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THE INFLUENCE OF INFORMATION ON SHARE-TSARAGI INTER COMMUNAL CONFLICT IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The conflict between Share and Tsaragi has recurred intermittently due to several factors, including the improper use of information under the guise of freedom of expression. Information has often been used to mobilise community members against rival groups and attract third-party support, thereby escalating inter-communal violence. This study investigated the effect of information quality on the Share–Tsaragi inter-communal conflict in Kwara State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined the effects of information quality on conflict escalation and explored challenges confronting the use of information in conflict de-escalation. The study adopted a descriptive research design using quantitative and qualitative methods. Through purposive sampling, 140 respondents, including security operatives and residents knowledgeable about information dissemination before, during, and after the conflict, were selected from both communities. Of the 140 copies of the questionnaire administered, 139 were retrieved and analysed using descriptive statistics. In addition, nine oral interview sessions involving six Key Informant Interviews (KII) and eight In-Depth Interviews (IDI) were conducted among community members and security operatives, while qualitative data were analysed using content analysis. Findings revealed that inadequate information quality contributed to fragile peace, breakdown of peace agreements, mobilisation of armed combatants, and the spread of conflict to neighbouring communities. Findings further showed challenges identified as lack of deterrents against harmful information dissemination, low inter-community trust, and inadequate media peace education. The study concluded that wrongful information dissemination has sustained and escalated the Share–Tsaragi conflict and recommended public sensitisation and strengthened of peace-building initiatives.

Keywords: Information quality, inter-communal conflict, misinformation, peacebuilding, Share–Tsaragi conflict

Introduction

Inter-communal conflicts have remained one of the major threats to peace, security, and socio-economic development across the world. From Asia to Africa and parts of Europe, disputes arising from ethnic identity, territorial ownership, religion, political interests, and access to resources have continued to generate violence and instability (Rustad, 2025; Davies, Pettersson, Sollenberg, & Öberg, 2025). The increasing circulation of information through traditional and digital media platforms has significantly influenced the nature, spread, and intensity of communal conflicts. Information, whether accurate or misleading, shapes public perception, mobilises groups, influences decision-making, and can either promote peacebuilding or escalate tensions within divided communities (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, (UNESCO), 2023).

In Africa, inter-conflict has greatly destroyed countries like Ethiopia, Sudan, Liberia, Somalia, Rwanda and Burundi (International Crisis Group, 2024). Other countries that have been negatively affected by inter-communal conflict are Angola,

Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria (Raji & Niyi, 2018). Looking at the central focus of the conflict in these countries, territorial boundaries and the struggle for land resources relatively exist among other issues (Atoi & Babale, 2022; Trémolières, Walther & Radil, 2020).

Rumours, biased media reports, inflammatory statements, and manipulated narratives often intensify communal distrust and violence (Howard, 2020). Studies have shown that misinformation and hate speech have contributed to instability in countries such as Kenya, Sudan, Rwanda, and Nigeria, particularly during periods of political contestation and communal disagreements (Abaho, 2019; Trémolières et al., 2020).

In Nigeria, communal conflicts constitute a persistent national challenge threatening peaceful coexistence and national unity (Okoli & Nnabuihe, 2019; Udom & Okolie, 2022). Conflicts involving ethnic groups, religious communities, farmers and herders, and boundary disputes have resulted in loss of lives, displacement of people, destruction of property, and disruption of economic activities (International Organization for Migration, 2023). Information dissemination has played a critical role in the escalation and management of many of these conflicts (Udenze, 2021). Fake news, inflammatory broadcasts, rumours, and sensational media coverage have often fueled violence and deepened divisions among communities (Otulugbu, 2021).

In this context, information plays a significant role in mobilising community members against rival groups and influencing third parties to join the cause in inter-communal conflicts. At the same time, responsible communication and conflict-sensitive journalism have been identified as important tools for conflict prevention and peacebuilding (Howard, 2020).

Kwara State, particularly the Share-Tsaragi axis, has experienced recurring inter-communal conflicts largely associated with land disputes, boundary disagreements, historical claims, and socio-political tensions. The Share community in Ifelodun Local Government Area and the Tsaragi community in Edu Local Government Area have witnessed periodic violent clashes over disputed territories and land ownership claims. These conflicts have negatively affected social harmony, agricultural production, economic activities, and peaceful coexistence among residents (Busari et al., 2020; Olademo et al., 2021).

