

# MEDIA AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION EXPERTS' VIEWS ON THE INFLUENCE OF MEDIA PROPAGANDA ON THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

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## Abstract

Due to limited resources and man's intrinsic need to control and exercise authority over others, conflict has become a vital part of humanity. The Russia-Ukraine row shows this. Propaganda is a standard wartime tool. Propaganda aims to influence a population or government's attitude toward a path or position. Propaganda is non-impartial information used to control an audience and forward an agenda, sometimes by selectively providing facts (thus possibly lying by omission) to encourage a specific synthesis or by utilising loaded messages to elicit an emotional rather than intellectual response. In this context, the researcher analysed media propaganda's impact on the Russia-Ukraine conflict. To reach the study's purpose, the researcher used a survey and sampled 501 media practitioners and conflict resolution professionals in Asaba, Delta State. The survey collected primary data. The data was analysed using tables and percentages. The study indicated that media practitioners and conflict resolution professionals in Asaba are aware of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and that international media is the primary source. It was also revealed that media propaganda is being used extensively in the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian conflict and has both a detrimental function in expanding the dispute and a positive part in resolving it. Western and non-Western media institutions were urged to stop using black propaganda in the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

**Keywords:** Communication, Conflict, Conflict Resolution, Editorial Reaction, Framing, Propaganda

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Conflict is part of human nature. Hence human existence has been marked by conflict since the beginning of time. According to Nkwocha (1999), conflict is any scenario, problem, or incident recalled as a turning point. Conflict increases uncertainty; thus, it's crucial to prepare when internal and external pressures change a company's goals and practices. Conflicts can affect individuals, companies, governments, and countries. A minor issue that isn't resolved quickly might lead to a big war and rifts

between nations, causing division.

Conflict is a significant part of humanity due to limited resources and man's intrinsic need to govern and wield dominance over others. Godwin (2003) states disputes arise when parties argue about rules, objectives, or team members' intents or ideals. These disputes cause deaths, property damage, and other social problems. No continent is conflict-free, as both developed and emerging countries endure internal upheaval. Terrorism, insurgency, and civil unrest

continue to cause destruction, evictions, and murders globally.

Like the Middle East, Africa is known for violence. Since the end of the Cold War, most military clashes in Africa have been internal (Cilliers & Schunemann, 2013). War and violent conflict have not been reduced across the world. Disputes have erupted between and among nations. Planet War I and II were horrible confrontations that almost ended the world and cost millions of lives and damage. Given this, it's not surprising that many Western academics hailed the establishment of a new world order and preferred a more democratic, rule-governed, and peaceful international system after the fall of the USSR.

After WWII, international wars ended. Shaw (1996) believes that "force would be used to defend individuals and advance human rights through a new form of humanitarian intervention." Since the 9/11 sequence of four synchronised suicidal terrorist strikes on the United States by Al-Qaeda, there have been other critical fights in the international system, most under the guise of the purported "war on terror." The 2001 and 2003 US-led military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq provoked violent clashes that continue today.

Later, US-backed activities in Libya and Syria were similar to the "war on terror's" beginning. Both countries are targets of the US, France, and the U.K. They have cooperated with regional allies (Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Israel, and Qatar) to fund and aid surrogate groups aiming to undermine both regimes, even though both appear to be engaging in "Arab Spring" upheavals.

According to Anderson (2019), Al-Qaeda and other jihadist-affiliated organisations got direct or indirect support from the U.S. and its European and Middle Eastern partners during the Afghanistan and Iraq wars. Saudi Arabia and the U.S. cooperated on Syria's most extraordinary clandestine CIA operation (Timber Sycamore). Russia and Iran helped Syria withstand the assaults.

Russia-Ukraine is the most recent worldwide war. Lennin (2022) claims Russia and Ukraine are at war (along with pro-Russian rebel troops). The war began in February 2014 with the Ukrainian Movement for Dignity, he said. The initial focus was on the legal status of Crimea and some of the Donbas. Lenin describes the Russia-Ukraine conflict this way:

The first eight years of the conflict included the Russian annexation of Crimea (2014) and the war in Donbas (2014-present) between Ukraine and Russian-backed separatists, as well as

naval incidents, cyber-warfare, and political tensions. Following a Russian military buildup on the Russia-Ukraine border in late 2021, the conflict expanded significantly when Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022 (p.12).

According to Jackson (2022), pro-Russian violence erupted in several Ukrainian regions after the Euromaidan protests and the February 2014 revolution that overthrew pro-Russian President Viktor Yanukovich. Unmarked Russian soldiers captured Crimea's crucial infrastructure, defence posts, and parliament. Crimea joined Russia after a poll that was widely condemned. Pro-Russian protests in the Ukrainian Donbas led to a battle between the Ukrainian military and Donetsk and Luhansk insurgents in April 2014. In August 2014, unknown Russian military vehicles crossed into Donetsk. Despite Russia's efforts to conceal its involvement, a secret battle erupted between rebels and Russian military and Ukrainian forces. After failed ceasefires, the fighting became static. Russia and Ukraine signed Minsk II in 2015, but its implementation has been delayed. Despite Russia's hint that it had soldiers in Ukraine in 2019, it still considers 7% of its land to be provisionally occupied.

