



**Exploration of the Media as a Catalyst for Conflict Resolution: Lived Experiences  
of selected Private Electronic Media entities in Zambia**

**BY  
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A Dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Science in Peace, Leadership and Conflict Resolution.

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## DECLARATION

I, **Lucy Shawa**, do hereby declare that this dissertation is a product of my own effort, and that it has never been done before. The sources of all materials referred to in this report have been acknowledged. Any misrepresentation of information that would arise from this report is purely my responsibility.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

## APPROVAL

This dissertation of **Lucy Shawa** is approved as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Science in Peace, Leadership and Conflict Resolution, of the University of Zambia and Zimbabwe Open University.

Examiners' Signatures

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## **DEDICATIONS**

To my caring uncle, Dr. Musonda and my parents who laid the foundation for my education and prayed for my success, respectively. Special tribute goes to my beloved daughter, Daniella whom I denied quality attention in the course of this study. I also wish to dedicate this work to my siblings, Richard, Peter and Takondwa whom I deprived time during the course of my study. I thank you for your unrivalled understanding. God bless you all.

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I also would like to thank the Almighty God for according me the opportunity of life.

I take responsibility of this entire work, from the start to completion. It is a product of my own making.

## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

IBA	Independent Broadcasting Authority
MISA	Media Institute of Southern Africa
ZICTA	Zambia Information, Communication and Technological Authority

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the media as a catalyst for conflict resolution with a reflection on lived experiences of selected private electronic media entities in Zambia. This research study was guided by the functional and dysfunctional theory of communication by Michael Wright (1974) which is very useful for any attempt to construct a new framework for analysis of media and conflict resolution.

The sample size comprised twenty-two (22) participants, purposively selected using non-probability sampling method. The breakdown of the sample size of 22 respondents consisted: 4 Chief News Editors, 1 ZICTA Representative, 2 IBA, MISA Representatives, 3 Members of the Public and 12 Journalists from 4 media entities in Zambia. This study adopted a qualitative method and specifically, the hermeneutical phenomenology which leads to the description and interpretation of the essence of lived experiences, recognizes the meaning and importance in pedagogy, psychology and sociology according to the experience collected. Thematic analysis with verbatims was used, where data analysis starts with the categorization of themes from the semi-structured interviews.

The study found, to a greater extent, that media entities engaged in some perceived bad media and poor editorial practices, infamous for jeopardizing and eroding societal peace and harmony. Some bad media practices identified included political propaganda, falsehoods, prejudices, discrimination and biased media editorial policies. Other findings were that Zambia's laws and regulations on the media have been making strides towards media self-regulation under the free access to information bill. In order for the media to take its role in conflict resolution and peace building, It was found that major media houses in Zambia have been endeavouring to tailor their editorial policies in line with the media's posit role to educate, inform, promoting dialogue and create a platform for meaningful debate on issues that better public perceptions and interest towards peace and conflict resolution. The research later concludes its findings with an assertion that: *in the right hands, the media is a panacea to peace and conflict resolution and in wrong hands it is a menace to lasting peace and conflict resolution.*

The researcher proposed three (3) recommendations that would help the media as a catalyst for conflict resolution in Zambia.

**Key words:** *Power, Power relations, Conflict, teacher, school and School Manager.*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION.....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>APPROVAL .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>DEDICATIONS .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>ABSTRACT.....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES .....</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES .....</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Overview.....	1
1.2 Background of the study .....	1
1.3 Statement of the problem.....	2
1.4 Purpose of the research.....	3
1.5 Research objectives.....	3
1.6 Research Questions.....	3
1.6.1 Limitations of the research .....	4
1.6.2 Delimitation of the Study.....	4
1.7 Definition of operational terms.....	4
1.8 Theoretical Framework.....	5
1.9. Summary.....	6
<b>CHAPTER TWO .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1 Overview.....	7
2.2 The Media and the case of Yugoslavia, Ethiopia and Rwanda’s Genocide .....	7
2.3 The Role of the Media and Conflict: The Cases of Rwanda, Bosnia and Denmark.....	10
2.4 Nigerian Media Objectivity and Conflict Management.....	11
2.5 The Media and Electoral Violence in Zimbabwe .....	11

2.6 Some Media Engagement and Polarization in Zambia.....	11
2.7 Research Gap from the Reviewed Literature.....	13
2.8 Summary.....	13
<b>CHAPTER THREE .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>14</b>
3.1. Overview.....	14
3.2. Research Design.....	14
3.3. Study Population.....	15
3.4. Sample Size.....	15
3.5. Data Collection .....	16
3.6. Data Collection Procedure .....	16
3.6.1. Interview Guide .....	16
3.6.2. Media observation and monitoring .....	16
3.6.3 Document Revision.....	17
3.7. Data Analysis .....	17
3.8. Ethical Considerations .....	18
3.9. Summary .....	18
<b>CHAPTER FOUR.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>PRESENTATION RESEARCH FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>19</b>
4.1. Overview.....	19
4.2 Demographic Information of Participants .....	19
4.2.1 Demographic Information of Participants by Highest Education level attained .....	21
4.3 Editorial Media Policies in Pursuant of Peace in Zambia.....	22
4.4 Lived Experiences on the Media as a Catalyst for Conflict Resolution and Democracy .....	22
4.5 Media challenges in the Quest to Cultivate Peace in Zambia.....	23
4.6 Strategies in which the Media Serves as a Catalyst for Conflict Resolution.....	23
<b>CHAPTER FIVE .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>24</b>
5.1 Overview.....	24

5.2 Editorial Media Policies in Pursuant of Peace in Zambia.....	24
5.3 Lived Experiences on the Media as a Catalyst for Conflict Resolution and Democracy .....	25
5.4 Media challenges in the Quest to Cultivate Peace in Zambia.....	27
5.5 Strategies in which the Media Serves as a Catalyst for Conflict Resolution.....	28
<b>CHAPTER SIX .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>30</b>
6.1 Overview.....	30
6.2. The Main Research Findings .....	30
6.3. Conclusion .....	31
6.4. Recommendations.....	31
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>37</b>
Appendix A: Interview Guide.....	38

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

Figures 1: Demographic Information of Respondents.....	19
Figures 2: Distribution of Respondents by Gender.....	20
Figures 3: Distribution of Respondents by Age.....	21

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Summary of the sample composition and procedure.....	15
Table 2: Demographic Information of Participants by Highest Education level attained...	21
Table 3: Frequency distribution of the Participants by Professional Employment status....	22

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Overview**

This chapter provides a background to the study, the problem of the study being explored by clearly asserting the motivation for embarking on it, the objectives and research questions of the study. The limitation of the study is also presented. The definitions of operational terms and finally, the summary concluded the first chapter.

### **1.2 Background of the study**

According to Gilboa (2009), the media and journalism can be a great assistance in conflict resolution and peace building. However, the power they have is also limited, as they will never be able to eliminate armed conflicts altogether. The media can be a good tool in a healthy and functioning environment but more is needed than ethical and responsible reporting to ensure lasting peace and safety. The role of the media is twofold: on the one hand, the media report and reflect on pressing issues and can help to question established concepts and ideas (Berry, 2008). On the other hand, they can be used for propaganda purposes and instead of revealing truths, try to cover things up and by this curtail people's freedom and right to information. Regardless, the potential of the media in conflict and post-conflict situations remains a net positive, and has been sadly underutilized to this point in time. Free and critical media plays a central role in democracies by constituting the main source of information, which provides the society with knowledge and a variety of experiences. It also serves as a forum for public debate, conception and development of opinions (Berry, 2008). The media is viewed as a source of power that influences, controls, and promotes new standards in the society and reinforces the existing ones. Media is thus one of the principal agents for societal development, democracy and good governance, and a crucial element in areas of conflict. It can be suggested that media is both a friend and a foe to a peace process. Media can foster human security, and there is evidence that media can reinforce motives for fuelling wars. For instance, in Rwanda, the media is alleged to have played a critical role in inciting and prolonging the violence that saw the massacre and killing of one million people belonging to a mainly Tutsi ethnic community and moderate Hutus in a span of 100 days, starting from April 7, 1994. According to Straus (2007), genocide

perpetrators cited radio broadcasts as a key influence, in amplifying hate. It can be an instrument for peace and conflict management, which promotes messages and strategies that can lead to peaceful agreements and tolerant behaviour in a given society. Media can also be a weapon of violence that propagates biased information and manipulates societies or groups in conflict with divisive ideologies and harmful actions. Thus, the media have become pervasive and extremely influential in attitudes towards conflict (Berry, 2008). For the media to be equal to its ethics, there is need for attitudinal and behavioural changes about the values every media person and agency should adapt to when covering conflict, in order to become peace agents. This way, values and virtues of peace can be incorporated into all levels of news coverage (Berry, 2008). According to Gilboa (2009), the media, particularly radio and television, were instrumental in stimulating conflict and violence in places such as Rwanda and Bosnia. The Danish cartoon controversy also demonstrates that the media can even cause a violent conflict. Scholars and practitioners have noticed how the media exacerbate conflict and have concluded that the media's role can be reversed and converted into positive contributions to conflict resolution. This reversal, however, is difficult to achieve. It is always easier to fuel conflict than resolve it, and the media's role in conflict resolution is more complicated than the roles of those dominating the violence phase.