In the course of these conflicts, information dissemination through interpersonal communication, community leaders, radio broadcasts, and social media platforms has significantly influenced the perceptions and actions of the conflicting groups (IfeKristi, 2022). Rumours, misinformation, and provocative messages have at times escalated tensions, while peace-oriented communication efforts have also contributed to conflict management initiatives (Ibrahim, 2023; Raji & Niyi, 2018).

Although, the inherent right of a person, people, groups, communities, and nations to express their beliefs, ideas, thought, without fear of retaliation, censorship, or legal repercussions is upheld by the fundamental human right on freedom of information and expression (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, Section 39), however, expressing of information and idea in any guise can either cause or enhance inter/intra-group conflict and leads airtime to forceful voices, or serve as an instrument of peace building.

The prevalence of false information, hate speech, and misinformation has become a major issue in Africa. About 7,787 pieces of such content were seen on the continent each week between January 1st, 2015, and December 31st, 2019 (Garbe, Selvik & Lemaire, 2023). For instance, The Cambridge Analytica Company was accused of engaging in news manipulation that had the potential to stir up ethno-religious conflicts, which affected the 2015 Nigerian electoral process, the 2013 Kenyan elections, and the 2017 Kenyan elections (Bajo, 2019).

The conflict between Share and Tsaragi kept occurring intermittently due to many reasons among which is inadequate usage of information by major stakeholders under the pretence of freedom of expression (Abdulkadir, & Alabi, 2022). For instance, during the 2015–2016 episodes of violence rumours of attacks quickly spread across both communities, leading to retaliatory mobilisation, destruction of schools, and burning of houses before security intervention could restore calm (Channels Television, 3rd August, 2016; Ilorin Info, 2016).

At a particularly instance, residents claimed they were unaware of the escalation until gunshots were heard, after which misinformation and fear triggered wider violence and property destruction (Ilorin Info, 2016). These patterns show how quickly unverified information can shift a localised dispute into broader communal confrontation.

Despite several attempts by government authorities, traditional institutions, and peacebuilding organisations to resolve the conflict, tensions continue to reoccur, indicating the need to examine underlying communication and information-related factors. While many reasons

have been attributed to the source of this conflict, limited or no knowledge about the role information played in escalating or de-escalating the conflict between the two communities.

There are several existing studies and official reports (Raji & Niyi 2018;_Olademo, Omotoye, Ikibe, Ibraheem, Tijani, Abubakre, Adebisi, Aboyeji, & Adimula, 2021; Abdulkadir & Alabi, 2022) attributing the origin of inter-communal conflict in Shara-Tsaragi and beyond this location to some other factors such as land and boundary ownership.

However, none of these studies focus on effects of information quality on the conflict, an academic lacuna this study filled. This study highlighted the need for a robust empirical investigation into the influence of information quality on inter-communal conflicts in the study location, shedding light on the extent to which information has either increase peace building or complicates tensions within these communities.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to examine the effects of influence of Information on Share-Tsaragi inter-communal conflict. The specific objectives were to: determine the effects of information quality on Share-Tsaragi inter-communal conflict escalation; and explore challenges confronting usage of information in Share-Tsaragi inter-communal conflict de-escalation.

Literature Review

Conceptual Review

Conflict

It is important to first understand the meaning of conflict as a foundation for discussing the key ideas, perspectives, and dynamics that shape this study. According to Cheng, Zhao, Tang, Zhao, Zhou, Shen, & Gao (2023) conflict is a behaviour that occurs when people or groups want to fulfill commitments, demands, or desires that are incompatible with one another. The authors further considered conflict as disagreement or hostility between two or more people. This means two or more parties do not have an accord and as such are on two different parallels on the same issue. It thus suggests the pursuit of incompatible goals. Put differently, conflict means people being on collision course due to their support and opposition to existing views, stands or position.