Russian troops massed near Ukraine's borders between 2021 and 2022 when Russia disputed NATO's invasion accusations. Vladimir Putin called NATO's expansion a threat to Russia and encouraged Ukraine not to join. He held irredentist views about Russia, questioned Ukraine's legality, and said Communist Russia forcibly created Ukraine. On February 21, 2022, Russia recognised the same two separatist authorities in the Donbas and sent troops. Next, Russia invaded Ukraine. Russia's post-revolutionary actions in Ukraine have been strongly condemned for breaking international law and meddling with Ukrainian sovereignty. After the 2022 invasion, many countries imposed economic sanctions on Russia, Russians, and Russian companies.

Understanding the influence of mainstream media is crucial. Wartime news is vital, and media monitoring entails observing society and acquiring and distributing essential information. Media emphasises conflict because it's newsworthy. The public turns to the media for safety and security updates when violent incidents occur. Since the conflict began, most conflict management professionals and media pundits have discussed the impact of media propaganda on the ongoing war. Most accuse the Western Media of

magnifying the differences between Russia and Ukraine through false media propaganda.

Media propaganda promotes national consensus and regulates foreign relations, especially in wartime. Propaganda, a political tool that peaked in WWII, was heavily used in the Gulf War, and Napoleon pioneered it in France. This study examines how media misinformation has affected the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Media and conflict resolution professionals in Asaba, Delta State, will be contacted for information.

## **2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Poor communication, communication breakdowns, or propaganda or disinformation can ignite conflict. Mass media have a key role in conflict communication. Media has become crucial to any fight throughout time. The mass media, which functions as the watchdog of society and the fourth estate, is involved in everything concerning civilisation. The media may use war-related public emotions for economic gain. Many newsrooms operate under the "bad news is good news" and "if it bleeds, it leads" principles because conflict sells. According to Tumber (2004), media emphasise conflict and violence to boost the value of "a profit-making product" (p. 396). Due to their social obligation to the public, the media must reduce misunderstanding and promote social stability during crises.

Wartime media impacts the public. The discursive arena creates media and keeps the audience engaged with the setting, parties, and evolving conflict narratives. They affect public opinion by selecting news stories and framing conflict-related issues. Media coverage can directly or indirectly influence the course of a conflict. Media can help prevent and end the war.

Media can trigger or escalate a quarrel. The media have two competing roles. Either the press actively participates in the fight by bringing those responsible for rising violence accountable, or they uphold their independence by settling the conflict and limiting devastation. Pre- and post-conflict media activity depends on various elements, such as their affiliations with warring parties and freedom from societal power brokers.

First, the media's relationship with the disputants is affected by corporate, advertising, and political interests. A media source devoted to or affiliated with a conflict actor is likely to favourably frame news about their supporters and negatively frame information about the other party or actor. An unbiased media outlet will report on problems—in this case, conflict problems—without fear or favour. Media independence affects how a conflict is covered.

Media manipulation has swayed public opinion about the Russia-Ukraine war. The media, notably the Western media, has been accused of demonising Russian forces and the government. In contrast, media outlets in Russia's allies have been accused of demonising the West and the Ukrainian government to justify Russia's unlawful invasion of Ukraine. Opinions differ on how media misinformation has contributed to the Russia-Ukraine war. Because of a lack of trustworthy information, it's difficult to pinpoint the press's role in the Russo-Ukrainian conflict.

This study is being undertaken to analyse the impact of media propaganda on the continuing conflict, such as if it helps resolve the dispute and reduces violence or increases violence.

## **3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The general purpose of this study is to evaluate how media propaganda has affected the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine. Specifically, the aims of the study are explicit:

1. Find out how much propaganda is utilised in the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine.
2. Determine whether inaccurate media reporting is to blame for how other countries see the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine.
3. Find out how the media of other countries who support Russia or Ukraine are reporting on the war.
4. Analyse how propaganda in the media has affected the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine.
5. Determine other elements that affect how other nations view the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

## **4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The following research questions shall be answered in this study:

1. How much propaganda is being used in the ongoing crisis between Russia and Ukraine?
2. Is media distortion affecting how other nations see the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine?
3. How is the crisis framed in the media of other countries that favour Russia or Ukraine?
4. How does misinformation in the media affect the continuing crisis between Russia and

Ukraine?

5. What additional elements affect how foreign nations view the current war between Russia and Ukraine?

## 5. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework represents the relationship between variables or the phenomenon's characteristics under investigation. In this study, the researcher developed a conceptual framework to explain or describe the interrelation between media coverage (media propaganda) and conflict outcomes.

