

THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN ESCALATING CONFLICT
(A Case of the Rwandan genocide)

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree or academic award in any other university; where the work of others has been used, it has been appropriately acknowledged.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research project first and foremost to God; I would not have come this far if it were not for Him. To my wonderful family, my late mother, to my father, brothers and sisters. Thank you for always being there for me, your love and support is what keeps me going. Lastly, to everyone that has supported and believed in me. Thank you. May the Almighty God bless them.

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Abstract

This study examines the role of media in escalating conflict, a case study of the Rwandan genocide of 1994. The genocide was among the most appalling catastrophes of the 20th century, and media played a significant part both internally and internationally. Globally, nationally and locally, the mass media plays a crucial role in public policy, agenda setting, national, and international conflicts. Conflicts do not occur spontaneously but tend to have a history as all conflict have a history. The purpose of the study was to determine what role both the Rwandan and the international media played in the Rwandan Genocide. The study examined and analyzed the factors that forced the media to propelling violence in conflict situations in third world countries instead of promoting democracy and peace. The media can play different roles in terms of escalating, moderating, or balancing a conflict. The case of the Rwandan Genocide is a good example of how media can be directly involved in escalating of conflict. The mass media has been of great importance in the war leading to, the genocides in Rwanda as well as in many other internal conflicts.

The objectives of the study were to determine the factors that made the media vulnerable to political manipulation, examine the role played by the media both local and international in escalating violence in the Rwandan genocide, and to examine the challenges faced by the media operations under the political umbrella in Rwanda. The study will be useful to the management of conflicts globally, to academicians, to the government and other researchers.

The research was a desk review that analyzed data from both internal sources and external sources. Internal sources included information sourced from the media. External data sources included data originating from outside the media urgencies such as government sources, commercial sources, inter and intra industry sources like trade publications, journals and other sources like non-governmental organizations, institutes of economic survey and also academic institutions.

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List of Abbreviations

BBC - British Broadcasting Corporation

CNN - Central News Network

CPJ - Committee for the Protection of Journalists

HIV - Aids Human Immunodeficiency Virus Infection / Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

ICT - Information Communication Technologies

IMS - International Media Support

MRDN - Mouvement républicain national pour la démocratie et le développement,

NATO - *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*

ORINFOR - l'Office Rwandais d'Information

RPF - Rwandan Patriotic Front

RTL - Radio-Télévision Libre des Mille Collines

SIPRI - Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

UNAMIR - United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda

UN - United Nations

US - United States

CHAPTER ONE:

1.1 Introduction

The media plays a very significant role in our societies today. It is all around us, from the internet, the shows we watch on tv, the music we listen to on the radio, to the books, magazines, and newspapers we read each day. Without the media, people in societies would be isolated, not only from the rest of the world, but from governments, law-makers, and neighbouring towns and cities.

While the media has historically been viewed as being overly aggressive and insatiable in their search for the latest and hottest news, their watchdog-type function is essential in a democratic society where people must know what their governments are doing.

The media has the capacity to hold governments accountable, forcing them to explain their actions and decisions, all of which affect the people they represent. In a democratic society, people should know all options if they are to govern themselves, and the media is a vehicle for the dissemination of such information.

However we cannot afford to overlook the fact that the media has access to people and this gives it a lot of power and with great power comes great responsibility. This power can either be used constructively by educating the people or it can be used destructively by misleading the innocent people.

The power of the media can transform the whole society, as it can be used as a weapon of mass destruction. As was the case of the Rwanda genocide that happened for 100 days after the assassination of the Rwandan president Juvénal Habyarimana in the evening of 6th April 1994 when his plane was shot down as it prepared to land in Kigali.

The 1994 genocide in Rwanda provides a telling case study of two quite separate roles for media in a conflict situation. The genocide was among the most appalling catastrophes of the 20th century, and media played a significant part both internally and internationally. Prior to the genocide, national radio stations and newspapers were carefully used by the conspirators to dehumanise the potential victims, Rwanda's Tutsi minority. During the genocide, radio was used by the Hutu extremist conspirators to mobilise the Hutu majority, to coordinate the killings and to ensure that the plans for extermination were faithfully executed. The international media ignored a series of terrible massacres of Tutsi, signs of ever-increasing violence. When the genocide came, the erratic media coverage largely conveyed the false notion of two 'tribes' (Hutus and Tutsis) of African 'savages' mindlessly slaughtering each other as they had done from time immemorial.¹

¹ Allan Thompson, (2007): *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide* Pluto Press, Fountain Publishers.

1.2 Background of Study

The events that followed the assassination of Rwanda's president Juvénal Habyarimana in the evening of 6th April 1994 for 100 days will remain in the books of history as the bloodiest and horrendous case of genocide since the holocaust where a record of 800.000 people lost their lives. It is believed that the presidents assassination was the catalyst for the Rwandan Genocide. The airplane carrying Rwandan president Juvénal Habyarimana and Burundian president Cyprien Ntaryamira was shot down as it prepared to land in Kigali, Rwanda.

Responsibility for the attack is disputed, with most theories proposing as suspects either the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) or government-aligned Hutu Power extremists opposed to negotiation with the RPF. Regardless of the cause of the assassination, it unquestionably resulted in the immediate national mobilization of anti-Tutsi militias, the Interahamwe, who proceeded to set up roadblocks across Rwanda and slaughter every Tutsi or Hutu sympathizer until driven away by rebel RPF troops

Media propaganda

According to recent commentators, the media played a crucial role in the genocide; local print and radio media fueled the killings while the international media either ignored or seriously misconstrued events on the ground.²

The print media in Rwanda is believed to have started hate speech against Tutsis, which was later continued by radio stations. According to commentators, anti-Tutsi hate speech became so systemic as to seem the norm. The state-owned newspaper *Kangura* had a central role, starting an anti-Tutsi and anti-RPF campaign in October 1990. *Kangura* have been accused of producing leaflets in 1992 picturing a machete and asking "What shall we do to complete the social revolution of 1959?" – a reference to the Hutu revolt that overthrew the Tutsi monarchy

² Media and the Rwanda Genocide. The Communication Initiative Network. Cominit.com. May 8, 2007.

and the subsequent politically orchestrated communal violence that resulted in thousands of mostly Tutsi casualties and forced roughly 300,000 Tutsis to flee to neighboring Burundi and Uganda. *Kangara* also published the infamous "10 Hutu Commandments", which regulated all dealings with Tutsis and how Hutus were to treat them. It communicated the message that the RPF had a devious grand strategy against the Hutu (one feature article was titled "Tutsi colonization plan")³

Due to high rates of illiteracy at the time of the genocide, radio was an important way for the government to deliver messages to the public. Two radio stations key to inciting violence before and during the genocide were *Radio Rwanda* and *Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines*. In March 1992, Radio Rwanda was first used in directly promoting the killing of Tutsi in Bugesera, south of the national capital Kigali. Radio Rwanda repeatedly broadcast warnings that Hutu in Bugesera would be attacked by Tutsi, a message used by local officials to convince Hutu that they needed to attack first. Led by soldiers, Hutu civilians and the Interahamwe attacked and killed hundreds of Tutsi.⁴

At the end of 1993, the RTLM's highly sensationalized reporting on the assassination of the Burundian president, a Hutu, was used to underline supposed Tutsi brutality. The RTLM falsely reported that the president had been tortured and castrated (in pre-colonial times, some Tutsi kings castrated defeated enemy rulers). There were 50,000 civilian deaths in Burundi in 1993.⁵

From late October 1993, the RTLM repeatedly broadcasted themes developed by the extremist written press, underlining the inherent differences between Hutu and Tutsi. the

³ Hate media in Rwanda & Call to genocide: radio in Rwanda, 1994: International Development Research Centre. Retrieved August 30, 2010

⁴ Hate media in Rwanda & Call to genocide: radio in Rwanda, 1994: International Development Research Centre. Retrieved August 30, 2010.

⁵ Richard Carver, "Broadcasting & Political Transition: Rwanda & Beyond," in *African Broadcast Cultures: Radio in Transition*, eds Richard Fardon and Graham Furniss, 190. (Oxford: James Currey Publishers, 2000).

foreign origin of Tutsi, the disproportionate share of Tutsi wealth and power, and the horrors of past Tutsi rule. The RTLM also repeatedly stressed the need to be alert to Tutsi plots and possible attacks. It warned Hutu to prepare to "defend" themselves against the Tutsi.⁵

After April 6, 1994, authorities used RTLM and Radio Rwanda to spur and direct killings, specifically in areas where the killings were initially resisted. Both radio stations were used to incite and mobilize populations, followed by specific directions for carrying out the killings.

The RTLM had used terms such as *inyenzi* (cockroach in Kinyarwanda) and Tutsi interchangeably with others referring to the RPF combatants. It warned that RPF combatants dressed in civilian clothes were mingling among the displaced people fleeing combat zones. These broadcasts gave the impression that all Tutsi were supporters of the RPF force fighting against the elected government.⁷

Women were targets of the anti-Tutsi propaganda prior to the 1994 genocide; for example, the "Ten Hutu Commandments" (1990) included four commandments that portrayed Tutsi women as tools of the Tutsi people, and as sexual weapons to weaken and ultimately destroy the Hutu men. Gender-based propaganda also included cartoons printed in newspapers depicting Tutsi women as sex objects. Examples of gender-based hate propaganda used to incite war rape included statements by perpetrators, such as "You Tutsi women think that you are too good for us", and "Let us see what a Tutsi woman tastes like."⁸

To promote an informed population and democracy in Rwanda, international agencies had promoted development of the media during the years leading up to the genocide. It appeared that promoting one aspect of democracy (in this case the media) may, in fact, negatively

⁶ Richard Carver, "Broadcasting & Political Transition: Rwanda & Beyond," in *African Broadcast Cultures: Radio in Transition*, eds Richard Fardon and Graham Furniss, 190. (Oxford: James Currey Publishers, 2000).

⁷ Hate media in Rwanda & Call to genocide: radio in Rwanda, 1994: International Development Research Centre. Retrieved August 30, 2010.

⁸ de Brouwer, Anne-Marie (2005) [2005]. *Supranational Criminal Prosecution of Sexual Violence*. Intersentia. p. 13.

influence other aspects of democracy or human rights. After this experience it has been argued that international development agencies must be highly sensitive to the specific context of their programmes and the need for promotion of democracy in a holistic manner.⁹

1.3 Statement of the problem

The media is being used as a tool to instigate violence and ethnic conflict in transitional countries especially in third world countries. For instance, in a country like Rwanda where 60% of the population was illiterate, they heavily relied on radio and television media to learn of what was happening in the country. During the war, they were very desperate for information and would believe anything the media both local and international was reporting. The media was in this case very crucial and should have been very careful on what they were reporting to the Rwandan people. The media should have played a very vital role in promoting peace and democracy but instead a few authorities saw it as an important tool for inciting ethnic hatred that resulted into war that killed close to a million Rwandese.