Therefore, this study is aimed at exploring the media as a catalyst for conflict resolution with a reflection on lived experiences of private electronic media entities in Zambia. In view of this, it is hoped that this study will help in establishing proper measures to be taken by media entities in promoting peaceful co-existence and conflict resolution.

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

Traditionally, the role of the media is to promote peace and co-existence in a democratic society. Despite such an advantageous societal fit, some media entities have engaged in some perceived bad media and poor editorial practices, infamous for jeopardizing and eroding societal peace and harmony. For instance, the media should be a catalyst for pacifying societies whose peace is or likely to be threatened by falsehoods, prejudices, discrimination and biased media editorial policies. For this cause, the media should not be a tool for propagating hate speech, partisan, regional, ethnic, and tribalistic ideas. It should help in the realization of societal harmony as what is meant to be achieved through Zambia's cherished dream of *One Zambia, One Nation*,

expounded by Zambia's founding President, Late Dr. Kenneth David Kaunda. It is believed that through such engagements, peace, harmony and co-existence can be attained, sustained and maintained.

Thus, this study seeks to explore some lived experiences among private electronic media entities in Zambia in relation to media as a catalyst for conflict resolution in Zambia.

#### **1.4 Purpose of the research**

The purpose of this study is to explore the media as a catalyst for conflict resolution with a reflection on lived experiences of selected private electronic media entities in Zambia.

#### **1.5 Research objectives**

The study is guided by the following specific research objectives:

- i. Explore editorial media policies in pursuant of Peace in Zambia
- ii. Describe lived experiences of media practitioners on the media as a catalyst for conflict resolution within the political and democratic dispensation in Zambia.
- iii. Explore the existing challenges associated with the media actors in their quest to cultivate peace in Zambia.
- iv. Explore strategies in use where the media serves as a catalyst for conflict resolution.

#### **1.6 Research Questions**

The study is guided by the following General and Specific Research Questions.

- i. What are the editorial media policies in pursuant of peace in Zambia?
- ii. What lived experiences of media practitioners exist on media as a conflict resolution catalyst within the political and democratic dispensation in Zambia?
- iii. What challenges associated to media are experienced among media actors in their quest to cultivate peace in Zambia?
- iv. What strategies are in use where media has served as catalyst for conflict resolution in Zambia?

### **1.6.1 Limitations of the research**

Limitations are conditions beyond the ability of the researcher that may place restriction on the conclusions of the study and their application to other situations (Best and Khan: 1993 in Mega: 2014). The researcher may experience constraints in the course of the research. During interviews and in answering questionnaires, some participants may not disclose adequate information for fear of exposing themselves. Regardless of the limitation, the findings will be comprehensive as they will still exhibit independence when answering and that through the ethical pledge will develop the confidence of their participation in the study. The study is equally limited to selected media entities in Zambia.

### **1.6.2 Delimitation of the Study**

The study focusses on exploring the media as a catalyst for conflict resolution with a reflection on lived experiences of selected public and private media entities in Zambia and the study is confined to the aforementioned research objectives and questions (Best and Khan: 1993 in Mega: 2014). This is based on the fact that the media is a fourth sector in governance and in the democratisation of any nation, Zambia inclusive. It is therefore espoused that if it fails in its primary mandate of acting as a watchdog as well as correctly informing the citizenry for rational decision-making, it may contribute to social anarchy and chaos. The societal engagement of the media may be uncertain leading to both positive and negative societal influences. Thus, the media can have over-reaching effects upon society and a single study like this one cannot exhaust the entire role played by the media in governance and national as well as economic development in Zambia, as elsewhere.

### **1.7 Definition of operational terms**

The following terms are defined within the context of this study:

*Key words: media, conflict, conflict resolution, peace and peace media*

*Media:* The word ‘media’ means middle and is a term purposely used to describe its location between the media industry or institution creating the content (the sender) on the one hand and the audience member (or receiver) on the other. Media industries or entities are involved in developing, producing and disseminating content through a wide variety of formats,

including the press, electronic publishing, telecommunications, internet, radio, music, cinema and television (Cunningham & Turner, 2010).

*Conflict*: Rakhim (2010:16) defines conflict as “an interactive process manifested in incompatibility, disagreement or dissonance within or between social entities.”

*Conflict resolution*: This is the process by which two or more parties reach a peaceful resolution to a dispute (Harvard Law School, 2020).

*Peace* is to be both ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ peace. ‘Positive’ peace denotes the simultaneous presence of many desirable states of mind and society, such as harmony, justice and equity. ‘Negative’ peace has historically denoted the ‘absence of war’ and other forms of wide scale violent human conflict (Webel & Galtung, 2007). Peace is the concept of harmony, lack of conflict and freedom from fear of violence.

*Peace media*: this is the use of radio, television, and printed journalism, to promote peace, to disseminate truthful information or alternate viewpoints that could turn public sentiment toward peaceful resolution of conflict, or to counter hate radio (Cunningham & Turner, 2010).

## **1.8 Theoretical Framework**

This research study is underpinned by the functional and dysfunctional theory of communication by Michael Wright (1974) which is very useful for any attempt to construct a new framework for analysis of media and conflict resolution. Functional theory is a classic communication theory anchored in sociological system theory, which views institutions, including the media, as performing roles designed to meet the needs of individuals and societies. In communication studies, functional theory paved the way for several approaches and techniques in modern communication research, including media effects, uses and gratifications, agenda-setting, framing, cultivation theory, and the spiral of silence theory.<sup>100</sup> Scholars have even described functional theory as a paradigm—a master theory in control of most research in mass communication.

Wright’s distinction between functions and dysfunctions is relevant to this research since the media may provide useful information to citizens who could be motivated to act against their own interests and the interests of their community. For example, when the media warn of an approaching tornado, the purpose is not only to provide information, but also to help citizens

prepare for threats to life and property. A warning, however, could be dysfunctional if it causes panic and chaos or if everyone rushes to the roads and causes traffic jams. Similarly, the purpose of reporting on a bank's financial difficulties is positive—warning those who have accounts of an imminent threat to their investments—but the result could be dysfunctional if all customers went to the bank, liquidated their assets, and drove the bank into bankruptcy. Application of the Wright formula suggests that, even if the media are sincerely interested in positive contribution to prevent, manage, resolve, or reconcile international conflict, the results may backfire. For example, during the prevention phase, the media may wish to create awareness among the public for signs of an emerging conflict or violence. The result could be positive if the warning creates awareness and effective steps are taken to stop the drift toward violence. However, the result could be negative if the coverage produces apprehension that leads to escalated conflict behavior. It is important to educate the public about the sources of conflict and the potential for violence or conflict resolution. If the public is educated, the coverage could be functional, but if the public is not educated, the coverage could be dysfunctional. During the resolution phase, the media may wish to initiate a conflict resolution process and mobilize public support.