Ada (2014) conceptualised conflict explicitly from its political point of view by noting that conflict exists when two or more groups engage in a struggle over values and claims to status, power and resources in which the opponents aim to neutralise, injure or eliminate their rivals To Martin (2021), conflict is the fate of life that occurs where the interactions of people are marked with differences in goals, perceptions, attitudes, views, beliefs, values or needs. It can be deduced from the several definitions stated above that conflicts are inseparable in human affairs and are inherent in social existence and social progress.

Inter-Communal Conflict

Conflict can take place in different places at different times. Among the places conflict inevitable to occur is community or/and between two communities. Communal identity is defined as subjective group identification based on common history, culture or core values (Martin, 2021). Martin (2021) sees communal conflict as participants or parties to the conflict are community-based identity groups. it is usually a function of communal identity. Corroborating this definition, Williams (2015) asserts that ethnic conflict is frequently analysed through the lens of communal identity, which is a subjective group identification based on common history, culture, or core values.

However, the scholar narrow down his submission on ethnic conflict to be conflict where at least one group defines its goals exclusively in ethnic terms and in which the fault-line of confrontation is one of ethnic variation. In this study, inter-communal conflicts are characterised as disputes between distinct communities, whether within or between communities, that are predominantly motivated by land resource conflicts, as seen in Share-Saragi.

Information

Information connotes different meaning to different people and remains a very strong instrument for cordial relationship across the world. Information has long occupied the minds of information experts possibly even before the name "information science" was created in 1955 (Madden, 2000). To a layman, information is a statement or incident of which one is told. This is just one of the many dictionaries definitions of the word. To Logan (2012) information is given by the processes that interpret it.

This is a very insightful definition because it explicitly incorporates the notion that information depends on context. According to Abd-Allah (2023), a negative impact of information to human or society is known as misinformation. Weather knowingly or unknowingly, misinformation can come in different ways such fake news, hate speech, wrong fact and figure and many other ways

hearing and absorbing of certain information can be inimical to human existences.

According to Johnston (2023), misinformation is a false information that is spread, regardless of whether there is intent to mislead, while disinformation is considered as deliberately misleading or biased information; manipulated narrative or facts; propaganda. In the context of this definition, both misinformation and disinformation are considered as wrong or untruthful spreading of information, though only disinformation is wrong on purpose.

False rumours and news stories that were spread on social media have been mentioned as one of the reasons for the recent rise of populist candidates in the U.S. and Europe and as fuel inciting violence against ethnic minorities in countries such as Sri Lanka and Myanmar (Barbera, 2018). In the context of this study, information is defined as spreading stories, news and images by a member or group in a community with sole intent of activating Faultline between two communities.

Effects of Information on Conflict

Several studies carried out have demonstrated that misinformation and fake news have become major instruments capable of escalating violent conflicts, social instability, and communal crises within Nigeria. Udenze (2021) observed that misinformation and fake news significantly influence violent conflicts through the spread of unfounded rumours, distorted narratives, and misleading reports capable of provoking fear, anger, and hostility among members of different communities. According to the author, the Nigerian society has experienced several incidents where the circulation of false information by misguided individuals intensified communal crises and disrupted peaceful coexistence. This suggests that information dissemination, especially when unverified, can shape public perception and trigger violent reactions within fragile communities.

Similarly, Aboyade, Uwaebuka, Wahab, and Stephen (2022) argued that the implications of fake news cut across various dimensions of Nigeria's socio-political and economic life. The scholars noted that fake news contributes to electoral violence, ethnoreligious conflicts, economic instability, leadership mistrust, jungle justice, and character assassination. The study further explained that fake stories circulated through social media platforms are often intentionally designed to incite fear, anxiety, suspicion, and disunity among ethnic and religious groups in Nigeria. This position highlights the manipulative nature of misinformation and the dangerous role of digital communication technologies in amplifying communal tensions and social division.

Corroborating these assertions, Otulugbu (2021) provided practical examples of fake news incidents and their consequences in Nigeria. The study identified several misleading reports, including false claims surrounding polio vaccination, the Ebola outbreak, rumours about President Muhammadu Buhari's death and marriage saga, fake Facebook posts that intensified regional and religious crises, misleading stories concerning herdsmen and farmers conflicts, and misinformation during the 2015 presidential election. According to the study, these fabricated stories generated widespread panic, confusion, hostility, and mistrust among citizens, thereby worsening existing tensions and conflicts across the country.

