

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

Media Propaganda and Nation Building: A Comparative Study of "Thousand Hills Free Radio and Television" (RTL) and Radio Biafra

Dr. Ekah, James Akpan

Lecturer, Department of History and International Studies, University of Uyo, Nigeria

Dr. Eminue, Esin Okon

Lecturer, Department of History and International Studies, University of Uyo, Nigeria

Okpalaeke, Patrick Chukwudike

Post-Graduate Student, Department of History and International Studies, University of Uyo, Nigeria

Abstract:

The paper critically examines the influence of media propaganda towards nation building, using Nigeria and Rwanda as a comparative case study. However, the essay focuses more on the aspect of radio propaganda, using both Thousand Hills Free Radio and Television (Rwanda) and Radio Biafra (Nigeria). Radio propaganda has in recent times, proven to be one of the most effective ways through which conflicting parties spread information across their sympathizers. The RTL has been widely regarded by many as having played a crucial role in creating the atmosphere of charged racial hostility that sustained the genocide of 1994 which claimed the lives of many people. The broadcast of KantanoHabimana cannot be said to have been in line with the tenets of nation building. At present, the radio propaganda strategy has in recent time been employed by the Independent People of Biafra (IPOB) through an established radio station called Radio Biafra which was founded by the government of defunct Republic of Biafra and has been reignited at the instance of NnamdiKanu, leader of IPOB in 2015; with the intention of transmitting information about the conditions of the Biafran in Nigeria to fellow Igbo domiciled in Nigeria and abroad. Upon critical examination, the essay expresses the view that there exist a thin line between what the RTL did back then in 1994 during the Rwanda genocide and what Radio Biafra is practicing in its quest for secession from the Nigerian state. This essay, therefore, sees the activities of Radio Biafra as a déjà vu which possesses the capacity to plunge the Nigerian state into another round of conflict that might bring about turmoil and anguish. In Conclusion, the paper avers that the Radio Biafra, just like the RTL is a very powerful propagandist tool which if left unchecked, has the potency of crippling what is left as peace in a "United Nigeria" and poses grave danger to nation building.

Keywords: Radio, Propaganda, Rwanda, Nigeria, IPOB, RTL, and Radio Biafra

1. Introduction

The place of media in any given society is as vital as other basic needs of life as media has over the course of time brought about changes in how people perceive issues bordering on their very existence. In short, media has been described as the "mirror" of modern society (Ravi 2012: 306-325). Within the Nigeria context, media kicked off in 1859 with the publication of "Iwelrohin" by Rev. Henry Townsend. By the twentieth century, media during colonial rule became a crucial instrument in the hands of Nigerian nationalists such as NnamdiAzikiwe, Obafemi Awolowo, Anthony Enahoro, among others in the pursuit of Nigerian independence. After gaining independence, the Nigerian media atmosphere became heavily characterized with several propaganda strategies, as politicians employed media propaganda as a way to outmaneuver their political rivals.

It is important, to state that the focus of this essay is solely channeled towards the role of media propaganda with special reference to radio as it has been employed in creating charged atmosphere that militates against national cohesion wherever there are more than one ethnic groups. In describing the effectiveness of radio in a given society, Kaye and Popperwell (1992) espouse thus:

Radio is the media genie, small enough to fit into a bottle, big enough to cover a continent...radio has developed into the most intimate of media, the principal one-to-one means of communication. At the same time, in remote agricultural communities the radio receiver may still be the focus of the family life as it was during the Second World War in Europe, gathering people to listen to news that affects all their lives. [11]

Thus, since the advent of radio as a broader communication gadget, it has continued to act as an indispensable and invaluable linchpin for pivotal change with regard to disseminating information to a large number of audience. The change

that came with the invention of the radio became practically more effective especially at the turn of the twentieth century which saw the outbreak of numerous conflicts particularly the First and Second World Wars. For instance, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) was very instrumental to the British government in the fight against anti-communist propaganda during the post Second World War years (Defty 2002:4-5).

Notably, when the radio was first invented, it was basically to aid the dissemination of information across a wide spectrum of audience within a definite radius through electromagnetic waves (Somerville 2012:34). Such information would include but not limited to news, jingles, and advertisements, among others. However, the first overtly political use of the radio to spread news and propaganda was in revolutionary Russia. Radio telegraphy and wireless radio signals were effectively used to spread the news of the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks and the formation of the Soviet government by the All-Union Congress of Soviet in October 1917 (Jowett & O' Donnell 2006). Marking the very beginning of radio propaganda in human history.

