to put picture in our head”. This explains the power of the media to frame, issues of public importance. The function is closely related to public opinion generation. McCombs and Shaw (1972) cited in Okunna (2002) argues that public issues through the media learn how much importance to attach to an issue or topic for the emphasis the media places upon it.

In essence, framing theory suggests how something is presented to the audience (called “the frame”) influences the choices people make about how to process that information. Frames are abstractions that work to organize or structure message meaning. The most common use of frames is in terms of the frame the news or media place on the information they convey. They are thought to influence the perception of the news by the audience, in this way it could be construed as a form of second level agenda-setting – they not only tell the audience what to think about (agenda-setting theory), but also how to think about that issue (second level agenda setting, framing theory).Framing is in many ways tied very closely to agenda setting theory, both focus on how media draws the public’s eye to specific topics – in this way they set the agenda. But Framing takes this a step further in the way in which the news is presented whichcreates a

frame for that information. This is usually a conscious choice by journalists – in this case a frame refers to the way media as gatekeepers organize and present the ideas, events, and topics they cover.

Framing is the way a communication source defines and constructs any piece of communicated information. Framing is an unavoidable part of human communication. (Secheufele,1999).The type of frames examined in media content analysis, is often time influenced by the event under investigation. Since this study is on the Tiv/ Fulani conflicts in Benue state, some of these frames will be examined; Response frame, Political frame, Economic frame, Religious frame and Ethnic frame. Others include; powerless frame, human interest frame and conspiracy frame. These measures were developed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000); Iyengar (1991) and De Vreese (2005), for analyzing frame in media coverage issues. The essence of examining these frames are to investigate how the two newspapers under study contribute in shaping the reality of Tiv/Fulani conflict in Benue state through their respective coverage.

Critique of the Framing Theory

Framing theory postulates that the media influences public perception of an issue through the way they frame and present such issues to the public. Hence, the theory is considered as extension of agenda setting theory of the media, a theoretical construct that underscores the invaluable power of the media in setting agenda for the public discourse.

Therefore, the framing theory, like its agenda setting counterpart, emphasizes the almighty power of the media that is, reminiscent of the magic bullet theory where media audience are presented to be gullible and seemingly “helpless” before media information.

This stance has however been challenged by step- flow theorist such as Paul Lazarfeld, Benard Berelson, Hazel Gaudet, among others who argue that influence are a number of mediating factors that influence the final perception of a media content by the audience.

According to Anaeoto, Onabajo and Osifeso (2008; 112), Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard and Hazel Gaudet, did a study on the “the impact upon voters of the 1940 mass communication presidential elections campaign in the entire country, Ohio, United State of America....” And prepared, authored the people’s choice which “..... Conclude that, ideas often flow from radio and print media to opinion leaders and from these to the less active sections of the population”.

The implication of this is that the nature of communication towards influencing political decision and by extension, any public issue including conflict perception, rest more with inter personal communication as a mediating factor than with the power of the media itself. In other words, face-to-face interaction with others like religious leaders, traditional leaders, wealthy business moguls, sponsors of campaigns, scholars, community leaders and the likes are far more important in the scheme of media effects towards political decision.

Be it as it may, the framing theory remains relevant here since the study is more concerned on the media coverage of the conflict under study than the effect or impact of such coverage on the audience.

The above theories helped the researcher in explicating the extent to which the two newspapers in confirmation with the Focus Group Discussion and the interview under study adhere to the tenets of social responsibility theory in their coverage and reportage of the

Tiv/Fulani conflicts in Benue state. To achieve this, the newspapers respective framing of the issue will be critically examined in this study.

Suffice us to say therefore that in this study, framing of Tiv/Fulani conflict by *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* newspaper sampled opinion will give insight on how much the papers have done in upholding social responsibility in their reportage.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter, efforts were made by the researcher to explain the methods employed for the study, the population and sampling. Also, this chapter takes a look at instruments for data collection, methods of data collection and sources of data as well as method of data analysis, validity and reliability of the instruments used for data gathering.

3.1 Research Design

The researcher used the triangulation method, which according to Patton (1999) involves using multiple data sources in an investigation to produce understanding; qualitative researchers generally use this technique to ensure that an account is rich, robust, comprehensive and well-developed. It refers to the use of more than one approach to investigate research question in order to enhance confidence in the ensuing findings. It shows that varieties of strategies are needed to fully understand and explain a problem. The research tools used for gathering data in this study are: interview, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and content analysis.

3.2 Study Population

The population of studies includes a reporter from *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* respectively. A six member of a Focus Group Discussion was selected at random in three communities, Guma, Gwer West and Logo, ages 20 to 35. Also all the editions of *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* newspapers between March 1, 2014 and March 31, 2015 and some stories from their archives were used for the study. This covers a period of 395 days and 56 weeks for each of the newspapers. Hence, total of:

$395 \times 2 = 790$ days and 112 weeks to be studied

This selection of the population is based on the fact that the two newspapers are national dailies and published every day throughout the period under study, representing North and South. Based on the fact that on the 1st of March, 2014, a certain Chief was said to have invited the Fulani for a peace meeting, in Agasha, Guma LGA. The Fulani were said to have attended the meeting and even paid the sum of 3million naira to be allowed a portion for grazing land in the area. In the course of the meeting, however, suspected Tiv youth were said to have invaded the venue and unleashed terror on the Fulani leaving no fewer than seven killed and their vital organs allegedly removed (*Daily trust*, March 1st 2014).

Also in the same March, the Fulani Herdsmen attempted a deadly attack on the then Governor of the state in person of Gabriel Suswam. According to the *Vanguard* newspaper, he narrowly ‘escaped death’, as the herdsmen pretending to be farming noticed the oncoming convoy, started shooting at random and killing scores of people. On March 11, 2015, Paramount Ruler of Gwer West Local Government Area of Benue State, Chief Daniel Abomtse, alleged that the Tor Tiv, Dr. Alfred Torkula, has been sacked from his palace by Fulani herdsmen. Also in the same march 2015 the Fulani Herdsmen were alleged to have beheaded the Logo women’s babies. These happenings generated attention all over the country and hence corresponding increase in media coverage.

3.3 Sampling Technique

The ‘simple random sampling technique’ is used to select the sample for this study. The essence of the simple random sampling is to make random selection from the population, such that, each member of the population stands a chance of being selected for the study (Ogbuoshi, 2006). Based on this, the simple random sampling gives every member of the population of this study an opportunity to be selected.

3.4 Sample Size

To select the sample size, Taro Yamane's (1967) formula for sample size determination is used. The formula is stated as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

where:

N= population of the study

e= error limit

n= sample size.

By substitution,

$$n = \frac{790}{1 + 790(0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{790}{1 + 790 \times 0.0025}$$

$$= \frac{790}{1 + 1.98}$$

$$= \frac{790}{2.98}$$

$$n = 265.$$

Therefore, a sample size of 265 is selected from the population, by shuffling the entire editions within 54 weeks for each of the newspapers.

To select the sample size, the total sample is divided by the number of weeks thus:

$$265/54 = 5.$$

This means that five copies of each of the newspapers are selected in interval of two weeks. That is 10 editions from each newspaper in a month.

$10 \times 13 = 130 \times 2 = 260$. To complete the sample size.

3.5 Instrument of Data Collection

Quantitative and Qualitative way of data collection was adopted for the study. Hence the information collected from the scrutiny was summarized by means of descriptive statistics. A code sheet is drawn to record issues that occur within the period using numbers or content analysis for this study. This is to enable the coders collect the data from the newspapers according to the number of stories, and to enhance reliability of the data. According to Ogbuoshi (2006), code sheet is used for content analysis in order to bring out the real manifest content in the subject of communication. The code sheet is constructed based on the content categories. In addition, the code sheet is filled based on coding instructions. The coding instructions were used to guide the coders in coding the stories.

Interview

Interviews were conducted with the conflict reporters from the *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* newspaper. The result from these interviews was compared with the result from the Focus Group Discussion and newspapers content.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

A focus group is a small, but demographically diverse group of people whose reactions are studied and open to discussions about a new product or something else to determine the reactions that can be expected from a larger population. It is a form of qualitative research consisting of interviews in which a group of people are asked about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and

attitudes towards a product, service, concept, advertisement, idea, or packaging. Questions are asked in an interactive group setting where participants are free to talk with other groups. In this study, the researcher involved four groups in the discussions. The four groups comprise 6 members (participants) each. The age group was between 20 and 35 years.

Participants who cut across Guma, Gwer West and Logo local government areas were randomly selected from the communities. The essence was to enable the researcher to draw responses from participants on issues associated with Tiv/Fulani Conflict and how the various newspapers reported it. The FGD was also used in order to raise, confirm reports, and other salient issues that were covered by the newspapers.

Content Analysis

The essence is to study the manifest content of communication as it concerns the Tiv/Fulani crisis covered by *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* newspapers and get varying opinions. Content analysis is defined as the study of manifest content of communication (Asika, 2010) and a method of observation in the sense that instead of asking people to respond to questions, it “takes the communications that people have produced and asks questions of communications” (Kerlinger, 1973).

3.6 Units of Newspaper Analysis

The Berelsian (1991) unit of analysis was used to analyze this study. These include theme, character, word and space.

Character

Under the character, the prominence of the story is measured in terms of the boldness given to the headlines of the story. Here the bolder the headline character of the story, the more

prominence is attached to the story. For the purposes of this study, character is divided into Banner, medium and Lower case. The upper case headlines include the banner headlines; the medium case has a smaller size than the banner, while the lowercase headlines have little headlines and captions.

Word

Word here means the choice of words employed in writing the story by the newspaper under study. This determines the slant of the story. The words here will be grouped into favourable, unfavourable and neutral. The words of the publication will be grouped into key words and light words.

Theme

Under the theme, the story type was considered. The themes vary in terms of news, features/articles, editorials, pictures, cartoon and interviews.

Space

This measures the length of a story. Here, the number of column or inches of a story is measured. Hence, these are categorized into full page story, half-page stories, quarter-page and one-eighth. These are determined by the number of columns and pages in which the story covers. In addition, any story not in these selected four is categorized under others.

Archive

This involves visiting the website of both papers to see all that they have covered on the Tiv/Fulani stories; this enable the researcher find similar stories or similar headlines. It enables the researcher known how keen both papers are on the Tiv/ Fulani conflict and to easily

identified their differences. Any paper that tries to update issues on the conflict goes a long way to show the level of prominence given to the conflict.

3.7 Content Categories

Content categories can be defined as a compartment with explicitly stated boundaries into which the units of contents are coded for analysis. Cohen and Manion (1994) identified that categories are normally determined after initial inspection of the document and it covered the main areas of content. The categories for this study include:

- News story
- Interview with the editors
- features
- Editorials
- Cartoons
- Pictures

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The analysis of this data was based on the content categories, as coded in the code sheet. The descriptive method of data analysis was used to analyze the data, using tables and charts. In addition, the computer SPSS software was used to separate the characteristics of the coded data in the code sheet. It was followed immediately by interpretation and analysis based on the contents of the tables and charts. The descriptive thematic method was applied for the qualitative data. This involved transcription of the data from the Focused Group Discussion (FGD) and interview.

3.9 Inter – Coder Reliability of Newspapers

To code the data, two extra persons were used to carry out the coding with the researcher. This brings the total number of coders to three. The coders coded based on the instructions provided either as figures or letters. Chadwick et al (1984) suggested a method of computing inter coder reliability by calculating a coefficient of reliability. It is calculated by dividing the number of units placed in the same category by the number of units coded.