## **1.9. Summary**

This chapter has introduced the study on exploring the media as a catalyst for conflict resolution with a reflection on lived experiences of selected private electronic media entities in Zambia. It started with the background of the study, where it showed that the media and journalism can be a great assistance in conflict resolution and peace building going beyond ethical and responsible reporting to ensure lasting peace and safety. It also gave the statement of the problem in which it stated that despite the traditional and cherished role of the media in democratic dispensation of nations, negative outcomes have been obtaining from the media's societal engagements. It stated that the media may engage in some counterproductive and retrogressive activities through propagation, manipulative and biased information aimed at misleading the public and society. The objectives of the study and the research questions have also been given. The theoretical framework of the research has also been given as based on the work by Michael Wright (1974). The chapter also gave out some of the limitations and defined the terms used in the proposal. The next chapter looks at some of the available literature which is deemed to be directly significant to the current research.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Overview**

In an attempt to strengthen arguments and prove the validity of conclusions drawn from the case study, the researcher made use of the available literature on the subject exploring the media as a catalyst for conflict resolution with a reflection on lived experiences of selected private electronic media entities in Zambia. In building a logical discussion for this research topic this chapter reviews literature informed this study.

The reviewed literature covers countries like Bosnia, Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Zambia. The chapter closes with a summary.

#### **2.2 The Media and the case of Yugoslavia, Ethiopia and Rwanda's Genocide**

According to a qualitative study conducted by Gessese (2020), the media exacerbated conflicts countries like Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Ethiopia. The 1994 Rwanda's genocide and Ethiopia's interethnic were indicated as countries whose conflict was comparative to the one witnessed in Yugoslavia. The study also addressed lessons other countries that abuse the media could learn from the former Yugoslavia and the 1994 Rwanda genocide. Six ethnic-based media from Amhara, Oromo, and Tigre ethnic groups of Ethiopia were taken as a sample of the study. The finding showed that victimization frames, ethnic injustice frames, moral superiority frames, anti-hero frames, 'enemy within' frames, and self-defense frames are the dominant crisis frames of the media, which created fear, sense of a clear and present danger and mobilized violent action in both Yugoslavia and Rwanda. Additionally, Yugoslavia and Rwanda media played the role of instigating and flaring conflict and genocide respectively. Similarly, the current manifestations and trends of Ethiopia's ethnic-based media are following the path which Yugoslavia and Rwanda media has passed. Regional state/public media and specific 'ethnic group' based private/commercial Ethiopian media are abused by 'extreme ethnic nationalists'. Based on these comparative analyses, the study identified major lessons from Yugoslavia and Rwanda which will help Ethiopia to take timely measures (James, 2008). Thus, structured, content-specific, aggressive and proactive interventions on ethnic-based Ethiopian media are highly needed. The date is 18 April 1994, nearly two weeks after the 6 April plane crash that claimed the life of

Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana and plunged Rwanda into the abyss. The tiny central African country, a mere dot on the world map, garnered virtually no international media attention before the killing spree that followed the president's death. No one had paid much attention to a fledgling peace accord signed in Arusha, Tanzania in 1993, setting out the details for a power-sharing arrangement between the majority Hutu population and the minority Tutsi, represented in the talks by the rebels from the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). An international peacekeeping force, commanded by a Canadian general, Roméo Dallaire, was dispatched to oversee implementation of the accord. Dallaire and his peacekeepers were only vaguely aware of the mounting tensions in the autumn of 1993, but heard rumblings about a 'third force' – Hutu extremists who opposed the power-sharing arrangement.

The voice of Hutu Power was the private radio station RTLM, established by extremists who surrounded the president. And RTLM was an echo of other extremist media, notably the newspaper Kangura. Once the president's plane was shot down by unknown assailants, the message from RTLM was unmistakable: the Tutsi were to blame; they were the enemy and Rwanda would be better off without them. The killings began almost immediately in Kigali through the night of 6–7 April. Hutu moderates, who were willing to share power, were among the first targeted, along with Tutsi marked for extermination in a campaign that eventually fanned out across the country. Many of the hundreds of thousands of Rwandans who were slaughtered had huddled in churches for sanctuary. Death squads lobbed in grenades. In their frenzy, killers severed the Achilles tendons on the heels of their victims, so they could return and finish the job later. Teachers killed students, neighbours slaughtered neighbours as local officials helped organize the killing. In its 2003 verdict in the 'Media Trial' of executives from RTLM and Kangura, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) confirmed the undoubted role of Rwandan hate media in the killing: The newspaper and the radio explicitly and repeatedly, in fact relentlessly, targeted the Tutsi population for destruction. Demonizing the Tutsi as having inherently evil qualities, equating the ethnic group with 'the enemy' and portraying its women as seductive enemy agents, the media called for the extermination of the Tutsi ethnic group as a response to the political threat that they associated with Tutsi ethnicity (Teferi, 2012).

Eventually, the international media reports on Rwanda were replete with images of bloated corpses, strewn at the roadside or choking Rwanda's rivers. But because there were so few

foreign journalists on the ground at the height of the killing and because the domestic media had either been cowed or co-opted into the massacres, there are no other known images of the crime itself, the crime of genocide. Would the world have reacted differently if confronted daily by images of people being slaughtered rather than the static, disembodied pictures of disfigured corpses? More informed and comprehensive coverage of the Rwanda genocide, particularly in those early days, might well have mitigated or even halted the killing by sparking an international outcry (Teferi, 2012). The news media could have made a difference. But within Rwanda, the only news media making a difference were hate media, such as RTLM, which proved instrumental in fanning the flames and implicating tens of thousands of ordinary people in the genocide.

Ethiopia is characterized by a large diversity of ethno-linguistics, cultures, religions, socio-economic activities, and governance traditions; more than 100 million people with more than 80 ethnic groups (Central Statistical Agency of FDRE, 2017). The country is one of those countries severely affected by violent inter-ethnic conflicts. The intensity of the conflict, its deadly consequence and impact on the country's co-existence as a nation increased at an increasing rate for the last 29 years, after post-1991 (Teferi, 2012). For instance, Bekalu (2017) summarizes the deadly consequences of inter-ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia from 1992 up to 2015; and from selected 17 conflict incidents nearly 800 people were killed, and it also affected the country severely. These facts and other evidences confirmed that the country is living with long-lasting violent inter-ethnic conflicts.

According to a study by Taddele (2017), Ethiopian media suffered from deep-rooted victimization frame, by nationalist elites. The nationalist elites call others in all corners of Ethiopia as 'they are settlers or strangers and to the extent as colonizers'; similar to Rwanda's situation before the genocide. This frame has become consistently increasing in the last two years; in these years the violent conflict between different ethnic groups becomes increasing and complicating. 'Son of the soil' frame, a potential cause of alienation and violence (Taddele, 2017), is another long lasted media frame framed as a counter-frame in current Ethiopia. For instance, Oromo nationalists framed other ethnic groups of the country, more specifically Amhara as 'settlers' of Addis Ababa. On the contrary, Amhara nationalists framed 'Oromo' as 'strangers' for the Addis Ababa city. This is all about 'Settlers' vs. 'Strangers' as 'Son of the

soil' counters frame competition of Amhara and Oromo extreme ethnic nationalists by using the media. Such kind of frames creates a fertile condition for extreme ethnic nationalists to create a sense of mistrust and hostility between Amhara and Oromo. Antihero frames are the other adversarial frame, framed by ethnic based media of Amhara, Oromo, and Tigre ethnic groups. The Amhara ethnic group based media framed king Minilik II as 'a father of modern Ethiopia' (Amhara TV, 2018b); whereas the Oromo and Tigre ethnic group based media framed him in an anti-hero frame as 'colonizer', 'oppressor', 'killer' and the like (Tigray TV, 2019). Similarly, Melese Zenawi (former Prime minister of the country) is framed by the Tigre ethnic group based media as a man who struggles for the equality of nations and nationalities of Ethiopia, and mastermind of the economic development of the country; On the contrary, Amhara and Oromo ethnic group based media framed him in an anti-hero frame as the sole responsible person for the overall crisis and who brought all the evil things of the country. Jawar Mohammed, a well-known Oromo nationalist, is framed by Oromo ethnic group based media as 'mobilizer, the voice for voiceless of the country (Oromo) and calculator of the recent political reform of the country' (OMN, 2019d); whereas Amhara ethnic group based media framed him in an anti-hero frame as 'terrorist and the cause for the current crisis of the country' (ASRAT TV, 2019). Such kinds of 'hero and anti-hero' frames are one of the major causes which increase a sense of hostility and enmity between these ethnic groups of the country. There are adversarial media frames, by ethnic-based media of Ethiopia, which possibly will create mistrust, enmity, even hatred, grievances, and polarized perceptions.