In another perspective, Adam, Osman, Bechlivanidis and Meder (2023) stressed that the overarching negative effect of misinformation comes from the argument that without an accurately informed public, democracy cannot function. Although, there are some discussions about whether this falls squarely on the shoulders of news media, these scholars contended that much of the evidence base is designed to show how beliefs in misinformed claims impact the evaluation of and support for policies.

It can be deduced from the above studies that misinformation and fake news constitute serious threats to peace, security, and national cohesion in Nigeria. The studies collectively establish that false information can influence public attitudes, provoke emotional reactions, distort realities, and intensify existing social and communal divisions. Another common element among the studies is the recognition of social media and digital communication platforms as major channels through which fake news spreads rapidly to large audiences.

The studies further demonstrate that misinformation is not limited to political matters alone but also affects health, religion, ethnicity, security, and intergroup relations. However, despite their valuable contributions, these reviewed studies focused mainly on the general effects of fake news and misinformation in Nigeria without specifically examining their influence on localised inter-communal conflicts such as the Share-Tsaragi crisis in Kwara State. The studies also concentrated more on national political, health, and religious issues rather than community-level conflict dynamics.

Review of Empirical Studies

The reviewed empirical studies collectively demonstrate that the Share-Tsaragi inter-communal conflict has attracted scholarly attention from different perspectives, particularly in relation to conflict resolution, agricultural production, and media management. However, there remains a significant gap regarding the specific influence of information and information quality on the persistence and escalation of the conflict. Olademo et al. (2021) examined the effectiveness of internal mechanisms in resolving the Share-Tsaragi conflict in Kwara State using both quantitative and qualitative research designs. Data were obtained through questionnaire, interviews, and participant observations. The findings revealed that government interventions and local conflict resolution strategies were inadequately implemented, thereby contributing to the recurrence of violence between the communities.

Similarly, Busari, Oladipo, Daudu, and Selesi (2020) investigated farmers' perceptions of how inter-communal conflicts affect agricultural production in Share and Tsaragi communities. Using a three-stage random sampling technique to select 120 respondents, the study identified boundary disputes, ownership claims over fertile lands, and conversion of leased lands to private property as major causes of the conflict. Ibrahim (2023), on the other hand, focused on the role of media in the management of the Share-Tsaragi communal conflict.

Through a descriptive survey design and structured questionnaires, the study established significant relationships between media reporting accuracy, open debate, and the management of communal clashes. These studies revealed certain common elements such as persistence and recurring nature of the Share-Tsaragi conflict despite intervention efforts by government and community stakeholders and communication-related factors, directly or indirectly, as important variables in conflict escalation and management.

The reviewed works adopted empirical approaches involving surveys, interviews, observations, and questionnaire, thereby providing practical insights into the dynamics of the conflict. Collectively, the studies establish that the Share-Tsaragi conflict is multidimensional, involving economic, social, political, and communicational factors. Nevertheless, Olademo et al. (2021) concentrated mainly on internal conflict resolution mechanisms without examining how information dissemination, misinformation, rumours, or communication patterns influence the conflict process.

Busari et al. (2020) focused specifically on agricultural production and farmers' perceptions of conflict causes, but did not investigate the role of information in shaping perceptions, mobilising groups, or escalating tensions. Likewise, Ibrahim (2023) emphasised media roles in conflict management but limited the discussion to media reporting and communication strategies, without extending the analysis to information quality, misinformation, fake news, and other broader dimensions of information influence within the communities.

Hence, existing studies have not sufficiently addressed how information itself functions as a driver, sustainer, or management tool in the Share-Tsaragi inter-communal conflict. In contemporary society where information flows rapidly through traditional media, social media, interpersonal communication, and community networks, the quality, accuracy, and interpretation of information can significantly influence communal perceptions and reactions. The absence of adequate empirical attention to this dimension limits comprehensive understanding of the conflict and weakens the development of effective information-based peacebuilding strategies.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive research design employing a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques to adequately address the research questions. The target population comprised adult residents of Share in Ifelodun Local Government Area and Tsaragi in Edu Local Government Area. Respondents for this study were purposively selected from each community based on their presumed knowledge and experience of inter-communal relations and conflict dynamics.