Coefficient of reliability = Number of units in the same category

$$\frac{\text{-----}}{\text{Total number of units coded}}$$

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Presentation, Interpretation and Analysis

4.0 Introduction

Peace is critical to the socio-economic growth, prosperity and development of any society. Therefore, all parties must strive to promote and propagate what sustains, consolidates and advances such peace which development communication teaches. This would aid in evaluating the role of the media in remediating conflict especially as it relates to the Tiv/Fulani crisis. The researcher set out to content analyzed two newspapers and get sample opinions. This chapter presents and interprets the data obtained from the qualitative and quantitative content analysis of *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* newspapers with regards to the report of the Tiv/Fulani crisis, from March 2014 to March 2015, the interviews and the focus group discussion. The data obtained from the analysis are hereby presented and analyzed. The essence of data presentation and interpretation is to make sense out of the data gathered during field work to discover the bearing they have on the research questions raised early in the project. In order to achieve this, such data must be processed and analyzed. However the research is designed to portray the objectives of the study earlier stated in the work.

The need to carry out this research was based on the fact that it's quite impossible to communicate development where there is conflict. How have the print media (*Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* newspapers) tried to explore the root cause of the Tiv/Fulani crisis? Also to what extend did the print media understand the importance of follow up and engaging the people in solving the crisis, of course for their own betterment, which are part of the core values of development communication.

Thus, to assess this impact of press coverage, the researcher conducted an interview with both reporters of both newspapers, carried out a Focus Group Discussion in 3 Benue communities and analyzed 260 editions and visited their archives (website) and collected 20 stories, 10 from each, as part of the analysis and in order to get more information and report about the crisis. 130 editions for each newspaper, 5 from *Vanguard* and another 5 from *Daily Trust*, making 10 editions for each month, therefore 260 hardcopies and 20 soft copies of newspaper editions were used for the analysis for a period of 13 month, which were picked at random from March 2014 to March 2015. Information gathered from the interview and focus group discussion was used to confirm the reports from the newspapers.

Daily Trust

1. Nasarawa Tiv Community Accuses Ruler of Allocating Land to Fulani Buyers.
2. Benue Community, Fulani Herdsmen Sign Peace Pact.
3. 7 Killed As Ortom Condemns Fresh Agatu, Fulani Crisis.
4. How I Survived The Tiv, Fulani Violence In Taraba -Father Lamma.
5. Benue Crisis: Face-To-Face Encounter With Fulani, Tiv Refugees.
6. Tiv, Fulani Crisis Has Political Undertone - Ter Makurdi.
7. Tiv/Fulani Crisis: Committee Recommends Resettlement Of Victims.
8. 12 Killed In Fresh Tiv, Fulani Crisis.
9. Fulani, Tiv, Agatu Agree Cease Fire In Benue.
10. Literature And Peace: The Example Of The Tivs And Fulanis Of Nigeria.

Whereas *Vanguard* newspaper has the following in their archives;

1. 10 killed in fresh Fulani, Tiv clash in Taraba On September.

2. Tiv/Fulani Crisis: Over 32 Displaced Persons Die In Camps.
3. Bloody Farmers/Fulani Herdsmen's Clashes In Benue: 40 Killed, Scores Injured, 2,000 Displaced.
4. 10 Killed, 300 Homeless As Fulani Herdsmen Invade Benue Villages On February.
5. Suspected Fulani Militia Invade Tiv Community, Kill Six.
6. Suswam Wants FG To Investigate Chemicals Used During Attack On Tiv Farmers.
7. Benue Farmers, Fulani Herdsmen Sign Peace Accord.
8. Declare Fulani Herdsmen Invasion As Insurgency, Benue Elders Tell Buhari.
9. 100 Killed In Benue Communities, Refugee Camps.
10. 300 Die As Herdsmen, Farmers Clash In Benue.

4.1 Data Presentation and Interpretation

Data extracted from the edition of *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* newspapers from March 1st 2014 to March 31st 2015 were presented in tabular forms; each table is accompanied by an interpretation of the data contained within the tables.

Table 1.Frequency of newspaper coverage on the Tiv/Fulani conflict in *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* newspaper from March 2014- March 2015.

X	DAILY TRUST		VANGUARD		
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Total frequency
News stories	20	(52)	10	(26)	30
Features	5	(13)	8	(20.8)	13
Editorials	1	(2.6)	-	—	1
Opinion	2	(5.2)	2	(5.2)	4
Pictures	9	(23.4)	7	(18.2)	16
Letters to the editors	1	(2.6)	-	—	1
Cartoons	—	—	—	—	
Total	38(98.8)	(100)	27(70.2)	(100)	65(169)

Source; field work 2016

The table above shows the aggregate frequency of content matters published as they relate to the Tiv/Fulani conflict by the newspaper under review. This table is an aggregated frequency of the entire news categories by *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* newspapers from March 2014- March 2015 a period of 13 month. During this period, the breakdown of each paper shows that the 38 news items published by *Daily Trust* constitute 98.8%, while *Vanguard* published 27

news items related to the conflict in Benue representing 70.2%. The table shows that *Daily Trust* gave more attention to the Tiv/Fulani crisis than *Vanguard* within the period of March 2014-March 2015.

Table 2. Shows the size and location of the conflict reported by *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* newspaper.

Name of newspaper	CONTENT CATEGORY							
	Front page	Back page	Full page	Half page	Quarter page	1/8 page	Other page	Total
Daily Trust	4	1	2	4	6	10	5	32
Vanguard	4	1	3	2	7	4	3	24
								56

Source; field work 2016

The table 2 above shows that *Daily Trust* has the largest size for the categories on the items covered on conflict stories, which has 32 for the grand total and *Vanguard* 24. This may be due to the fact that *Daily Trust* gives more value to conflict news stories than *Vanguard*, and so they lavish more time and space for its reportage. Though, *Daily Trust* reported 2 full page stories whereas *Vanguard* reported 3 full page stories, hence *Vanguard* gave more prominence when it came to full page stories. *Vanguard* has 2 half page stories, compared to *Daily Trust* which has 4. *Vanguard* has the highest size for 1/4 pages which is 7 and *Daily Trust* 6. *Daily Trust* has the highest frequency size for reporting conflict stories in 1/8 format which made up to 10 stories and *Vanguard* 4. This may be due to the fact that *Daily Trust* has more space format and

location for crime stories, hence using only the limited space available in every page. And for the other pages, which are 5 for *Daily Trust* and 3 for *Vanguard*. This also indicates the value attached to conflict by both papers. The research reveals that both newspapers have 4 bold and small size headlines respectively.

Table 3. Tone/Frame given to the Tiv/ Fulani conflict by *Daily Trust* newspaper.

Key: Positive; stories that are favourable to a party. **Negative:** stories that are unfavourable to a party. **Neutral;** stories that are not in support of any party.

Name of Newspaper	Unit of analysis	CONTENT CATEGORY						
		Positive		Negative		Neutral		Total
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
DAILYTRUST	New stories	10	(26)	4	(10.4)	8	(20.8)	22
	Features	2	(5.2)	1	(2.6)	2	(5.2)	5
	Editorials	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Opinions	1	(2.6)	1	(2.6)	–	–	2
	Letter to the editors	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Cartoons	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Pictures	6	(15.5)	–	–	3	(7.8)	9
	TOTAL	19(49.4)	(100)	6(15.6)	(100)	13(33.8)	(100)	38

Source: field work 2016

This table reveals that *Daily Trust* has 19 (49.4%) positive, 6 (15.6 %) negative and neutral has 13 (33.8%). Some positive and negative stories could be seen as taken sides and so, as explained by Adamu (2008), if reports are bias it is capable of escalating the conflict.

Table 4. Tone/Frame given to the Tiv/ Fulani conflict by Vanguard newspaper

Name of Newspaper	Unit of analysis	CONTENT CATEGORY						
		Positive		Negative		Neutral		Total
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
VANGAURD	New stories	6	(15.6)	2	(5.2)	7	(18.2)	15
	Features	2	(5.2)	3	(5.2)	–	–	5
	Editorials	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Opinions	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Letter to the editors	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Cartoons	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Pictures	–	–	–	–	7	(18.4)	7
	TOTAL	8(20.8)	(100)	5(13)	(100)	14(36.4)	(100)	27

Source; field work 2016

Table 3 highlighted the direction/tone used to report the Tiv/Fulani conflict and resolution aspect of the conflict by *Vanguard* newspaper within the period under study. As shown on the table, *Vanguard* coverage of the incident mostly comes as straight news stories taking a neutral direction which is 14(36.4%). 8(20.8%) for positive and 5(13%) neutral.

Table 5. Comparison of Tone/frame given to the Tiv/Fulani conflict by the *Vanguard* and *Daily Trust* newspapers

Names of Newspaper	CONTENT CATEGORY			
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Total
X	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	
DAILY TRUST	19	6	13	38
VANGUARD	8	5	14	27
Total/percentage	27 (70.2)	11 (28.6)	27 (70.2)	65(169)

Source; field work 2016

The comparison of the tone/frame given to Tiv/Fulani conflict by the newspapers as shown above depict that most stories were neutral and positive, because 27(70.2%) of the stories fell under the category of positive and neutral respectively, while 11(28.6%) fell under negative as (maybe) reason for the conflict. The positive and negative might indicate reasons why the conflict still persist. And in total it amounts to 65(169%).

Table 6: This table shows the level of objective coverage of the Tiv/Fulani conflict.

Key; Ethical: when articles don't contain aggravating element. **Unethical;** when articles contains aggravating element.

Name of Newspaper	Unit of analysis	CONTENT CATEGORY			
		Ethical	Percentage	Unethical	Percentage
DAILY TRUST	New stories	16	(41.6)	4	(10.4)
	Features	5	(13)	–	
	Editorials	1	(2.6)	–	
	Opinions	1	(2.6)	1	(2.6)
	Letter to the editors	1	(2.6)	–	–
	Cartoons	–	–	–	–
	Pictures	6	(15.6)	3	(7.8)
	TOTAL	30(78)	(100)	8 (20.8)	(100)

Source: Field work 2016

Name of Newspaper	Unit of analysis	CONTENT CATEGORY			
		Ethical	Percentage	Unethical	Percentage
VANGAURD	New stories	7	(18.2)	3	(7.8)
	Features	6	(15.6)	2	(5.2)
	Editorials	–	–	–	
	Opinions	1	(2.6)	1	(2.6)
	Letter to the editors	–	–	–	
	Cartoons	–	–	–	
	Pictures	5	(13)	2	(5.2)
	TOTAL	19 (49.4)	(100)	8 (20.8)	(100)

Source: field work 2016

Table 6 above shows the presentation of the direction of the news publication of both newspapers. The table shows that *Vanguard* had 19 (49.4%) of its stories meeting the ethical standard of professional reportage in conflict situation, that is by being objective and publishing stories that strive to resolve the conflict rather than escalating it as compared to 30 (78) % news stories published by *Daily Trust* which also meets the same criteria of news reporting in a conflict situation. However, meeting the unethical standard in conflict reporting, 8 (20.8%) stories were published by both *Vanguard* and *Daily Trust* respectively, they both falter in this

regard and is considered unethical thereby rendering them not to be too professional and having the likelihood to escalate the conflict instead of deescalating or resolving it.