The purpose of this study is to examine and analyse the factors that force the media to propelling violence in conflict situations in third world countries instead of promoting democracy and peace.

⁹ Lise Rakner, Alina Rocha Menocal and Verena Fritz (2008), "Assessing international democracy assistance: Key lessons and challenges", London: Overseas Development Institute

1.4 Objectives

1.4.1 General Objective

Determine the how the media is used as a tool for penetrating crime against humanity

1.4.2 Specific objectives

- Determine the factors that make the media vulnerable to political manipulation
- Examine the role played by the media both local and international in escalating violence in the Rwandan genocide
- Examine the challenges faced by the media operations under the political umbrella in Rwanda

1.5 Justification

Media in third world countries is being abused and used as a tool especially by political bodies to propagate violence in conflict situations. The study will address this and seek to find solutions to such problems.

Rwanda was the ideal country for this study because the media both local and international were involved in the killing of thousands of Rwandese in the just concluded genocide of 1994 that took 100 days. There was enough literature on this topic to make this study a success. The incident was fairly recent and fairly extreme and was within the scope of the study.

The research was also driven by the fact that the lessons from Rwanda media behavior during pre-genocide can be applicable to countries undergoing transition periods in their political governance e.g. Constitution Review and Referendum/ Arab Spring Revolution or the normal political campaign periods. The lessons can be used by policy makers, governments both local and international. legal frameworks and nations world wide, when passing laws that affect the role of media in nations.

A lot of history into the aspects that lead to war in Rwanda will benefit the academic arena and add knowledge to related research in the previous years for students and scholars interested in the history of war and conflict in transitional governments in third world countries

The study paved way for additional related research for other researchers and academicians

Hypothesis

- The inability of both the local and the international media to use the proper methods and channels in handling conflict in Rwanda, made the 1994 Rwandan Genocide inevitable.
- Unprofessional management of handling the media in Rwanda, impacted negatively on its ability to prevent the 1994 genocide.
- Lack of independence of the Rwandan media made it vulnerable to be used as a tool of crime that resulted to the Rwandan Genocide.

1.6 Literature review

Media and Conflict

It has become very critical for the local media to develop and become independent so that they can catch up with the international media, as major international media giants are controlling the international news agenda. As media in many developing nations, like in Africa, move away from state control towards private enterprise, it is essential for local media to find their own voice and professional codes. A well developed media system with professionally trained journalists usually benefits both global and local audiences and provides a vital link to the outside world.

Yashwant Gaunder, a journalist from Fiji instantly recognised the power of the media in maintaining global communication flow during the coup d' etat that occurred in Fiji in 19th May 2000. His web publisher fijilive.com was the only communication link out of Suva during the first two days of this crisis. Media world wide took news feed from fijilive.com and informed the world about the events that were unravelling in Fiji's parliamentary grounds.¹⁰

With the development of information communication technologies (ICT) from the radio, television, phones and computers, journalists are able to gather, analyse and report news with ease from many parts of the world. The digitization of the news industry, has enabled news reporting to become timely as time and space have been compressed. For instance, actions such as demonstrations, riots can be transmitted to different parts of the world as they happen. This not only informs the universe of what is transpiring but it may also lead to a call for action nationally or globally.

¹⁰ The role of media in International conflict by Christopher Young

In India the BBC relayed, instantly, footage of violent clashes during an attack on a Hindu shrine by Muslim fundamentalists. A large number of Indians witnessed these horrific footages. The end result was widespread clashes around the country. The media's reporting of a conflict became the conflict itself. While technology has reduced the tyranny of distance, the commercial realities of news gathering have also affected the reporting of conflicts.¹¹

Media development and independence is affected by political instability. For instance, the Pacific region over the past 20 years has experienced increased instability and political unrest. Fiji, Solomon Islands and Bougainville in Papua New Guinea between 1987 and 2000 have experienced some of the worst conflicts worldwide that have been caused by sensitive issues of land rights, unequal distribution of political power and economic resources, and growing corruption. Political instability has had a sustained negative impact on the operation of local media and media practitioners.

Several scholars such as Mary Kaldor, insist on globalisation leading to important qualitative changes in the dynamics of conflict. She goes on to argue that the revolution of information technology during the 1980's and 1990's, led to a particular type of globalisation, which in turn, has led to the need for a redefinition of what we think of as war. The total number of armed conflicts does not tell us of the intensity of the violence, *where* armed conflicts are fought, *why*, nor *how* they are fought, *who* does the fighting and *who* the victims are.¹²

¹¹ The role of media in International conflict by Christopher Young

¹² The role of media in International conflict by Christopher Young

While conflict exists worldwide, there are two regions in which violent conflicts predominate, these are Africa and Asia. Since the end of the Cold War, Africa is the most war torn continent with a total of 19 major armed conflicts. The reasons behind a conflict always lies in a combination of root and direct causes. The cause being related to scarcity of some resource, whether its power or material resources. There is a differentiation made between primary and secondary actors. Primary actors being the cause of existence of basic incompatibility, hence the state and its citizens whereas a secondary actor being those involved in the conflict, in a more peripheral manner, for example the media.¹³

The role of the media in fueling conflict, a report written by Charissa M Luci cites challenges faced by Julius Mucunguzi, a Ugandan journalist now working as assistant spokesperson for Africa Commonwealth Secretariat's Communications and Public Affairs Division. Mucunguzi, who was into sensitive conflict reporting when he was working with Uganda's main newspapers prior to his current post, stresses that journalists should be in the frontline in resolving conflict by using their influence of the media. This however isn't the case because most media modes like print-outs, radios and television air conflict as soap operas. He goes ahead to point out that stories of peace don't sell but war stories are hotcakes in the media world making media men part of the conflict.

During the gulf war, for the purposes of preventing massive gathering of reporters, reporters were confined in groups and a representative of each group elected. These

¹³ A major armed conflict is defined as "a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory over which the use of armed force between the military forces of two parties, of which at least one is the government of a State, has resulted in at least 1000 battle-related deaths in any single year." (CDP 2000.)

representatives reported on the war and their reports were made public to the rest of the other reporters. This system restricted most reporters from accessing real events as well as what they were supposed to report on.

In the 1994 Rwanda genocide, the media played a role in fueling the conflict that led to the death of 800,000 people. In December, 2005, the world also saw the role of media and other forms of communication like text messaging in the hostilities between some members of the local Anglo-Australian community and Middle Eastern people at Cronulla Beach in Sydney, Australia. ¹⁴

The Media both local and International finds itself as a conduit of violence when reporting and managing conflict in war torn nations for various reasons. These reasons can be direct or indirect as these report has highlighted below.

Security

There is an ongoing tension between journalists' desires to report on conflicts and military actions, and military concerns about security. Generally journalists accept the need for some secrecy regarding military maneuvers. However many journalists have observed that secrecy and controls on reporters are often imposed for reasons of political convenience, for example to avoid blame for military or political errors that deserve exposure. ¹⁵

For the purposes of preventing massive gathering of reporters in war zones and maintaining security, reporters were confined to groups during the gulf war. These groups had representative reporters whose reports were made public to the rest of the media. This

¹⁴ THOMPSON, J. B., 1995. *The Media and Modernity – A Social Theory of the Media*, Cambridge: Polity Press. 42.

¹⁵ *The role of media in International conflict* by Christopher Young p.3

system restricted most reporters from accessing war zone areas as well as what the reporters were allowed to report on.

Retired general Sidle a consultant to the American Defence Department argues that when dealing with the press, the safety and security of troops must and always should be the military's first concern. Sidle prefers field press censorship rather than press groups which he argues provides freedom of the press as well as maintaining troop safety. He however cautions that if the media doesn't limit the number of reporters it sends into a conflict zone, the military will have no choice but to intervene and impose limits.

Escalation

The media can contribute to conflict escalation, either directly or indirectly. Experienced war reporters observe that sometimes the very presence of cameras will prompt the sides to start shooting.¹⁶ Terrorists through their attacks and many rebel groups often rely on the media to draw attention to their cause. In the absence of media coverage, many types of terrorism would be useless.

Video media in particular tend to focus on dramatic and violent events. It is observed that in terms of news, war is better than peace, violence is better than non- violence.¹⁷ This tendency to focus on violence and conflict and to further sensationalize violent events can distort the public's perceptions of the situation.

The American press, in particular, failed to adequately investigate the Gulf War, or to report on the causes of the war. Instead the media became the mouthpiece for the government, it gave up its privilege of free criticism, reinforced the us- versus-them

¹⁶ The role of media in International conflict by Christopher Young p.52

¹⁷ The role of media in International conflict by Christopher Young p.54

syndrome.¹⁸ Many participants expressed grave concern that the public seemed quite willing to accept such a "tame" press. Milton Viorst of the New Yorker argued that, as a result of this Congress didn't obtain, and the American people didn't obtain the information needed to challenge the president on the subject of a war which I believe could have been avoided.¹⁹

Selective Focus

Media's reporting on conflict is twisted as much as distorted by a number of factors. If there is no picture then there is no story hence stories that aren't captured in pictures or films tend to be under-reported or not at all. Dramatic events and situations such as bombing and heavy artillery battles receive maximum coverage whereas wide spread situations like famine and poverty get less. For example, the Gulf War got extensive coverage, while the deaths of over 140,000 Bangladeshis due to spring flooding went virtually unreported.²⁰

Emphasis on visual reporting also leads to escalation by the "anchor man." Relevant live satellite reporting depicts a journalist's authenticity and credibility leading to competition among the various media outlets to get their own man on the scene even if the scene has no relevance whatsoever.

Another factor shaping news coverage is the preference of both the media and the public for good guy, bad guy stories. For example, The Iran-Iraq war that resulted into over one million deaths, being of major political importance received very little coverage in the west since both countries were out of favour with the Americans. There was no "good

¹⁸ The role of media in International conflict by Christopher Young p. 28 .

¹⁹ The role of media in International conflict by Christopher Young p.11

²⁰ The role of media in International conflict by Christopher Young

guy" in this context. However the Soviet backed Afghani war received much more coverage at least until the Soviets pulled out of the conflict.

The Iran-Iraq war resulted in over a million deaths and was of major political importance but received relatively little media coverage in the West. Both parties were out of favor with the American public, and so there was no clear "good- guy" in that conflict. In contrast the Soviet-backed Afghani civil war received much more coverage at least until the Soviets withdrew from the conflict. ²¹

Search for truth

The traditional role of the media as reporters of the truth can play an important role in international conflicts. As noted above, a key function of the media is to give the public the information necessary to make good decisions. The media can seek to confirm official accounts, reveal official deceit, and correct errors of omission. When officials claim that there was an oil spill eighteen times as large as the Exxon Valdez spill spreading off the coast of Kuwait, one reporter hired a helicopter to look for the spill. She found no evidence of a spill of that magnitude, and revealed that the official claims were greatly exaggerated.