Precisely 6 April 1994, Rwanda became the cynosure of the international community as a result of the genocide that was being perpetrated by the Hutu towards the Tutsi ethnic group as thousands were reported dead and many fled the country. However, The Rwanda genocide did not seem as a spontaneous outburst, but one that followed instructions from highest level. In line with the foregone, Somerville (2012:153-154) argues that the Rwanda genocide was not a sudden event since it is on record that prior to April 1994, the Hutu and Tutsi citizens, had since the dying years of Belgian colonialism suffered frequent and bloody outbreaks of violence between the two ethnic groups marked by horrific massacres, waves of refugees moving to and fro the borders of both Rwanda and Burundi and bouts of guerilla warfare. In short, both ethnic groups were not stable and well-ruled according to the rule of law and with equality for all citizens. Couple with the already existing tension was the use of radio propaganda to incite hatred among the populace. The Thousand Hills Free Radio and Television (RTL) at the instance of KantanoHabimana, who addressed the Tutsi as "cockroaches" (a name first given to the Tutsi by Kangura in his article published in 1993) (Desforges 1999:62) became a medium for disseminating hate speeches that ultimately escalated the 1994 Rwanda genocide.

As a rider to the aforementioned, Nigeria presently is experiencing similar radio propaganda trend as it was employed in Rwanda during those ugly period the genocide lasted. By 2015, the Radio Biafra began to gain momentum and a wider audience across both Nigeria and in the diaspora. It was evidently noticed that the nature of broadcasts aired by Radio Biafra was very much similar to what the RTL at the instance of KantanoHabimana orchestrated back then that had grave consequences on the Rwanda ethnic question. Since 2015, Radio Biafra under its director, NnamdiKanu have been engaging in the broadcasting of propaganda and hate speeches capable of plunging Nigeria into crisis.

In light of the foregone, this study is set to conduct a comparative study on the role of RTL in the Rwanda genocide and the role of Radio Biafra in broadcasting hate speeches on its quest to achieving Biafra's freedom from Nigeria. It is pertinent to note that Radio Biafra was first founded by the defunct government of the Republic of Biafra which served as a propaganda machinery during the years of the Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970). Forty-five years later, the Radio Biafra was reactivated in the year 2015 primarily to serve as a channel for transmitting information about the conditions of the people of Biafra in Nigeria to fellow Igbo living both in Nigeria and overseas, although, this goal was defeated when the Radio station left its primary assignment and started to broadcast very inciting utterances. Although, outside the broadcasting of hate speeches, other issues being aired on Radio Biafra ranges from Igbo marginalization, insecurity (herdsmen killing across Igbo lands), violation (denial) of human rights, among others. In addition, the Radio Biafra, according to Taiwo (2017:14) possesses strong online presence, since it uses social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to achieve set goals.

2. The Development and Influence of Mass Media in the Nigerian Society

Historically, the development of mass media in Nigeria can be said to have occurred in different phases. For instance Tador (1996:40) is of the view that the development of mass media in Nigeria took three phases- the early press (1800-1920); Nationalist press (1929-1960); and contemporary press (1960-till date). Whereas, Ogunsiiji (1989:45-47) opined that the development of mass media in Nigeria can be view from four eras starting from the era of Missionary journalism (1846-1863), the era of alien-dominated press (1863-1914), the emergence of indigenous press (1914-1960), and lastly, the new era (1960-till date). While both Tador and Ogunsiiji have given an elaborated insight into the various stages Nigerian mass media may have passed through in its development, Omu (1978:6), however, sums the development processes when he asserted that missionary activities that occurred along the West Africa coast, starting from Freetown gave impetus to media emergence in Nigeria. Given the views of these scholars, it is obvious that mass media in Nigeria has its origin in the activities of colonial missionary and later went on to metamorphose as a vital platform used by Nigerian earliest nationalists in the campaign towards self- actualization.

Whatever was the case, the evolution of mass media in Nigeria took root in the publication of *Iwelrohin* which was published in 1859 by an Anglican missionary known as Rev. Henry Townsend in Abeokuta, thirteen years after the first printing press had been established in Calabar by the Presbyterian mission in 1846 (Omu 1985; Okonkwo 1985:65). Further, by 1862, Rev. Townsend's printing press went on to print the first Bible in Yoruba language (Okonkwo 1985:65). This remarkable events went on to spark a great revolution in the aspect of communication as it aided learning and reading culture amongst the indigenous population. At this juncture it is intrusive to note that the primary reason behind the publishing of *Iwelrohin* by Rev. Townsend was to aid his "ambitious political propaganda and shrewd manoeuvring for power in Egbaland"

(Omu 1978:8). In order to achieve his aim, Rev. Townsend introduced the English language supplement making *Iwelrohin* bilingual as from March 8, 1860 (Omu 1978:6). This act carried out by Rev. Townsend actually sowed the seed of media propaganda which by the twentieth century took a formidable turn amongst the Nigerian nationalists in their quest to dominate both politically, and otherwise.

While the emergence of *Iwelrohin* may have set the pace for mass media in Nigeria, the newspaper suffered heavy setback in 1867 owing to the series of socio-political clashes among the Egba people and their European settlers which ultimately led to its demise (Daramola 2016:56). Nevertheless, by 1863, the first English newspaper in the history of Nigeria's indigenous press started with Robert Campbell's establishment of the *Anglo-African* newspaper; Robert Campbell acted in a dual capacity both as its editor and proprietor (Tador 1996:41; Omu 1978:19). The primary goal of the paper was to promote the interest of Lagos and its inhabitants, particularly in the aspect of Western education and enlightenment. Unfortunately, it folded in 1865 as a result of meagre resources to support its continuous operation (Tador 1996:41-42; Omu 1978: 1920). A major resultant effect of the *Anglo-African* newspaper would be that, its emergence, though short-lived, set the pace for the media revolution that occurred in the subsequent decades marking the twilight of the nineteenth century.