### **2.3 The Role of the Media and Conflict: The Cases of Rwanda, Bosnia and Denmark**

According to a study conducted by Gilboa (2009), most existing studies focus on the often negative contributions of the media to the escalation and violence phases of conflict. Very few studies deal with the actual or potential media contributions to conflict resolution and reconciliation. Indeed, the media, particularly radio and television, were instrumental in fomenting conflict and violence in places such as Rwanda and Bosnia. The Danish cartoon controversy also demonstrates that the media can even cause a violent conflict. Scholars and practitioners have noticed how the media exacerbate conflict and have concluded that the media's role can be reversed and converted into positive contributions to conflict resolution. This reversal, however, is difficult to achieve. It is always easier to foment conflict than resolve it, and

the media's role in conflict resolution is more complicated than the roles of those dominating the violence phase (Gilboa, 2009). According to Frohardt and Temin (2003), before the outbreak of gets to the highest stage of violent conflict, genocide, in Rwanda, the media tried to create fear on Hutus by transmitting the information with content that shows the irreversible upcoming attack by a Tutsi militia.

#### **2.4 Nigerian Media Objectivity and Conflict Management**

Akinro (2016) provides an insightful account of a complex conflict, involving the Boko Haram conflict, in northern Nigeria. The study found that the Boko Haram crisis was represented in the newspapers examined and that the newspapers did not provide sufficient contextual and background information about the crisis. The media did not play active roles towards conflict management, as advocated by Galtung, and were involved in partisan reporting of incidents in the crisis. The study made a significant contribution to the debate about objectivity in news reporting and the role of the media for societal good (Akinro, (2016).

#### **2.5 The Media and Electoral Violence in Zimbabwe**

According to a research carried out by **Tsarwe and Mare (2008)**, Zimbabwe has often been characterised by electoral violence, and in 2008, the media played a key role in its mediation from the build-up to the election through to the post-election period. A research carried out in Zimbabwe by **Tsarwe and Mare (2008)**, revealed an apparent bias by the Zimbabwean press in the coverage of contesting political parties, an obvious omission of facts and a propensity towards fanning divisive politics through name calling and the use of inflammatory language. The same observations were echoed by the SADC Electoral Commission which declared that: "The mission noted with concern the partisan and biased coverage given to some political parties and their candidates by both the public and private media". In addition, research reviewed that the same behaviour by the Zimbabwean press followed similar trends witnessed elsewhere in Africa, Western and Eastern Europe in past decades (**Tsarwe & Mare, 2008**).

#### **2.6 Some Media Engagement and Polarization in Zambia**

The study by Mazurova, Pokai and Chisholm (2021) examined the role that the media plays in polarising views and escalating tension. The cases studied reflects the competing perspectives on

Chinese engagement in Zambia, from the courtship of Chinese investment to rising anti-Chinese sentiment. Based on a comparative media analysis of English and Mandarin news articles about the ZAFFICO and COVID-19 discrimination controversies, we argue that the multi-layered polarisation in Zambia's media landscape amplifies existing identity-conflicts. Framing—the tone, word choice, and selection of detail—in articles changes with the positionality of the media outlet and shapes the discourse around the cases. Sensationalisation, misinformation, and divergent frames contribute to conflict between different identity groups, which is capitalised on in a divisive political environment. The media facilitates blackboxing and us vs. them thinking which often precede conflict. The 'other' that appears in the Zambian media landscape includes 'China/the Chinese', 'the opposition', and 'the ruling Patriotic Front'. The media plays a role in polarising views and amplifying societal tensions around Chinese-Zambian engagement. We found visible differences in tone, word choice, and selection of detail between articles depending on the positionality of the outlet and its readership. These differences in frames could be a contributing factor to polarisation and conflict escalation in inter-group conflict. The majority of Chinese stakeholders are not malign actors, as some media sources suggest, but differences between them and the Zambian people are capitalised on in a divisive political environment. The media certainly reflects real grievances, but also sensationalises and exaggerates information for political ends. Analysing the media presents an interesting but also daunting task as there are so many points of distortion. People are inundated with information, and it is difficult to discover the root of the problem and not get emotionally invested in the discourse taking place. Similarly, for researchers, it is difficult to limit where, when, and what to assess in the media. From this, the question of positionality arises as how someone adds to the conversation is affected by the identity they hold in relation to the identity of the group, society, or country being researched. The other difficulty with media analysis is reflecting intersectionality in the analysis. There are socioeconomic differences that affect who can participate in the media discourse and whose identities are validated. All of these ideas feed into information reliability, and there is no guarantee that the media is an accurate reflection of what is happening in society. Without effective spaces for addressing legitimate grievances and mediating between different views, the media will continue to escalate tensions and be used as a tool to incite violence. Those who study the media in any context should acknowledge positionality and intersectionality, and those

working with activists, journalists, or stakeholders could create workshops and facilitate discussion on navigating media in different contexts.

In another study and According to the research conducted by Sepiso (2016), the media is polarized. The private media is under government surveillance, impeding it from carrying its task effectively of providing a platform for public debate on many political subjects affecting the country. Further, he found out that the public media was a mouth-piece of the state and could not criticize the government on human rights abuse or on matters bordering on lack of accountability and transparency in its operation. This disadvantaged the citizenry from being well informed. It is because of this polarization that the media in Zambia falls short in promoting peace.

## **2.7 Research Gap from the Reviewed Literature**

From the above literature review, there has not been adequate study on exploring the media as a catalyst for conflict resolution with a reflection on lived experiences of selected public and private media entities in Zambia, specifically. Therefore, this study is an endeavour in that direction.

## **2.8 Summary**

In this chapter various forms of international and local literature have been discussed. Literature on exploring the media as a catalyst for conflict resolution with a reflection on lived experiences of selected private electronic media entities in Zambia has been reviewed to show the uniqueness of this study. It is worth noting that the reviewed literature depicts the media on the side of fueling conflict than being used as a tool for conflict resolution. Thus, this research is unique to fill in the void gap. This has been done to ensure that the reader gets a clearer picture on the thinking behind the study. The next chapter focuses on the methodological approaches to the study. Special attention will be granted to description of the methods or approaches to be used in the study and the justification for their usage in the study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Overview**

The previous chapter reviewed the global, African and Zambian literature related to the topic of study. This chapter discussed the methodology employed in the study. It started with the description of the research design employed, then the target population, the sample size, the sampling procedures and the research instruments used. Furthermore, it described the data collection procedures and how the data was analysed in order to answer the research questions. In addition, it explained the ethical considerations to be made during the process of data collection. It then ended with a summary.

#### **3.2. Research Design**

The study employed qualitative method and specifically, the hermeneutical phenomenology. According to Fuster (2019), hermeneutical phenomenology is based on the theories of Van Manen, Raquel Ayala and Miguel Martínez. This approach leads to the description and interpretation of the essence of lived experiences, recognizes the meaning and importance in pedagogy, psychology and sociology according to the experience collected. This method constitutes rigorous and consisted processes of the ethical dimensions of the daily experience, which are difficult to be accessed by other usual research methods. Barbera and Inciarte (2012) pointed out that phenomenology originated in the Greek word phenomenon which means "something that shows itself, and manifests that it can become visible by itself" (p. 201). Phenomenology is a philosophical current developed by Edmund Husserl in the middle of the 20th century. This approach focuses on how individuals understand the meanings of lived experiences. The approach arises as an opposition to naturalism, since it observes the individual and eradicates all the observer's intentionality and intuition. This enabled the researcher to have a broader understanding of the subject under study in order to arrive at more objective findings for readers, relevant stake holders and policy makers. The hermeneutical phenomenology is appropriate as it permitted the researcher to observe phenomenon in their natural, real-life settings; according the researcher, a chance to develop a more accurate understanding of the

phenomena under study (Saunders et al., 2009). The key advantage of the qualitative, interpretive orientation is that findings based on this approach are more valid and less artificial.