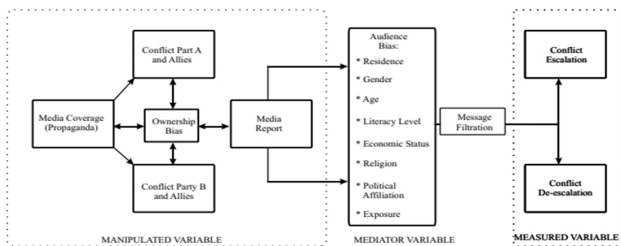


Figure 2.1: 3M Model of Media Propaganda and Conflict Outcome

The 3M Model of Media Propaganda and Conflict Outcome provides a more straightforward framework for this study. The model illustrates how the three variables (or "3M")—the manipulated variable (an independent variable), mediator variable (an intervening variable), and measured variable—are related to one another (dependent variable). The model illustrates that media coverage (propaganda), the conflict between Party A and Allies, the conflict between Party B and Allies, ownership bias, and media reports are all included in the manipulated variable. Additionally, it can be seen that the measured variable has conflict escalation and conflict de-escalation. In contrast, the mediator variable includes audience bias, which provides for residency, gender, age, reading level, economic status, religion, political affiliation, and exposure.

The researcher implicitly assumes that the mediator variable, measured variable, and controlled variable do not act independently of one another. According to the study, media coverage (also known as propaganda) is not the sole domain of one party in a conflict situation; as a result, both party A and party B, as well as their allies, can use media propaganda. However, ownership bias frequently dictates how much media is used in conflict. In other words, the extent to which each side uses the media to spread its

anti-war propaganda is up to the media owners' discretion. These impact the media product or report and vice versa. In addition, the researcher asserts that, despite media misinformation, there are intervening or mediating variables that affect the conflict's conclusion. These factors include one's demographics or the bias of the media audience. They also have the audience's location concerning the conflict. In turn, the demographics put the media storey or content to some level of inspection or filtration. This message filtration heavily influences the variable or conflict outcome being monitored, which could either be conflict escalation or de-escalation; according to the researcher's 3M model, which applies to this study, media propaganda influences how the continuing confrontation between Russia and Ukraine plays out. It is assumed that the outcome of the Russo-Ukrainian war will be significantly influenced by how the general public assesses the many forms of media propaganda being spread by both sides and their allies.

### Concept and Nature of Conflict

Everyone interprets conflict differently. Others regard it as more harmful than excellent or positive than negative. Functional or dysfunctional conflict can become possible. Regardless matter how one views battle, there will always be disagreements in behaviours and beliefs.

Traditional wisdom holds that confrontation is wicked, damaging, and should be avoided. Nwosu (2004) defines conflict as "any condition in which there are opposing intentions, cognitions, and emotions" Conflict is a behavioural and interactional byproduct of human connection, attachment, and transaction. Disputes can be helpful or harmful, but they're necessary for a social relation or relationship to work and exist. Moderately intense conflicts that generate creativity, healthy competition, and behaviour change should be encouraged.

Human history is full of conflicts. The conflict appears innate to human interaction and life. It's "connected with human existence" and "part of human life" (Isard, 1992, p. 72). (1992, p.9) Zartman (1991, p. 370) says conflict is "an unavoidable byproduct of decisions and actions," Stagner (1995) says aggressive behaviour nearly always causes conflict. Conflict symptoms appear when one party in a social contact feels resentful and essential negotiation and mediation aren't used.

Nwolise says conflict develops from negligence or a lack of monitoring measures (2002, p. 33). All tertiary educational institutions fear conflicts because they cause insecurity and other problems.

Organisational and societal conflict are realities of life (Roa et al. 1990). It can be subtle or overt, leading to hostile situations and combative relationships between individuals, groups, and civilisations. It's a competitive manifestation of differences. It requires a conversation to bring the parties together. It's vital to social connections. It's a result of management and student relations in academic institutions. Conflict occurs when one person or group tries to thwart another's goals or interests.

Encarta defines conflict as a disagreement between ideas, values, or people (2005). According to Hybel and Weaver (2001), the notion is a conflict between at least two people who feel their goals are at odds or that others are hindering them from achieving them. It explains why academic dispute is inevitable. Because conflict in higher education is insoluble and diverse, most management ideas are vague. Folarin (2005) says conflict emerges from people's conflicting or different interests, anxieties, wants, and opinions. Ad-hoc or continuous, these interactions are often made to further one's interests. When two or more groups contact regularly, conflict can occur.