Thus, from 1880s, mass media recorded massive outburst in the number of newspapers that flooded the newsstand. According to Tador as cited in NnanyelugoOkoro, the newspapers then included the following: *The Lagos Times and Gold Coast Colony Advertisers* (1880), *The Lagos Observer* (1882), *The Eagle and Lagos Critic* (1883), *The Mirror* (1887), *The Lagos Weekly Record* (1894), *The Lagos Echo* (1894), and *The Lagos Standard* (1894) (Okoro 2012:6-12). In sum then, about a total of fifty-one newspapers was established between 1880 and 1937. These consisted of eleven dailies, thirty-three weeklies, three fortnightlies and four monthlies (Omu 1978:26). These numerous newspapers played the critical role of questioning the policies of the British colonial government as melted out to the peopling of Nigeria. As a matter of fact, they became the mouth piece of the colonized against the colonizers. This period, without doubt, marked the beginning of 'Radical Newspapers Movement' in Nigeria, as most of those editors were dogged and spirit filled. Always using their write-ups to galvanize the people into protesting against the maltreatment of the British colonial government.

The growth and influence of mass media in the Nigerian society took a ferocious dimension at the dawn of the twentieth century, particularly after the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern Protectorates in 1914 by Lord Frederick Lugard. The first newspaper to bear the name "Nigeria" was *Nigerian Chronicles* founded on 20 November 1908 by two brothers-Christopher Josephus Johnson and Emmanuel T. Johnson. Two years later, James Bright Davies brought in the *Nigerian Times* on 5 April 1910. Both papers espoused the views to express opinion and judgement on government measures (Omu 1978:39-42) as it affects the lives of Nigerians across the country without fear nor favour.

Further, the influence of media on the Nigerian society became more pronounced when its nationalist started to agitate for a better representations as well as self-determination. Even though, the first set of indigenous editors were hardly professionals, the likes of Ernest Ikoli of the *Nigerian Daily Times* and later editor of *Nigerian Messenger*, Richard Blaize of the *Lagos Times*, Herbert Macaulay of the *Lagos Daily News*, NnamdiAzikiwe of the *Pilot* and Obafemi Awolowo of the *Service* (Echeruo 1974:50-64) contributed immensely towards using the media (press) as a platform against colonial abrasive policies and also as a medium to arouse the consciousness of the Nigerian public towards self-actualization which ultimately fast-tracked Nigeria's independence.

Owing to the aforementioned, the origin of electronic media (radio and television) in Nigeria took a different form from that of the print media. While that of the radio began with the introduction of the Radio Distribution System in 1933 in Lagos by the British colonial government under the Department of Post and Telegraph (P&T), that of the television was, however, established by the Western region government which started operation on 11 October, 1959 (Shittu 2013:850-860). Pointedly, the aim of the first ever launched radio station in Nigeria by the British government was to aid the dissemination of information concerning British efforts and her allies during the Second World War through the British Broadcasting Corporation. However, by 1939, the Ibadan radio station was commissioned, followed by the Kano station in 1944. It was not long when a re-appraisal of radio broadcast objectives gave birth to the establishment of the Nigerian Broadcasting Service (NBS) in the year 1950. Within a short while, the NBS commenced operation across cities such as Kano, Enugu, Kaduna, Ibadan, and Lagos (Ibrahim 2013). In discussing the influence of colonial radio activities on the Nigerian society, Nwanze (2003:n.a) espouses thus:

The British colonial government initiated radio broadcasting to link colonial territories with Britain, to serve as a propaganda machinery. The colonial masters used radio broadcasting to propagate and disseminate their alien cultural values, belief and norms. And further consolidate the domination of the colonial territories.

Hence, in 1957, radio broadcasting in Nigeria assumed a level of great importance to the Nigerian audience as numerous programmes were not initiated to suit the taste of the listeners but to recast their perception on events.

Therefore, since its emergence in Nigeria, the radio media has remained a very formidable force in the country. The radio, which is today a very common household electronic gadget in every Nigerian homes acts as a portal to the outside world in terms of getting informed on issues around the globe. Its influence is not only measured by how information disseminated through it are perceived by listeners but how they react based on the information received via radio.

3. Understanding Thousand Hills Free Radio and Television (RTL) and Radio Biafra

Prior to the start of the 1994 genocide, Rwanda had two major national radio broadcasting stations, one is the Thousand Hills Free Radio and Television (RTL) and the other, Radio Rwanda. Thus, RTL began proper broadcasting in July 1993, using two transmitters. While one 100-Watt transmitter was placed in the capital, Kigali, another 1000-Watt transmitter was placed on Mount Muhe, which is one of the country's highest mountains (Yanagizawa-Drott 2012:8). There is no denying the fact that the government owned Radio Rwanda had for long been in the business of broadcasting propaganda and hate speeches before the genocide of 1994, but it was the RTL that broadcasted the most extreme and ferocious messages which eventually charged up the racial biased atmosphere leading to the death of several thousands.