### 3.3. Study Population

The population, according to Brynard & Hanekom (2006:55), refers to a group in the universe that possess specific characteristics, in the context of this study, with the term “universe” referring to all subjects who possess the attributes in which the study is interested. This study will target Chief News Editors, ZICTA Representative, IBA, MISA Representatives, Members of the Public and Journalists from 4 media entities in Zambia.

### 3.4. Sample Size

The sample size, as suggested by (Kothari, 2011), refers to the number of items to be selected from the target population. A sample size of twenty-two (22) participants will be purposively selected using non-probability sampling method in this research study. Kumar (2014), regards purposive sampling as based on the judgement of the researcher in identifying who may provide the information most likely to enable the researcher achieve the objective of the study. The breakdown of the sample size of 22 respondents shall consist: 4 Chief News Editors, 1 ZICTA Representative, 2 IBA, MISA Representatives, 3 Members of the Public and 12 Journalists from 4 media entities in Zambia. A summary of the participants to the study and the proposed sampling procedure is provided in table 1 below:

**Table 4: Summary of the sample composition and procedure**

RESPONDENTS' CATEGORIES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	SAMPLING PROCEDURE
Chief News Editors	4 (1 per media entity)	Purposive
ZICTA Representative	1	Purposive
IBA, MISA Representatives	2	Purposive
Members of the Public	3	Purposive
Journalists	12 (3 per media entity)	Purposive
NUMBER OF Media entities	4	Purposive
Respondents' Total	22	

### **3.5. Data Collection**

The study collected qualitative data through face-to-face interviews, participant observation and document revision, as instruments for collecting primary data. The researcher considered it appropriate to use the three independent data collection methods in order to corroborate the research and the findings within the study (Saunders et al.; 2009). An interview guide was used to collect data during face-face interviews. In participant observation, the researcher made use of a diary to record a narrative account of observation results, whilst administrative and instructional documents were reviewed during document revision data collection method.

### **3.6. Data Collection Procedure**

#### **3.6.1. Interview Guide**

The interview guide contained open-ended questions for the collection of qualitative data (Mwarari & Ngugi, 2013; Thindwa, 2011). The contact method was by face-to-face and this was advantageous to the researcher since it provided flexibility and the ability to probe and clarified responses (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2001). Originality of data was guaranteed by taking notes of the interview and using a voice recorder, out of permission. Though it was labelled in some circles, as time consuming and leading to interview bias, the interview guide was used in the study because it provided for direct interaction with the respondents and the collection of in-depth information.

#### **3.6.2. Media observation and monitoring**

This involved a descriptive observation of the target media practice (through their broadcast, information dissemination and presentations) by the researcher. In descriptive observation, the researcher's main focus is on observing the physical setting, the media's editorial policy and practice, mission statement, key participants and their activities, particular news items and emotions likely to be triggered or triggered (Saunders et al.; 2009). The researcher maintained a diary in which to record a narrative account of the results of the media entity observation. The role of the researcher was essentially that of a complete observer and monitor, strictly analysing headline and news framing (Saunders et al.; 2009). One of the advantages of this monitoring and observation is that it yielded a

very high ontology and validity because it involved studying social phenomena in their natural contexts (Khotari, 2011).

### **3.6.3 Document Revision**

This data collection instrument is also known as “archival research”. The principal source of data was Television broadcast and online TV platforms, Newspapers, magazines and journals (Saunders et al.; 2009). The main reason for analysing these publications was because they are a product of day-to-day activities (Hakim 2000). The use of secondary information as a key source of data was strictly for the purpose of capturing the reality on the ground on how the media had engaged itself in Zambia’s socio-political affairs, and not as data originally collected for research purposes. Secondary data from Newspapers, magazines, and journals were helpful as it contained the exact information required to answer research questions or address research objectives. Circumstantially, data may be missing or the researcher may be denied access, or data may be censored for confidentiality reasons (Saunders et al.; 2009).

The study utilised secondary data from Zambia’s leading Newspapers and by consulting already published sources, such as, from the social media like face-book, internet, journals, print and electronic media articles, research reports as well as national, regional and global organisational reports.

### **3.7. Data Analysis**

N’gandu & Kasonde, (2014) defined data analysis as the manipulation of collected data for the purpose of drawing conclusions that reflect on the interests, ideas and theories that initiate the study. They will add on that, analysis of data can be achieved by organizing data to produce findings that require interpretation through coding and condensing the codes after which data is represented in figures or tables. This study was purely be qualitative in nature and therefore seeks to have its, data analysed manually. Interview notes were read thoroughly in order to gain an understanding of their content. Any voice recordings permitted by respondents were replayed repeatedly to grasp the responses as first-hand information. The responses were transcribed from the interview notes, researcher’s diary, as well as voice recorders which consisted raw data. The data was thereafter rearranged and tabulated systematically into themes in order to translate

analysis into a thematic analysis. Lastly, description of categories and subcategories of data were done, followed by identification of major themes that helped in the final analysis of the contents. However, in participant observation and document revision methods, data collection and data analysis was carried out simultaneously, depending on a given situation at the time of the research (Saunders et al., 2009).

### **3.8. Ethical Considerations**

Authority was sought from The University of Zambia Ethics Committee, as well as relevant authorities in the National Broadcasting, Zambia Information Communication and Telecommunication Authority (ZICTA), MISA and the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) before embarking on the study. During the data collection exercise, it was clearly explained to each participant that no monetary benefits, for participating in the study was involved, and that consent will be sought from the research participants to ensure their autonomy. It will be explained to the research participants that the research did not pose any physical harm or risks to their lives. Research participants will be assured that confidentiality of their information would be maintained and that their identity will remain anonymous. During in-depth interviews, the anonymity of participants would be ensured, by not mentioning names or specific places where the interviews took place. Participants were also assured that they would be free to terminate their participation in the research at any time without consequences. Before in-depth interviews, participants would further be encouraged to indicate their desire to discontinue the discussions if they so wished without facing any difficulties.

### **3.9. Summary**

This chapter outlined the research design and methodologies that were adopted in the study. The chapter articulated research design and methods that were used to collect data in selected media entities in Zambia. The next chapter focused on the research findings obtained from the study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION RESEARCH FINDINGS

#### 4.1. Overview

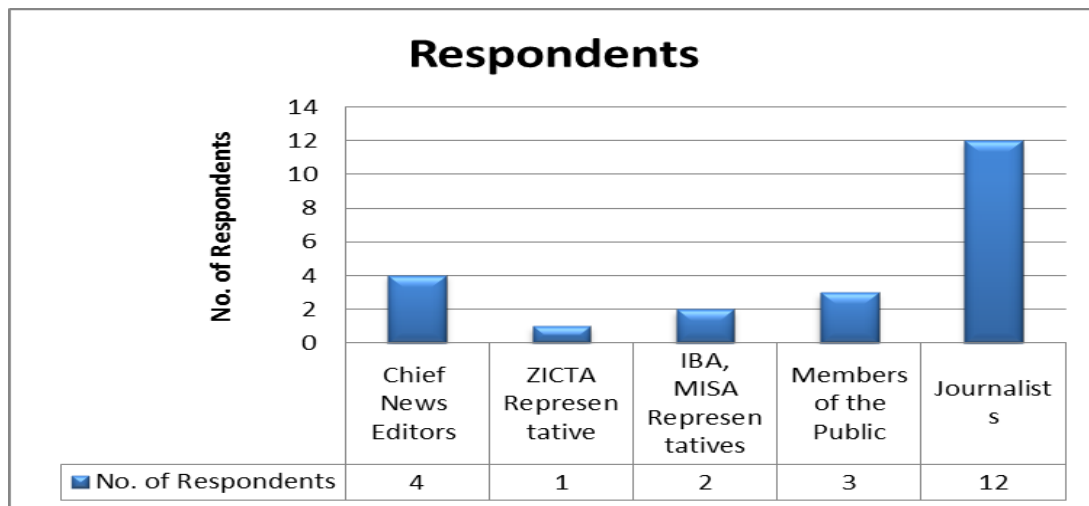
The prior chapter looked at all research methodologies employed in this study. This chapter presents the findings of the study. The intent of the study was to explore the media as a catalyst for conflict resolution with a reflection on lived experiences of selected private electronic media entities in Zambia. The findings are presented according to the requirement of the research objectives as:

- i. Explore editorial media policies in pursuant of Peace in Zambia
- ii. Describe lived experiences of media practitioners on the media as a catalyst for conflict resolution within the political and democratic dispensation in Zambia.
- iii. Explore the existing challenges associated with the media actors in their quest to cultivate peace in Zambia.
- iv. Explore strategies in use where the media serves as a catalyst for conflict resolution.