Since the researcher also visited the archive of both papers in order to compare similar headlines. For conflict stories *Vanguard* has 846 results and *Daily Trust* has 293 results as at May 15, 2016. The archives reveal that recently *Vanguard* has covered more conflict stories.

4.2 Introduction to the Headlines and Inside Story

One of the reasons why newspapers exist is to pass across information. So that individual, even on the street can be abreast with the day to day happenings while moving about. So, the importance of truthful headlines and inside story cannot be overemphasized, therefore all newspapers must be cautious in the nature of their reports and coverage in order to foster unity and development in a society. The aim of this research is to explore ways through which the print media can better deploy effective communication towards a conflict free society using headlines and inside story. It is therefore paramount that practitioners must engage in investigative journalism before framing or reporting any story especially as relates to conflict. This is to avoid contradictive reports or framing that may cause disagreement. Below are some headlines and inside story that relates to the Tiv/Fulani conflict.

4.3 Benue Community, Fulani Herdsmen Sign Peace Pact (DAILY TRUST)

By Hope Abah, Makurdi | Publish Date: Mar 13 2016 5:00AM

Turan community in Guma Local Government Area of Benue State and Fulani herdsmen have signed a peace pact, which involves sheathing their swords in-order to pave way for harmonious living. Our correspondent reports that Moon ward and half of Mbaikyol ward in Turan community of Kwande Local Government Area had been overtaken by the herdsmen who

invaded the locality and chased out its inhabitants in 2013, following the incessant boundary dispute between the people and their neighbouring Jukuns' of Kashimbilla in Taraba State. In a communiqué signed by the leader of the herdsmen in charge of Kwande/Takum axis, Yakubu Abubakar and Zaki Yalu Agbo, the Mue Ter Turan among other witnesses including ex-member of House of Representatives, retired Col. Benjamin Aboho, at the end of its second reconciliation meeting on Friday, the parties agreed to embrace peace. The two ethnic groups resolved to drop their arms and live together in harmony so that the displaced Tiv people would return to their villages which had been occupied by the Fulanis' as soon as possible. The Fulani herders agreed to vacate the Tiv homes, noting that they are basically after grazing and not occupation of land while the Tiv elders promised to stop their youths from killing or stealing Fulani cows. At the end of the meeting, a committee comprising of 20 people from both parties was set up in line with the various peace resolution, while both Tiv and Fulani women spoke in support of the idea. Our correspondent reports that the herdsmen who turned out in large number for the meeting further demonstrated their sincerity by bringing along to the meeting their wives who served the Tiv people with fresh milk.

4.4 Fulani, Tiv, Agatu agree cease fire in Benue (DAILY TRUST)

By Hope Abah, Makurdi, | Publish Date: Apr 1 2014 4:00AM

Fulani herdsmen and farmers in Agatu and Tiv areas of Benue who had been in persistent conflict yesterday announced a stop to the conflict and killing on both sides. Retired Brig-Gen. Atom Kpera, the leader of the Benue delegation who read a communiqué at a news conference in Makurdi after a two-day peace meeting at the Government House, said the warring parties had resolved to immediately stop hostility. The Tiv, Agatu and Fulani have agreed to an immediate cessation of hostility and no party should attack the other", he said this at the news conference

which was witnessed by the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police Operations, Michael Zuokumo. Brig-Gen. Kpera said, the Fulani had not been chased out of the state and should feel free to live peacefully with the Tiv and Agatu farmers. “The Tiv/Agatu and Fulani will immediately work together to set up a joint task force to check the activities of criminal elements on both sides and implement details of the peace agreement”, he said. National President-General of the Myetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association, Bello Abdullahi Bodejo, confirmed that a decision was reached to end fighting and rivalry between the herders and Benue people who according to him had been good friends of his kinsmen until the recent enmity. Bodejo assured that his members would heed the terms of agreement as both parties continue to meet regularly to build confidence and keep track of its implementation. “We agree to all the peace talk during the meeting. We want peace because the Tiv man is my brother, you see the Fulani were suspected for all the things happening but it’s not Fulani”, he said. DIG Zuokumo warned the people against rumours and to shun acts that could heighten provocation. He said he was delegated by the federal government to broker peace between the warring factions.

He arrived the state on Sunday with more policemen to keep surveillance in all parts of the state. “The restoration of peace is a gradual process but we must begin from somewhere. We advised all parties involved in the ongoing crisis to go back and talk to their people to sheath their swords. Even in countries where there are long wars, there always comes a time when they would cease fire and begin to initiate peace. We have started and we will follow it up. We are also going to mop up arms”, he said. The communiqué signed by leaders of the various factions and their secretaries resolved to among other things dismantle all illegal road blocks and desist from searching motor vehicles to harass anyone. They also resolved to stop all attacks on persons of specific nationalities and their properties and warned that people desist from any acts that

constitute criminal offences for which the police would not hesitate to arrest and prosecute offenders.

Meanwhile, the Director General of NAFDAC, Dr. Paul Orhii, has urged the federal government to look into the alleged use of chemical weapons in the killings before such act spreads to other parts of the country. “Chemical weapons have been used on our people and for the first time, I saw it yesterday. It was concealed in canister shells,” he said while donating relief materials worth over N20 million to displaced persons in the state and called for peace among the warring factions. In another development, the Agatu Elders Forum has called on the federal government to deploy more security personnel to village bordering Kogi and Nasarawa States. In a communiqué signed by chairman of the forum, Peter SuleNgbede after a meeting at Otukpo, the elders condoled with families who lost loved ones in the crisis and enjoined its sons and daughters at home or in the Diaspora to cooperate with them in the quest for a lasting solution.

4.5 Fulani Herdsmen Sign Peace Accord On April 1, 2014 (VANGUARD)

News by Femi Ajasa Comments MAKURDI

Feuding Benue farmers and the leadership of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association, MACBAN, and an umbrella body of Fulani herdsmen have signed a peace accord to end all hostilities currently going on in parts of Benue State. This was even as the Director General of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control, NAFDAC, Dr. Paul Orhii, has said that substances suspected to be chemical weapons were used in the killing of over 200 farmers in Benue State by suspected Fulani herdsmen. Orhii spoke, yesterday, in an interview with newsmen in Makurdi, the Benue State capital, shortly after donating relief

materials to victims of the crisis at various camps in Makurdi and Guma local government areas of the state.

However, the truce was brokered at the end of a peace meeting between the Deputy Inspector General of Police, DIG, (Operations), Mike Zuokumor and his team, the Chairman, Benue State Reconciliatory and Peace Building Committee, led by General Atom Kpera and members of his committee as well as the National President Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association, MACBAN, Alhaji Bello Modejo and his team at the Banquet Hall of the Government House. Reading the resolution of the meeting to newsmen, General Kpera, who was flanked by Alhaji Modejo, said both the Tiv/Agatu and Fulani have agreed to implement the peace agreement. They vowed to fish out all criminal elements that were fuelling the dispute in order to effectively tackle the crisis.

4.6 25 killed as Fulani Herdsmen, Tiv Youths Clash in Benue (VANGUARD)

On March 18, 2014 12:29 News by Abiodun Comments BY PETE DURU MAKURDI

No fewer than 25 persons were feared dead, Monday, in a fresh outbreak of heavy fighting between suspected Fulani mercenaries and Tiv youths at Agasha and Yelwata, in Guma local government area of Benue State. *Vanguard* gathered from an eyewitness that at the time of filing this report the mercenaries had sacked and taken over Tse-Gaa and Tse-Kpaegh, Kaambe district while fighting was still raging at Yelwata. According to our source, the invaders who opened up two battle fronts in Guma this morning, were marching towards the ancient town of Agasha but were being repelled by youths of the community. “Several houses and farmlands have been set ablaze by the herdsmen and many are fleeing the besieged communities”. They stormed our communities in their hundreds early Monday morning, shooting sporadically and killing anything in sight, over 25 persons must have been killed on both sides; they took away

two of our youths alive but many of our people are missing. “They came into Agasha after crossing River Buruku at Ayila from neighbouring Nasarawa state; same for Yelwata which is also a border community”. The Special Assistant to Governor Gabriel Suswam on Banking and Investment, Mr. Ayoosu Bem who hails from one of the invaded communities, said youths of the area were putting up a resistance to the invaders. Bem said, “the attackers came this morning and started killing and burning down houses; some of our people are missing while many are fleeing their homes”. When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer, PPRO, Superintendent, SP, Daniel Ezeala confirmed the attack, but said the command was yet to confirm the number of casualties adding that security personnel had been drafted to the affected communities

4.7 12 killed in fresh Tiv, Fulani crisis (DAIL TRUST)

By Hope Abah, Makurdi | Publish Date: Apr 27 2015 4:00AM

At least 12 people have been killed in a fresh crisis between Tiv people of Guma Local Government Area in Benue State and Fulani herdsmen at the weekend. *Daily Trust* gathered that the latest trouble started in Daudu village of Guma, when two Fulani men reportedly attacked a Tiv man, who overpowered them, seized their pistol and killed them.

It was also learnt that the Fulani herders initiated the attack on the Tiv speaking people over repeated allegations that their cows were stolen by some questionable characters in their host communities. A villager in the affected locality told our correspondent yesterday that based on the allegations and counter allegation, the herders on Saturday evening blocked a major road linking Umenger in Mbadwem district of Guma Local Government Area of Benue and Kiana in Nasarawa State to carry out a reprisal over the killing of their kinsmen.

The source said: “The herders blocked the road because it was a popular market day in the area and opened fire on Benue people who were returning to their homes, killing 10”. State secretary of the Myetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association (MACBAN), GarusGololo said three cows and a Fulani man were killed in Daudu on Thursday because they allegedly refused to vote for the People’s Democratic Party (PDP).Gololo said: “In an unprovoked attack, some mischievous Tiv men suspected to be armed robbers on Friday killed three herders and four cows in the same Daudu and the deceased were buried on Saturday”. The state police spokesman, ASP, Austin Ezeani, confirmed that 12 people died in the attack and that some hoodlums were behind it. “We have been informed that two Fulani men and 10 Tiv people were killed. The command is however yet to get the accurate figure”, he said.Ezeani added that the command was on top of the situation and doing everything possible to fish out those instigating crisis and disrupting the peace.He further appealed to residents to stay away from trouble, assuring inhabitants of the crisis-ridden area of safety of lives and property.

Meanwhile, the affected villagers in TseUosu, Gbudu, Daudu and Umenger have deserted their homes and fled to Makurdi for fear of further attack, while in some part of Markurdi town, both Fulanis’ and indigenes were seen yesterday afternoon evacuating their belongings to unknown destinations immediately cease hostilities, and also set up a task force to implement the peace agreement. They vowed to fish out all criminal elements that were fuelling the dispute in order to effectively tackle the crisis.

4.8 Suspected Fulani militia invade Tiv community, kill six(VANGUARD)

On April 12, 20145:33 News by BY PETER DURU, Makurdi.

Despite the spirited efforts of the Deputy Inspector General of Police, DIG, Operations, Michael Zuokumor led committee to bring to an end the lingering bloody conflict between Tiv farmers/Fulani herders, suspected Fulani militia, Thursday evening invaded Governor Gabriel's home town at Anyii, leaving six persons dead. Saturday Vanguard gathered that the marauders numbering over 100 also attacked Chembe, Ife and TseGundu, Anawah settlement at Ukemberaga/Tswarev ward of Logo local government area. One of the fleeing natives told Saturday Vanguard that the invaders launched their attack on the affected communities from two fronts. According to him, "they came in two groups numbering over hundred; one of the groups came through Ikapa-TseGundu road to attack Chembe village while the other group emerged from a far route and bursting out at Achive compound".