The RTL, as a radio station in Rwanda became very popular as a result of the crucial role it played from July 8, 1993 to July 31, 1994. The RTL became an instrument through which hate speeches and propaganda was sowed into the hearts and minds of the Hutu people which in turn unleashed mayhem on the Tutsi who were considered as a threat to their (Hutu) very existence. Prior to when the RTL fully started operation in Rwanda; owing to the nature of media propaganda in the Rwanda political landscape, the government of the day had actually sought to regulate the activities of the newly established radio station by reaching certain agreements which were actually signed. This agreement between the Rwandese government and RTL included an undertaking which demands that RTL should not broadcast any programmes capable of inciting hatred, violence or any form of division. Also, the broadcaster must refrain from telling lies or giving out information that may mislead the public (Human Right Watch 2003). In spite of the undertaking, the RTL radio station cared less of what dire consequences its action would have on the already tensed populace what were just waiting for the spark that would ignite the fire.

The role of RTL in the 1994 Rwanda genocidal event have been critically examined by several researchers. For instance, Romeo, the former United Nations Force Commander in Rwanda espouses that "In Rwanda the radio was akin to the voice of God, and if the radio called for violence, many Rwandan would respond, believing they were being sanctioned to commit these actions" (Dallaire 2004:272). This was the reality of things in the 1994 Rwanda genocide event. Hate messages transformed men and women into beast as they feasted on the blood of their fellow countrymen. While also conducting a study on the place of radio propaganda in the Rwanda genocide, Linda Melvern (2000:71) avers that the RTL radio was "a propaganda weapon unlike any other as the influence of hate radio...must never be underestimated." (Melvern 2005:25). Considering both statements, it is clear that RTL radio exacerbated the whole issue making it easy for the Hutu group to carry out those heinous crimes without their consciences pricking them because they, the Hutu, have been brainwashed into believing that the Tutsi were a cancerous substance that must be chop off if the Hutu group must make any meaningful progress, be it political, economic or in any other aspect. In addition, Linda Kirscheke (1996:3) submits that the role of RTL in the Rwanda genocide remains, obviously the most suitable example of the ugly role radio can contribute in issues that could plunge a society into disarray. Similarly, Samantha Power (2001:89) strongly asserts that "killers in Rwanda often carried a machete in one hand and a radio transistor in the other. "Hence, the radio served as the medium to receive instructions while the machete was the tool to deliver upon whatsoever instructions they received from the broadcasters. Therefore, going by the foregone background, we can say for sure that RTL contributed and sustained the Rwanda genocide but was, however not the only factor that propagated the genocidal event. Giving credence to the above viewpoint, Carver (1996:2) stated that most of the accusations leveled at RTL are exaggerated and inaccurate.

However, the primary strategic role of the RTL before and during the Rwanda genocide was strictly based on two strategies: first was to help create the awareness that an attack by the Tutsi-dominated Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), based in neighbouring Uganda was under way and that the Tutsi were pursuing a sinister covert plot to topple the government, rule Rwanda and repress Hutu and by some report also enslave them. Whereas the second was to sought ways to demonize and dehumanize Tutsi in every way possible so as to help create that consciousness in the hearts of the Hutu people that hacking down a Tutsi was not akin to killing humans, therefore, making the barbaric act a more acceptable way of life for the Hutu people (Surisn.d). This only goes to show that the RTL was considered as a very viable means of preparing the people to carry out violent actions against their Tutsi brethren. As a matter of fact, these strategies paid off in the sense that by 1994, Rwanda had attracted the attention of the international community which actively monitored the genocide, but, unfortunately was slow to intervene in the horrific onslaught. In actual fact, the RTL also functioned as a guide for Hutu's attacks on their Tutsi countrymen. it was reported that specific locations, names of personalities, (Straus 2010:7) as well as potential threats were broadcasted on RTL, as evidences show that those places and individuals were attacked by ferocious mobs with just one mission in mind- to lynch.

In Nigeria, exactly twenty-three years after the Rwanda genocide, Nigeria as a nation started to experience a new form of radio propaganda and the intense broadcasting of hate speeches which is akin to what was aired before and during the Rwanda genocide. The Radio Biafra (also known as Voice of Biafra) first came into operation during the decade of the 1960s, in the heat of the Civil War as the Broadcasting Corporation of Biafra (Omaka 2017). Its establishment, it can be deduce, was to help fight the Civil War on the media front. However, by the second quarter of the year 2015, a secessionist group called Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), erected a media platform and named the station Radio Biafra, after the defunct Radio Biafra of the Civil War years.