The selected respondents in each community included members of Community Development Associations (CDAs) which include (10) religious leaders (both Christian and Muslim), (10) community/traditional leaders, (10) youths and (10) women association members. Also, (30) security personnel were drawn from the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), State Security Service (SSS), and Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC). These respondents were administered copies of structured questionnaire in both communities.

On the other hand, few individuals were selected for oral interview sessions among the purposively selected respondents. This included (6) key informant Interview (KII) for security operatives and traditional leaders, and (8) In-depth Interview (IDI) sessions in both communities. The choice of

purposive sampling was informed by the need to identify and engage individuals who possess relevant information, lived experience, and contextual understanding of the subject matter. Total of 140 copies of questionnaire were administered in both communities, out which 139 were retrieved back for analysis using descriptive analysis. Total of 14 interview sessions were successfully conducted. These included 6 KII (security operatives/traditional leaders) and 8 IDI involving community youth and women leaders from both communities. Qualitative collected was analysed using content analysis.

Result of the Findings

The below tables, alongside its interpretations and the analysis of oral interview showed the result of data collected from the respondents.

Table 1: showing demographic report of respondents

s/n	Information		Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Gender	Male	79	56.8
		Female	60	43.2
		Total	139	100.0
2	Age range	18-30	31	22.3
		31-40	43	30.9
		41-50	55	39.6
		Above 51	10	7.2
		Total	139	100.0
		Total	139	100.0
3	Communities	Tsaragi	68	49.6
		Share	71	50.4
		Total	139	100.0

Source: Researcher's Field Study, 2025

Table 1 shows the demographic distribution of 139 respondents from Tsaragi and Share. Males constitute 56.8% while females represent 43.2%, indicating slightly higher male participation in the study. In terms of age, most respondents fall within the active adult categories, with 41–50 years (39.6%) being the largest group, followed by 31–40 years (30.9%). This suggests that responses largely reflect the views of economically active and socially engaged individuals.

Community representation is almost evenly split, with Share at 50.4% and Tsaragi at 49.6%, ensuring balanced perspectives from both sides of the study area. The balanced community representation and concentration of mature respondents enhance the reliability of the findings, as they reflect informed, experience-based perspectives on the inter-communal conflict

The Effects of information quality on Share-Saragi Inter-communal conflict escalation

Table 2: Showing respondents' perceptions on the Effects of information quality on Share-Saragi Inter-communal conflict escalation

Variables	Level of Agreement				
	SD	D	A	SA	M
Increase in fragile peace between the two communities	35 (25.2%)	-	30 (21.6%)	74 (53.2%)	3.00
Mobilisation of combatants through misinformation	52 (37.4%)	10 (7.2%)	22 (15.8%)	55 (39.6%)	2.02
Breakdown of peace agreement	-	-	59 (42.5%)	80 (57.5%)	3.75
Asymmetric spreading of the conflict	5 (3.6%)	13 (9.4%)	71 (51.1%)	50 (35.9%)	3.51
Promote inter-ethnic hate speeches	15 (10.8%)	18 (12.9%)	89 (64.1%)	17 (12.2%)	2.82

Source: Researcher's field Study, 2025

Table 2 shows that all 139 respondents (100%) agreed that inadequate information caused the breakdown of peace agreements between Share and Tsaragi communities. Also, 106 respondents (76.3%) agreed it promoted inter-ethnic hate speech, 104 (74.8%) agreed it increased fragile peace, and 121 (87%) agreed it led to asymmetric spread of the conflict. All these effects recorded mean scores above 2.00, indicating that inadequate information significantly contributed to conflict escalation in the study area. However, respondents showed weak agreement on whether inadequate information significantly mobilized combatants, as 77 (55.4%) agreed while 62 (44.6%) disagreed, with a mean score of 2.02. Findings from Key Informant and In-depth Interviews also revealed that misinformation and distorted narratives undermined peace efforts. A police respondent noted that whenever issues arise between the two communities, misinformation spreads rapidly, often triggering violent clashes.