Veteran journalist, Ann Medina stressed the importance of being a first-hand witness. Official sources, even when they agree, may simply be wrong. She recounted a time where Canadian and British embassy officials and the Ugandan government all assured the press that the government still held a key town against rebel forces. However, when she was finally able to get there in person she found rebel forces in complete control. ²²

²¹ The role of media in International conflict by Christopher Young

²² Leave None to tell the Story; Genocide in Rwanda. Human Rights Watch, March 1999

Rwanda Genocide

Although there is a great deal of discussion and research in various news medias and academic institutions about the events that lead to the tragedy in Rwanda. One factor is very common which is not unique in many nations world wide. These factors revolve around resources, power, tribalism and international interference. From late 1950's onwards. Political elites of both Rwanda and Burundi used ethnicity in their struggle for power and state resources. (responding to Crisis in African Great lakes, Evans 1997 pg 19)

For over 20 years, before Germans and Belgians had colonised Rwanda, Tutsis controlled most of the country. Even before that, past practices such as violence against domestic and external foes during the rule of King Rwabugiri (1853-95) were also targeted to the majority Hutus.²³

In 1950 the Hutus were becoming more agitated and in 1957. the Hutu emancipated movement published the Hutu Manifesto. In the manifesto they assumed the monopoly of power in Rwanda by the Tutsi minority. In 1962 the Hutus overthrew the monarchy and established a republic headed by president Gregoire Kayibanda. This president during his tenure persecuted the Tutsis especially those previously in power. In 1973 Hutu's General Juvenal Habyarimana seized power in a coup killing the president and promising all Rwandese progress.

²³ René Lemarchand, "Rwanda: The State of Research", *Scholarly Review, Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence*, Nov 200, referring to Keana and Dienan, *Antecedents to Modern Rwanda: The Nyiginya Kingdom* (2004), Retrieved September 15, 2010

International interference came in especially during the Belgian rule over Rwanda. Although the Hutus and Tutsis ethnic groups existed before colonialism, the Belgians recognised their pre-existing distinctions. For example the Tutsis were rich in cattle hence the meaning of their name while the Hutus were mainly their servants hence the meaning of the word Hutu meaning servant or subject. The Belgians introduced separate Identity cards for the two tribes maintaining their division. By the time the Belgian rule was ending most of the country's resources like land and power were in the hand of the Tutsis while Hutus languished in poverty and forced labour. The presence of colonialists disputed the ruling of Tutsis against Hutus who later organised a genocidal massacre against their fellow countrymen.

During Habyarimana's tenure there were a lot of clashes between the Tutsis and Hutus. By 1990 it was clear that the stalemate was getting out of control. At one point the RPF had even tried to overthrow the government during the Rwanda Civil War. Though the attempt had failed, the RPF had managed to take over control of one of the border regions. Both sides (Hutus and Tutsis) began peace negotiations in 1992. This resulted in the signing of the Arusha accord in 1993 in a bid to create a power-sharing government. However the RPF were against the negotiations and their show of power intensified support for the so called "Hutu Power" ideology. The Hutu Power portrayed the RPF as an alien force with a sole mission of reign stating the Tutsi monarchy and enslaving Hutus. This force had to resist at all costs.²⁴

The force led to the collapse of Habyarimana's government in July 1993 when the prime minister Dismas Nsengiyaremye criticised the president for delaying a peace agreement. For this the prime minister was dismissed and Agathe Uwilingiyimana who was less sympathetic with RPF appointed. The opposition did not support Agathe's appointment

²⁴ *Leave None to Tell the Story; Genocide in Rwanda, Human Rights Watch, March 1999*

therefore failing to form a coalition government which was a requirement of Arusha accord.²⁵

The security situation deteriorated throughout 1993. In 1994 Romeo Dallaire, Head of Military force attached to UNAMIR, who had been sent to observe the implementation of Arusha accord reported that time was running out for political discussion. Catastrophic consequences were very possible.

UNAMIR mandate was finally reached after arguments and disagreements between them and the United States with the latter threatening to withdraw on Tuesday 5th of April 1994. Meanwhile President Habyarimana was finishing a regional tour. On April 4th he had flown to Zaire to meet president Mobutu Sese Seko. On 6th he flew to Dar-es-salaam for regional summit of head of states convened by Tanzanian President. On the evening of the same day, his plane was shot down as he approached Kigali International Airport. All on board were killed including Burundian President Cyprien Ntaryamira and a couple of his ministers. This was now the beginning of what would later be classified as the worst genocide ever on the African soil.

Impact of the genocide

For the next 100 days after the assassination of the president, Rwanda experienced its worst darkest moments, a genocide that resulted in the loss of one million lives through the use of simple tools and a well calculated and planned mass media.

What transpired between April 6th and July 16th 1994 was an estimated 800,000 to 1,000,000 deaths. More than 6 men, women and children were slaughtered every other minute of every hour of every day. Rape was used as a weapon of genocide leading to

²⁵ *Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda, Human Rights Watch, March 1999*

between 250,000 to 500,000 rape victims. 67% of the women were infected with HIV aids as a result of the rapes. HIV infected men were also used as a weapon of genocide.²⁶

International Interference now turned into avoidance. The national community stood aside, watched and debated whether this was a genocide or civil war. Mass killing, rape and forced evacuations would classify this as an automatic genocide but the international community chose not to act and withdrew its 2500 peace keepers who had been sent as part of the UN mission to UNAMIR²⁷. As a result of the genocide, the economy of Rwanda was affected as trade could not take place and even investors were scared away.

Role of Media in The Rwanda Genocide

The Rwandan genocide of 1994 would have been probably avoided if only the media hadn't been compromised. False information was aired and a propaganda based on political and selfish interest born. The media played a major part in supporting, or creating an atmosphere to sanction the terrible human suffering that ensued. A detailed report²⁸ from Human Rights Watch in 1999, looked into how the killing campaign was executed, using oral testimony and documentation from a wide variety of sources. It explained how this was planned for a long time and how the international community was aware of what was going on yet ignored it, and were even present during the systematic killings.

At least half a million people perished in the Rwandan genocide," the report notes.

Perhaps as many as three quarters of the Tutsi population. At the same time, thousands of Hutu were slain because they opposed the killing campaign and the forces directing it.

²⁶ survivor Fund 2008

²⁷ Report of the Independent 1999

²⁸ *Leave None to Tell the Story; Genocide in Rwanda, Human Rights Watch. March 1999*

But one issue about the whole tragedy was how it was portrayed in some of the mainstream media of some western countries. The genocide was often attributed to ancient tribal hatreds. However as Human Rights Watch notes, "this genocide was not an uncontrollable outburst of rage by a people consumed by ancient tribal hatreds."

This genocide resulted from the deliberate choice of a modern elite to foster hatred and fear to keep itself in power. This small, privileged group first set the majority against the minority to counter a growing political opposition within Rwanda. Then, faced with RPF success on the battlefield and at the negotiating table, these few power holders transformed the strategy of ethnic division into genocide. They believed that the extermination campaign would restore the solidarity of the Hutu under their leadership and help them win the war, or at least improve their chances of negotiating a favorable peace. They seized control of the state and used its machinery and its authority to carry out the slaughter.²⁹

Richard Robbins, professor of anthropology at the State University of New York also agreed and said that "If they were to examine cases of purported ethnic conflict, they would generally find that it involved more than ancient hatred. "even the 'hatreds' we find are relatively recent, and constructed by those ethnic entrepreneurs taking advantage of situations rooted deep in colonial domination and fed by neocolonial exploitation." The case of Rwanda is instructive he adds. In his book,³⁰ he looks at some of these deeper political and modern causes of the genocide in Rwanda.

Perhaps there is no better case than Rwanda of state killing in which colonial history and global economic integration are combined to produce genocide. It is also a case where the

²⁹ *Leave None to Tell the Story; Genocide in Rwanda, Human Rights Watch, March 1999*

³⁰ *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism* (Alyn and Bacon, 1999, 2002), pp. 269-274,

causes of the killing were carefully obscured by Western governmental and journalistic sources, blamed instead on the victims and ancient tribal hatreds.

Rwanda experienced in 1994 one of the worst genocides of the twentieth century. Some 800,000 people, mostly but not exclusively Tutsis, were slaughtered by the Hutu-run state. Contrary to media and many government reports, the genocide was the result of Rwanda's political and economic position in the capitalist world system. It involved such monetary factors as its colonial history, the price of coffee, World Bank and International Monetary Fund policies, the global interests of Western nations, particularly France, the interests of international aid agencies, and Western attitudes towards Africa (Shalom 1996).³¹

The Rwandan government began massacring Tutsi in 1990. Crimes that were solidly documented by local and international human rights groups and by a special rapporteur for the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, some donors protested. The Belgian government went so far as to recall its ambassador briefly. But none openly challenged Rwandan explanations that the killings were spontaneous and uncontrollable and none used its influence to see that the guilty were brought to justice. In addition, the lack of international response to the 1993 massacres in Burundi permitted Rwandan extremists to expect that they too could slaughter people in large numbers without consequence.³²

Various propaganda techniques were being used by Habyarimana's inner circle, such as setting up a radio station ("a potent source of power in a country that is 60 percent illiterate," Robbins notes³³ to denounce attempts at peace between the government and the RPF, while also inciting more hatred. Acts of violence against Tutsis increased, as Robbins continues, after the president of neighboring Burundi was killed in an attempted

³¹ Richard H. Robbins, *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism*, (Allyn and Bacon, 1999, 2002), p.269

³² (Human Rights Watch, March (1999) Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda)

³³ Human Rights Watch, March (1999) Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda, p.272

coup by Tutsi army officers. Hutus were incited to kill Tutsis, and the RPF responded by killing Hutus: some 50,000 peasants were reported killed, slightly more Tutsis than Hutus. The shooting down of a plane which killed Habyarimana provided the final step to start the genocide:

Even when it was clear to most that the genocide was the work of an authoritarian state, international media chose to characterise it as, Hutus Killing Tutsis and vice versa. As a result they were perceived by the west as, Savage Africans. Major Ed Koch of New York City went ahead to characterise the genocide as, tribal warfare involving those without the veneer of western civilisation.³⁴

It is therefore very clear that as long as the genocide remained as savage Africans slaughtering each other due to lack of civilisations as the west put it, they would distance themselves from the conflict. This would perhaps save them money. The west even went to great lengths not to use the word "genocide" as this would require their military intervention as is required by the United Nation Genocide Convention of 1948. Its after 800,000 or so Tutsis and Hutus lives lost had been killed, that the western leaders acknowledged the genocide.³⁵

After the killings began, U.S., Belgian, and French policy makers knew that Tutsi were being slain because they were Tutsi. General Dallaire, commander of the U.N. peacekeeping force delivered that same information in a telegram to U.N. headquarters on April 8th 1994. Early accounts by journalists on the spot also depicted systematic, widespread killings on an ethnic basis. The simultaneous selective slaughter of Hutus opposed to Hutu Power complicated the situation but did not change the genocidal nature

³⁴ Kellow and Steeves, "The Role of Radio in the Rwandan Genocide;" Gulseth, "The Use of Propaganda;" Dallaire, *Shake Hands With the Devil*; Kirschke, *Broadcasting Genocide*.

