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**NEWS FRAMING OF ETHNO-POLITICAL ISSUES AND CONFLICT  
BEHAVIOURS: ETHNIC CONFLICT PATHWAYS MODEL**



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## Abstrak

Kajian kesan pbingkaian berita terhadap pendapat umum dan pembentukan tingkah laku didapati terhasil secara berasingan. Walau bagaimanapun, pengaruhnya terhadap konflik etnik kekal menjadi salah satu cabaran yang masih tidak menerima perhatian yang sewajarnya. Sungguhpun puncanya dikenal pasti dan penyelesaian turut dikemukakan, tetapi ia tidak begitu membantu dalam membendungnya khususnya dalam masyarakat berbilang kaum. Sehubungan itu, pentingnya satu pendekatan baharu diperlukan untuk menyiasat pbingkaian berita dan konflik tingkah laku. Hal tersebut merupakan pendorong utama kajian ini yakni meneroka dan menilai motif serta perangsang perilaku konflik. Kajian ini meneroka aliran pbingkaian berita mengenai konflik etnik melalui kaedah reka bentuk campuran. Temubual mendalam bersama 26 informan dalam kalangan penduduk di Kwara State, di Utara Tengah Nigeria telah digunakan, manakala analisis kandungan tiga surat khabar utama di Nigeria telah digunakan sebagai kaedah pelengkap pengumpulan data. Data temu bual dianalisis secara tematik manakala data analisis kandungan dilakukan secara deskriptif. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa pemimpin-pemimpin kumpulan etnik merupakan protagonis utama terhadap laluan konflik etnik manakala pbingkaian akhbar merangsang perbezaan etnik melalui pbingkaian berorientasikan konflik. Kajian ini telah menyumbang kepada pemahaman baharu dan terkini perspektif keseluruhan bagaimana pbingkaian akhbar telah secara langsung dan tidak langsung mempengaruhi konflik etnik. Di samping itu beberapa potensi penyelesaian turut dicadangkan. Kajian ini menyimpulkan bahawa faktor struktur (politik dan pemingiran ekonomi, ketidakadilan, kemiskinan, dan ketidaksamaan) adalah antara isu-isu etnik dalam bingkai berita adalah penyebab kepada tingkah laku konflik etnik di Nigeria. Kajian ini juga mencadangkan satu model laluan konflik etnik sebagai panduan terhadap pemahaman dan penyelesaian strategik bagi pengurusan konflik dalam masyarakat pelbagai etnik.

**Kata kunci:** pbingkaian akhbar, konflik etnik, pemimpin pendapat, komunikasi politik

## Abstract

News framing study impacts on public opinions and behaviours formation have been severally established. However, its influence on ethnic conflicts which have remained a challenge have not received adequate attention. Despite that the erstwhile causes identified and solutions offered have not really helped in the containment mostly in multiethnic societies. Based on this, the need for a new approach to investigate news framing and conflict behaviours has become imperative. This therefore was the impetus for this study's exploration and examination of the ethnic conflict motives and stimulants for conflict behaviours which is the main helix. The study explored the waves of news frames on ethnic conflict through a mixed methods design. The in-depth interview with 26 informants residents in Kwara State, North Central Nigeria was used, while content analysis of three major newspapers in Nigeria was applied to complement the collection of data. The interview data was analyzed thematically while the content analysis was analysed descriptively. The results showed that ethnic group leaders are the main protagonists in the pathway to ethnic conflict while newspaper framing stimulates ethnic differences through conflict oriented framing. The study has significantly contributed fresh and up-to-date angles to the overall perspectives of how newspapers frames have been directly and indirectly influencing ethnic conflict. In addition the possible solutions have been proposed. The study concludes that structural factors (political and economic exclusion, injustice, poverty, and inequality) and how newspapers frame ethnic issues are the reasons for the intractable conflict behaviours and ethnic conflicts in Nigeria. This study proposed a model to guide the ethnic conflict pathways understanding and solution strategies for multiethnic societies to manage ethnic conflict.

**Keywords:** Newspaper framing, ethnic conflict, opinion leaders, political communication.

## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to **the almighty Allah**, the most beneficent, the most merciful for His benevolence and mercies towards me and my family,

And to

**My mother**, for her sacrifices, love and prayers.



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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 An Overview

Conflict can be traced back to the beginning of human history and will probably never end (Jacob, 2012). Therefore, human survival on this planet hinges on how we manage the various features of conflict that is fuelled not only by seemingly incompatible interests and values, but also by hostilities (Jeong, 2008). Although tension and conflict within African nations are on the increase recently (Hewitt, 2012; Quinn, Wilkenfeld, Eralp, Asal, & Mclauchlin, 2013), nevertheless virtually all societies have gone through a certain phase of conflict, sometimes with tensions or violence along ethnic, religious, class, or gender (Salehyan, et. al., 2012).

The Nigerian success story of amalgamation of diverse groups in 1914 has radically shifted from a platform for peaceful coexistence to an arena of hostility, conflict and gradual disintegration. Presently, agitation and mutual mistrust among and within ethnic groups has reached a high level. The popular explanations for this unexpected situation include colonialism, corruption, political instability and protracted ethnic and religious conflicts. The spate of these insecurity, conflicts and threats to lives and properties in Nigeria has reached alarming proportions, despite the growing democratic system. For over a decade till present, there were dozens of active conflicts across Nigeria; many of them have claimed lives as well as still threatening the lives of women and children.

### 1.2 Background of the study

Just as in other areas of impact of mass communication research, newspaper framing has appeared in researches and many media critics have focused attention on the ways

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