Francis (2004, p. 20) says denying human desire causes violent conflicts. Conflict requires perceived aim incompatibility and interference or blocking. Ojiji defines goal incompatibility as a zero-sum relationship between parties' goals (2008). Pate (2002) says social relationships are rife with conflict. Interpersonal changes represent it. Owens-Ibie (2002, p. 30) agrees that "life and living" cause tension. Because of how people interact in higher education, conflict is inevitable. All human civilisations have conflict, but its degree varies.

Conflict is a natural, inevitable, and unavoidable aspect of institution efficiency (Alli, 2006). Conflict is essential for change, so it's ordinary in any community. Conflict happens when communication breaks down between two parties, ethnic, cultural, or religious groups. Unresolved historical grudges may cause it. Francis (2006), adopting Alli's logic, says conflict is normal and inescapable. According to him, conflict comes from conflicting interests. Alli (2006) defines conflict as two or more parties fighting over ideals, prestige, power, and resources to neutralise, harm, or kill their opponents. Higher education administration and student conflict are akin to a physical battle or war. Conflict is a quarrel, argument, war, or combat in which one side may win. Conflicts provide newsworthy items for journalists.

Anaeto (2006) defines conflict as "a state of disagreement or incompatibility between two parties" Conflicts will always exist as long as there are people and relationships. Unmet human demands like autonomy, fairness, identity, distinctive or necessities, individual rights, or student rights motivate it.

### **The Russian-Ukrainian War (Conflict)**

Lenin (2022) says Russia and Ukraine are at war (together with pro-Russian separatist troops). The battle began in February 2014, after the Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity, over the status of Crimea and the Donbas, regarded as part of Ukraine. The first eight years of the conflict included the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014, the war in Donbas between Ukraine and Russian-backed separatists, maritime incidents, cyber warfare, and political tensions. After a Russian military buildup on the Russia-Ukraine border in late 2021, Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24 2022. (Lennin, 2022, p.12). Jackson (2022) says pro-Russian unrest broke out in numerous places of Ukraine after the Euromaidan protests and the 2014 revolution that toppled pro-Russian President Viktor Yanukovich. The Russian military, without insignia, seized Crimea's vital infrastructure, defensive positions, and parliament. Crimea joined Russia after a referendum Russia organised but was criticised for. It absorbed Crimea.

Pro-Russian protests in Ukraine's Donbas region sparked a war between the Ukrainian military and separatists in April 2014. Russia and Ukraine signed Minsk II in 2015, but tensions delayed their implementation. By 2019, 7 per cent of Ukraine's territory was temporarily occupied, and Russia indirectly acknowledged its presence. In 2021 and 2022, Russia bolstered its military near Ukraine's frontiers. Russia denied NATO's claims that it was planning an invasion. Putin called NATO's growth a threat to Russia and encouraged Ukraine not to join. He also expressed irredentist sentiments regarding Russia, questioned Ukraine's legality, and said Soviet Russia illegally founded Ukraine. Russia accepted the two separatist governments in Donbas on February 21, 2022. Russia invaded Ukraine after three days.

According to The Moscow Times (2022), "on February 21, 2022, the Russian government said that Ukrainian shelling had damaged an FSB border facility and killed 5 Ukrainian soldiers who tried to enter Russian territory. Ukraine denies involvement in both "false flag operations." Putin ordered Russian armed forces to invade the territories the same day the Russian government recognised the self-declared DPR and LPR as independent entities, not just in the areas

Vladimir Putin ordered Russia's border forces to attack Ukraine on February 24, 2022. ABC News (2022) reports that the invasion involved attacks over the Belarus-Ukraine border and bombardment of Ukrainian military infrastructure. Volodymyr Zelenskyy responded by imposing martial law and general mobilisation. Ukraine had air raid sirens daily (Yeung, Renton, Picheta, Upright, Sangal, Vogt; Macaya and Chowdhury, 2022). Russian cyberattacks and bombings have crippled Ukraine's ICT. Cities and infrastructure in Ukraine have been captured, including Chornobyl. A US defence official said on February 25 that Russian soldiers "encounter more opposition" in Kyiv. The next day, Britain's Armed Forces Minister James Heapey reaffirmed this (Sky News, 2022). A considerable percentage of the world community has criticised Russia for its post-revolutionary Ukraine activities and accused it of violating international law and Ukrainian sovereignty. After the 2022 invasion, various governments placed economic sanctions on Russia, Russians, and Russian businesses. Most conflict management professionals and media pundits have argued about the impact of media propaganda on the ongoing crisis, accusing the Western Media of overblowing the differences between Russia and Ukraine through unsubstantiated media propaganda.

### **Concept of Media Propaganda**

"Propaganda" first occurred in English in 1718, according to Nwanne (2014). The earliest citation from the New English Dictionary originates from that time. It displays the meaning developed in the term's Romance forms, all from the contemporaneous Latin word in the title "Congregatio de propaganda" Pope Gregory XV formed this committee in 1622 to monitor overseas missions. Propaganda was only added to their Latin title and remained in use until the mid-19th century. The word propaganda stems from the Latin (propagare), which implies the gardener's method of planting fresh shoots of plants into the dirt to replicate new plants that will later take on a life of their own. Since the spread of ideas in this way is not natural but instead developed or created, the Roman Catholic Church first used the term in a sociological sense.

