Assessing the Role of Peace Journalism in Mitigating Cross-Border Conflicts: Case Study of Moyo, Uganda and Kajo-Keji, South Sudan

Yanta Daniel Elisha, Nkalubo Hakim

Victoria University, Kampala-Uganda

ABSTRACT

This study examined the role of peace journalism in reducing cross-border conflicts between Uganda and South Sudan, focusing on Moyo, Uganda, and Kajo-Keji, South Sudan. The study was crucial for gaining insights into how journalists used approaches aligned with peace journalism principles to report on cross-border conflicts, to examine the impact of peace-oriented media coverage on public perceptions and attitudes toward Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts, and to identify the challenges journalists face in implementing peace journalism to mitigate cross-border conflicts. Although peace journalism has had an impact on global, regional, and internal conflicts, there was never any research carried out on cross-border conflicts and particularly the case of Moyo and Kajo-Keji, hence the study became a necessity to uncover the novelty in the specific context. The main objective of the study was to assess the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts. Using a longitudinal case study design dating back to 2014, when cross-border conflicts intensified; leaving at least 20 dead and 200 huts burnt to ashes, the study used in-depth interviews for journalists and focus group discussions for key stakeholders, totalling to 30 purposively selected respondents. In addition, document reviews were made to trace written or recorded facts for analysis. The study uncovered that journalists used collaboration, conflict-sensitive and conflict transformation approaches in reporting on the cross-border conflicts. Consequently, the peace-oriented media coverage impacted positively on trust and social rebuilding, collaboration and peaceful co-existence, economic and structural powers, narrative shifting and media influence amidst challenges of institutional and political barriers, capacity and resource limitations, safety and psychological risks as well as societal and cultural resistance. To this effect, this study has become a wakeup call for enabling institutional and policy support, strengthened media capacity and ethics as well as increased peace dialogues and cross-border collaboration.

Keywords: peace journalism, cross-border conflicts, conflict mitigation, media coverage, journalistic approaches, collaborative approaches, conflict-sensitive reporting, Moyo, Uganda, Kajo-Keji, South Sudan

INTRODUCTION

For decades, cross-border conflicts have ravaged the world, leaving in their wake devastation, displacement and death. As of 2023, at least 162,000 deaths related to cross-border conflicts were recorded (Global Peace Index, 2024). In Europe alone, the conflict in Ukraine versus Russia resulted in over 13,000 deaths since 2014. In Africa, the cross-border conflicts between countries resulted in significant losses of lives. For instance, the Democratic Republic of Congo experienced considerable violence, with over 100,000 deaths since 2015. In September 2014, Uganda and South Sudan reportedly lost at least 20 lives and 200 huts burnt to ashes between the Moyo and Kajo-Keji frontiers (The Niles, 2022). Galtung, a pioneer in the field of peace research, recognized the need for a new approach to conflict reporting, one that prioritized peace, understanding and reconciliation. His work laid the foundation for a global movement that seeks to challenge the prevailing stories of war and conflict.

Amidst this chaos, a new brand of journalism had emerged, seeking to challenge the dominant narratives of war and conflict. This is the story of peace journalism, a movement that has grown from a humble beginning to a global force for change. The concept of peace journalism was first introduced by Norwegian sociologist, Johan Galtung in the 1960s (dos Santos, 2021). Peace journalism has been used to address some of the world's

most pressing conflicts. For example, in Israel-Palestine, peace journalists have worked to challenge the main narratives of conflict, promoting instead a culture of peace and understanding (Wolfsfeld, 2018).

Peace journalism is an approach to reporting conflicts that prioritizes peace, understanding and reconciliation (Jehangir, 2024) or reporting that promotes conflict resolution and peaceful coexistence (Aondover, et al, 2024).

Peace journalism cultivates peaceful attitudes and behaviours among audiences by promoting peaceful conflict resolution and human rights (Prager & Hameleers, 2021). Peace journalism challenges mainstream narratives, which often perpetuate conflict and violence at worse, promoting instead a more nuanced and peaceful understanding of conflicts (Youngblood, 2016). Peace journalism resonates with people's personal experiences of conflict and violence, making the message more believable and influential (Kumar, et al., 2018). Border conflicts refer to disputes or tensions between two or more countries over their shared boundary, often fuelled by contests for territory, resources or identity (Moyo & Nshimbi, 2019). Whereas, mitigating refers to the reduction or alleviation of the negative consequences of a conflict, such as violence, displacement and or human rights abuses (Prager & Hameleers, 2021) or simply reducing the intensity or impact of conflicts (Todorova, et al., 2022).