The primacy of the Radio Biafra under the leader of IPOB (Nnamdi Kanu) was akin to that of RTL in Rwanda. While Radio Biafra was originally set up to act as the media wing of IPOB in disseminating vital information concerning the affairs of

Igbo in Nigeria and how they are being treated by the Nigeria government, it was rather unfortunately that sooner than later, Radio Biafra would be transformed into a machinery used for the broadcast of hate speeches and other related propaganda. To this end, Bello (2017) succinctly remarked:

...was used in transmitting information about the conditions of the Biafran in Nigeria to fellow Igbo domiciled in Nigeria and abroad. Emphasis was mostly hinged on Igbo marginalization, enslavement, insecurity, and denial of human rights and means of survival by Nigeria, amongst others. The radio station had (still has) strong online presence, as it also transmitted its information to its audience through other social network platforms such as twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and many more. [14]

Unfortunately, the Radio Biafra which was initially set up with the motive to keep Igbo informed of certain pertinent issues concerning their secession bid, would later be seen to have derailed from its original course as it started propagating hate speeches which had the capacity of inciting people into another possible ethnic conflict with a potential for high level destruction.

Put differently, the Radio Biafra, can best be understood as a platform the IPOB group was using to send messages of agitation for self-actualization from the Nigerian state. With its slogan "In defence of freedom," the leader of IPOB, NnamdiKanu made numerous statements reiterating the desire of Igbo people both in Nigeria and in Diaspora, for a referendum to decide the fate of Igbo people in their quest towards the actualization of the Republic of Biafra (Ojukwu&Nwaorgu 2016:6). In doing so, Kanu employed the strategy of media propaganda when he began disseminating information and statements that were considered unhealthy for the unity of Nigeria. Consequent upon the foregone, Kanu's tactic cannot be said to have been any different from what was employed during the Rwanda genocidal event as further studies reveals a lot of similarities among RTLM and Radio Biafra in their respective operations.

Henceforward, the activities of IPOB became so provocative and disturbing that most of it were considered as threats capable of destroying whatsoever is left of Nigerian unity by the Muhammed Buhari led administration and other stakeholders in the country. Again, available records proved that NnamdiKanu had actually gone across some countries both in Europe and America to sought for support from Igbo in diaspora concerning preparation for a potential war should the Nigerian government denied IPOB a right to referendum. According to one of the sources, "in a video clip while addressing a group of people from the Igbo extraction at the World Igbo Congress in the US, Kanu was passionately soliciting for weapons from the audience" (Ojukwu&Nwaorgu 2016:6-7).

4. RTLM and Radio Biafra: A Comparative Analysis

Comparatively, the RTLM and Radio Biafra, based on the foregone analysis, shares ample similarities. RTLM, a radio station that operated from 1993 was very dramatic and influential during the ethnic cleansing in Rwanda. Its activities were mostly hinged on very inciting statements aired by one of its On Air Personalities (OAP) KantanoHabimana passed down to the Hutu people against the Tutsi. Take for instance, one of the RTLM broadcast as given by Habimana that depicted hate speech goes thus " these people [the Inkotanyi] and all other accomplices in the country have ruined this country, plunging it in such misfortunes" (rnw 2013). Also , a hate speech in 1992 as given by Dr. Leon Mugesera, a leading ideologue among the Hutu extremists reads " they [the Tutsi] belong to Ethiopia and we are going to find a short cut to get there by throwing them into the Nyabarongo River...Wipe them all out" (Pruiner 1995:172). Still from KantanoHabimana, a very prominent example among his numerous hate speeches was a broadcast he aired on June 4, 1994. Habimana asked his ardent listeners to "exterminate the inkotanyi" (Gordon 2013:346) or Tutsi, who according to him could be easily identify by height and other physical feature. Habimana further added "Just look at his small nose and then break it" (Gordon 2013:346).These statements by KantanoHabimana without doubt must have sunk deep into the consciousness of the Hutu ethnic group and led them to carry out one of the most horrible ethnic cleansing in post-colonial African crisis.

Before the RTLM's started to broadcast hate speeches, an article named *Kangurahave* in actual fact, around the period of February 1993, in one of its publications entitled *A Cockroach Cannot Give Birth to a Butterfly* (Des Forges & Des Forges 2004:79-81),wrote many damaging things against the Tutsi. In elaborate terms, the article read thus:

We began by saying that a cockroach cannot give birth to a butterfly. It is true. A cockroach gives birth to another cockroach [...] The history of Rwanda shows us clearly that a Tutsi stays always exactly the same that he has never changed. The malice, the evil are just as we knew them in the history of our country. We are not wrong in saying that a cockroach gives birth to another cockroach. Who could tell the difference between the Inyenzi who attacked in October 1990 [Kangura erroneously posited that Tutsi forces had attacked Kigali] and those of the 1960s [who had resisted the Hutu revolution of 1959]. They are all linked ... Their evilness is the same. The unspeakable crimes of the Inyenzi today ... recall those of their elders: killing, pillaging, raping girls and women, etc. [83]

Further, it was no surprise to note that RTLM garnished its hate broadcasts with some sort of religiosity. This unholy act of giving the ethnic crisis some divine sanctions was evident in statements such as the ones given by RTLM announcers Bemeriki and Habimana. Specifically, Bemeriki asserted that the Virgin Mary appeared on several occasions at Kibeho church and have told the Hutu people that "we will have the victory". Whereas, Habimana was in line with Bemeriki when he espouses that "even God himself has dropped them" (Contra ITRC, *The Prosecutor v. Ferdinand Nahimana et al.*, 137, Paragraph 403-404). In another hate speech broadcast, Habimana, towards the twilight of the genocide celebrated by saying:

...Come dear friends, let us sing...com let us rejoice further, the Inkotanyi have been exterminated! Come dear friends, let us rejoice, the Good Lord is just. The God Lord is really just, these evildoers, these terrorists, these people with suicidal tendencies will end being exterminated. [403-404]

The foregone statements made by Hutu propagandists portray the fact that the Rwanda genocide had some colouration of media propaganda of which the RTLM was very much instrumental. Again, these Hutu extremists were not mindful of the fact that given their hate speeches divine colouration may further incite people to align with the idea of committing crime against humanity and the creator. All they were interested in was to achieve set goals-Ethnic cleanings against the Tutsi group.

Juxtaposing the numerous hate speeches of RTLM in the wake of the Rwanda crisis of 1994 to Radio Biafra's broadcasts from when it was reactivated in the second quarters of 2015 in London, it is not difficult to ascertain the similitude that exist in both radio stations. The Radio Biafra, which we have earlier stated to be the media arm of IPOB, spread information, broadcast the ideology of Biafra, as well as counter any form of propaganda that may be coming from the side of the Federal Government of Nigeria. Take for example, on 26 June 2015, Radio Biafra through its Twitter handle and Facebook page broadcast the following statements:

True Biafrans must go after the hausa Fulani Yorobber [Yoruba] ethnic bigots and dismantle their monumental bundle of illegality and lies against Biafrans. Go after them on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Viber, WhatsApp etc. and all the platforms you find yourselves. We have only told them to stop the decades of injustices against us and they are having nightmares. The journey has just begun! [http://www.twitter.com/@radiobiafralive]

This statement above is a typical example of hate speech. The speech had the capability of sowing hatred in the mind of Igbo against their fellow countrymen across the whole nation. As a matter of fact, it was not surprising to come around some posts on social media sites, particularly Facebook that depicted the instruction dished out on Radio Biafra social media handles.

Thereafter, on the third day of September 2015, while reacting to an alleged killing of pro-Biafra protesters by Nigerian security operatives, the coordinator of IPOB through its radio station, Radio Biafra, expressed his annoyance through the broadcasting of hate speech by saying:

We are still mourning the death of our lost Brothers, who were murdered at Onitsha by The Nigeria Government. I swear with the Lives of my Family and my Life that, the zoo will not go Unpunished for this calamity they have brought upon Biafran. Those Media that have refused to write on the Terrorist act and Mayhem carried upon Biafran on the 30th of August, 2015, will do so, after we avenge. I want the World to take note of this, so that we will not be blamed when we descend on the perpetrators of the killing of Biafrans, I will only replay today's broadcast, that took place on the 3rd of September, 2015, reaching you from NEW YORK CITY. The deaths of our Brothers MUST be avenged. Mark today's date, WE MUST AVENGE THE DEATH OF OUR PEOPLE. There will be revenge that I can assure you. [News Rescue 2015]

From the above quotation, it is right to assert that NnamdiKanu was all out to create an atmosphere of charged ethnic hostility in Nigeria, something very similar to what was done in Rwanda through the RTLM. Kanu's statement aroused the consciousness of the Igbo concerning issues affecting them in the country. It was very common to see the effects of some of Kanu's hate speech on most social media sites, particularly Facebook, which turned out to be a platform for ethnic battles most especially among Nigerian youths.

In another development, there were alleged reports of NnamdiKanu referring to the Federal Republic as "Zoo Republic" and President Muhammed Buhari as "a terrorist, evil and paedophile" (Ojukwu&Nwaorgu 2016:6-8) in most of Radio Biafra's broadcasts. These words were considered very sensitive and provocative. Addressing the President in such a manner is definitely not a good way to attaining self-actualization. Rather, such statements only goes to disparage the Nigeria state in the international community. However, it was also alleged that NnamdiKanu, while still under the custody of the Department of State Service (DSS), tendered an apology for all the denigrating statement his made against President Mohammed Buhari, former President Goodluck Jonathan, and the entire Igbo elders. Though, he was reported to have remained unapologetic about his demand for a Republic of Biafra (Opejobi 2015). This claim that Kanu apologized was, nonetheless, swiftly debunked by IPOB leaders (Nwaiwu, 2015).

In sum then, the foregone comparison have been able to establish the fact that the Radio Biafra that was relaunched in 2015, and directed by NnamdiKanu was broadcasting hate speeches capable of plunging Nigeria into another round of Civil War. It is safe to say that this is nothing different from what transpired in the Rwanda genocide of 1994 that was influenced by the numerous hate speeches broadcasted on RTLM, particularly by its most prominent and radical ethnic bigot-KantanoHabimana.