"Similar propaganda in Delaware State" was cited in the New English Dictionary in 1800. It may be the first political use of the phrase. Soola (2015) notes

that in the twenty-first century, the popular image of propaganda has changed, and the term has come to imply a sinister, lying process based on a deliberate attempt by an individual or group to manipulate others' minds for their ulterior ends. This trend may be related to the official use of propaganda as a weapon in modern total warfare, beginning with World War I. Falsehoods, political deception, and atrocity stories were used unethically to affect the outcome. Propaganda definitions vary. Kimball (2018) defines propaganda as "the more or less deliberate, systematic employment of symbols, mostly through suggestions and allied psychological tactics, to change beliefs, ideas, and values, and ultimately overt acts along predefined lines." Propaganda can be open or covert. Its psychological and cultural aspects can't be comprehended without a social-culture context. (p.43).

Leonard (2017), author of an extensive treatise on the topic, defines propaganda as an abbreviated version of the above. He describes suggestion as "a systematic effort by an interested individual (or individuals) to influence the attitudes and behaviours of groups of people." Doob (2019) defines propaganda as "the endeavour to change the personalities and control the behaviour of individuals for unscientific or questionable purposes in a society at a specific period." Many people's anxiety about propaganda being used to dominate them is legitimate. The propagandist nearly always conceals something; it may be his genuine aim in engaging in his campaign, the tools (suggestion and other psychological techniques), or the fact that different views to his own are not addressed or presented to distort them. Whether the information is confirmed, the operator is sincere, or its intentions are "good" or "evil" makes no difference. Behaviour propaganda is characterised by its delivery and substance.

Media and propaganda are interdependent. Kris and Leites (2014) define media propaganda as using the media to influence many people's attitudes on sensitive issues. Not all complicated things pertinent to a group are propaganda if they aim to clarify problems rather than sway beliefs. "Media propaganda" has lost its fundamental connotation of information transmission. As it's used now, it refers to the use of media to portray selected facts to influence people for propaganda or a cause. In times of conflict, contending governments deploy media propaganda to sway enemy and domestic people. Propaganda strategies entail a carefully coordinated manipulation of symbols through language to create desired impressions. In propagandists' messages, valid "facts" may be twisted and perverted to tell only one side of the story. It includes "targeted truth" and "card stacking," in which facts are picked and/or treated to create an inaccurate picture (Hands et al., 2015, p.332).

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **The Propaganda Model**

Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky established the propaganda model to explain propaganda and systematic biases in corporate mass media. The notion describes how people are controlled and how propaganda "creates" widespread support for local and worldwide economic, social, and political policies. According to the concept, corporate media—whether through government sources, advertising, or media ownership concentration—inherently causes conflicts of interest and acts as a channel for anti-democratic propaganda. The propaganda model, introduced in their 1988 book "Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media," sees corporate media as businesses more concerned with selling a product—readers and audiences—to other companies (advertisers) than high-quality journalism in the public interest. Chomsky (1989) describes the media's "societal objective" as ignoring "the study of institutions and how they work, except for fringe elements or a minimal scientific literature." According to the hypothesis, five key "filters" control media news. Five categories are ownership, money, sourcing, flak, and anti-communism or "fear ideology." The first three are usually the most important. Chomsky and Herman amended their book after the 9/11 attacks to include the "War on Terror" and "counter-terrorism," which they say are identical. Chomsky and Herman argue the idea holds for any nation that shares the model's core economic structure and organisational principles as the root of media biases, even if the model was primarily focused on the U.S. media. According to Klaehn (2018), many academics agree with them, and the media's propaganda function has been assessed in Western Europe and Latin America.

### **The Frustration-Aggressive Theory**

Dollard, Doob, and associates (1939) initially formulated this hypothesis. Miller (1948) and Berkowitz (1969). According to the theory, goal frustration leads to rage. When demands aren't met, individuals become annoyed and act violently, complain, or become hostile. Frustration causes Russia-Ukraine clashes. People confront one other when they feel or can be held accountable for obstructing their aims when relationship expectations don't meet accomplishment. What irritates one man may not irritate another. Mr A may have grown up in an urban area with reliable power and water, while Mr B lived in a rural area without either. A lack of water and light on campus may drive Mr A to act violently,

causing a fight, but not Mr B. The frustration-aggression theory says frustration causes aggression. Frustration can lead to an attack when someone can't complete a task. When frustration overwhelms, it consumes latent fury, which may be directed against the source of dissatisfaction. This powerful feeling leads to aggressiveness and a predisposition toward violence in that situation or person. According to Fatale (2011), a couple's relative hardship affects the chance of collective violence. Deprivation, like rage, causes social groups to act violently collectively when a people's interests conflict with those of a superior society or institution, and negative behaviour results.