#### 4.2 Demographic Information of Participants

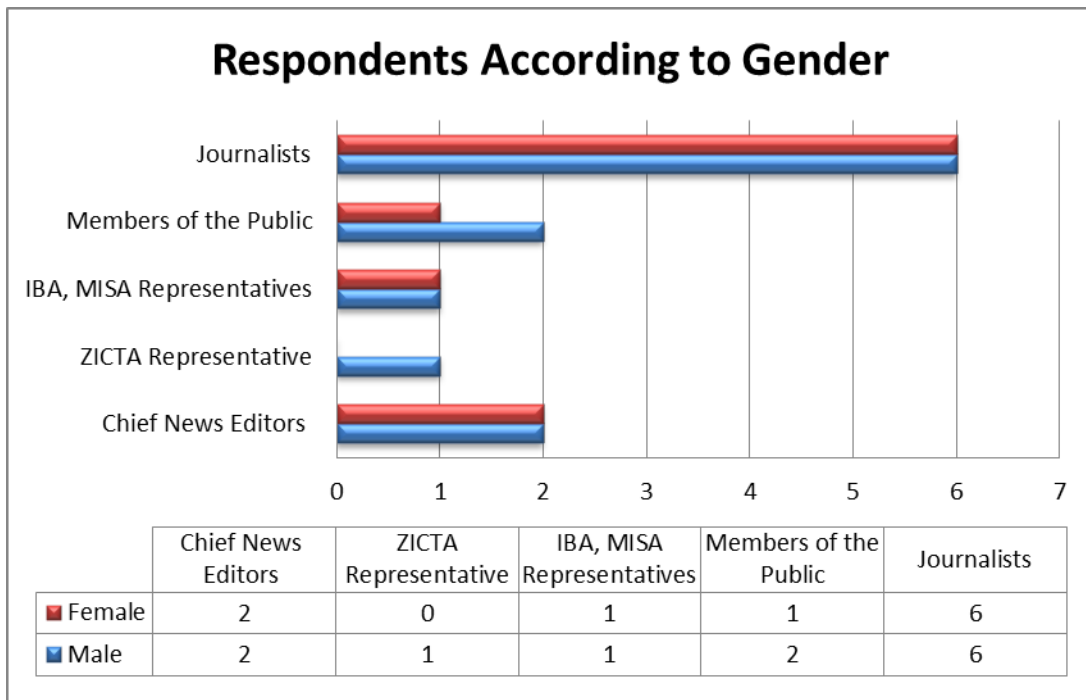
This section gives a presentation on the demographic information of all the participants who took part in the study.

**Figures 1: Demographic Information of Respondents.**



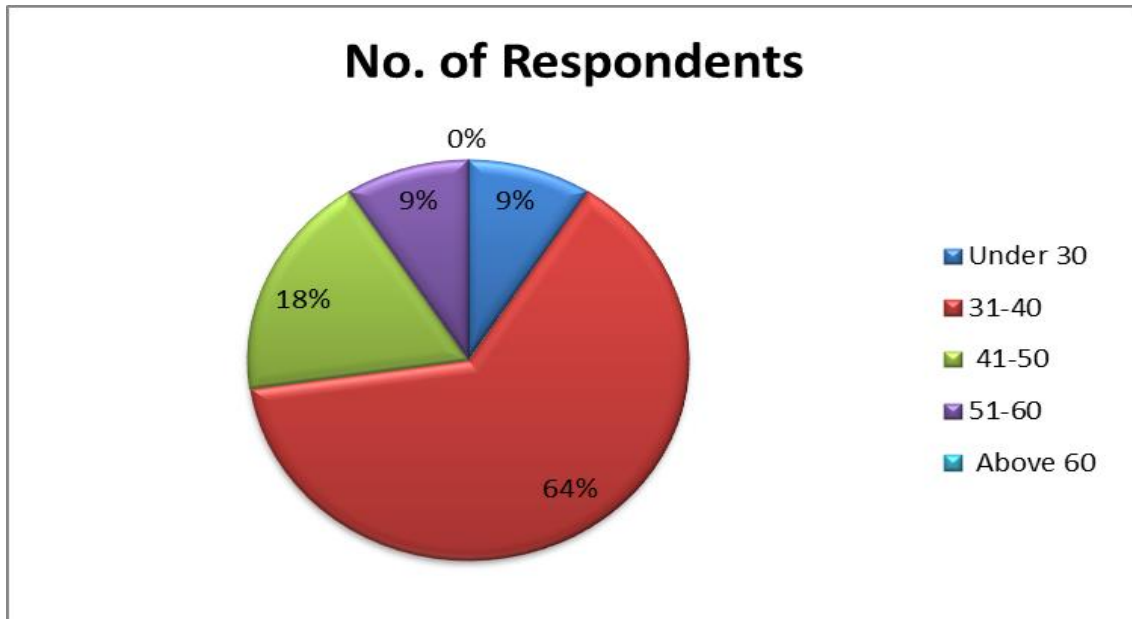
The demography of participants refers to the statistics relating to the research participants/respondents who took part in this study. This includes all the background information of the research participants deemed necessary and relevant to the study by the researcher. A research participant, informant or respondent is someone who is well versed in the social phenomenon being studied and who is willing to provide information on it (Babbie, 2007: 186). On the demographic information of the respondents, four (4) were Chief News Editors, one (1) ZICTA Representative, two (2) IBA/MISA Representative 3 Members of the Public and 12 Journalists.

**Figures 2: Distribution of Respondents by Gender.**



The overall respondents' gender was at 55% males and 45% females. This indicates a fair balance of respondents according to gender.

**Figures 3: Distribution of Respondents by Age.**



Respondents in the age group under 30 years accounted for 9%, in 31 to 40 years 64%, in 41-50 years 18%, 51 to 60 years 9% and above 60 years 0%.

#### **4.2.1 Demographic Information of Participants by Highest Education level attained**

This section gives a presentation of findings on the demographic information of the participants by highest level of education attained as shown in table 2 below:

**Table 5: Demographic Information of Participants by Highest Education level attained**

Respondents	Certificate	Diploma	Degree	Masters	Doctorate
Chief News Editors				3	1
ZICTA Representative			1		
IBA, MISA Representatives			2		
Members of the Public			3		
Journalists		4	8		

**Table 6: Frequency distribution of the Participants by Professional Employment status**

Respondents	Employment status				
	Formal	Informal	Contract	Temporal	Retired
Chief News Editors	4				
ZICTA Representative	1				
IBA, MISA Representatives	2				
Members of the Public	3				
Journalists	<b>12</b>				

According to the research findings, all the respondents representing 100% were in formal and professional employment.

#### **4.3 Editorial Media Policies in Pursuant of Peace in Zambia**

According to the findings, all the respondents affirmed that the media is a critical partner in conflict resolution and peace processes in Zambia. The participants asserted that the media in Zambia is well placed to provide authentic information to the public. They indicated that the media follows certain ethics and regulatory standards so as not to misinform, mislead and sensationalize its message to the masses. All participants nodded the media's vested power to influence attitudes, behaviours, perceptions and actions critical for decision making of the masses. Viewed in this way, the participants strongly stressed that the media should disseminate content that would promote peace (MISA Zambia, 2022).

