Title of Article: A Conceptual Review of Mass Media and Political Violence in Nigeria between 1999 and 2013

Author(s): Iruonagbe, T.C., Imhonopi, D. & Ahmadu, F.O.


Date: 2013

Abstract: This paper is an exploratory study that examines the interplay between political violence and the role of the mass media in addressing this, with a focus on the period between 1999 to date in Nigeria. Violence becomes political when it is intended to disrupt the immediate and future political process. Political violence may involve a process of perpetuating an existing government in power and eliminating perceived opponents or it could be a response to frustrating circumstances and an inability of those in government to fulfill their campaign promises to the people. As the fourth estate of the realm, serving as the watchdog of the three arms of government, the media has often been hijacked by political office holders to manipulate, create falsehood including acts of political propaganda. Ideally, the media ought to be for information, education and entertainment. This role has often been circumvented by those at the helm of affairs especially the political class, as he who pays the piper dictates the tune. Has the media exercised the right professionalism and work ethics needed in the execution of their task? Has the reporting of news items by the media resulted in acts of political violence or in its reduction? To what extent has lack of press freedom affected the correct reporting of events by the media? Based on the normative and Marxist theories, this study tries to uncover these critical questions with a view to finding appropriate solutions to the lingering political violence in Nigeria

KEY WORDS: Mass media; Political office holders; Political propaganda; Political violence and Professionalism