³⁵ Richard H. Robbins, *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism*, (Allyn and Bacon, 1999, 2002), pp.272-273

of attacks on Tutsi and, in any case, killings of Hutu diminished markedly after the first days. Given the pattern of killings, given previous massacres of Tutsi, given the propaganda demanding their extermination, given the known political positions of the persons heading the interim government, informed observers must have seen that they were facing a genocide.

They knew, but they did not say. The U.S. may have been the only government to caution its officials in writing to avoid the word "genocide," but diplomats and politicians of other countries as well as staff of the U.N. also shunned the term. Some may have done so as part of their effort at neutrality, but others surely avoided the word because of the moral and legal imperatives attached to it.

Some policy makers could not get beyond the old cliches, like one official of the U.S. National Security Council who described the genocide as "tribal killings," an explanation echoed by President Bill Clinton in June 1998 when he talked of "tribal resentments" as the source of troubles in Rwanda. In a similar vein, an adviser to French President Francois Mitterrand suggested that brutal slaughter was a usual practice among Africans and could not be easily eradicated. Other diplomats, more up to date, promoted the idea of a "failed state," ignoring all indications that the Rwandan state was all too successful in doing what its leaders intended. They seemed unable to dissociate Rwanda from Somalia, although the two cases had few points of comparison beyond their common location on the African continent. Most journalists simply exploited the horror and made no effort to go beyond the easy explanations. A leading columnist for the New York Times even

managed on April 15, 1994 to put the new and the old clichés in the same sentence, referring to a “failed state” and to a “centuries-old history of tribal warfare.”³⁶

The hate radio station Radio Télévision Mille Collines (RTLM) was like “the voice of the devil”, a “conversation among Rwandans who knew each other well, the sole source of authority for interpreting news. Perhaps the only shared perspective among contributors is the horror of the genocide itself. Controversies about the role and the impact of the media emerge through lively disagreements about audiences’ reactions, journalists’ responsibilities, and media’s legal and political impact. Editor Allan Thompson assembles an unrivaled group of experts who closely observed, produced, and prosecuted media related to the Rwandan genocide. After introductory statements, notably one from Romeo Dallaire describing his interactions with Rwandan and international media as head of UNAMIR,³⁷

The Newspaper, radio and television made it their daily routine to target Tutsis for destruction. Demonising them as having evil qualities. The media had indeed been compromised. It no longer cared about the truth and its audience. It had been taken over by an ethnic disease. Enemies who knew no boundaries but to clean Rwanda of any existing Tutsi and any Hutu that were against this mission.

International media on the other hand mis-understood the nature of the conflict in Rwanda, terming it as tribal warfare. The majorly focussed on covering the evacuation of expatriates from Rwanda rather than focussing their efforts on the conflict itself. By mid-April the genocide had intensified and there were hardly any international journalists on site. They had already left with the rest of the expatriates.

³⁶ *International Responsibility: Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda, Human Rights Watch, March 1999*

³⁷ Kellow & Steeves, “The Role of Radio in the Rwandan Genocide

Eleven years down the line after the genocide two movies were released in the aim of creating awareness of actual occurrences and experiences of the genocide. This greatly spread the realisation of the horrors that had taken over half a million lives of both Tutsis and Hutus an incidence that wasn't meant to take place had the media taken their mandate seriously. In these movies the role of the media came out very clearly. There was no doubt that their mission was to kill people.

Conclusion

The media was the only true weapon that had the potential to either stop or fuel the genocide. It chose to instigate the violence further. It's true that Rwanda had experienced for a better part of its existence war and violence as the two tribes struggled for power and resources. However the genocide was within control and would have been avoided had both the international and local media stuck to their mandate.

The local media being state owned had been compromised. During the genocide about 60% of Rwanda's population was illiterate. Radio and television media were the only source of information that would be understood by all. They would therefore believe anything from the media without question.

The media is supposed to be a neutral body. The Rwandan media was biased and favoured the Hutus terming the Tutsis as enemies from hell and instigated their eradication.

The media should be independent for the purposes of having the ability to stand out as a third party. It should not be controlled by selfish individuals or groups of people with a mission of harming others because the media is a very strong weapon and if mis-handled can cause a lot of damage if not catastrophic consequences. The media now in the wrong hands aired hate messages and insiting information instead of solutions to stopping the senseless killings of the innocent women and children and sending messages of hope.

Many lost their lives over media propaganda and baseless ideologies. The media has a mandate to uphold its oath to the letter reporting the truth. Both International and local media failed miserably in informing their audience on the truth. The local media aired falsified information to accomplish its mission of ethnic cleansing while the international media failed to air anything as it debated whether it was a civil war or a genocide yet all facts pointed to the later.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

Propaganda is a form of persuasion involving a mass message campaign designed to discourage rational thought and to suppress evidence. The term is also used to refer to individual messages as in a piece of propaganda, often as a pejorative term used to attack a message in disagreement with the source of the pejorative. This entry considers definitions and theories of propaganda and its history, distinguishing propaganda from other persuasive forms.

Walter Lippmann (23 September 1889 – 14 December 1974) an American public intellectual, writer, reporter, and political commentator, identified the tendency of journalists to generalize about other people based on fixed ideas. He argued that people, including journalists are more likely to believe "the pictures in their heads" than come to judgment by critical thinking. Humans condense ideas into symbols, he wrote, and journalism, a force quickly becoming the mass media, is an ineffective method of educating the public. Even if journalists did better jobs of informing the public about important issues, Lippmann believed "the mass of the reading public is not interested in learning and assimilating the results of accurate investigation." Citizens, he wrote, were too self-centered to care about public policy except as pertaining to pressing local issues.

It is from this argument that he developed the idea of propaganda, claiming that "In order to conduct propaganda, there must be some barrier between the public and the event" (Lippmann, 1922, p. 28). With this separation, there is the ability of the media to manipulate events or present limited information to the public. This information may not match the public's perception of the event. In this way, Lippmann was essentially presenting some of the first views on the mass communication concepts of gatekeeping and agenda-setting, by showing the media's power to limit public access to information.

In a country where over half the population is illiterate, the radio media becomes a very powerful tool of communication. It was the best tool for incitement and instigating hatred between the Tutsi and the Hutus hence creating violence that was geared for ethnic cleansing. The media decided to report false information by persuading the Hutus that the Tutsis who were the majority were trying to cleanse the nation of the Hutus who were the minority and that the Hutus should prepare themselves for a war of ethnic cleansing. The result was the genocide that saw the loss of close to one million lives in Rwanda.

This study believes and bases its theoretical framework that it is this media propaganda that started a war that ended up claiming almost a million lives. The study also believes that the same media was taken over by parties with political and selfish interests and used deceptive and distorted information to gain support, resulting to the cleansing of roughly three quarters of Tutsi population in Rwanda and thousands of Hutus who were opposed to their forces

Propaganda can serve to rally people behind a cause, but often at the cost of exaggerating, misrepresenting, or even lying about the issues in order to gain that support. While the issue of propaganda often is discussed in the context of militarism, war and war-mongering, it is around us in all aspects of life.

As the various examples below will show, common tactics in propaganda often used by either side include:

Using selective stories that come over as wide-covering and objective.

Partial facts, or historical context

Reinforcing reasons and motivations to act due to threats on the security of the individual.

Narrow sources of “experts” to provide insights in to the situation. (For example, the mainstream media typically interview retired military personnel for many conflict-related issues, or treat official government sources as fact, rather than just one perspective that needs to be verified and researched).

Demonizing the “enemy” who does not fit the picture of what is “right”.

Using a narrow range of discourse, whereby judgments are often made while the boundary of discourse itself, or the framework within which the opinions are formed, are often not discussed. The narrow focus then helps to serve the interests of the propagandists.

Some of the following sections look into how propaganda is used in various ways, expanding on the above list of tactics and devices.

Probably every conflict is fought on at least two grounds: the battlefield and the minds of the people via propaganda. The “good guys” and the “bad guys” can often both be guilty of misleading their people with distortions, exaggerations, subjectivity, inaccuracy and even fabrications, in order to receive support and a sense of legitimacy.³⁸

During the horrific genocide in Rwanda, 1994, the Rwandan media played a major part in supporting, or creating an atmosphere to sanction the terrible human suffering that ensued. A detailed report (Leave none to tell the Story, Genocide in Rwanda) from Human Rights Watch in 1999, looked into how the killing campaign was executed, using oral testimony and documentation from a wide variety of sources. It explained how this was planned for a long time and how the international community was aware of what was going on yet ignored it, and were even present during the systematic killings.

³⁸ <http://www.globalissues.org/article/157/war-propaganda-and-the-media>

1.8 Methodology

Introduction

While performing specific study operations researchers employ techniques to enable them collect data and establish replicable verifiable truths about a case, phenomena or topic. This is summed up as methodology according to (Kothari 2004). A researcher selects methods, which includes selecting and constructing research techniques. Through research techniques, the researcher performs operations such as observation, recording data and analysis of data using clearly defined steps.

Data Collection Procedures

Data type and data collection methods

Only secondary data was collected using various methods while conducting the research. This is because the research was a desk review study. The researcher was not in a position to travel to Rwanda to carry out the research and therefore rely on journals, the internet and books to carry out the study.

Secondary data

Secondary data was collected from both internal sources and external sources. Internal sources included information sourced from the media. External data sources included data originating from outside the media urgencies such as government sources, commercial sources, inter and intra industry sources like trade publications, journals and other sources like non-governmental organizations, institutes of economic survey and also academic institutions.

Data Analysis Techniques

Analysis of Historical records such as recording of notes, Content analysis, Tape and Film listening and Research records analysis. Analysis of documents such as statistical compilations and manipulations, reference and abstract guides, contents analysis.

In order to determine the role of media in Rwanda Genocide, lobby groups and other law enforcement urgencies in Rwanda, made use of performance measurement variables which included; number of media owners who adversely played a role in ensuring peace tranquility during the war, level of reporting to the people. This represents the dependent variables.

Case Study

Case study research excels at bringing us to an understanding of a complex issue or object and can extend experience or add strength to what is already known through previous research.

Case studies emphasize detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships. Researchers have used the case study research method for many years across a variety of disciplines. Social scientists, in particular, have made wide use of this qualitative research method to examine contemporary real-life situations and provide the basis for the application of ideas and extension of methods. Researcher Robert K. Yin defines the case study research method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1984, p. 23).