## **1. METHODOLOGY**

The survey research technique was used as the research design. The survey approach was picked because it entails creating a collection of inquiries on various facets of the issue, to which a subset of the population is expected to respond. Survey research, according to Osuala (1987), "studies both small and large populations by choosing and researching samples taken from the population to uncover the relative occurrence, distribution, and interrelations of sociological and psychological factors" (p.180). As a result, by employing the survey method, researchers may obtain data on a particular group that is a subset of a larger population representing their research interests. Using this technique, the researcher got respondents' opinions on how media propaganda impacted the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine. According to the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), Delta State chapter's compendium, there are four hundred and ninety-one (491) registered practising and qualified journalists in Delta State. Therefore, all 491 registered journalists in Delta State make up the population of media practitioners in this research.

The population includes ten conflict management and resolution specialists in Asaba, Delta State. These conflict management specialists were picked because the researcher knew them and believed they were qualified to supply the information needed in conflict management on a local and global scale. As a result, the population of this research in Delta State will comprise 491 journalists and ten conflict management and resolution professionals in Asaba, bringing the whole population to 501 respondents.

All 501 participants in the research will be included in the sample size. The researcher used census and purposive methods to determine the study's sample size. The census method is a sampling technique that enables researchers to examine and

assess the whole population. Complete or 100% enumeration are other names for this technique.

This approach became necessary since the size of the research population was manageable and constrained, leading to the selection of all 501 study participants as the sample size.

The research also employed the purposive sampling method. The purposive sampling approach is the judgement, subjective, or selected sampling method. It is a non-probability sampling technique where the researcher chooses participants randomly for the survey's sample frame. Researchers must be aware of the goals of their studies in advance to use this sampling approach to select survey respondents or eligible participants in an effective manner. The researcher used this technique to choose only 491 registered journalists in Delta State who were deemed qualified to provide relevant data for the study and ten (10) conflict management and resolution specialists in Asaba. These conflict management and resolution specialists were people the researcher knew and deemed qualified to supply the information required for this research.

The Questionnaire will be used for this research to gather information from the sampled respondents. A 5-point Likert scale will be used in the survey. The 5-Point Likert Scale is a psychometric response tool that asks participants to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with a statement using one of five potential options: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Strongly Disagree, and Disagree. The survey will be divided into two portions and include closed-ended questions. Section A of the Questionnaire will consist of the sociodemographic elements, while Section B will address the thematic issues.

The collected data were analysed using the quantitative technique. Simple percentages will be used to assess the information gathered from the respondents, which will be displayed in tables. The formula consists of the following:

$$\text{Simple Percentage} = \frac{fx}{N} \times 100$$

Where;  
 Fx = Frequency of Response  
 N = Total number of respondents

## 2. RESULTS

The Questionnaire was given out to responders in 501 copies, and each copy was duly completed and returned. It was made possible by the researcher's

employment of study assistants, who assisted in distributing and collecting the Questionnaire from respondents.

**Research Question 1:** What is the Level of Propaganda used in the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine?

Tables 1-5 were used to obtain data to ascertain the respondents' awareness and knowledge about the subject under investigation, while tables 11-13 answered research question 1.

**Table 1:** Are you aware of the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	501	100%
No	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source of Data: Field Survey, 2022

Table 1 shows that all the respondents (501), representing 100%, said they are aware of the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

**Table 2:** If yes, which of the following is your primary source of information about the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Local Media	50	10%
Foreign Media	200	40%
Social Media	150	30%
All of the Above	101	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source of Data: Field Survey, 2022

Table 2 shows that 50 respondents (40%) said that the local media is their primary source of information about the ongoing Russia and Ukraine conflict. In comparison, 200 respondents (40%) said foreign media were their primary source of information about the conflict, 150 respondents (30%) said their primary source of information was social media and 101 respondents (20%) said they got their information from all the media mentioned above platforms.

**Table 3:** Have you conducted independent research on what led to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine and its current state?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	501	100%
No	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 3 shows that all the respondents (501), representing 100%, said they had conducted independent research on what led to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine and its current state. By implication, all the respondents are well informed about the subject under investigation.

**Table 4:** The media has spread misinformation about the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	150	30%
Strongly Agree	351	70%
Neutral	-	-
Disagree	-	-
Strongly Disagree	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source of Data: Field Survey, 2022

Table 4 reveals that 150 respondents (30%) agreed that the media had spread misinformation about the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, while 351 respondents (70%) strongly agreed. By inference, all the respondents believe that the media has spread misinformation about the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

**Table 5:** To what extent is misinformation being spread by the media about the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High Extent	326	65%
Low Extent	175	35%
<b>Total</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source of Data: Field Survey, 2022

Table 5 shows that 326 respondents (65%) said the media were spreading misinformation about the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine to a great extent. In comparison, 175 respondents (35%) said it is to a low extent.