At Achive, they mounted a road block along Anyiin-Wukari road shooting sporadically, forcing the people who had returned to their homes after fleeing previous attacks to scamper into the bush for safety. "The attackers carried out the operation for several hours killing about six people without molestation, despite the supposed presence of security operatives in the area." Corroborating the story, the Senior Special Assistant to the state Governor on Media, Chief Anawah Joseph who hails from one of the affected communities, said two bodies had so far been recovered from his community. When contacted, the State Police Public Relations Officer, PPRO, Superintendent Dan Ezeala said the incident was not a Fulani attack but robbery at Chinwe community where he said two corpses were found. According to Ezeala, the information got to the anti-terrorists squad stationed in the area who stormed the affected community; "it was

discovered that there was no destruction of property, which clearly indicated that it was not a Fulani attack”.

4.9 Implications of some of the Coverage (Guma, Gwer West and Logo)

Inciting role of media in conflict prone society has been acknowledged as dangerous trends that easily influence behavior of people involved in the early stage of conflict. For instance, Kalyango and Vultee (2012) reiterated that it was the inciting reports from the media in Rwanda that stimulated the hatred behaviour which eventually led to ethnic cleansing of more than half a million Tutsi ethnic groups. Similarly, the inciting reports in Ethiopia media spread hate messages which facilitated political violence that claimed the lives of more than 300,000 people in a span of 20 years. Significant numbers of the focus group discussant, regardless of their background affinities, described the inciting reports on the pages of newspapers as unhelpful and dangerous to the co-existence of some herdsmen crisis in Nigeria. Based on the understanding and experiences of the statements of literature, newspapers are culpable in the emergence and escalation of conflict as a result of series of provocation reports. This revelation as it concerned the Tiv/Fulani conflict which is proven by these participants on conflicts in Nigeria will serve as eye opener toward addressing the incessant conflict.

Part of what constitute the research problem is that, though some literature have expressly accused the media for its involvement as source of hatred (Kurspahic, 2003) and in the emergence and escalation of conflicts (Kalyango & Vultee, 2012; s.Reuben, 2009), but most of them did not clearly identify how this is done. According to Lecheler and de Vreese (2013) and Onwuzuruigbo (2013) the extent and scope that newspapers framing influence conflict behaviours in ethnic leaders who control the hearts and minds of members in a community are still underexplored. Similarly, Schoemaker and Stremlau (2014) described

serious gaps in evidence, the dearth of indicators to directly accuse the media for conflict involvement. However, in a recent study by Adisa, Rosli, and Ahmad (2015) the foremost promoter liable in conflict actions is how newspaper frame issues in Nigeria. In corroboration of this fact, the evidence from this study's interviews showed that all the interviewees and Focus Group Discussant were of the view that newspaper framing play significant role, though along with other contexts, in the conflict behaviours that mostly culminate into conflict. Their responses highlighted five specific ways through which newspaper framing in line with the research objectives and questions may contribute to the Tiv/Fulani conflict.

- Provoking reports
- Name calling
- Double standard
- Ownership interest

Provocative reports

As identified by the participant, the first activity of Nigeria newspapers that carries great influence on what they think and how they feel about other groups is from the provoking reports they are exposed to almost on a daily basis. Confirming this, Frohardt and Temin (1997), Kalyango and Vultee (2012) have stressed that, aside the active use of media to stimulate conflict the media also contribute to conflict involuntarily, most times through submissive provocation to violence mostly because journalists have poor professional skills. At the same time, Yassin and Zauddin (2012) stressed that conflict report surface when there is a trace of conflict among the individuals, groups and institutions and society.

According to a participant from Guma,

“They (newspapers) poison the minds of ethnic groups against each other. Sometimes they incite people to conflict”. This claim was also confirmed by Informants from Gwer west and Logo, who stressed that

:

...newspapers set some communities against each other. It's like poisoning the minds of one against the other through what we read on the pages of newspapers...Newspapers indirectly stimulate conflict through what they write.

Newspapers that practically poisoned the minds and direct people through what they write ...they write all sorts of things that most time influence people to develop hatred to other groups

Stating the essential trend of the provocation, participant from Guma, said:

What we hear daily on the media, especially newspapers and from individual about the way some Tiv treat others usually is also a pointer to conflict behaviour...unguided talk from both the media, elite in the society, politicians, and ethnic leaders on matter relating to conflict. They talk not minding the ripple effect and how the public will react to what they say (participant from Logo).

Meanwhile, participant from Gwer West, an herdsman specifically revealed that, “Without finding out the fact the (newspapers) come out saying the Fulani have killed people and destroyed farm lands, all these influence people into taking harms against us and we against them”. Corroborating the perspective above, participant from Logo then observed thus, “the way newspapers report incidents of Tiv/Fulani misunderstanding, are one of the main motives behind our behaviours that are responsible for the Tiv/Fulani conflicts in Nigeria”

The views expressed above were also evident in the participant from Logo's perception of the dangerous implication of inciting reports from the media. He concluded that “The media, especially newspapers are the main cause of some of these behaviours and even conflict escalation. Newspapers are so free that they publish all sorts of things both good and bad”. Meanwhile, participant from Gwer West, blamed not just the media but also some of the elder state men for

what he described as, “unguided statement from both representatives of these groups and the media which inform the negative behaviour of group toward each other.

Ownership interest

Ownership plays an important role in determining what is reported in the media. Though, in Nigeria, newspaper (including electronic) ownership pattern is dual ownership which is government ownership and private ownership. However, what is curiously interesting is that the ownership of some of the newspapers is shrouded in secrecy, which according to some of the interviewees, that their heads control the nature of reports (Political framing). (Adesoji & Hahn, 2011; Okwuchukwu, 2014) in what many presented to the ignoble role intended to play. Establishing the interest that Nigeria newspapers promote, Pate and Dauda (2013) disclosed that most of the newspapers concern themselves, mainly, with serving the interests of their managers. This, no doubt has been stimulating discord among societies. One of the interviewees and participant in Guma, stated that the key challenges and implication of ownership interest as a motive for conflict behaviors which has to do with balance and objectivity. He said:

Some people feel cheated when reports are unjustly reported. And this happens mostly because of the ownership of these newspapers. This has even prompted some communities to have newspapers, radio and television for the purpose of promoting their own interest (participant from Gwer west).

Also holding the same view, participant from Logo said that, “everybody is trying to own a newspaper for the purpose of promoting their own interest, be it, political interest and economic interest”. Another participant from Logo, also stressed that, “ownership impact is too much on the performances of newspapers. Maybe somebody somewhere usually dictates the focus of the newspapers”. Showing his grievances with the newspaper reportage of Tiv/Fulani issues,

participant from Guma, briefly captured the situation thus, “ownership influences still holds a way in the daily coverage of events”.

Double Standard

The issue of double standard in media coverage of the Tiv/Fulani issues has been identified mostly as conflict oriented (Galtung, 2002), because it is the application of different level of attention, different tone and circumstance of coverage for similar situations. This no doubt affects the relationship between the Tiv and Fulani in Nigeria. Significant numbers of the interviewees and focus group discussant were of the view that double standard is evident in newspapers. Newspaper also has negative impact on the behaviours of some conflict reports towards others. For instance, daily trust reporter stated that:

Media also creates this behaviour through the support they give to one group at the expense of the others... They protect; they cover up the mess of some people and individual in the society. Whereas,

Also reiterating the implication of this double standard practice of Nigeria newspapers, a participant from Guma, lamented that

...some newspapers through their imbalance coverage create problem among the Tiv and the Fulani people. Newspapers have tagged the Fulani as terror but failed to report all the good things we do in the society”. In the same way, participant from Logo disclosed that “Whenever there is a conflict somewhere, they accused Fulani herdsmen. Even when we are the victims of the attack, it is still Fulani they will mention on the pages of newspapers as the attackers”. In view of this, in an interview with the vanguard reporter, which may counter this statement, opined that some of the vanguard news reports have taken a conscious decision not to report it as Fulani herdsmen but as herders.

Meanwhile, some participants stated that the fundamental assumption that informed newspaper double standard. According to a participant in Logo, “Newspapers sometimes take side with a

group that is linked to the publisher. So, others feel cheated and decide to react". Also, Participant from Gwer west argued that:

Media do show open support to some groups which is not too good where there are other numerous group, groups that is not within the interest of newspapers is usually tagged negatively and exposed on every atrocity. While the group that is close to the newspaper is usually protected and cover upon any incident (Participant from Logo).

In what seems to be a new twist to the issue, some of the participant directly accused some national newspapers that are based in Taraba State of double standard, which implies that the location of a newspaper has impact on its coverage and that some of the Tiv, based in the Gyambu Taraba State, are being treated as animals. According to participant from Guma,

it is annoying to read most times on the pages of newspapers, all sort of negative adjectives to qualify the Fulani people who fight for their right whereas the Tiv in Taraba state commit havoc on regular basis and still the newspapers will not expose them (participant from Logo).

Name Giving

Name giving which is equally referred to as labeling emerged from the newspapers analysis as one of the key to the formation of behaviour that escalates into conflict. Name calling or labeling is impoliteness in newspaper framing that categorizes people involved in the news into either good or bad (Chandler, Clements & Combs, 2015; Coe, Kenski & Rains, 2014). This practice indirectly removes blames on one group and relatively passing it to other (Galtung, 1998; Tehranian, 2002). It is a newspaper negative representation and dichotomy that affects the behaviours of groups in conflict (Musa & Ferguson, 2012). Confirming the implication of this practice by newspapers, participant from Gwer West said,

“When newspapers tag us with different negative names, we tend to be irrational and angry”. Similarly, participants from Logo noted that “newspapers helped in widening the differences between the Tiv and the Fulani by calling some settlers” (participant from Gwer west).

Describing how the infuriating name calling is done by newspapers and how it affects them. Participants from Logo and Guma lamented that,

“Through series of attack and tags they give to us. For example, there were times that media named us terrorists, some called us militants, oil bunker, secessionists etc” (participant from Guma). “Newspapers are used to the attitude of giving bad name tag to Fulani, such as “bandits, bloodthirsty” (all participants).

Another participant also lamented that “Sometimes newspapers will tag us criminal who rob, attack and destroy other people’s properties and farm then run into the bush”. To another participant, while referring to one of the main contention that is continuously and currently fueling the herders in Benue and Kaduna state, said “they tag us settlers”. In what appeared to be a show of general unpleasant to and impact of name calling on the ethnic groups, participant from Guma, bared his mind thus “I don’t like the way newspaper refers to the Boko Haram group as Islamic militants. It is a kind of bias against Muslims. Why not call them or refer to them in their name instead of that”. However participant from Logo summed-up this practice thus, “the newspapers tactic of calling a dog a bad name in order to hang it is repulsive and detestable”.

To this end, the reporters of the selected newspapers have this to say:

Roland Mutum from *Daily Trust* newspaper

Yes, people may accuse us of writing provocative report, calling or labeling them names, been bias or having double standard or whatever ownership interest may mean to them, but the truth is that people don’t want to be told the truth, most of our reports on conflicts are gotten from the people themselves, when we meet them and ask questions. Some people are eye witness to some of the report we give. We also get information from the police who rush into some of the conflict scene. so we simply don’t fabricate stories and you will agree with me that some of these reports may not be favourable to another party. We have heads who control what we report and how to report it, so if people say we report from

ownership interest, ideologies and principles, they may not be totally wrong, but in all we report what we see and messages that we receive from our sisters' paper, we also try to abide by the rules and regulation governing print media coverage.