Critics of the case study method believe that the study of a small number of cases can offer no grounds for establishing reliability or generality of findings. Others feel that the intense exposure to study of the case biases the findings. Some dismiss case study research as useful only as an exploratory tool. Yet researchers continue to use the case study research method

with success in carefully planned and crafted studies of real-life situations, issues, and problems. Reports on case studies from many disciplines are widely available in the literature.

This study will use the case study method and then applies the method to an example case study project designed to examine how the media played a vital role in violence escalation in Rwanda. The study examines the issue of how both local and international media contributed to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

Many well-known case study researchers such as Robert E. Stake, Helen Simons, and Robert K. Yin have written about case study research and suggested techniques for organizing and conducting the research successfully. This introduction to case study research draws upon their work and proposes six steps that should be used:

Determine and define the research questions

Select the cases and determine data gathering and analysis techniques

Prepare to collect the data

Collect data in the field

Evaluate and analyze the data

Prepare the report

1.9 Scope and Limitation

Finance constraints- Finance was one major constraint since the study is based in Rwanda. As a researcher it was difficult since it required a lot of traveling and therefore spending a lot of money.

Time –Period for the Researcher was limited. The time scheduled for this research was very short hence making it difficult for the researcher.

Sensitivity –The extreme sensitivity of the topic, the unresponsiveness of affected communities, citizens and the lack of reliable data on this issue related to the media roles.

Political environment –The political environment was another factor that hindered the study given that the country had suffered a lot of human massacre in the conflict. The political environment was a key factor that jeopardized the research findings.

Language – the languages in use during the genocide were Kinyarwanda and French. And even today, majority of the population still uses Kinyarwanda and French. English is just being introduced.

1.10 Chapter Outline

The study was organized in five chapters. Chapter one presents an introduction which includes background of the study, statement of the problem under study, objectives of the study, justification, hypothesis, literature review, theoretical framework, methodology, data collection procedures, scope and limitations of the study and definition of key terms of the study. Chapter two incorporates the literature review on Media and conflict management while chapter three focuses on the Rwandan Genocide in details. Chapter four includes the Role of Media in the Rwandan Genocide. Lastly, chapter five includes summary, conclusion and recommendations for further research.

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Chapter Two

2.1 The Media and conflict Management

Introduction

Globally, nationally and locally, the mass media plays a crucial role in public policy, agenda setting, national, and international conflicts. Their role and the decisions they make before, during and after a conflict, depending on their relationship with the parties to a conflict, their freedom to relay information impartially, the nature and the amount of media coverage, can either escalating or de-escalating the conflict. If the media is impartial and presents issues from both parties to a conflict clearly, then conflict escalation born from propaganda could be avoided.

An International Media Support (IMS) IMS was founded in 2001 to support media in conflict situations. Through short term interventions they are trying to strengthen and promote local press freedom as they believe that a strong independent media will help promote peace and stability in conflict situations.

Conflicts have always been part of the society for decades leading to abuses of human rights, deaths, massive human suffering, massive displacement of people, and massive sufferings.

The rising number of conflicts globally has created international concern. There have been 59 'major' armed conflicts occurring since the end of the Cold War according to Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

The media should cover events of the conflict moderately rather than be on extreme positions in order to help resolve the conflict. Sometimes the media fails in their role by reporting inciting stories, focusing their attention and coverage on one side of the conflict thus

escalating the conflict rather than de-escalating or solving it. Parties to a conflict and mediators can help the media to avoid the above incident by explaining the situation to the media impartially. The public can also make direct appeals to the media to practice their social responsibility.³⁹

Role of international community

Conflicts have always been part of the society and very few of these conflicts have attracted serious concern from the International community, for example the genocide in Rwanda which was an internal conflict was escalated by the media (Radio Mille Collines). The wars in the Balkans that marked the break up of Yugoslavia have led to much debate about the powers and responsibilities of the international community, as well as triggered serious rifts inside the United Nations, making the effective work of that organisation more difficult.

The international media seems to have a biased and haphazard ways of reporting conflict and setting international policy agendas. Media, and the way in which it selects material to report, is simply not a reliable catalyst for policy change. The international community would do well to recognize the danger of calibrating its responses to the substance and timing of the information it receives from media reports. The international media should always respond positively and quickly to any conflict and try to manage or reduce any conflict. In most cases it has been seen to ignore conflict as was the case of the Rwandan genocide or not report impartially.⁴⁰

The rise in conflict led to the formation of international organizations like the United Nations, regional bodies such as NATO, the European Union and the African Union which are often acting on behalf of states in conflict resolutions in state or states in conflict. These

³⁹ Conflict Research Consortium, University of Colorado, USA, Media Management

⁴⁰ Center for Post-Conflict Peace and Stability Operations at the U.S. Institute of Peace.)

international organizations need to work together with both the local and international media in order to resolve the conflict in affected areas.

International donors are also important contributors of the international community in resolving conflict and post conflict problem. In recent years donors have become more aware of the need to support media as part of a strategy to bring peace to the universe. Most donor governments and agencies have set conditions and priorities based on what seem to be more urgent tasks for example stabilizing an insecure environment, physical reconstruction, dealing with displaced persons, tackling the immediate economic collapse engendered by war. Most general media development works funded by donors either because it is seen as part of democracy building or as part of their overall development programmes which for government donors is structured around achieving the Millennium Development Goals

However, donors have continued to sustain media in circumstances where it is not economically viable. For many this is a questionable long-term strategy, which ensure neutral objective journalism that seeks to diffuse conflict and it counteracts the subsidies being paid by warlords to their own media. Funding has also been provided to directly establish media locally such as the UN's radio station in Cambodia

International media has a global coverage and it can help attract worldwide attention. Most conflicts that are happening are mostly armed conflicts and the number of conflicts that get international attention is small; therefore local media is vital in this context ⁴¹

⁴¹ (United Nations Office for West Africa (2005) *UNOWA Workshop on Reporting for Peace*. p.3-5)

Role of the local Media

The local media plays a crucial role in conflict prevention and management by shaping and developing the conflict on the ground. Internal conflicts do not occur spontaneously but tend to have a history as all conflict have a history. The local media usually has a deeper understanding of the existing political structures, the conflict and the parties to the conflict. Therefore they can help reach different communities on the ground far much better than international media as the local media understands what exactly is happening.

Often, local media can contribute to peace merely by restoring levels of trust and self-worth in a population on the brink of or emerging from violence. The local media has the ability to give voice to those who were previously silenced by conflict according to George Papagiannis. Genocide is about silencing a people the goal of the local media as the radio station is purely non-political; The local radio can bring various community members on a regular basis to talk about issues that are affecting them thus release some of their tensions through radio rather than through armed conflict. This act encourages healing, community building and prevents against future resurgence of violence.⁴²

Another advantage of local media, especially radio is that in border areas it is possible to convey peace messages to passing fighters and refugees alike⁴³. It is vital that the use of information within a society is not solemnly passive but that the population gets actively involved in creating content and broadcasting it.⁴⁴

⁴² (Center for Post-Conflict Peace and Stability Operations, Centers of Innovation, Media, Conflict and Peace building, June 2007 | Peace Brief by Yil Bajraktari and Christina Parajon).

⁴³ (ibid p.4)

⁴⁴ (Deutsche Welle – Global Media Forum (2008) *Media in Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention*, p.59-61).

Role of International and local media conflict management

In trying to cover conflict situations both the local and international media face a myriad of challenges some of which are fatal. According to the US based Committee for the Protection of Journalists (CPJ) an estimate of 337 journalists have been killed over the last ten years covering conflicts. CPJ research claims that the majority of journalists killed since 1995 were not killed accidentally in crossfire. Most were killed because of what they had written. It seems that journalists are murdered with impunity. The media must be independent in the sense that it must be able to operate freely and without threat and with the capacity to report on all aspects of the conflict.

The media should at all times inform parties to a conflict on what exactly is going on. Lack of information during pre conflict situation or during the conflict or post conflict makes people anxious and as a result they can be manipulated easily by parties to a conflict or the media itself. Proper information enables people to make informed decisions thereby promoting democracy and peace. The United Nations Millennium Declaration emphasizes on the importance of ensuring freedom of the media to perform their essential role and the right of the public to have access to information.⁴⁵

In order for both the local and international media to be effective in their role of managing conflicts they should partner together in sharing ideas and developing programs of promoting tranquility at all times. The international media is more qualified professionally and technologically and thus they can help develop the local media. The local media can also help the international media with information on the ground since they are more aware about the conflict. To reduce costs and increase their economic possibility local media should at all time

⁴⁵ (United Nations Millennium Declaration (2000))

consider how they can cooperate and work together for the good of their community. Media organizations could also sponsor media centers (with international donor support) to act as centers of excellence and places to share and exchange experience of media development.

The media should be able to counter hate-speech and create an environment of balanced opinions, information equilibrium.⁴⁶ It should not take sides with the parties to a conflict as this is more likely to fuel the conflict. Journalists have to stay clear of judgmental representations and describe reality without exaggeration.⁴⁷

Professionalism of the media should be practiced by all journalists at all times. The media have a crucial role to play in helping to avoid conflict, resolve conflict and manage conflicts while at the same time adhering to their professional ethical codes of conduct. It is important for the media to understand how conflicts situations should be covered. They should be impartial, accurate, truthful and professional as this will help correct misunderstandings. The international and local media should be careful by the way they are reporting because they can fuel the conflict. For example by reporting a mass killing, the media is usually implying that one party of the conflict is responsible for the mass killings and this could affect the conflict even further or peace moves. This is not to suggest that mass killings should be ignored but the media should practice professionalism in reporting conflict in order not to escalate it.

There are other situations whereby the media have taken the decision not to report violence in the interests of peace building. For example Bush Radio in Cape Town, the first community station in South Africa, has been heavily involved in mediation during the past fifteen years.

It is very important for journalists and the media to understand the root cause of any conflict and what the parties of the conflict are aiming to attain while at the same time remaining

⁴⁶ Koven, Ronald (2004) *An Antidote to Hate Speech: Journalism, Pure and Simple*.

⁴⁷ *ibid*

neutral at all times. Peace-building media can employ different strategies such as conflict-sensitive and peace journalism, peace-promoting entertainment media, media regulation to prevent incitement of violence, but also Peace-promoting citizen media.⁴⁸

When negotiations are held in private, the press can get very suspicious, and will sometimes try to develop stories from rumors about the private meetings which may or may not be true. To prevent the spreading of false rumors, frequent press releases that explain what is happening in the negotiations and why can help generate positive media coverage. If press releases are impossible as they are with especially sensitive negotiations that need complete privacy, explaining to the press why such privacy is needed, and promising a full report at the end can be helpful.