**Table 6:** Media propaganda has been employed in the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	150	30%
Strongly Agree	351	70%
Neutral	-	-
Disagree	-	-
Strongly Disagree	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source of Data: Field Survey, 2022

Table 6 shows that 150 respondents (30%) agreed that media propaganda had been employed in the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, while 351 respondents (70%) strongly agreed. It implies that all the respondents believe that media propaganda is employed in the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

**Table 7:** To what extent has media propaganda been employed in the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High Extent	326	65%
Low Extent	175	35%
<b>Total</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source of Data: Field Survey, 2022

Table 7 shows that 326 respondents (65%) said that media propaganda had been employed in the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine to a great extent. In comparison, 175 respondents (35%) said it is to a low extent.

**Table 8:** How effectively is the media propaganda employed in the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very effective	301	60%
Effective	165	33%
Not effective	35	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source of Data: Field Survey, 2022

Table 8 shows that 301 respondents (60%) opined that the media propaganda being employed in the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine is very effective; 165 respondents (33%) said it is practical, while 35 respondents (7%) said it is not realistic.

**Research Question 2:** Are other countries' perceptions of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict influenced by media misinformation?

Table 9 provided answers to research question 2.

**Table 9:** Media misinformation is responsible for other countries' perceptions of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	100	20%
Strongly Agree	251	50%
Neutral	-	-
Disagree	-	-
Strongly Disagree	150	30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source of Data: Field Survey, 2022

Table 9 shows that 100 respondents (20%) agreed that media propaganda is responsible for the perception of other countries about the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian conflict, 251 respondents representing (50%) strongly agreed, and 150 respondents (30%) strongly disagreed.

**Research Question 3:** How are the media of other nations supporting Russia or Ukraine framing the conflict in their reportage?

Tables 10-11 provided answers to research question 3.

**Table 10:** Western media organisations such as CNN and BBC frame the Russia-Ukraine conflict in favour of Ukraine.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	326	65%
Strongly Agree	175	35%
Neutral	-	-
Disagree	-	-
Strongly Disagree	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source of Data: Field Survey, 2022

Table 10 shows that 326 respondents (65%) agreed that Western media organisations such as CNN and BBC frame the Russian-Ukraine conflict in favour of Ukraine, while 175 respondents (35%) strongly agreed.

**Table 11:** Non-Western media organisations such as Aljazeera frame the Russia-Ukraine conflict in favour of Russia

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	225	45%
Strongly Agree	276	55%
Neutral	-	-
Disagree	-	-
Strongly Disagree	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source of Data: Field Survey, 2022

Table 16 shows that 225 respondents (45%) agreed that non-western media organisations such as Aljazeera frame the Russia-Ukraine conflict in favour of Russia, and 276 respondents (55%) strongly agreed.

**Research Question 4:** What impact does media propaganda have on the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine?

This research question was answered in tables 12-14.

**Table 12: Media propaganda is contributing to an increase in the conflict**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	50	10%
Strongly Agree	251	50%
Neutral	-	-
Disagree	-	-
Strongly Disagree	200	40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source of Data: Field Survey, 2022

Table 12 shows that 50 respondents, representing 10%, agreed that media propaganda contributes to an increase in the conflict, 251 respondents representing 50%, strongly agreed, while 200 respondents representing 40%, strongly disagreed.

**Table 13:** Media propaganda is aggravating the Russia-Ukraine conflict to a great extent

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	50	10%
Strongly Agree	150	30%
Neutral	101	20%
Disagree	-	-
Strongly Disagree	200	40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source of Data: Field Survey, 2022

Table 14 reveals that 50 respondents (10%) agreed that media propaganda is aggravating the Russia-Ukraine conflict to a great extent; 150 respondents (30%) strongly agreed, 101 respondents (20%) were neutral, and 200 respondents (40%) disagreed.

**Table 14:** Media propaganda is contributing to the resolution of the conflict to a great extent

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	-	-
Strongly Agree	200	40%
Neutral	50	10%
Disagree	-	-
Strongly Disagree	251	50%
<b>Total</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source of Data: Field Survey, 2022

Table 14 shows that 200 respondents representing 40%, strongly agreed that media propaganda contributes to the resolution of the conflict, 50 (10%) were neutral, and 50% strongly disagreed.

**Research Question 5:** What other facts influence other countries' perception of the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine?

**Table 15:** What factors influence other nations' perception of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Trade Relations	150	30%
Religious Affiliations	101	20%
Existing International relations	125	25%
Personal Conviction and others	125	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source of Data: Field Survey, 2022*

Table 15 reveals that 150 respondents (30%) said that other factors affecting the perception of nations about the conflict are trade relations, 101 respondents (20%) said it is religious affiliations, and 125 respondents (25%) said it is existing international relations. In comparison, 125 respondents (25%) said it is based on personal convictions and others.