> The use of misinformation did lead to fragile peace between the two communities, breakdown of peace agreement. Neighbouring communities that happen to be the kens brothers of an ethnic group were easily mobilised with false narrative, and they as well engage in violent confrontation. This is the case in Ekanga; a community before Share (KII/M/Police/45yrs old/2024).

According to a member of Tsaragi progressive union,

> There was time that two of our boys were killed while returning home from Tsaragi market. They were slaughtered and their motorcycles were snatched. Due to the existing conflict between the two communities, rumour and misinformation began to fly around that it was the hand work of Share community. Because of that, tension and anxiety were in every where. People started mobilising for another violent confrontation before such information was founded to be false (IDI/Tsaragi/Male/59yrs/2024).

Another security agent succinctly mentioned causes of the conflict,

> Many people properties and farmland have been burnt down because of Share-Tsaragi communal conflict. Take for example, the last fight between Share and Ekanga communities was an extension of that of Tsaragi. But many houses and farmland were burnt down. An innocent indigene of another community wat mistaken for an indigene of Share and was attack and killed. All this happened du to wrong information. (KII/M/NSDC/50yrs old/2024)

Challenges confronting usage of information in Share-Tsaragi Inter-communal conflict de-escalation

Table 3: Perception of respondents on the challenges confronting usage of information in Share-Tsaragi Inter-communal conflict de-escalation

Variables	Level of Agreement				
	SD	D	A	SA	M
Inadequate media peace education	24 (17.3%)	5 (3.6%)	13 (9.4%)	97 (69.7%)	2.58
Inadequate trust between the two communities	22 (15.8%)	13 (9.4%)	89 (64.0%)	15 (10.8%)	2.87
Inadequate channel of communication between the two communities	-	20 (14.4)	9 (6.5%)	110 (79.1%)	2.93
Distorted communication between the two community	18 (12.9%)	101 (72.7%)	-	20 (14.4%)	1.85
Lack of deterrent against misinformation	-	-	30 (21.6%)	109 (78.4%)	3.85

Source: Researcher's field Study, 2025

Table 4 shows that 139 respondents representing 100% % identified lack of deterrent against misinformation as a major challenge confronting

usage of information in de-escalating Share-Tsaragi Inter-communal conflict, 104 respondents representing 74.8% perceived inadequate trust between the two communities as another challenge, and 116 respondents representing 85.6% sees inadequate channel of communication between the two communities as a challenge and 110 respondents representing 79.1% considered inadequate media peace education as a challenge limiting information for conflict de-escalation. All these factors secured above 2.00 means value, an indication that they are challenges of using information in deescalating Share-Tsaragi inter-communal conflict. Oral interview evidence obtained from Key informant interview and In-depth interview sessions session showed thus.

According to security operative (Police) that had witnessed up three to two occurrences of violent clashes stated that lack of punishment for spreading fake information, which ordinary should have serve as deterrent for others, remains a big challenge to the usage of information in deescalating Share-Tsaragi According to a member of Tsaragi progress union,

> We did not trust each other. This is because of doubt and deceit in the peace accord that over the time broke down on several occasions. By mere hearing any offensive information instead of us to take our time to verify how authentic it is, we simply react (IDI/Tsaragi/Male/59yrs/2024).

Another security agent succinctly talked about challenges of mitigating misinformation

> lack of trust and confidence on stakeholders to enforce peace accord signed by both communities. Beside that, government has no significant existing policy to curtail fake news and misinformation. That has continued to encourage primary actors to leverage on as weapon to mobilised third party combatants (KII/M/NSDC/50yrs old/2024)

Discussion of the Findings

Result of the above findings showed that misinformation has increase in fragile peace led to breakdown of peace agreement and mobilisation of combatants through misinformation between the two communities. Other contributing effect of misinformation to the Share-Tsaragi inter-communal conflict is asymmetric spreading of the conflict to neighbouring communities.

While looking at the issue of fragile peace, finding demonstrated that the nature of peace that exists between two conflicts remain fragile, capable to be broken down at any slight of provocation. Misinformation over time has been found to be responsible to such provocation that led to the breaking down of social order between the two communities. This finding is different from the argument of Adams et al. (2023) that overarching negative effect of misinformation is largely shown on nation's democratic stability. This is to say that beyond negative effect of misinformation on democratic stability, misinformation negatively affects peace stability of communities experiencing conflict.