Preventive diplomacy is the action to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur, should be practiced. Full-scale peace journalism should be practiced by the media and all journalists. Based on ethical values it is possible for individual journalists and media to change the discourse of the media content from war to peace before, during and after conflict. The development of media organizations should be encouraged and this depends on the separation of media institutions from the state. Interventions should take place in a voluntary cooperation between international and local actors at the governmental, media, journalist and civil society level.

⁴⁸ (Himelfarb, Sheldon and Chabalowski, Megan (2008) *Media, Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: Mapping the Edges*. United States Institute for Peace.)

Proper media structures should be put in place by both the local and international media which can reach the broader population through relevant media channels. This media structure should be easy to control, simple to use, efficient in its reach and favourable to the parts of the population who are the most likely supporters of the rulers' interests.

Media legislation that are favorable to both the people and the government should be enacted, and they should efficiently restrict the media's freedom of expression from in sighting parties to a conflict or escalating the conflict. Media and journalists who violate these restrictions should be punished. Media independence is defined as the autonomous control over editorial content by publishers, broadcasters, editors and journalists. This control implies that the work of collecting, editing and publishing information is conducted within the framework of editorial aims that are articulated and adopted by the professionals involved and without interference from third parties, public authorities or private-interest groups.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ (Hamelink, 1999, p. 9).

Conclusion

Conflict have always been part of the society and all conflicts have a history. The media, both the local and the international have a huge role to play in conflict management. The media can either chose to escalate or descalate a conflict. Policy makers have been slow to understand the importance of media in shaping modern conflict or how, with proper support, it can help create the conditions for peace. International media has the potential to influence governments and international organizations. and as such can have an agenda-setting effect.

Donors that are interested in conflict prevention and sustaining stability should support local media. Local media often yields non-tangible results in war-torn communities, such as increased levels of trust. increased hope in the future of the country, and the ability to contribute to a peaceful society.

Guarantees regarding the media and freedom of the press as well as efforts to promote professional, objective, unbiased reporting should be an integral part of any successful peace agreement.

Chapter Three

3.0 Rwandan Genocide

Introduction

During the Cold War, most violent conflicts occurred within rather than between countries and can be set in the ideological context between East and West.⁵⁰ The root cause of conflicts has often been known to be resource or land disputes but fought with strong references to ethnic, cultural, and religious identities. During the Cold War conflicts were primarily driven by rational motives and were consequently settled rationally, from a national security perspective.

In the post-Cold War era, armed conflicts have increasingly become internal conflicts rather than wars between nations. Many violent internal conflicts occurring in the world today are between governments and political opposition groups or between majority governments and minorities seeking independence and land, as well as between quite sharply defined population groups living in the same country, each with their separate identity.

In the post Cold War era, open conflicts as well as external attempts to manage them were met with a much more irrational and localised battleground of identities and historically protracted conflicts⁵¹. At the same time, many of the internal conflicts were regional or transnational by nature, implying strong links with external and global interests. The number of armed conflicts peaked in 1999 with 51 and has since then declined to 20 in 2004⁵². The mass media

⁵⁰ (Lederach, 1997, p. 3-17). LEDERACH, J. P., 1997 Building Peace Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies. USA: Endowment of the United States Institute of Peace, 38-75.

⁵¹ (Lederach, 1997, p. 3-17).

⁵² EASTERBROOK, G., 2005 [online]. Explaining 15 years of diminishing violence. The end of War? Available from: The New Republic Online website. [Accessed 30th May 2005].

has been of great importance in the war leading to, the genocides in Rwanda as well as in many other internal conflicts⁵³.

Background

Rwanda is situated in East Africa and has three different groups namely the Hutus, Tutsis and Twas. Rwanda was made up of a number of small kingdoms that were conquered by the Nyiginya dynasty. Among the annexed kingdoms were the Tutsis who were led by stockbreeders and the Hutus led by farmers. By getting livestock, the Hutus could advance socially and quit their Hutu status, becoming Tutsis, while a Tutsi who lost his cattle became poor and identified as a Hutu.

The pre-colonial ruling system for Rwanda had been divided into three areas of responsibility with a Chef du Gazon, a Chef du Sol and a Chef de l'Armée, consisting of a Tutsi, a Hutu and a representative from the Twas who were both farmers and stockbreeders⁵⁴, respectively. Another element that kept pre-colonial and colonial Rwanda united was the myth of having one common God for Tutsis, Hutus and Twas, a God of Rwanda, who cared especially for Rwanda. In spite of the inequalities and the exploitation that occurred between Tutsis and Hutus, the nation had been kept together through their shared experiences in terms of the triple system, the common Rwandan God and a common culture.

As early as 1894, when the Germans wanted the Rwandan kingdom to become a German mandate, the state was well organized, centralised and orderly, in comparison with other African states. The Germans consequently chose to respect a system of indirect rule in

⁵³ Thompson, 1999, p.1 and Chretien, 1995, Chapter 2.

⁵⁴ (Bizumuremyi, 2001)

the country. With the German defeat in World War One, the Belgian government was given the mandate to administer what today is Rwanda and Burundi, called Ruanda-Urundi.

Rwanda became an independent state after centuries of colonial or imperial rule. The outcome for the states was consequently strongly divided societies with identity conflicts, which were strengthened through differences between favored and less favored groups. Rwanda was established as a unification of a number of kingdoms by the colonial rulers, which might have relatively homogenous ethnic, religious, and cultural identities, but also a tradition for different social roles in society depending on the group identities as Hutu, Tutsi and Twa. The Tutsi minority had ruled the Hutu majority during colonial time and when the Hutu took over after independence revenge from both sides formed part of the motives and roots of conflict.⁵⁵

For over 20 years prior to this colonization, a Tutsi monarchy had controlled most of the power in Rwanda. This is remarkable, because the Tutsi monarchy only had a population of 10% towards a Hutu population of almost 90%. During the 1950s, the majority Hutu population became more rebellious and when time went by they no longer accepted their submissive position in the country. In 1957 the Hutu Emancipation Movement decided to fight for the Hutus and they started the 'Hutu manifesto'. This manifestation was successful, in 1962 the Hutus overthrew the monarchy of the Tutsis and they established the Rwanda Republic. Because of this establishment Rwanda became also an independent country

For along time the Tutsi people were always seen as intelligent, rich and had a noble background while most Hutus were just farmers. A rebel group named 'Rwandan Patriotic Front', lead by Tutsis, tried to defeat the Hutu-led government in 1990 but they did not succeed. Their action led to the beginning of the Rwandan civil war and social tension.

⁵⁵ Thompson, 1999, p.1 and Chretien, 1995,

On the evening of April 6, 1994, the assassination of Habyarimana, who was at that time the president of Rwanda, took place when his plane was shot down. This action increased the social tension and this led to the beginning of the Rwandan Genocide. Even though it has never been known who was responsible for his assassination, most theories suggest that it was the Rwandan Patriotic Front.

The assassination of Habyarimana led to mass killings of minority Tutsis by the majority Hutus. The killings were well executed by the Hutu government all over Rwanda. In the testimony for the International Criminal Tribunal, Rwandan Prime Minister Jean Kambanda described that one of the ministers said she was in favour of getting rid of all Tutsis. Without them, she told her colleagues: all the problems would be over.

Both Hutus and Tutsis were forced to always bring ID cards with them, which specified their ethnic group. In that time, Tutsi men, women and children were separated from the general population and often forced to be slaves for the Hutus. Just like the government and the army, the Rwandan media played a big role in coordinating the genocide, by telling the population what to do.

The role of the media.

The media, and in particular, the radio, played a central role in an ethnic conflict as bloody as any known in recent history. The blame for the Rwandan genocide of 1994, in which between 800,000 and 1,000,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were massacred in 100 days⁵⁶. There was mass killings in Rwanda and the media did not bother to inform the rest of the world of what

⁵⁶ Christine L. Kellows and H. Leslie Steeves, "The role of radio in the Rwandan genocide," *Journal of Communication* 48 no.3 (1998): 118.

was transpiring. If the media would have reported earlier about the fact that a nationwide killing campaign took place in Rwanda, then the killings would have gone to such massive extent. Journalists in the first three weeks only reported about a civil war. They should have noticed the fact that the government, the army, and the Rwandan Media organized this 'civil war'. They really failed in their work because they did not recognize it as a genocide⁵⁷

Allan Thompson, former journalist at Toronto Star and journalism professor at the University of Carleton agrees with Kuperman. He blames the international media for ignoring Rwandan situation as this led to the massacre in Rwanda. Simply because of their absence⁵⁸. According to Thompson, groups who were trying to avert the conflict needed public and political support. They were ignored, just because the world was not aware of the tensions between the Hutus and the Tutsis. If the media would have given attention to Rwanda, the international community would probably be more aware of the extreme situation in the country.

Thompson is also aware of the fact that he was one of the journalists who was not in Rwanda in 1994. "I can also blame myself for ignoring the genocide. One of my colleagues, the Africa correspondent of Toronto Star was reporting about the apartheid in South Africa at that time. I should have travelled to Rwanda myself to inform my readers of the extreme situation".

To clarify his point of view, Thompson explained the Heisenberg-principle in his book. He translated this principle to the theory that journalists can influence an incident only because of their presence. According to Thompson, you can also converse this theory. "Because no one was reporting about the conflict, the Hutu-led government did not have to justify to anyone. Nobody was stopping them, so the genocide could go on and on".

⁵⁷ Alan J Kuperman in his article 'How the media missed Rwandan genocide'.

⁵⁸ Allan Thompson 'The media and the Rwanda genocide' 2007

Conclusion

Rwandans local print and radio media fuelled the killings by telling one ethnic group to murder the other ethnic group. The international media also ignored or misconstrued the situation in Rwanda. It mistook genocide for civil war. The country had been wracked by a low-level civil war from 1990 to 1993 between the government, controlled by the Hutu majority, and a rebel force comprised mainly of Tutsi. Though a minority, the Tutsi had ruled until the late 1950s when the Hutu took power and forced many Tutsi to flee as refugees. Conflict continued through the next three decades, so upon the outbreak of genocide on April 6, 1994, Western correspondents reported the initial burst of violence in the capital Kigali as resumption of a bloody civil war.

Chapter Four

4.0 Role of media in the Rwandan Genocide

Introduction

In the world today, the media is playing a fundamental role in making the world smaller, as people are able to connect all over the world despite the distance between them. In other words, technological innovation like the satellite, computers and the internet in mass communication have added a new dimension in communication, with instantaneous commutation of words and images over distances.

For example, the internet has become a necessity means for communication for most household and business. The media is like a mirror that reflects and informs the society of the events transpiring around them. And to some extent, journalists are like soldiers in the battle field who risk their lives in search for the truth regardless of the dangers that lie ahead. A world without the media would be lost, in total darkness and ignorant of what is happening around them.