#### **4.4 Lived Experiences on the Media as a Catalyst for Conflict Resolution and Democracy**

According to the research findings, the media's role in Zambia in conflict resolution processes has been: *defusing tension before it reaches a critical point* as well as *providing checks and balances on government, oppositional political parties and society*. Other ways have been to:

*build bridges between warring factions, increase and simplify knowledge awareness on complex issues, being impartial and objective in reporting (without side-lining any societal sect or group), avoiding propaganda mongering on 'grey' areas that have the capacity to divide political players and parties. Similarly, other participants indicated that the media in Zambia has been providing factual and accurate information to enhance quick conflict resolution and also by providing peace building initiative that safeguard democratic governance which is essential in bringing about humanitarian benefit. Further, the participants stressed that the media in Zambia has been providing equal coverage space to players with divergent views, promoting the respect of human rights and freedoms and engage in sensitisation of the Zambian public on the electoral process.*

#### **4.5 Media challenges in the Quest to Cultivate Peace in Zambia**

According to the research findings, the media fraternity has the following challenges in its quest to cultivate peace in Zambia: *political interference and intimidation especially by parties in power, lack of security and protection for media personnel, hooliganism and barbaric behaviour, media polarization of private and public media, inadequate funding for comprehensive coverage, rigidity in licensing for wider coverage and media house expansion, hostile legal and tensed political environment, poor conditions of service for media practitioners and media misinformation, propaganda and media sensationalism.*

#### **4.6 Strategies in which the Media Serves as a Catalyst for Conflict Resolution**

According to the findings, the media in Zambia uses the following strategies as a catalyst for conflict resolution: *bringing various players together to a round table and on one-on-one basis for discussions without being biased, using well researched information critical for conflict resolution, ensuring that they adhere to media regulations that prohibit and prevent violence incitement. Others participants suggested that the media in Zambia can promote peace by: being objective and accurate in reporting, doing away with media polarisation by working together as a fraternity, encouraging tolerance, divergent views and dialogue among political players while taking no sides, ensuring that legislative reforms are undertaken to strengthen the media fraternity, by sensitization and promotion of democratic principles and ensuring that there is credible and inclusive coverage.*

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 5.1 Overview

This chapter deals with the discussion of the findings that were presented in chapter four. The discussion of the findings conformed to the four research objectives of this study which were:

- i. Explore editorial media policies in pursuant of Peace in Zambia
- ii. Describe lived experiences of media practitioners on the media as a catalyst for conflict resolution within the political and democratic dispensation in Zambia.
- iii. Explore the existing challenges associated with the media actors in their quest to cultivate peace in Zambia.
- iv. Explore strategies in use where the media serves as a catalyst for conflict resolution.

#### 5.2 Editorial Media Policies in Pursuant of Peace in Zambia

The first objective of the study was meant to explore media editorial policies in pursuant of peace in Zambia. From the inception, research participants acknowledged that freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of expression and access to information may not be absolute but one that require responsibility in Zambia's thriving democracy and democratisation. As such, Zambia's laws and regulations on the media have been making strides towards media self-regulation under the free access to information bill. The findings are consistent with the position taken by MISA Zambia that major media houses have endeavoured to tailor their editorial policies in line with its posits as to educate, inform, entertain and create a platform for debate on issues of public interest, which is a huge democratic and peaceful stride in Zambia's political dispensation (MISA Zambia, 2022). The premise is that it is a fundamental human right to ask for, and receive, information held by public organisations and bodies. It is critically important to make sure that information held by public, and in some cases private, institutions is available and accessible to citizens. MISA Zambia has been advocating for legislative changes to media laws and particularly the repeal of laws that criminalise the work of the media. The organisation has adopted new innovative and effective advocacy strategies and developed clear advocacy messages. As part of its advocacy efforts, MISA Zambia has also increased its contacts and engagement with the National Assembly, the Executive and civil society organisations while

also supporting grassroots organisations in their push for information access (MISA Zambia, 2022).

Another finding indicated that the media is a critical partner in conflict resolution and peace processes in Zambia. Other findings are that the media in Zambia is well placed to provide authentic information to the public, follows ethics and regulations so as not to misinform, mislead and sensationalize its message to the masses. Further, it was found that the media has vested power to influence attitudes, behaviours, perceptions and actions critical for decision making of the masses. Viewed in this way, the media in Zambia has, by and large, been disseminating content that would promote peace. The role of the media in Zambia has been to educate, inform, entertain and create a platform for debate on issues of public interest. The media also plays a watchdog role by providing information that shed light on the activities of those in public office, crime, and corporate wrongdoing. In this way, the media promotes accountability which could be achieved, to a certain extent, through investigative journalism.

### **5.3 Lived Experiences on the Media as a Catalyst for Conflict Resolution and Democracy**

According to the research findings, the media's role in Zambia in conflict resolution processes has been: *defusing tension before it reaches a critical point* as well as *providing checks and balances on government, oppositional political parties and society*. Other ways have been to: *build bridges between warring factions, increase and simplify knowledge awareness on complex issues, being impartial and objective in reporting (without side-lining any societal sect or group), avoiding propaganda mongering on 'grey' areas that have the capacity to divide political players and parties*. Similarly, other participants indicated that the media in Zambia has been *providing factual and accurate information to enhance quick conflict resolution* and also by *providing peace building initiative that safeguard democratic governance which is essential in bringing about humanitarian benefit*. Further, the participants stressed that the media in Zambia has been *providing equal coverage space to players with divergent views, promoting the respect of human rights and freedoms and engage in sensitisation of the Zambian public on the electoral process*.

Such findings are consistent with the assertion by Kuusik (2010) that 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 utilised 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. The definition of conflict and defining conflict areas is not easy (Kuusik, 2010). The intervention of unbiased and free media is important not only for Zambian public but also for the people directly affected. The danger of manipulation and inflammation of ethnic tensions, however, cannot be ignored. Another advantage of local media, especially radio is that in border areas it is possible to convey peace messages to passing fighters and refugees alike. Democratic media structures need more than this; it is vital that the use of information within a society is not solemnly passive but that the population gets actively involved in creating content and broadcasting it (Kuusik, 2010). The media has the power to defuse tensions before they even reach a critical point and keep a critical eye on government, opposition and society. By supplying credible information and reaching a large audience, the media help in managing conflicts and promote democratic principles. In the aftermath of a conflict, reconciliation and societal development can be encouraged as well. A suggested framework used by peace-building media can employ different strategies such as (1) Conflict-sensitive and peace journalism; (2) Peace-promoting entertainment media; (3) Media regulation to prevent incitement of violence, but also (4) Peace-promoting citizen media (Kuusik, 2010).

Media and journalism can be a great assistance in conflict management and peace building. However, the power they have is also limited, as they will never be able to eliminate armed conflicts altogether. The media can be a good tool in a healthy and functioning environment but more is needed than ethical and responsible reporting to ensure lasting peace and safety. The role of the media is twofold: on the one hand, the media report and reflect on pressing issues and can help to question established concepts and ideas. On the other hand, they can be used for propaganda purposes and instead of revealing truths, try to cover things up and by this curtail people's freedom and right to information. Regardless, the potential of the media in conflict and post-conflict situations remains a net positive, and has been sadly underutilized to this point in time (Kuusik, 2010).

#### **5.4 Media challenges in the Quest to Cultivate Peace in Zambia**

According to the research findings, the media fraternity has the following challenges in its quest to cultivate peace in Zambia: political interference and intimidation especially by parties in power, lack of security and protection for media personnel, hooliganism and barbaric behaviour, media polarization of private and public media, inadequate funding for comprehensive coverage, rigidity in licensing for wider coverage and media house expansion, hostile legal and tensed political environment, poor conditions of service for media practitioners and media misinformation, propaganda and media sensationalism.

The findings are in line with the assertions by Mulatu (2016) that while the media can play central role in promoting peace by using various techniques, as mentioned above, they are facing some challenges to do so, and even sometimes, they are playing destructive roles in the peace building process. These challenges are described differently. For example, Shoemaker and Reese (1996), outlines the challenges in five hierarchical levels such as individual level, media routines level, organization level, extra media level, and ideological level. These are the media atmosphere, media ownership, media institutions, the journalists, and the receivers. These are how far the media are independent from the government control and other exterior interference. In most cases, media are under the control of external body such as the governments, owners, political parties, advertisers and others. These groups are able to determine the media content, working situation and finance. The smooth working environment of the media in most parts of the world is depending on the relationship between the media and the state. The relationship of the two certainly has great impact not only the conflict issues but also other reporting specially in developing countries. One of the influence is the government has the chance to limit the information. It means that the political environment and the media situation (how the media are free) limit the media's role in general and the peace building process in particular. One of the essential elements of peace building process is a calm political environment, (Wolfsfeld, 2004). The political situation, the level of freedom of expression and the media expansion in a given country have direct impact in the peace building process. In certain political climates, those who engage in critical reporting must expect to face sanctions, threats or even death. Conflict actors may also attack with impunity, without fear that their actions will be promptly investigated by the relevant authorities. In addition, lobbyists and representatives of political institutions may

attempt to obstruct investigative journalism by cancelling the advertising upon which many media organizations, above all community and local media, depend, or simply by ensuring that critical journalists in leadership positions are replaced. Finally, the work of journalists is also influenced by the preferences, interests, level of awareness and habits of their readers, listeners and viewers.