Also, based on the result, misinformation led to breakdown of peace agreement between Share-Tsaragi. Supporting this finding, Abaho (2019) argued that fake news and misinformation affect political communication and civic engagement in Nigeria. When peace disagreement is broken, it is suggested that civic communication is distorted in any given society.

On the issue of combatants being mobilised through unguided narratives, this largely encourages third party to be invited to the conflict as rightly observed in the study. The finding is different from the study of Ibrahim (2023) that

there is relationship between reporting accuracy in media and management of communal clashes. This implies there is also relationship between information being used to mobilise combatant for inter-communal conflict. Therefore, if armed combatant is to be discouraged from communal conflict, there is needed to monitored and censored spreading of fake news or information.

Asymmetric conflict escalation happens when conflict move from its current location to other location, possibly, nearby communities and villages. This finding showed that misinformation led to the spread of Share-Tsaragi communal conflict to neighbouring communities. This finding is corroborated with moral panic theory that media campaigns are used to create fear, reinforce stereotypes and add tension to preexisting divisions based on race, ethnicity and social class (Mazepus, Osmudsen, Bang-Petersen, Toshkov & Dimitrova, 2023). If not check-mated, inappropriate usage of information in Share-Tsaragi can turn the conflict to be inter-ethnic conflict between the Yorubas and Nupes living beyond Share and Tsaragi communities.

Result from the above findings revealed that challenges such as lack of deterrent against misinformation dissemination, inadequate trust between the two communities, inadequate media peace education and inadequate channel of communication between the two communities limited the strength of information in de-escalating Share-Tsaragi inter-communal conflict.

It is sensible to know that information is power and crucial to inter-personal and group relationships. Based on the above finding, Inability to create a deterrent measure for wrongful usage of information has become a limitation to information in de-escalating inter-communal conflict in the study location. This finding is closely related to the argument of Bodi, Abbare and Leawat, (2021) that restrictions such as punitive laws, the closing of media outlets, and the persecution of journalists that parade fake news or misinformation will serve as deterrent mechanisms. It is therefore safe to say that misinformation is freely spread without any mechanism in place to control it.

On the aspect of inadequate trust between the two communities, even if numerous misinformation and fake news are deliberately being spread, once both communities, trusted each other's commitment to the peaceful co-existence, such misinformation may not stand the test of the time. In that case, there will be a credible and trusted platform that both parties will rely on to verify truths and facts behind any information being spread. The above finding showed that there is an inadequate trust between the two communities which has led to a big challenge to the positive usage of information. This challenge and its implications to conflict de-escalation is inline with the argument of Ognyanova et al. (2020) that the consequences of lack of trust are especially apparent in times of crisis and uncertainty when citizens are most in need of credible sources providing current and reliable information. This implies that misinformation can as well be control by the level of trust and confidence each community has for each other.

Conclusion

Inter-communal conflict between Share and Tsaragi has lingered with several information related factors responsible this conflict. These effects included increased in the fragile peace, which subsequently led to the breakdown of peace agreement between the two communities. It has also been used to mobilised armed combatants that fight during violent confrontations. Other contributing effect was the asymmetric spreading of the conflict to neighbouring communities. These negative effects largely happened due to some challenges limiting the usage of information for conflict de-escalation process. These challenges were lack of deterrent against misinformation dissemination, inadequate trust between the two communities, inadequate media peace education and inadequate channel of communication between the two communities. It is therefore concluded that wrongful spreading of information has negatively influenced Share-Tsaragi inter-communal conflict.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are considered imperative in addressing negative effects that wrongful spreading of information has generated in Share - Tsaragi inter-communal conflict.

I. There should be an adequate sensitization on how to formally have access to the usage of disputed and any other undisputed land areas by residents of both communities and nearby villages for.
II. Also, people of Share and Teasrgi should be committed to peace building and progress by raising level of trust to each other
III. Furthermore, peace education should be promoted in this area. This can be achieved through continuous media programmes in local languages, extra curricula activities in school and worship centres, targeted towards positive usage of information for peace building.

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