However with the commercialization of media, it is becoming hard for the media to be impartial, professional and relevant to the public. Media houses are concentrating on increasing their sale rates through what they consider to be hot news rather than informing the public on crucial matters affecting them. The media has the power to set the agenda as it affects how we think and perceive various issues in our surrounding and about the world. Today the society for example is aware of their surroundings and responsibilities because of the crucial role the media is playing by informing them.

Role of the Local Media

The media can play different roles in terms of escalating, moderating, or balancing a conflict. The case of the Rwandan Genocide is a good example of how media can be directly involved in conflict. The mass media has been of great importance in the war leading to, the genocides in Rwanda as well as in many other internal conflicts.⁵⁹

Since the world war two, the radio was the most important means of communication in sub-Saharan Africa. In Rwanda, the main source of information for the wider population was, however, the national Radio Rwanda. In 1991, some 29% of all households owned radios, a number that rose to nearly 60% in urban areas.⁶⁰ Those who were not proud owners of radios listened at friends' homes or at bars in the neighborhood. Due to the high illiteracy rate and because the international media did not broadcast in the national language Kinyarwanda, and a few of the Rwandese spoke French, Radio Rwanda became the all-dominant radio.

Radio Rwanda, a state owned radio station since the independence of Rwanda in 1961 through the two party rule by president Kayibenda and Habyarimana until the genocide was the major source of information for most Rwandese. All journalists were considered to be civil servants, this was the most trusted radio station and it was the voice of the government and its authority was never questioned.

According to John Pauly, a communications scholar from Marquette University, traditionally, Journalists have always seen themselves as disinterested witnesses or observers to conflict and they were only meant to report on the facts. More recently, it has been noted that journalists need to take a more active role in educating and helping the public find solutions to the

⁵⁹ Thompson, 1999, p.1 and Chretien. 1995, Chapter. THOMPSON, J. B., 1995. *The Media and Modernity – A Social Theory of the Media*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 42.

⁶⁰ (Forges, 2002, p.?).

problems of the day as this key to understanding how the media itself determines the impact of media on conflict.⁶¹

In October 1990 the major source of information, Radio Rwanda began airing propaganda against RPF. In 1991, after the legislation of opposition political parties, the opposition tried to withdraw radio Rwanda from MRDN control but they failed. This station continued reporting false statements against the Tutsi and journalists who did not obey orders were ordered to resign. The staff for radio Rwanda went on strike in 1992 and 1993 demanding for their independence to report freely. Already evident during World War Two and throughout the Cold War era, media radio, television and films has been used as a tool for propaganda to promote the strength and values of one party or to weaken popular support for another.⁶²

One of the publications, which the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (the Rwanda Tribunal) later found to have incited genocide was the news magazine Kangura. Among many other articles, the magazine published the 10 Hutu commandments, which later became a point of reference for the other extremist publications and media.⁶³ In parallel with the 10 Hutu Commandments, Kangura also published the 19 Tutsi Commandments, which encouraged Tutsis to replace the Hutus in positions of authority and keep in mind that the Hutu are created to be servant to other. In other words, the 19 Tutsi Commandments were by Hutu media distributed.⁶⁴ Hutu Ten Commandments, originally printed in the virulently anti-Tutsi newspaper, Kangura, in 1990. These commandments included a range of instructions on

⁶¹ International Media and Conflict Resolution: Making the Connection, Andrea Kupfer Schneider, 93 Marq. L. Rev. 1 (2009).

⁶² Bytwerk, 1997

⁶³ (Bizumuremyi, 2001)

⁶⁴ Kelman, 1997, p.223

how Hutu should behave toward Tutsi, and decreed, he Bahutu should stop having mercy on the Batutsi.⁶⁵

Both examples were seen by the Rwanda Tribunal as promoting fear and hatred among the Hutu majority and mobilizing them against the Tutsi minority. Kangura called itself "The Voice that Awakens and Defends the Majority People". In one issue, the Kangura stereotyped the Tutsi as being liars, thieves and killers. On the magazine cover, the question "What weapons shall we use to conquer the Inyenzi once and for all?" was answered with the depiction of a machete.⁶⁶

The Rwandan people spend all their time with a receiver stuck to their ear.⁶⁷ Listening to radio broadcasts was part of their daily life in a way that most contemporary westerners cannot fully comprehend; radio was so prevalent that in the years immediately leading up to the genocide, there was a ratio of one radio per thirteen people.⁶⁸

Radio Rwanda had kept a hesitant distance from stereotyping against Tutsis up till 1990. Like many traditional state radios, it had conveyed messages from the government to the governed, but still kept a relative openness and balanced approach to the Tutsi issue⁶⁹. Radio Rwanda was the voice of the state and of its president. His admonitory speeches were heard daily and were the way in which the Rwandan population could be reached all over the country. Alison Des Forges tells in his "Silencing the Voices of Hatred", that the radio announced official

⁶⁵ Samantha Powers, "Rwanda: 'Mostly in a Listening Mode,'" in *A Problem From Hell*, 329-389 (New York: Basic Books, 2002).

⁶⁶ Samantha Powers, "Rwanda: 'Mostly in a Listening Mode,'" in *A Problem From Hell*, 329-389 (New York: Basic Books, 2002).

⁶⁷ Christine L. Kellows and H. Leslie Steeves, "The role of radio in the Rwandan genocide," *Journal of Communication* 48 no.3 (1998): 118.

⁶⁸ Hege L. Gulseth, "The Use of Propaganda in the Rwandan Genocide: A Study of Radio-Television Libre des Milles Collines (RTL), University of Oslo Student Thesis, May 2004,

⁶⁹ Article 19, 1996, p. 47.

mectings, nominations to and removals from government posts, and the results of nationally-administered school examinations.

Following the widespread political dissatisfaction with the government in the late 1980s and 1990 a minor invasion took place in October 1990 from the 7000 member RPA. In the neighbouring countries, where around 600,000 Tutsi-refugees from the 1959 revolution lived, the RPA believed that the dissatisfaction would make it easy to overthrow the government and gained support from the Uganda government and Belgium to attack the country⁷⁰.

The October War immediately led to restrictions on movement within Rwanda, obstructions to the distribution of newspapers and the harassment of journalists. Though Radio Rwanda disseminated inaccurate and distorted information about the Uganda-based Tutsi exiles in the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), the Hutu extremists then accused Christophe Mfizi, the director general of l'Office Rwandais d'Information (ORINFOR) since 1974, of limiting the president's right to bring anti- Tutsi messages on Radio Rwanda. This allegation was raised in Kangura.

A few days later, the director general was dismissed and Media in Conflict Prevention and Peace-Building replaced by Ferdinand Nahimana, who gained fame in the later process of the International Criminal Court of Rwanda. As director general of ORINFOR, he oversaw all media, including Radio Rwanda, and soon more virulent and distorted broadcasts took place⁷¹. The vague steps towards democracy a year earlier were not reflected in Radio Rwanda, which refused to air news of opposition parties. However, in 1991, a demonstration forced the government to provide a limited slot for the opposition parties and a new constitution

⁷⁰ (Article 19, 1996, p. 13).

⁷¹ (Article 19, 1996, p. 29).

simultaneously opened for multi-party elections and freedom of expression. It was followed by a Press Law, which guaranteed every person the right to establish and operate a radio or television station. The latter gave room to Radio-Television Libre des Mille Collines (RTL) but the licensing procedures were still regulated by government bodies and the legislative freedom for everybody to establish media was not carried out in practices⁷².

The freedom of expression as carried out by journalists had severe restrictions. The journalists were subject to penal code punishment if they were to incite the population to revolt against the established authorities, either to incite or attempt to incite conflict amongst the population or to cause alarm and seek to bring turmoil to the territory of then Republic (Code penal Rwandais, 1977). Journalists who criticized the government, particularly on its handling of the RPF invasion in October 1990, risked being charged and punished through Article 47 of the 1991 Press Law, with between two to ten years prison (Article 19, 1996, p. 55). It should be remembered that the RPF from Uganda broadcasted propaganda into Rwanda via its own radio.

In early 1992, Radio Rwanda spurred attacks on Tutsi and members of the political opposition for the first time (Article 19, 1996, p. 53). Following an outcry among members of the opposition and pressure from international donors, Ferdinand Nahimana was dismissed from his post as director of ORINFOR in April 1992. A transitional coalition government was formed that same month. Through political in-fighting between the MRND and earlier opposition parties over the next two years, the radio actually ended up with fewer biased programmes, but still broadcasted inflammatory reporting against the Tutsi occasionally.⁷³

⁷² Article 19, 1996, p. 45

⁷³ Article 19, 1996, p. 49

This illustrates that state media in a transitional phase might be seen not as editorially independent but as a joint property of the whole political elite, whether in government or the opposition. In this case, attempts were made to secure neutrality between the different interests. The new parties in the coalition did not eliminate the prominent MRND journalists, but sought with limited success to moderate the hostile attitude to Tutsi and a less negative attitude to the on-going peace process with the RPF. Though the MRND still seemed more influential than the coalition partners, the programmes did improve towards being more objective and it became clear to the MRND and the Hutu Power sympathisers that the state broadcaster had become a space for power struggles and was no longer a mere mouthpiece.

In the same year, the dismissed director of ORINFOR, Ferdinand Nahimana, and other members of the ruling MRND engaged in setting up the first private radio station in Rwanda, RTLM, which started broadcasting in April 1993. It quickly gained popularity through its modern music, informal studio talk shows, communication with the audience and phone-ins. The broadcasts of RTLM changed from October 1993, when the democratically elected Hutu president in the neighbouring Burundi was assassinated. The radio became inflammatory and incited hatred against the Tutsi population in Rwanda, claiming that they, like the Burundi Tutsi who killed their president, would also be dangerous to the Hutus in Rwanda (Article 19, 1996, p. 49).

However, in spite of the ethnic propaganda that RTLM broadcast in the months prior to the genocide, it should be noted that there is a "distinction between what was broadcast before April 6, 1994 and what was broadcast after."⁷⁴ While early broadcasts did contain propaganda and ethnic slurs, and may have helped to create a popular mood more favourable to genocide,

⁷⁴ Richard Carver, "Broadcasting & Political Transition: Rwanda & Beyond," in *African Broadcast Cultures: Radio in Transition*, eds Richard Fardon and Graham Furniss, 190. (Oxford: James Currey Publishers, 2000).

⁷⁵ the tone of RTLM underwent a significant shift on the night of April 6 from a station so ridiculous that it was hard to take seriously⁷⁶ to something far more sinister.