Wereas Jide Ajani from *Vanguard* newspaper

We are simply watch dog, we are always at alert to make sure people are abreast with the happenings in the society and primarily to make sure they safeguard themselves, be at the right place at the right time. So if members of the society see newspaper report as report that causes or aggravate conflict I will simply say its self-delusion. I must state here that the print media or *Vanguard* newspaper tries to resolve conflict and not to escalate it. So the issue of hate report or prorogating is not what we do, some persons don't even read this report to the end, they just read the headline and conclude negatively. Two wrongs can never make a right, so we often try to balance our report, sometimes, one party may be at fault another time it may be another party, but in all reports we try to give our source. Before any report is made, the editors and chief editor scrutinize the report. So since we own the newspaper the report has to be in our own interest, but we try to be as truthful as possible.

From the focus group discussion some of the participant have said that the first economic parameter often affected by war or conflict situation is price of goods and services because the state is seen as the food basket of the nation and an agrarian society; because other factors such as transportation cost, labour, information disruption affect the price of goods and services. Scarcity of foods during conflict is a very common phenomenon as there could be blockage in supply and diversion to peaceful environment. Social insecurity is a common manifestation in conflict situation especially when it is a violent one.

Part of the implication of conflict is that people develop fear of being attacked unnecessarily which also negatively affect their ability to carry out their economic activities (Blench, 2004). It may create a huge burden on the government or the neighbouring communities.

4.10 Discussion of Findings

The information obtained from the interviews, FGD and newspaper archives are used to discuss the findings of this study. In order to enhance clear and easy understanding, the findings of this research are hereby discussed in relation to the research questions raised in chapter one. Having conducted an interview, a focus group discussion and analyzed, 260 editions, 20 archive stories of *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard*, the following was discovered from the interpretation and analysis.

Generally, for a newspaper to be called Southern or Northern, then that newspaper must have been established to represent that segment of people from that region. Thus, in this study *Daily Trust* has been used to represent the northern papers popularly called Arewa press and *Vanguard* represents the southern press known as Lagos- Ibadan axis. From the table 1-6 above, for instance, it is revealed that *Daily Trust* has a total of 19 positive news coverage of the Tiv/Fulani, 6 negative and 13 neutral. On the other hand, *Vanguard* has 8 positive news coverage, 5 negative and 14 neutral. With this one could say that both papers covered the Tiv/Fulani conflict and from the interview conducted both editors accepted that they reported the Tiv/Fulani conflict.

It is obvious that *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* reported the Tiv/Fulani conflict, but also, it can be observed that there exist some differences in their manner of coverage. These differences usually arise as a result of the ownership, ideological affiliation and framing style of the press, (Abubakar, 2006). This was also seen during the question and answer section with the focus group participants.

The ethics regulating the media profession may be necessary to maintain a sanitized system of communication. Among many media principles is balance. Balance means getting

opinions from both sides where the practitioner recognizes two sides but not necessarily covering the spectrum of opinion (Wimmer,2000). More realistic opinion is generally left out. The level of balance of a media house could determine the rate of prominence a story receives. Thus to ascertain the level to which the two newspapers adhere to the media principles, this will be determined by how much the media practitioner could detach himself from the story and present a balance report that will be neutral. From the tables above, the number of stories that were neutral is considered not to have taken sides but simply reported the incident the way they occurred. From the table, *Daily Trust* had 13 stories under neutral, whereas *Vanguard* had 14 that were neutral. From the foregoing therefore, it is safe to say that *Vanguard* performed a bit better in upholding the cardinal principles of the media than *Daily Trust* because *Vanguard* has a higher frequency. Achieving this is not easy especially when confronted with reporting conflict. This could be because practically, “all news reporting including those on conflict are influenced by one factor or the other. Some of them could be political and others could be ideological and sometimes both”. (Galadima and Enighe, 2001). This was also seen in accordance to the response on the daily trust editor who affirmed that, there are different frames for reporting terrorism.

For the media to become a veritable tool and further perform this transformative role in a country like Nigeria. It is important that the media undergoes a paradigm shift from its current posture and selective exposure of social and conflict reportage in the country (Akpan et al, 2007). In other words, the media should be seen as helping to report issues and conflict as they occur without selecting coverage. The shift should be such that, it would provide a place for peace media orientation and operation in order to reduce the tendencies for violent manifestation of conflict.

From the above headlines of both newspapers, one could have a relief and believe that the crisis have come to an end, because of their choice of words, for instance “the Tiv/Fulani have yesterday sign a peace pact”, “Fulani herdsmen and farmers in Agatu and Tiv areas of Benue, who had been in persistent conflict yesterday announced a STOP to the conflict and killing on both sides.” Some of the challenges faced with some of the meetings on conflict resolution, is that, it is attended by a few, who sometimes are the bourgeoisies and may not speak the mind of the majority, but rather for their own selfish interest (focus Group Discussion). The report on the signing of peace pact could have been of a great advantage to the newspapers, if they had follow-up the story, or make it participatory by engaging village herders and farmers by telling them the outcome of the meeting on the signing of the peace pact. The press would have gotten their opinion and knowing their stance on the matter. This may have deescalated the conflict. In confirming this with the FGD, the participants greed that series of meeting have been held, but nothing to show for it, as some of the members just enjoy the sitting allowance, and the interviewees have accepted that they have covered such meetings.

The story on the “suspected Fulani militia invade Tiv community kill six,” simply shows how the *Vanguard* newspaper are not too meticulous in carrying out some report, after spending so much energy on describing how they attacked the then governor’s local government and other local government areas by mounting road blocks and shooting at random. In the end, they discovered that it was an armed robbery attack. One could imagine the harm or damage this might have caused after the bold headlines; it is possible that the Tiv in their fury, on seeing the headline and its framing, could have launched an attack on the Fulani, thereby escalating the conflict. This is why the media cannot under emphasize the importance of investigative reportage. Similarly the report on “12 killed in fresh Tiv Fulani crisis” which was reported by

Daily Trust, one could see that the news lack some credibility, the case of political thuggery, armed robbery by the Tiv youth, Fulani robbery attack and of course the major Tiv/Fulani crisis were all reported, in the end one cannot deduce whether it is political crisis, armed robbery attack or the ethnic crisis. All these incidents show that the headline is not reflecting the story, because everything seems to be contradictive. Though, from the participants of the FGD, they agreed that the then governor has had series of attack, some from political tugs and the herdsmen.

Ahmed (2006) posits that “the identity of the newspapers covers its basic layout and design, title, editorial orientation to the very ideological basis for the setting up of the paper as well as its readership. He added that for newspaper just as for the nation state, Identity is constructed, matured and developed into reality”.

From table 2 above, it reveals that *Daily Trust* has the highest reportage of on the Tiv/Fulani conflict with 38 (98.8%) this indicates that they gave more attention to the conflict. as compared with *Vanguard*. *Daily Trust* made a total of 20 news stories, 5 features, 2 opinion articles, 9 pictures, 1 letter to the editors and 1 editorial on the major attack within the same period. Whereas *Vanguard* has 10 news stories, 8 features, 2 opinion, 7 pictures, has no record for editorials, no letter to the editors, within the period covered by the research. In a nutshell, looking at the various units of analysis, *Daily Trust* has a total of 38 items dedicated to major crisis under the period of study, while *Vanguard* has a total of 27 items within the same period. With this, it is evident that the two newspapers devoted some amount of their page to the coverage of the Tiv/Fulani conflict, although there still exist some differences in the manner in which the two papers covered the conflict. The tone and language of *Daily Trust* condemns the attack but less emotive and may not provoke shock, sadness and anger from their readers while that of *Vanguard* strongly condemns the attack and urges urgent and decisive action against the

herdsmen. More so, the *Vanguard*, from the archive, in majority of its report describes the Fulani herdsmen as architect of most of the crisis and gave high figure of death rate and injured person. Whereas daily trust tried to avoid all those, maybe in order not to create tension, and so suppressed some the information.

According to Norris, Ken and Just (2003) the idea of “news frames” refers to interpretive structures that journalist use to set up particular events within their broader context, they explain further, “news frames bundle key concept, stock phrases and iconic images are used to reinforce certain common ways of interpreting development. The essence of framing is selection to prioritize some facts images, or development over others, thereby unconsciously promoting one particular interpretation of events”. Therefore the dominant frame used in this study as seen in the theoretical frame work include the response frame, religious frames and ethnic, others that were critically observed were the human interest frame and the conspiracy frame.

Since social responsibility theory rest on the notion of free press acting responsibly, the press is to oblige, to be responsible to the communication in contemporary society. To achieve this ethics is very vital. Ethics emphasizes responsibility of the media in packaging their content, and McQuail (1987), under the principles of social responsibility theory; is of the view that, the media should avoid whatever might lead to crime violence or civil disorders or given offence to minority group. From the key, ethical stands for articles that do not contain aggravating element and unethical stands for the articles that contains aggravating element. *Daily Trust* has 30 (70%) ethical stories and 8(20.8%) unethical stories a *Vanguard* has a total of 19 (49.4%) ethical stories and 8(20.8%) unethical stories. This means both papers strived toward been ethical in framing their headlines and inside story. Though *Daily Trust* performed a bit better in trying to conform to the recognized standard as stated by Olugbade (2003) on page 41, because the total frequency

of the *Vanguard* 27 and *Daily Trust* 38, it is expected that the unethical aspect of *Vanguard* should be less than that of *Daily Trust*. Be it as it may there is an effort by the two newspapers not to aggravating the crisis. Although, the few unethical stories which are 8(20.8%) reported, is capable of escalating the conflict. Therefore unethical stories should be avoided at all cost.

The coverage on Fulani, Tiv, Agatu agree cease fire in Benue (*Daily Trust*), on the April 1, 2014, whereas (*Vanguard*) on the same April 1 2014, has this headline, Fulani herdsmen Sign Peace Accord. From these headlines the researcher discovered that, that of *Vanguard*'s headline is hanging; the Fulani herdsmen sign peace accord with who? This question arises because there are other dimensions of the Fulani Crisis. Though after reading through the inside story, it was discovered that it was with the Benue community. In both report *Daily Trust* has 1 and ½ page story resulting to about 40 lines and *Vanguard* had ½ a page amounting to 17 lines, it shows that *Daily Trust* devoted more time and space on the report than *Vanguard*. And the editor of the vanguard newspaper also agreed that the peace accord was with the Benue people.

Daily Trust provided detailed information about a resolution meeting stating the submission of both sides. The plea made by the then NAFDAC Director, Dr. Paul Ohil on the use of chemical weapon in the crisis, it revealed that *Vanguard* stated that the numbers of casualties were 200 farmers, whereas *Daily Trust* did not mention any figure stated the outcome as "Death of People". Also from some of the headlines the researcher discovered that *Vanguard* newspaper were quite bias, in other words, some of their report were not balanced and objective. For instance, "Fulani militia Invade Tiv Community, kill six(*vanguard*), from this headlines and inside story, it was reported that, the Fulanis attacked the Tiv community and killed six persons, but the counter attack and reaction from the Tiv wasn't stated. Whereas, that of *Daily Trust* seems to be balanced, For instance *Daily Trust* reported that 12 killed in fresh Tiv,

Fulani crisis, *Daily Trust* reported that both sides shared in the pain. From these findings the researcher discovered that location and ownership may be the reason for the differences in their reports. This was also seen in the Focus Group Discussion with the herdsmen that, most papers tends to call them names, because they are closer to the Tiv people, and all the good deeds by the Fulani have never been reported, because most newspapers in the state are controlled by them.