### **5.5 Strategies in which the Media Serves as a Catalyst for Conflict Resolution**

According to the findings, the media in Zambia uses the following strategies as a catalyst for conflict resolution: *bringing various players together to a round table and on one-on-one basis for discussions without being biased, using well researched information critical for conflict resolution, ensuring that they adhere to media regulations that prohibit and prevent violence incitement.* Others participants suggested that the media in Zambia can promote peace by: *being objective and accurate in reporting, doing away with media polarisation by working together as a fraternity, encouraging tolerance, divergent views and dialogue among political players while taking no sides, ensuring that legislative reforms are undertaken to strengthen the media fraternity, by sensitization and promotion of democratic principles and ensuring that there is credible and inclusive coverage.*

The above findings on the strategies are in line with those by Himelfarb and Chabalowski (2008) who opined that a framework used by peace-building media as one that can employ different strategies such as: Conflict-sensitive and peace journalism; Peace-promoting entertainment media; Media regulation to prevent incitement of violence, and Peace-promoting citizen media. the media is an indispensable political actor in peacebuilding processes. On the discursive battlefields of already fragmented societies in conflict countries, the media and individual journalists play an important part in constructing conflict realities. They provide a daily stream of information and analysis on current events. Through their work, media professionals not only influence the perceptions of millions of readers, viewers, listeners and internet users, but also determine to a crucial degree whether and to what extent conflict actors recognize the array of constructive options available for resolving their differences. There are therefore multiple opportunities for the media to play a constructive role in conflict transformation. Through their work, the media can strengthen dialogue processes by introducing and anchoring important issues in national and local discourses. They can help to break up stereotypes of victims and

perpetrators and build up the public's knowledge about political decisions relating to peace deals and the like, thus making potential transformation processes more participatory. They can raise awareness of the psychosocial effects of conflict. Through their work, they can also support reintegration processes of ex-combatants, including child soldiers, at the community level.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.1 Overview

This chapter is meant to present the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations made by this study.

#### 6.2. The Main Research Findings

This study sought to explore the media as a catalyst for conflict resolution with a reflection on lived experiences of selected private electronic media entities in Zambia. Thus, the study examined the media's role in promoting peace and co-existence in a democratic society. It was found further that certain media entities engaged in some perceived bad media and poor editorial practices, infamous for jeopardizing and eroding societal peace and harmony. Some bad media practices included falsehoods, prejudices, discrimination and biased media editorial policies. Other findings were that Zambia's laws and regulations on the media have been making strides towards media self-regulation under the free access to information bill. The findings are consistent with the position taken by MISA Zambia that major media houses have endeavoured to tailor their editorial policies in line with the media's posit role to educate, inform, promotion of dialogue and the creation a platform for meaningful debate on issues that better public perceptions and interest towards peace and conflict resolution, which is a huge democratic and peaceful stride in Zambia's political dispensation (MISA Zambia, 2022). The lived experience of the media has been to provide equal coverage space to players with divergent views, promoting the respect of human rights and freedoms and engage in sensitisation of the Zambian public on many matters of public concern, including peace and conflict resolution. It was equally found that the media fraternity has had challenges in its quest to cultivate peace in Zambia ranging from political interference and intimidation especially by parties in power, lack of security and protection for media personnel, hooliganism and barbaric behaviour to media polarization of private and public media and inadequate funding for comprehensive coverage. The strategies and suggestions brought forth for peaceful media and conflict resolution included: bringing various players together to a round table and on one-on-one basis for discussions without being biased,

using well researched information (investigative media) critical for conflict resolution and ensuring that they adhere to media regulations that prohibit and prevent violence incitement.

### **6.3. Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that, to a greater extent, the media and journalism can be of great help in conflict resolution and peace building. It can be a good tool in a healthy and functioning environment but more is needed like adherence to ethics and regulations that encourage dialogue, co-existence and tolerance. A peaceful media house should promote human rights respect, champion the rule of law, seek for accountability and advocate transparency and responsible reporting for everyone's lasting peace and safety. Amidst some bad media practices like falsehoods, prejudices, discrimination and biased media editorial policies, Zambia's laws and regulations on the media have been making strides towards media self-regulation under the free access to information bill. Thus, major media houses in Zambia have endeavoured to tailor their editorial policies in line with the media's posit role to educate, inform, promotion of dialogue and the creation of a platform for meaningful debate on issues that better public perceptions and interest towards peace and conflict resolution. In the right hands, the media is a panacea to peace and conflict resolution and in wrong hands it is menace to lasting peace.

### **6.4. Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the study considered to make the following recommendations:

- i. The Government of the Republic of Zambia should, in consultation with a cross section of stakeholders, expedite the assenting into law the free access to information bill which would enhance accountability, transparency, good governance and promote the respect to the rule of law for a peaceful Zambia. It will make the work of the media easy in its quest to gather verifiable information without fear or favour since misinformation and public ignorance are a recipe for conflict and societal anarchy.

- ii. The Government should ensure the protection of media personnel in their discharge of duty. There should be guaranteed of safety, even when a story exposes the mischievousness of the elites in society.
  
- iii. Media houses and media stakeholders should unite in order to win their space of societal influence as the fourth sector in societal progress. They should not work in isolation but should have a unified voice for better treatment, betterment of their conditions of service and in accessing verifiable information.

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## APPENDICES

### TIME TABLE AND BUDGET

#### A. Time Table

Data Collection will take one (1) Month from the time of distribution of research instruments. Data Analysis will take two (2) weeks while the research report write up will take two weeks. The entire work is scheduled for two (2) Months.

ACTIVITY	TIME FRAME
DATA COLLECTION	1 MONTH
DATA ANALYSIS	2 WEEKS
REPORT WRITE UP COMPLETION	2 WEEKS
TOTAL TIME:	2 MONTHS

#### B. Budget

ACTIVITY	AMOUNT
DATA COLLECTION TRANSPORT	K2000.00
DATA ANALYSIS	K1000.00
REPORT PRINTING	K2, 000.00
TOTAL AMOUNT	K5,000.00

## INSTRUMENTS

### Appendix A: Interview Guide

This study, in which you are being requested to participate is undertaken to *explore the media as a catalyst for conflict resolution with a reflection on lived experiences of selected private electronic media entities in Zambia*. The information gathered will be treated as confidential and will be used for academic purposes only. For more information on the study feel free to contact the researcher on 0977938375. You are kindly requested to answer the questions by either putting a tick in the box [] provided next to the answer of your choice, or by writing your views in the spaces provided.

#### SECTION A: Demographic Information:

1. Your gender: Male [] Female []
2. Age bracket. Under 30 [] 31-40 [] 41-50 [] 51-60 [] Above 60 []
3. What is your highest professional level attained?
  - a. Primary level []
  - b. Secondary level []
  - c. College certificate []
  - d. Diploma []
  - e. Bachelor's Degree []
  - f. Master's Degree []
  - g. Doctorate []
  - h. Any other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

#### SECTION B: Media as a Catalyst of Conflict Resolution

6. Do you think the media can be a partner in conflict resolution and peace processes in Zambia?
7. What do you think is the role of the media in Zambia's conflict resolution processes?
8. What are some of the roles played by the media in Zambia's political and democratic dispensation?
9. What are the challenges encountered by the media in Zambia's peace processes?
10. In what ways can the media in Zambia become a catalyst for conflict resolution?

Thank you for your Time and Participation in this Research Interview!