### 3. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study focused on media and conflict resolution specialists in Asaba, Delta State, to assess media propaganda's impact on the Russia-Ukraine war. Respondent information was presented in tables and analysed using percentages to satisfy the study's purpose. According to the research questions, all respondents are aware of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine and agree that the media is their primary source of information. It implies that all the respondents were correctly chosen for the study, as knowing the subject makes it easier to respond to the Questionnaire and provide valuable data. 10% of respondents said local media is the primary source of Russia-Ukraine conflict information, 40% said foreign media, 30% said social media, and 20% said all of the above. The media have covered the conflict adequately. Damian (2022) noted that the Russo-Ukrainian war is public knowledge, and the media is at the forefront of spreading the word. He added that the Russo-Ukrainian war had garnered more media attention than other international crises.

The study also indicated that respondents did independent research on what led to the war between Russia and Ukraine and its current situation. Data analysis demonstrated media misrepresentation concerning the Russia-Ukraine war. 30% agree, and 70% strongly agree. According to 65% of respondents, the media spreads misinformation extensively. Without independent and personal inquiry into the Russia-Ukraine conflict, an individual is unlikely to get a genuine stance on the conflict, as misinformation abounds in the media.

Thirty per cent and 70% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed that media propaganda has been used in the Russia-Ukraine conflict. 66% of respondents thought media propaganda in the conflict was high, while 35% felt it was low. It illustrates that conflict propaganda and misinformation are used. These findings answer research question 1 about the level of propaganda in the Russia-Ukraine war. Sixty per cent of the respondents feel media propaganda in the present conflict between Russia and Ukraine is highly effective, 33% say it's effective, and 7% say it's ineffective. The Russia-Ukraine war is defined by media propaganda, and respondents believe it's effective. 70% of respondents believe media misrepresentation regarding the Russia-Ukraine war affects how other countries view it, while 30% disagree. Respondents said other issues influence how other countries view the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Trade relations (30%), religious ties (20%), existing international relations (25%), personal conviction and others (25 per cent). It answered questions 2 and 5.

The study found that Western media companies, such as CNN and BBC, frame the war in favour of Ukraine. In contrast, Non-Western media organisations, such as Aljazeera, frame the conflict in turn of Russia. It means that media reports on the Russia-Ukraine conflict are purely subjective. Leen-Ed (2022) observed that Russian and Ukrainian armies had exploited the media to promote their ideals and pains. While Russia promotes Western and NATO invasion, Ukraine promotes Russian terrorism and inter-country bullying. Western media characterise NATO weaponry given to Ukraine as "military support", whereas Russian arms are called "weapons."

The study also found that most respondents believe media misinformation contributes to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. 10% agreed, and 50% strongly agreed. 40% of respondents agreed that media propaganda helps resolve the issue. It is in accordance with Afoke (2022), who said that by constantly portraying Russia as the bully of Eastern Europe and threatening it, the Western media infuriates the Russian leadership while urging the Ukrainian government to go to war. It has been terrible, with ongoing deaths and destruction (Afoke, 2022).

### 4. CONCLUSION

The study examined media propaganda's impact on the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The survey research design was implemented using a questionnaire. The data were evaluated using simple percentages, and it was determined that media

practitioners and conflict resolution professionals in Asaba, Delta State, are aware of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. Foreign Media is the primary source of knowledge. It was also revealed that media propaganda is being used extensively in the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian conflict and has a dual role of growing and alleviating the conflict, with most experts favouring the former.

Data analysis and study conclusions showed that most countries benefited from media propaganda. Propaganda creates a misleading mental picture to dehumanise and stir hatred against an internal or external foe. It can be done by using racial insults, deleting sentences, or alleging the opposing side committed crimes. Most propaganda battles involve convincing the home population that the opponent has committed an injustice, whether real or imagined.

Propaganda seeks to convince a society or government to take a given action or viewpoint. Propaganda is biased information used to persuade and further an agenda. This information is often supplied selectively (by omission or laden wording) to promote a particular synthesis or to evoke an emotional rather than rational response. Governmental communication programmes that encourage or discourage specific behaviours resemble propaganda. Propaganda is another psychological warfare method that may involve false flags. "Propaganda" also refers to misleading information meant to bolster existing opinions. If someone has a false belief, they will constantly have doubts. Since uncertainty is unpleasant, people will be receptive to promises from authority figures.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study made above, the following recommendations were made:

1. Western and non-Western media must stop using black propaganda in the Russia-Ukraine war to end it.
2. Peace and conflict settlement should use the media.
3. Media should avoid printing and broadcasting war threats and battle scenes, as this infuriates and fuels the problem.

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