It was observed that *Daily Trust* had a total of 19(49.4%) positive stories, 6(15.6%) negative and 13(33.8%) for neutral. As earlier mentioned from the key, positive stories are stories that are favourable to a party, negative stories are unfavourable to a party and neutral stories are not in support of any party. So from the table and other observations from the archives, the researcher discovered that Negative has the lowest frequency, that is *Daily Trust* tried as much as possible to avoid any negative coverage or report that could aggravate the conflict. Though for the positive stories which amounts to 19 and negative 6, this is quite risky due to the fact that any bias report no matter how little could still cause unrest. As compared to *Vanguard* which has 8(20.8%) positive, 5(13%) negative and 14(36.4%) neutral. This shows that *Vanguard* tried to avoid positive and negative stories as such they tried to be neutral, since neutral has the highest frequency. In total, both papers amounted to 27(70.2%) neutral that were recorded it is evident that both papers tried to avoid one sided story in order to enhance the resolution of the conflict.

To this end the researcher discovered some lapses and they include;

- Both papers seems not have real limited or investigative report on the crisis. As such, they mainly reported what was said by the government or the spokesman of the papers, through e-mail, video clips and audio recordings. This means that sometimes the

newspapers were acting as mouth piece to the state government or the Fulani herdsmen, because some the participant during the FGD confidently said some of the information in the newspapers are wrong.

- There wasn't a direct relationship between the number of reports in the newspapers and the frequency of the Tiv/Fulani herdsmen crisis attacks carried out. That is, there was a flow of reports in the press about the Tiv/Fulani only after the Tiv/Fulani carried out series of attacks and a pause in press coverage when the Tiv/Fulani conflict is silent, in other words there is hardly any peace report.
- The researcher also discovered that some of the headlines and the nature of itsFraming did not reflect the story. For instance, where we have Fulani attack as headline, the story line shows that it was an armed robbery attack. So the framing should be about armed robbery and not Fulani. When false information is passed across, especially on conflict, it can aggravate the conflict.
- That some reports can cause serious hatred among conflicting parties. When reports are watery, full of lies and conflicting figures of death and injured persons. This can cause chaos as one side may feel cheated and may often time want to vengers.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.0 Introduction

Communication plays a vital and fundamental role in conflict resolution in such a way that it can deescalate and escalate a conflict. The research work set out to investigate press coverage of conflict by analyzing the content of *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* coverage that pertains the Tiv/Fulani conflict. The research also was to find out the level to which the print media has been able to resolve conflict in the society via their coverage. In every conflict situation, excess coverage of the conflict may lead to exacerbation of the conflict; less coverage of the conflict signifies underrating the conflict. Therefore, a balanced coverage may deescalate the conflict. Furthermore, conflict can escalate if different media carry different amount of coverage on it and equally tends to be over looked if media organizations cover less of its activities.

5.1 Summary

The credibility of any media organization is rated vis-à-vis its objectivity and balance reportage (Emmanuel, 2011). The tenet of objectivity in social responsibility theory of the press requires the media to be factual, balanced, accurate and fair in its reporting of any event as it must reflect both parties to the story or crisis in the story; this assertion is in view of the theory of social responsibility. The media cannot be bias in a conflict situation if it wants to bring about resolution of the conflict

The early part of this research gave a background to the study from which statement of the research problem was clearly identified. Research questions and objectives and significance

of the study were also discussed. Other aspects pertinent to the chapter were explicitly stated out in the same section.

The second part reviewed exiting literature related to the study. The review, studied the influence of ownership on the performance of the Nigeria press, the partisan nature and ideological division of the Nigeria press, and its implication in reporting national issues. This led the study into analyzing the editions of the *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard*, both privately owned from the north and south respectively and a report from NEMA the Tiv/Fulani conflict was carefully looked at. Also the concept of conflict was analyzed focusing basically on the Tiv/Fulani crisis, and the manner the two newspapers covered the conflict over the study period. Lastly two theories were used, namely social responsibility theory and framing theory.

A research design is the blue print that guides the researcher in the course of a research, (Asika, 2010), and as such no research can be carried out without a research design. This was the focus of the methodology. The descriptive research method using qualitatively and quantitative content analysis served as the basis for gathering and analyzing data for the research and an interview and Focus Group Discussion was carried out. The simple random sampling technique which is of non- probability method of sampling was used. The sample size consisted of 260 editions and a peep into their archives. 130 editions from each paper over a period of 13 month from (March 2014 – March 2015) were used.

The fourth part, deals with the presentation and interpretation of data obtained from the content analysis, interview and Focus Group Discussion. The findings were discussed under the discussion of findings. The findings revealed that, though both *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* tried to aid the resolution of the Tiv/Fulani crisis activities but of course there occur some lapses, the

partisanship nature of the Nigeria press came into play when it came to the ways of resolving the conflict. Essentially, *Daily Trust* sees the use of dialogue as one of the ways of resolving the conflict, whereas *Vanguard* believed more in the use of force between the state government and the herdsmen. The discussant agreed that if meetings are held, areas most affected should be adequately informed as this may bring about peace between the Tiv and Fulani.

The least portion has the summary of the study, a concise conclusion and provides recommendations that are meant to resolve the challenges discussed in the findings. Hence, such recommendations proffer solution for the controversial coverage of the Tiv/Fulani herdsmen crisis which will reduce regional and religious bias to the barest minimum.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the findings of the work carried out by looking into the interview, Focus Group Discussion, content of selected newspaper and visiting the archive of both newspapers, that is, *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard*, the researcher hereby draws to this conclusion, that both newspaper coverage did not give adequate coverage of the conflict as well as in the aspect of in-depth explanations and the follow up stories in the form of features regarding the conflict. Also despite the seriousness of the conflict there is hardly any report on the back page, features, editorials and letters to the editors. Maybe it's due to the seriousness of the crisis that the researcher did not also find any cartoon pictures, though the researcher on the field stumbled on some Boko Haram crisis cartoon pictures of the period under study. Also from the archive it could be said that both papers may be biased, they are sometimes sensational and lack adequate investigative journalism. Conflicting numbers of injured and dead persons, this can, to an extent aggravate the crisis. The Nigeria media should be more concerned with the national integration of the whole country through framing of messages that will promote unity and tolerance among the people in Nigeria. That is

the press must ensure that collective national interest must supersede parochial ethnic and individual interests. Adamu (2008) while citing Hattotuwa (2005) stresses that the media is equally a double- edged sword, It can be a destructive weapon of violence when it propagates messages of intolerance or disinformation that manipulate public sentiments, on the other hand, it can also be an instrument of conflict resolution, when the information it presents is reliable, respect human rights and represent diverse views. It is the kind of media that may upholds accountability and exposes malfeasance.

The study revealed that mass media coverage and reportage of the Tiv/Fulani conflict is not adequately objective and may have the likelihood of escalating the conflict rather than resolving it. Generally the press is at the forefront of discussing issues in the society, the higher the prominence and level of coverage they give to an issue, the more popular such issue becomes, and this is the framing role of the press. Similarly, it is the social responsibility of the press to disseminate factual information to the society as well as fulfill its obligation of promoting peaceful co-existence among citizens for national integration.

The press is to be a promoter of peace by abandoning all bases, thus, the Nigeria press must learn to transcend its ideological polarization of the northern southern press to champion a common national goal. As such, in the bid to finding a lasting solution to the serious security challenge facing Benue state. The press should rise up and champion a strategy that will bring this Tiv/Fulani conflict to a final end. Thus, this study has been able to show that media role in conflict is vital to the success of any mediatory move towards peace and reconciliation, where the media plays more importance on balanced, accurate and objective coverage and reportage of conflict scenarios. Newspaper in the country should strive to maintain ethical standards and be objective in their coverage of event, most especially in conflict scenario in order not to cause

reactionary action that might lead to the escalation of conflict. The two newspapers *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* should allocate more space, as in pages and size for communal crisis, so that readers will see how important such report is to them. There is need to evaluate all current style, mood and tone of news reporting in time of conflict, by training and retraining media practitioners, in this news beats of conflict and war journalistic practice in order to bring about conflict resolution and peace building in the society.

5.3 Recommendations

Drawing from the findings of this study, the researcher came up with these following recommendations, in order to enhance the report on crisis by the Nigeria press.

1. The press should engage more in investigative reporting than the traditional style of relying on messages, especially when it has to do with ethnic crisis like that of the Tiv/Fulani conflict. This will put the conflict in some sort of context and will enlighten the population of the Tiv and Fulani people.
2. The stance of the media through editorials should be based more on neutrality rather than the idea of taking sides and criticizing one group or the other, in other words the place of editorial gatekeeping where news events and stories that have the tendencies to cause tension and escalate conflict should be reactivated in the mass media such that it enhances its role of peace building and conflict resolution. Also the framing should be in line with the story.
3. A problem tree can be used to tackle issue of conflict from the root, rather than handling it from the surface level. Media practitioners must device a means in engaging the people, strategize means of critical consciousness or awareness, follow-up, evaluation, before some coverage can be made. This will tend to reduce the crisis to the barest minimum.

4. Finally, no matter the media, absolute objectivity and balance can never be achieved just as every media will always have an ideology or editorial policy which will always tend to make them support or oppose ideas or policies. But in all, a good distribution of various media with good reputation to relate stories from every angle will improve the media performance in Nigeria.

5.4 Suggestions

From the analysis and the discussion of findings in this research, the study suggests that further research should be carried out to explore;

- i. The importance of follow up in order to resolve conflict which cannot be overemphasized, it is advised, that media practitioners must learn to follow up issues especially when the crisis is a bit still, this will help to eliminate bias reportage, sensational coverage, and it will bring about fact findings that could easily bring the conflict to an end.
- ii. The press must also learn to report peace, (peace journalism). Like the Tiv/Fulani conflict which is not a monthly occurrence. Media can report peace when people are not tensed up this will help to raise the hope of the duo, that someday peace may be restored, because of course the duo were once friends and lived in peace.
- iii. To communicate development to a people, it is important to understand them, also to communicate peace to a people that will bring about sustainable development it is paramount to understand them, in terms of their culture and traditions, dos and don'ts, history, language, religion etc. this simply means that media practitioners in order to restore peace to a conflict society, must carry out adequate survey of the people, understand their conflict situations, other than reporting second hand information. Some

development communication tools like pair wise ranking, problem tree, river of life can bring parties together for better understanding to solve their own problem. This can also lead to better and truthful framing of the stories.

The following are suggestions for further readings:

- iv. Evaluating the use of gate keeping in conflict reporting.
- v. Appraisal objectivity in the Nigeria press coverage of conflicts: a study of the *Nation's* coverage of the Jos conflict.
- vi. A comparative study of *Daily Trust* and *Tribune's* coverage of the implementation of Islamic banking in Nigeria
- vii. A comparison of the northern press coverage of the Niger Delta crisis and Boko Haram.

5.5 Contribution to Knowledge

This study has shown that news frames are almost completely hidden and taken for granted. Conflict frames do not appear as social construction but as primary attributes of events that reporters are merely reflecting. However, the constructionist news frames are obvious and can be located in four places: the communicator, the text, the audience and the culture.