5. Implications of Media Propaganda in Nigeria and Rwanda: A Synopsis

Media propaganda in Nigeria and Rwanda come with many implications for the two countries, particularly on the aspect of nation-building. The issue of media propaganda cuts across both government owned media and private media. Ali (2015) is of the view that government owned media in Africa (of which Nigeria and Rwanda are a part of) have without restraint continued to be used by incumbent governments to mislead their citizens on promises they are yet to fulfill after several years in power. The propaganda tool have been greatly employed by the governments to brainwash the Nigerian and Rwandese masses on issues of great import in order to buy more time in power. On a different note, propaganda is employed

both by the incumbent government and [the] opposition. While the incumbent uses propoganda to manipulate the minds of the populace, the opposition equally employs propoganda to create some sort of awareness on the citizenry concerning the lackluster nature of the incumbent government.

Note that in Nigeria, the incumbent government always uses both the Nigeria Television Authority (NTA) and the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) to sound its praises on both those targets it has achieved and those it is yet to achieve. While during the period of the genocide in Rwanda, the case was not so much different as the media, both broadcast and print were used to influence the minds of the people against the other (Allan Thompson 2007). Therefore, the implications of these acts by the government of the day (in Nigeria), and the Hutu-led government of 1994, is that it goes to reposition the minds and hearts of the people on very pertinent issues bordering on governance and nation-building. This is so, considering the definition of propoganda as given by Jowett and O'Donnell, that "the deliberate systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propogandist" (Jowett & O'Donnell 2011:5).

In addition, McQuail (2010) in a deliberate attempt to expatiate on the meaning of propoganda states that "In our time, the primary association of propoganda is generally with conflict between state and currently the war against terrorism, but the term can be applied to almost any area where communication is planned to achieve some goal or influence. "In the case of Nigeria and Rwanda, propoganda has always been used and is still being use as a very powerful tool in shaping the perception of the populace.

More so, the effect of propoganda on the Nigerian society have been felt within the political milieu as political parties and politicians are fond of using propoganda to cajole unsuspecting electorates to vote for them into various offices. In an article entitled *Of Lies, Desperation and Propaganda*, Alabi (2015) describes the level of propoganda employed by political parties in the build up to the 2015 General election when he avers thus:

They therefore have carefully and systematically replaced the word "campaign" with "propaganda". In rallies, traditional media and social media networks, the political parties are trying to outdo each other. They definitely are strictly keeping to the Oxford Dictionary definition of propoganda, which is "ideas or statements that may be false or exaggerated and that are used in order to gain support for a political leader, party, etc.

This has been the trend during most election campaigns in Nigeria and Rwanda as politician vying into political offices see propoganda as one sure measure to outmaneuver their rivals and gain political supports from their supporters.

In another dimension, media propoganda has shown to have very negative effect on the Nigerian and Rwandese populace in that it has created disunity among the people. To buttress this position, in the case of Nigeria, during the period of political campaigns, media propoganda, employed by various political parties is used as a machinery to feed the minds of the people with negatives thoughts against opponents. Whereas, during the 1994 Rwanda genocide, the effect of media was very much seen at the end of the whole genocidal exercise as it was reported that thousands lost their lives. (More often than not, such messages are typically hate speeches that leaves a lasting impression on the psyche of the populace which in turn could accumulatively spark up politically instigated clashes among the people). It is on record that in the chequered political history of Nigeria, during election campaigns, violence is very eminent owing to the hate speeches most political parties uses in order to denigrate or smear their contenders. In line with the foregone, Samuel Diminas (*The Cable News* 2015) succinctly remarked thus:

Electoral violence in Nigeria has always been preceded by pre-election propoganda and dogma, orchestrated to manipulate an ignorant youth population to resort to violence in pursuit of diabolical political interests. In all past cases, from the 'Action Group' crises of 1962 to the post-presidential election violence in 2011, violence has not served any reasonable purpose for the youths who are killed and instigated to carry out mass murders during election cycles.

Whereas, in the case of Rwanda, particularly during the genocide event, a great number of the Hutu population were instigated against the Tutsi which at the end, led to the loss of lives and property across the country. Propoganda also have so much impacted on the Nigeria state in the area of ethno-religious conflict. This is evident in times of crisis, most especially in the emergence of a clash between Christians and Muslims in the country. Media reportage can be so exaggerated that it could add fuel to the already existing problem at hand. Just like Salawu (2009) remarked that "The media as a social institution are also involved in conflicts in the society either as a harbinger, channel of information and analysis of the conflicts, or as part of the escalation or resolution of the conflicts." Thus, without doubt, propoganda have impacted on the Nigerian state in many ways than one, with grave implications for nation-building. As was recorded during the 1994 Rwanda genocide. Broadcasters such as KantonaHabimana employed the use of religious backings to further perpetuate his hate speeches against the Tutsi people. This act gave impetus to more attacks by the Hutu on their Tutsi brethren.