In the time leading up to the genocides in 1994, the population was continually reminded of the importance of defending the 1959 revolution. It became a totem in a Hutu Power discourse. The radio RTLM received several formal warnings from the Minister of Information, because they not only breached the Press Law, but also the written agreement with the government not to broadcast programmes likely to incite hatred, violence or any form of division" Article 19, 1996, p. 55). Up to and during the genocide, RTLM actively incited genocide, through spreading false rumours, stereotypes, and hate speech.⁷⁷ RTLM increased its playing of Bikindi's "violence-provoking songs"⁷⁸ to as many as fifteen to twenty times a day at the peak of the station's broadcasting.⁷⁹

The President defended RTLM against any attempts from the Minister of Information, representing the earlier opposition parties, to use legal means to diminish the incitement. He did this by referring to the freedom of the press as a guiding principle.

Consequently, RTLM continued broadcasting names of individual persons, who were said to oppose the Hutus and instructions about where to find them were given as part of the broadcasts. As the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda later concluded, the management of RTLM was guilty of genocide. This also shows that liberalization of electronic media can be done under the cover of the noblest motives, but in the case of

⁷⁵ Richard Carver, "Neutralising the Voices of Hate: Broadcasting and Genocide," in African Voices on Development and Social Justice: Editorials from Pambazuka News 2004, eds Firoze Manji and Patrick Burnett, 71. (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota Publishers, 2005).

⁷⁶ Canadian Ambassador, Lucie Edwards, as quoted by Radio Netherlands, "Hate Radio: Rwanda," Counteracting Hate Radio Dossier, 2004.

⁷⁷ Kellow & Steeves, "The Role of Radio in the Rwandan Genocide."

⁷⁸ Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil*, 261.

⁷⁹ Kellow & Steeves, "The Role of Radio in the Rwandan Genocide."

Rwanda was a deliberately planned process towards establishing a MRND radio out of the political power struggle, but with clean and untouched loyal MRND messages to encourage genocide.

The situation escalated drastically when a plane crash on the 6th of April 1994 killed the Rwandan president. A new interim government consisting only of extremist Hutu power people took power. The Minister of Information was assassinated and the Director of ORINFOR fled the country, while many of Radio Rwanda's moderate journalists were killed and substituted with extremist Hutus. Few days into the genocide, Radio Rwanda was also turned into a weapon in the hands of those Hutus who were committing genocide (Article 19, 1996, p. 80).

Professionalism

The journalists in Rwanda were hardly professional in the sense of adhering to journalistic principles of impartiality, pluralistic, factual or critical. Rather they were employed as and were to be seen as civil servants fulfilling an information mission for the state. This is not to say that they could not personally have had a critical attitude to the government or that they were in favor of the killings. But there was no professional pride, tradition or code of ethics binding them together against abuse or hate speech.

Radio Rwanda broadcasters and main print media refrained from questioning the existing political system. Radio Rwanda in this period did not stereotype or produce significantly one-sided reporting against the Tutsi population, but it provided free and unlimited access to the radio from the totalitarian government, supported the totem of the revolution and did not convey any criticism against the rulers.

The media had, in spite of political control, had every chance to be aware of that problematic background. Instead of being a public sphere for contrasting arguments and shaming the government for failing in their role, the media kept the telescope to the blind eye. In Rwanda, where several new print publications started three to four years before the genocide, there was no clear picture of content and attitudes. Some of the new papers were rather liberal and promoted democracy, but could and did not according to Article 19 criticize the government for its handling of the conflict with the Tutsi.

Others began as mouthpieces for the extremist Hutu power supporters to spread stereotypes, prejudice and hatred against the Tutsi. Magazines like Kangura built among its, albeit limited, readership what Stanley Cohen calls Moral Panic – letting the Tutsi become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; with its nature presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion (1987, p.9).

When the governmental Radio Rwanda did not want to add to the Moral Panic, the management was changed and the attitude of the radio radicalised till a coalition government two years later installed a more moderate leader. The private radio RTML encouraged killings of Tutsi and Hutu opponents on air. The Minister of Information and a number of journalists were killed because they opposed the Hutu Power hate speech against the Tutsi.

The public media Rwanda, as the most watched and listened to media were the stage for such severe struggles between professional journalists and leaders in favor of editorial independence, diversity and impartiality on one side and the leadership on the other. This indicates that mechanisms for safeguarding public media's independence well ahead of a conflict might prevent the worst atrocities from the leadership during conflict escalation.

The role of the media in contributing to conflict or peace links primarily to the content, which is distributed through the media. Parties in a conflict might attempt to influence the agenda the media sets and might seek to pressure owners, managers, editors and journalists to frame their stories in favor of one of the parties. Framing is, in this sense, defining problems, diagnosing causes, making moral judgments and suggesting remedies through "the use of certain words or phrases, making certain contextual references, choosing certain pictures or film, referring to certain sources and so on"⁸⁰

How successful the parties in a conflict are at influencing the agenda and framing stories depends on many factors as the ability of journalists and editors to distance them from the conflict. Even more crucial is the organizational and editorial control of the media and whether this has been formalized to guard editorial independence or, on the contrary, to allow outside interests to intervene.

⁸⁰ (McQuail, 2000 p. 343).

Conclusion

Rwanda ruling politicians deliberately used the media to disseminate content, which encouraged prejudice, hatred, and violence against the other sides of the conflict. The media was the only weapon that could have been to prevent, manage, resolve and reconcile the Rwandan populace. The genocide would have been avoided if both the local and international media had taken up on their responsibilities.

The local media being a state owned, had been compromised to benefit only a few. The majority of the populace was illiterate and highly depended on radio and television as their only source of information and they would believe any information without question. The media is supposed to be neutral and not take any side to a conflict but the Rwandan media failed on this as it was biased. It termed the Tutsi as the enemy from hell and instigated their eradication.

Chapter Five

5.0 A Summary of the Rwandan Genocide

Rwanda's population is divided into three ethnic groups namely the Hutu who made up roughly 85% of the population, the Tutsi who made up 14% and the Twa who made up 1%. Before colonialism the Tutsi community was considered to be superior to the Hutus but social mobility was possible depending on the level of wealth.

Rwanda was colonized by the Germany, but Belgium was able to defeat Germans and took control of Rwanda during the First World War. Ethnic tensions were rising and in 1962, when Rwanda gained Independence. Juvenal Habyarimana became the president. Ethnic conflict and violence continued after independence leading to civil wars. The Hutu political movement, which stood to gain from majority rule, was gaining momentum while segments of the Tutsi establishment resisted democratization and the loss of their acquired privileges.. In 1988, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) composing mainly of Tutsi was founded in hope of reforming the Rwandan government through political power sharing.

On 6 April 1994, the deaths of the Presidents of Burundi and Rwanda in a plane crash led to several weeks of intense and systematic massacres. The killings happened over the course of approximately 100 days and it is estimated that around 800,000 people lost their lives. It was the height of longstanding ethnic competition and tensions between the minority Tutsi, who had controlled power for centuries, and the majority Hutu peoples, who had come to power in the rebellion of 1959-1962 and overthrown the Tutsi

On 7 April, Radio Television Libres Des Mille Collines (RTL) aired a broadcast attributing the plane crash to the RPF composing mainly of Tutsis and incited the Hutus to eliminate the Tutsi for their act. Later that day the Prime Minister, Agathe Uwilingiyimana and 10 Belgian

peacekeepers assigned to protect her were brutally murdered by Rwandan government soldiers in an attack on her home. Other moderate Hutu leaders were similarly assassinated.

The government failed in their role as they were responsible for the genocide. They planned systematically nation wide attacks against on ethnic groups and they did nothing to stop the media from inciting the parties to the conflict. Any one who condemned the government attack was punished severely by the government.

International media blamed the international community for not intervening soon enough but the media must share blame for not immediately recognizing the extent of the carnage and mobilizing world attention to it. They failed to report that a nationwide killing campaign was under way in Rwanda until almost three weeks into the violence. By that time, some 250,000 Tutsi had already been massacred.

Both the local and international media failed in their role of promoting and maintaining peace in a conflict situation. For instance, Rwandans local print and radio media fuelled the killings by telling one ethnic group to murder the other ethnic group. And the international media either ignored or misconstrued the situation in Rwanda. , it mistook genocide for civil war.

Conclusion

The end of the killing was not the end of the genocide. Its consequences will continue for several generations in the families and individuals torn apart by the murders. There were 7,000,000 people living in Rwanda before the genocide, about 930,000 Tutsi. At its conclusion, 85 % of the Tutsi had perished, and much of the Hutu population had fled to neighboring countries.

Most Tutsi families were affected in one way or another. For instance, rotting bodies were strewn across the countryside, a member or members of the family were murdered, injured, raped or psychologically overwhelmed by events, homes were destroyed, Many parents had been separated from children; many children were orphaned.

Survivors of the genocide have a huge role to play to help themselves and to help build the whole country. There are three main groups in Rwanda today: surviving Tutsi, returning Tutsi (those who had been away for more than a generation) and Hutu. Most Hutu living in Rwanda today never murdered Tutsi, as the activists were a relatively small proportion of the 6,000,000 Hutu in Rwanda during the genocide. However, many would have known or played indirect roles. Reconciliation and trust between all three groups is therefore hard to foster, as there are such discrepancies in their experiences.

Recommendations

Conflict management experts need to enlighten the media about their stories, so that the stories of successful conflict management actually reach the public. But, equally important the media often miss the crucial nuance of conflict because such details are not as compelling.

Working media structures should be put in place so that they can reach the broader population through relevant media channels. The media structures should be easy to control, simple to use, efficient in its reach and favorable to the entire population.

Media legislation that is favorable to both the people and the government should be enacted, and they should efficiently restrict the media's freedom of expression from inciting parties to a conflict or escalating the conflict. Media and journalists who violate these restrictions should be punished. Media independence is defined as: the autonomous control over editorial content by publishers, broadcasters, editors and journalists. This control implies that the work of collecting, editing and publishing information is conducted within the framework of editorial aims that are articulated and adopted by the professionals involved and without interference from third parties (public authorities or private-interest groups).

Professionalism of the media should be practiced by all journalists at all times. The media have a crucial role to play in helping to avoid conflict, resolve conflict and manage conflicts while at the same time adhering to their professional ethical codes of conduct. It is important for the media to understand how conflicts situations should be covered. They should be impartial, accurate, truthful and professional as this will help correct misunderstandings. The international and local media should be careful by the way they are reporting because they can fuel the conflict. For example by reporting a mass killing, the media is usually implying that one party of the conflict is responsible for the mass killings and this could affect the conflict

even further or peace moves. This is not to suggest that mass killings should be ignored but the media should practice professionalism in reporting conflict in order not to escalate it.

Preventive diplomacy is action to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur. The media should practice preventive diplomacy for the good of the community and a nation.

Full-scale peace journalism should be practiced by the media and all journalists. Based on ethical values it is possible for individual journalists and media to change the discourse of the media content from war to peace before, during and after conflict. The development of media organizations should be encouraged and this depends on the separation of media institutions from the state.

Interventions should take place in a voluntary cooperation between international and local actors at the governmental, media, journalist and civil society level.

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