The research brings into limelight of the conflict activities in Logo, Guma and Gwer West local government area of Benue state that the media have given rise to poking messages and bad name calling and have hardly reported the good deeds of the conflicting parties.

In checkmating the role of media in resolving conflict, most studies have focused on content analysis of the different media; like print, radio and television, this study has shift focus by confirming the reports by the media via Focus Group Discussion and interview.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW WITH NEWSPAPER REPORTERS

Ronald Mutum: conflict Reporter, Abuja. *Daily Trust* Newspaper.

Question: how did *Daily Trust* newspaper reported major Tiv/Fulani conflict?

Answer:Journalists that are reporting from regions of conflict faces unique challenges in providing accurate and impartial news. “One careless word from a report or one inaccurate detail can ignite a conflict. We use news features, email information from our sisters papers, messages, interviews and we try as much as possible to make sure that the message is not inciting.

Question: what are the dominants frames used by *Daily Trust* newspaper about the Tiv/Fulani crisis?

Answer: Increasingly, news originates from decisions made in the newsroom rather than by events from the outside. While statements by government officials may be represented on front page news, Frames are a necessary way of organizing information to make it more coherent and interesting and to put it into perspective. What ultimately deserves more reflection by our reports is whether their use of frames is balanced. There may be too great a tendency to view the news through combative frames orexplanatory frame. In addition, we may rely on certain frames too reflexively, especially for certain kinds of stories. News that is too systematic and familiar becomes less interesting and less use. The framing by rote may be failing to ask the right questions, choose the right stories and serve the public as they intend. If some stories usuallydevelop triggered by government action around conflict and horse race, there is a good chances that we may miss an opportunity to explain the process, how policy will affect people's lives . Human interest frame is another aspect that we use in reporting conflict,the frame “brings

a human face or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue, or problem. In crisis situations, the frame stimulates the psychological pulse of people, which ultimately leads them to a more negative attitude which shows that the human interest frame influenced participants' emotional response, and that it is a significant predictor of blame and responsibility in a transgression crisis. Conflict frame also is the frame that report issues in such a way as to reflect conflict and disagreement among individuals or groups, the conflict frame was the second most common frame, and the more serious the newspaper, the more the conflict coverage.

Question: what is the level of objectivity and balance in the newspaper reportage of the crisis?

Answer: Even if you have to overcome a personal prejudice and decide to cover a story you find disagreeable, you must still take care that you are fair in your choice of sources of information. It is not fair to choose to interview an attractive personality for instance, for a cause you support but an unattractive or muddled person for a cause you oppose. There is also the danger that, if you are asked to cover a story you dislike doing, you will fail to put enough energy into finding interviewees and arranging to talk to them. For example, someone you dislike may not want to talk to you. You must not say: "Oh well, let's forget him." You should try your hardest to get an interview or at least a comment. If you want to be a good journalist, you should put your best effort into every story. That way you produce a good product will help objectivity. So 99% of our report are balanced and objectively carried out, especially those that relates to conflict.

Question: what role do the print media play in resolving the crisis?

Answer: information is power and insight can impact on public discourse. This way, perceptions can be changed by access to media. Different types of media are utilized globally to distribute

knowledge and idealistically, free mass media is a tool of and signpost for democracy. Freedom of expression is not only the core of a healthy media but also a fundamental human right and vital for a democratic structure. It stands for freedom of speech, the right to information and the representation of different opinions in a heterogeneous society. In any culture of prevention, effective and democratic media are an essential part and indispensable for societies trying to make a transition towards peace and democracy. Harry S. Truman once said “You can never get all the facts from just one newspaper, and unless you have all the facts, you cannot make proper judgments about what is going on” this statement reflects the need for free access to unbiased information. Not giving people the possibility of political participation and not allowing them to express themselves freely is a significant cause of conflict. On the one hand free, independent and pluralistic media provide a platform for debate and different opinions. On the other hand, media can be misused for propaganda purposes, to incite hatred and spread rumours and therefore artificially create tensions. The transmission of ideas is also not limited to conventional media such as newspapers, TV or radio. Arguably, the traditional media takes primacy in this, however, new technologies, the internet and digital content should also be considered in this context, newspapers have built in agenda and they represent these personal/political agendas and/or biases when they report facts. I must tell you that is the ownership of the media that decided what, when, where, why and how to report in a situation of conflict. The public relies on the media to separate facts and tangible realities from assumptions and spin, to provide a reliable account of what is really going on. Audiences should receive an intelligent account that enables them to form their own views. However, it is believed that the media largely failed to deliver on this promise. So we play the role truthful information to bring people together

Question; in the case of the tiv/Fulani conflict have the affected people ever been consulted before any report or coverage or what is the greater source of information before any coverage is done?

Answer: we have our situation reporters who are always at the scene of any conflict, but due to the death of so many journalists many, we wait when; the area is less tensed, and get information from affected victims.

Question: what if the report generated is one sided?

Answer: Omission occurs when important information is not reported or is reported incompletely. We can think of omission as being news that should have been reported but is left out of the news we read, see and hear. When important news is omitted, we get a skewed or biased perspective. Obviously no news organization can cover every newsworthy story from every possible perspective. But news organizations and their reporters do have an obligation to seek the truth and be reasonably comprehensive in their reporting. The information citizens need to make informed decisions comes, to a significant extent, from news organizations. If important stories are ignored, are reported incompletely, or present facts that are not adequately verified, then the obligation to seek the truth is undermined. In these cases the news that is omitted can be as important as the news that is published.

Question: what does a reporter do if a report is likely to escalate the conflict?

Answer:Peace journalism could work out here; it has been developed from research that indicates that often news about conflict has a value bias toward violence. It uses Conflict analysis and transformation to update the concept of balance, fairness and accuracy in reporting. It also includes practical methods for correcting this bias by producing journalism in both the

mainstream and alternative media, and working with journalists, media professionals, audiences, and organizations in conflict. So we try as much as possible to report peace. Peace journalism includes conflict solution journalism, conflict sensitive journalism, constructive conflict coverage and reporting the world. Peace journalism aims to correct for these biases. Its operational definition is "to allow opportunities for society at large to consider and value non-violent responses to conflict". This involves picking up calls for, and articulations of, non-violence policies from whatever quarter, and allowing them into the public sphere.

Jide Akani: Conflict reporter *Vanguard newspaper*, Lagos State

Question: how did Vanguard newspaper reported major Tiv/Fulani conflict?

Answer: We report using both news and news features, also carry out opinion samples. Sometimes we don't have enough time but we try as much as possible to report all conflict stories. Like the Tiv/Fulani conflict over 95% have been reported and we are still reporting it.

Question: what are the dominant frames used by Vanguard newspaper about the Tiv/Fulani crisis?

Answer: We mostly use the response frame. Once in a while politicians try to influence the coverage. But we try as much as possible to make it human interest frame and not political.

Question: what is the level of objectivity and balance in the newspaper reportage of the crisis?

Answer: We simply follow the convention of newspaper objectivity as it relates to reporting events. There are modalities that guide the way we report and we try as much as possible to make sure the report we make is objective.

Question: What role do the print media play in resolving the crisis?

Answer:Most people say the media is the eye of the society, which means the media is the watch dog of the society, so the media is to be at alert, pre inform the society in case of any approaching danger. And the Vanguard newspaper have taken a conscious decision not to refer to the Fulani as Fulani herdsmen, but rather as herdsmen, because some sources have revealed that some of them are not Fulani.

Question; In the case of the Tiv/Fulani conflict, have the affected people ever been consulted before any report is made or what is the greater source of information before any coverage is done?

Answer:We speak to the victims, the families of the affected victim, we even involve the leaders of the Meyitti allah cattle association, in which the president of Nigeria is the African leader of the group, so when we have deaths, injured persons, the end up giving us conflicting ideas and we therefore take statistics to get our final report.

Question: what if the report generated is one sided?

Answer: yes, sometimes due to time factor, or conflict that happen late at night and coverage have to be made the following day, report may be one side, we sometimes get the information from news messages. And most times one side is heavily affected, we try to report the truth and then it end looking one side, in such cases we don't have a choice but we make sure it is properly edited. We don't cover reports that are not directly from us as situation report but as opinion samples.

Question: What does a reporter do if a report is likely to escalate the conflict?

Answers: Well, a reporter goes out, cover conflict stories, no matter how horrible the scene may look, he is expected to capture everything and leave the rest to the editorial theme. Like this herdesmen crisis, there are cases were you see many cows lifeless, reporting such will simply escalate the crisis. So the editorial team has a huge responsibility of making sure reports don't escalate.

APPENDIX B

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Introduction

2. Rules

3. Exchanging pleasantries and E, M, W,3 Game

4. Introductory question:

What do you know about the Tiv/Fulani conflict.

5. When did the Tiv Fulani conflict started?

6. Why is the conflict still lingering?

7. What are the major causes of the conflict?

8. Do you think the newspapers are reporting the conflict the way it is? (especially the
(vanguard and daily trust newspapers)

9. How have they tried to solve it?

10. Do you think they are doing more harm than good?

11. Do you think their coverage are truthful and no biased?

12. How best do you think the conflict can be stopped?

13. Concluding question

Out of all the things we have discussed today, what would you say are the most important
issues you would like to express? Or what would you like to conclude with.

Names of participant (from Logo, Guma and Gwer West).

- Terfa Terka
- Aondona Soughter
- Tersoo Ngusulunn
- Nokyaan Gwagza
- Denen Sersuu
- Aondougwafakaa Saondoo
- Agbanger Sulushima
- Mvudaga Terna
- Isaac Tersoo
- Mbahoron Terngu
- Tersue Iorwuese
- Ayatse Serfa

Names of Fulani herdsmen

- Ndume abubakar
- Jalige Musa
- Rilwan Abubakar
- Pakau shehu
- Umar Umar
- Modibo Abubakar

Transcription

Questions and Response

What do you know about the Tiv/Fulani crisis?

Mvudager Sulushima(Gwer west): The Tiv and Fulani people have been fighting for a long period now; the main reason for the fight has to do with cow rustling and areas of grazing. And this has led to heavy casualties on both sides. The Fulani cannot graze in peace and we the farmers cannot farm in peace. Since the Fulani man values his cow so much, he wouldn't mind going round the entire Benue state in search of greener pastures at the end of the day, the encroach into farmlands and the resultant effect is fight, and this fight has led to a full blown crisis.

Nokyaaan Gwagza (Logo): initially we were good friends with the Fulani people, to the extent that we even entrust our properties to them and they in turn do the same. It's quite unfortunate that we are now enemies. Just like Mvudager said, they have been stepping into our farm land the destroy our crops, allow their cows destroy our ridges, and even when we try to complain in a polite manner they tend to fight us, and this has continue and have seems not to have an end. Please tell the government to come and help us.

Isaac Terna (Guma); the crisis started gradually and we took it as something trivial, we thought it was something we could easily settle, but today see, it is affecting the state and even other parts of the country. All effort to live in peace has proved abortive. There was a time that the Guma said we should even fence our farmlands, a good number of us did that not minding the size of the farm land. But after a while the Fulani people started pull down the fence and allow their cattle into our farmland any attempt to stop them has resulted into blood bathing.

Jalige Musa(herder from Logo): I must say we have been accused wrongly, yes our cows were entering their farmlands, but immediately we were cautioned, we stop coming close to their farming areas, we also know the importance of farming, how can one feed if he doesn't farm, the truth about is that there are Fulani people everywhere and those migrating from other parts are the cause of this escalating conflict. Some Tiv have resulted in stealing our cows, and we are not happy about that, as far as some other people or Fulani keep moving around the crisis willy stop.