More so, the radio has in recent time, influence both the Nigerian and Rwandese societies in the area of cultural nationalism as jingles, advertisement, programmes, and campaigns, among others are geared towards reorienting the hearts and minds the populace. Take for instance, during the Nigeria Civil War, the implications of media (radio) propoganda was so dramatic during the war years, as both the Federal Government of Nigeria and the defunct Biafran government took the radio broadcasting (propoganda) to a higher dimension. Outside battles fields, the war was equally fought through propoganda from both fronts. While in 1994 Rwanda, media propoganda or Rwanda hate-media-Kangura and RTLM influenced the genocide due to the fact that both platforms got necessary backings, financial aids, and were supported by powerful and influential politicians, businessmen and military officers who were close to the President as both media platforms used state

facilities, like printing houses (Kangura) and radio transmitter (RTLM) without even paying for them (n.a 2003). Thus, media Propaganda had dire implications on the Nigeria civil war since after the Biafra side had been blocked in almost every quarters, the only instrument for survival was propaganda. And this the Biafran did admirably and effectively, as it drew the world attention to the plight of the people (Davies 1995:2). Also, in the case of Rwanda, the RTLM, a medium through which hate speeches were broadcasted drew the attention of the world towards the negative effect of media. As earlier mentioned, the RTLM was like the mouthpiece which issued out 'divine' instructions and these instructions were carried out to the latter by the Hutu mobs against their fellow countrymen. An exercise which saw over one million people killed in just hundred days (Oppong 2008).

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

In the course of the research, the study embarked on a historical voyage in a bid to trace the growth of mass media and what influence it had on the Nigerian state. Also, efforts were geared towards understanding both RTLM and Radio Biafra in the aspect of how they emerge and for what purposes. The study equally went further to look at what implications media propaganda have on both Nigerian and Rwanda populace *vis a vis* nation-building. The paper states that media propaganda have grave consequences that militates against nation-building as the cases of RTLM in Rwanda and Radio Biafra in Nigeria have been comparatively discussed to help buttress the position of the authors. The RTLM, though not the only contributing factor in the Rwanda genocidal crisis, was, however, very instrumental in the build-up and sustenance of the Rwanda crisis to an extent that at the end of the genocide, the RTLM and some of its broadcasters were accused of fostering the genocide and were found guilty.

Similarly, the Radio Biafra, a media platform of the IPOB, since its reemergence in 2015 have been playing similar roles akin to what RTLM played prior to and during the Rwanda genocidal crisis. The paper also strongly posits that both RTLM and Radio Biafra served as channels for the dissemination of hate speeches which in the case of Rwanda fueled the already charged racial atmosphere. And Radio Biafra, it can rightly be asserted based on its numerous broadcasts is repeating exactly the same media vices RTLM did back then in 1994 which could be very detrimental towards nation building within the Nigerian milieu.

In sum then, the study concludes that both the RTLM and Radio Biafra shares a lot in common as both radio stations have ethnic colouration. Talking about ethnicity, the study shows that the Rwanda genocide, historically, took roots in the colonial instigated ethnic rivalry that long existed between the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups. This imbroglio would again give impetus to the ethnic cleansing of 1994 that was further fueled by the hate speeches broadcasted on RTLM. Like the Hutu-Tutsi ethnic tussle, IPOB and Radio Biafra, are without doubt the living spirit of the Biafran side that waged a sort of ethnic war (1967-190) against the Nigerian state in her quest to secede out of the Nigerian project which its leaders claimed marginalized the Igbo people almost at all fronts. The point to note here is that both the RTLM and the Radio Biafra were primarily set up for propaganda purposes to aid in the fight against the subjugation of one ethnic group against the other (i.e. Igbo versus Hausa-Fulani). Therefore, on this bases, the government of Nigeria must tackle the issue of ethnic rivalry headlong through the prisms of justice, fairness and equity.

Another measure to consider is that of genuine reconciliation for absolute reintegration. It should be recalled that one of the major philosophy of the IPOB, aired through its media platform, the Radio Biafra, was the actualization of the Republic of Biafra. This is based on the claims of the movement that the Igbo ethnic group, right from the end of the Nigerian Civil War in 1970 have continued to experience extreme marginalization in spite of post war policy such as the Reconciliation, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (3Rs) enunciated by Gen. Yakubu Gowon. The above policy have been faulted on the grounds of ill-implementations. On that note, it is high time the government of Nigeria revisited the process of implementation of the 3Rs, since the full implementation would have in both words and deed healed the wounds of the Igbo people, and give them some sense of belonging which in turn would aid total reintegration of the Igbo people back into the Nigeria project.

In the final analysis, in other to avert another round of conflict stimulated by media propaganda in Nigeria, the Federal Government should consider granting the prayers of Biafran for their requested referendum. Considering the fact that not all Igbo share the same view with IPOB and its leaders, and may choose not to embark on this secession move as many Igbo have multi-million naira investments already across the length and breadth of Nigeria. Also, most of those glamouring for secession are either jobless or may not have been adequately empowered and they now feel the way out is to join the call for referendum. Hence, the Nigerian government must seek ways to ensure that youths across all geo-political zones of the country are beneficiary of government empowerment schemes for this will show good faith on the part of the Nigeria government towards keeping the country a united, indivisible entity with the aim of achieving genuine nation building for all and sundry.

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