When did the conflict started

Ayetse Serfa (logo); I can't really remember exactly when it started, but around year 2000 and 2002. The Fulani people said that their cows were missing, and that we have poisoned our crops and other pasture so that they will eat and die, but I must tell you that it is not true. So the captured some Tiv people and started killing them, and since then till today the conflict has continue.

Mbahoro Terngu:it started in 2002, around April when we had the first killing of a tiv man by a Fulani man while he was farming, the Tiv man after a hot battle and warning the Fulani man to take his cows out of his farm land, started wiping and driving the cows out of the farm land, the Fulani mas was angry and started fighting the Tiv man, in the process killed the tiv man an escaped. So many Tiv youth tried to stop the Fulani people from entering their farmlands.

Terfa Terka: it started around 2000, when some Tiv people were seriously driving the Fulani people out of benue state, because we the Tiv started experiencing poor yield, our yams were so small in size and few, not to mention our fruit plantation, this is our major occupation and source of livelihood so we couldn't sit back fold our arms and watch ourselves starve to death,

action need to be taken. We pleaded with them not to come close to farmlands that they could graze in other parts, but obviously they refused and since then it's been bloodshed.

Umar Umar. I don't know the exact year, but many years ago the Tiv people were said to have killed the our sultan Usman, while he was going about to visits his Muslim brothers, the Tiv people maybe unknown to them said he was the leader of the Fulani people, he was killed, we couldn't really ascertain who killed him, but the Benue people were suspected to have done that and since then it has been a serious hatred.

Do u think the media, especially the newspaper are reporting the conflict the way it is expected?

Anodougwafakaa Saondoo: well I will say they are trying, but the hardly report the truth, sometimes we just laugh when we hear reports on radio. Out of 20 people the radio can say 4, so we that are seeing what is going on here we don't believe the media.

Ayatse Serfa: for the newspaper we can't really say because we really do not have access to newspaper, it is expensive, and our parents don't buy, those that have access to newspaper are mostly in the town around Markurdi. **But have they come here to get information about the crisis?** Sometimes we see people coming here from NTA, Radio people, and the state newspaper, they come after the crisis has ended to ask questions. But they don't come all the time. But what we hear sometimes is not what is really happening here. Some people feel cheated when reports are unjustly reported. And this happens mostly because of the ownership of these newspapers. This has even prompted some communities to have newspapers, radio and television for the purpose of promoting their own interest.

Iorwese. Tersue; newspaper cannot report the truth about all the crisis, because some are done with public notice, as a matter of fact, some people are already use to it and tried of questions from young government people, some no longer answer the journalist. So they go back and report what they feel like. What we heard daily on the media, especially newspapers and from individual about the way some Tiv treat others usually is also a pointer to conflict behaviour...unguided talk from both the media, elite in the society, politicians, and ethnic leaders on matter relating to conflict. They talk not minding the ripple effect and how the public will react to what they say (participant from Logo).

Pakau Shehu; I won't lie to you, I can't read so why would I buy newspaper, but from radio I listen to, we here reports on the conflict, I will say they are reporting it as they see it, but they are not aware of all the crisis. They have never asked me question. And they haven't asked my friends either.

How do you think they have tried to solve it? For those of you that is aware of the media or newspaper coverage?

Aondougwafakaa Sasondoo; I think the only way only way they can solve the problem is by covering it crisis, and people get to know about the conflict and the government will proffer solutions, or the good people of Nigeria would come to our rescue. **But do you think their report can worsen the conflict?** Yes now, if they are not reporting what is correct, it can cause confusion among us.

Nokyaan Gwagza; the newspaper cannot solve our problem, what many leaders, past and present cannot solve, is it the newspapers that can solve it (laughter). It is bigger than them. But I know if they report what is not correct it would cause chaos, just as my friend as said.

Tersoo Ngusulunn; I school in Markurdi town so I know a bit about some of the newspapers; I have also come across the vanguard and daily trust newspapers. I would say from the few I have come across, they are actually reporting the conflict, and most of the time they report mostly about the Tiv killings, even when it's we and the our minority tribes in the village are having issues, they say its they Fulanis. I would say that their report is one side and they don't carry out proper investigations before they frame their headlines. **I have here with me some headlines I would like to confirm if it is true:**

Benue community, Fulani herdsmen sign peace pact

Fulani, Tiv Agatu agree cease fire in Benue

25 killed as Fulani herdsmen Tiv youth clash in Benue

12 killed in fresh Tiv/ Fulani crisis

Suspected Fulani militia invade Tiv community kill six

All the above report took place around the year 2014 and 2015 can you confirm it to be true?

Tersoo Ngusulunn;on many occasion the government has given us hope that peace would return to the state. We hear stories that the Fulani cattle breed association which is the Myitti Allah cattle breed association has resolved the crisis, but only for us to wake up and it continues. Many times the former governor Susuam, have told us all would soon be alright, because the sultan Sokoto has met with the Late Tor Tiv, to see how peace can be restored to the community. So I would agree on the newspapers on that. Several meetings have actually been held, within us here,

and sometimes the meeting becomes chaotic because both parties end up not having a logical conclusion.

Mbahoro Tersoo; for the other headlines it is true, the Tiv youth and Fulani have occasionally been having clashes, it is usually death upon death, our girls are raped, they still from us, kill and sets our huts on fire. In a bid to retaliate the Fulani people sometimes have their own share. But most times they take us un aware, and so we end up having an more casualties compare to theirs. So I would say those report are true. **Was there any time that the former governor was attacked? Agbanger Sulushima;** yes, **who attacked him?** Well ever since the crisis, soldiers have been around to make sure there is peace and order, the was a particular attack where some soldiers were called upon to the headquarters, and that day the governor was heading to his local government. Some armed men armed bushed him and started shouting at random, some herders were seen at the scene of the incident, but the funniest thing is that the armed men were in military uniforms so we couldn't really say whether it was a Fulani attack.

Terfa Terka; for quite some times we have been receiving some deadly attacks, and some of them are in military uniforms, they sometimes come in helicopter, and destroy an entire community. Some investigation have proven that some of our Elders statesmen are guilty, the collect money from some Fulani men and give them information and most times they attack us when we are not prepared. Their attack is mostly centred on the women and children. If things continue this way we may not have a generation that will take over from us in the next 30-40 years.

Rilwan Abubakar: unlike my friend I have great interest in reading newspapers, and we have heard so many times that they are trying to settle the crisis; they call pastors, imams, the

governor, sultan, Tiv leaders. The moment when we think peace has been restored, the next thing is another trouble. So we wonder what they actually discussed during their meetings. Yes, the newspapers are correct in some of their report, there was a time when there were serious killings, people were dying anyhow, we wake up and see dead bodies, but they end up pinning it on the Fulani people. "...some newspapers through their imbalance coverage create problem among the Tiv and the Fulani people. Newspapers have tagged the Fulani as terror but failed to report all the good things we do in the society". In the same way, Informant from logo disclosed that "Whenever there is a conflict somewhere, they accused Fulani herdsmen. Even when we are the victims of the attack, it is still Fulani they will mention on the pages of newspapers as the attackers".

What do you think can be done to stop the crisis?

Denen Sersuu: they should live our land, though in Agatu the governors have allocated a portion of land to them. Should we continue like this? If we keep allocating land to them one day they will take over the entire state from us.

Isaac Tersoo: I agree with him that, the only way we can solve this is for them to leave the state, but that would be a bit difficult, the only way is for them to graze far in the bush were they are, they also have vast land with pasture why coming to farming areas. But sometimes we are tempted to believe that some of these attacks have some big wigs behind it, if it is true then it would take a longer time for it to end, because some people are enriching themselves from this crisis. People are kidnapped and ransom is demanded, young girls are put in a family way, at the end their babies are stolen and sold.

Jalige Musa; the crisis would not end, until the entire Benue state is fenced, and is that possible?

The Fulani people are everywhere, coming from Togo, Cameroon, chad etc. they are also from within the state roaming about, a Fulani man can live Benue state and move to Sokoto with his cows and at every point he has to rest, and while resting in some of the state before reaching sokoto he may decide to commit havoc and now it become Sokoto herder Committing crime, whereas the herdsmen in sokoto could be peaceful, so because of this passerby, the other herdsmen in Sokoto face certain consequences. So as far as herders move about, there will always trouble, except may be if a portion of land is allocated to them by the government

APPENDIX C

Vanguard Newspaper

- Benue government, Fulani herdsmen in gun battle. March 12, 2014
- Weekend massacre 90 killed in Benue. 55 dead, many missing as Tiv youths, Fulani clash in Benue. Vol. 25 no 621016
- Benue communal clash. IG summons AIGs, orders recovery of fire arms. Vol. 25 no 62107
- Fresh Mayhem in Benue/ Borno 74 killed in attacks. Herdsmen launch attack at 4am. Governor Suswam seek military assistance. Vol.25 no 62101
- 10 killed in fresh Fulan/Tiv clash in Taraba September 16, 2015
- Tiv/Fulani crisis over 32 displaced persons die in camps. March 29, 2014
- Bloody farmers/Fulani herdsmen's clashes in Benue 40 killed, scores injured. Feb, 28, 2016
- 10 killed 300 homeless as Fulani herdsmen invade Benue village. Feb 8, 2016
- 25 killed as Fulani militia invade Tiv community kill six. March 12 2014.
- Suswam wants FG to investigate chemicals used during attack on the Tiv farmers. April 10, 2014.
- Benue farmers, Fulani herdsmen sign peace accord. April 1, 2014
- Benue government, Fulani herdsmen in gun battle, march 16, 2014
- Mystery Benue murderers or herdsmen. March 16, 2014.
- 300 die as herdsmen, farmers clash in Benue. Feb 26, 2016
- 100 killed in Benue communities refugee camps, may 26 2015
- 12 persons feared dead as Fulani herdsmen sack five in Benue. Jan 31 2015.

- Suspected Fulani kill 90 in benue. March 16, 2016.

Daily Trust

- Benue Crisis: face to face encounter with Fulani/ Tiv refugees. March 16, 2014
- Fresh attack claim 52 in Benue. March 24, 2014
- Fulani herdsmen deny attacking Suswam's convoy. March 13, 2014
- Suswam's convoy, herders exchange fire as fresh violence claims 30. March 1 2014
- Benue refugees get relief materials. March 24, 2014.
- 20 killed as Fresh herders/farmers violence erupts in Benue. March 7, 2014.
- Herders/farmers clashes threaten food security. March 28, 2014
- Nassarawa/ Tiv community accuses rulers of allocating land to Fulani buyers. April 1 2016
- Benue community, Fulani herdsmen sign peace pact. March 13, 2016
- 7 killed as Ortom condemns fresh Agatu/Fulani crisis. Feb 1, 2016
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PHOTOS



FIG,1. HERDSMEN (RESEARCHER AND MEMBERS OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION)



FIG. 2;RESEARCHER AND HERDSMEN



FIG, 3;MR. JIDE AJANI (REPORTER VANGAURD)



FIG.3;MR. RONALD MUTUM (REPORTER DAILY TRUST)



FIG. 4;MEMBERS LOGO COMMUNITY



FIG.5;MEMBERS GUMA COMMUNITY



FIG.6; MEMBERS GWER WEST COMMUNITY
SOURCE; 2016-2017 FIELD WORD IN BENUE STATE