In Africa, peace journalism had been used to address some of the continent's most pressing internal conflicts. For example, during the Rwanda genocide, peace journalists played a crucial role in promoting reconciliation and healing (Mclntyre, et al., 2018). Similarly, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, peace journalists worked to challenge the leading narratives of conflict, promoting instead a culture of peace and understanding (Frere, 2017).

In East Africa region, peace journalism had been used to address cross-border conflicts and promote regional peace initiatives. For example, in the Kenya-Somalia border conflict, peace journalists played a crucial role in promoting reconciliation and healing (Ogola, 2017). Yet, globally, there was a lack of empirical research on the impact of peace journalism on cross-border conflicts (Lynch & Tiripelli, 2022). Existing theoretical frameworks on peace journalism remained inadequate for understanding the complex dynamics of cross-border conflicts according to (Kumar, et al., 2018). Research on peace journalism had not adequately addressed the role of new media in mitigating cross-border conflicts (Kumar & Semetko, 2018). Research on peace journalism had not sufficiently addressed the complex dynamics of cross-border conflicts in Asia (Lee, 2015).

The role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts in Europe received insufficient attention (Wolsfeld, 2022). Never had there been a research on the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts in Africa (Ciboh, 2024).

Viewing North, East, West and South of the continent, there had never been a research on the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts in East Africa (Kabahenda, 2017).

Research on peace journalism had not satisfactorily addressed the complex dynamics of cross-border conflicts in West Africa (Frere, 2017). Equally, the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts in Southern Africa received little attention (Moyo, 2017). There had never been a research on the role of peace journalism in mitigating the Uganda-South Sudan cross-border conflicts (Kabahenda, 2017). As such, this longitudinal case study as a proactive measure, assessed the role of peace journalism in mitigating Moyo, Uganda and Kajo-Keji, South Sudan cross-border conflicts from 2014 to 2025 to gain new insights for conflict transformation.

Peace journalism had been a distinctive approach to reporting conflicts, which prioritized peace, justice and human rights (Kumar, et al., 2018). Peace journalists seek to provide a more thorough and balanced coverage of conflicts, highlighting the human cost and the need for peaceful resolution (Youngblood, 2016). In Africa, peace journalism played a decisive role in mitiPating cross-border conflicts. Africa had over 100 international borders, many of which had been hot spots of conflict (International Crisis Group, 2019). The Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Sudan and Somalia were among the countries, which experienced prolonged cross-border conflicts. These conflicts in their escalating stages resulted in a significant human suffering, with

millions displaced and thousands killed. East Africa experienced several cross-border conflicts including the dispute between Kenya and Somalia over the maritime border (The East African, 2020). The conflict between Uganda and Rwanda over the border at Gatuna was also a source of tension (The Independent, 2019).

Peace journalism played a vital role in mitigating these conflicts at latent, emergent, escalating or de-escalating stages, with journalists providing balanced and refined coverage of the disputes. The cross-border conflicts between Uganda and South Sudan have been ongoing since 2014, resulting in significant human suffering and displacement (International Crisis Group, 2016). Peace journalism had played a crucial role in mitigating such conflicts, with journalists providing balanced and refined coverage of the disputes. The Uganda-based newspaper, The Daily Monitor, was at the forefront of peace journalism in the region, providing in-depth coverage of the conflict and its impact on civilians (Monitor, 2020). However, there remained a gap in understanding the specific role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts.

Further research was needed to assess the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts, analyse the approaches journalists use in reporting on Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts and their alignment with peace journalism principles, examine the impact of peace-oriented media coverage on public perception and attitude, and identify the challenges journalists face in implementing peace journalism in Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts since 2014.

Statement of Problem

Peace journalism has been recognized as a potential solution to conflicts through promoting peaceful resolution as it provides a platform for dialogue and negotiation (Abubakar, et al., 2025). It reduces hate speech and incitement, which fuels conflicts (Abubakar, et al., 2025). Peace journalism also provides alternative narratives to hostile propaganda of interest groups, hence promoting a more exact understanding of conflicts (Tenenboim-Weinblatt, et al., 2016). Amidst its limited reach and impact, particularly in areas with limited access to media (Sehl, et al., 2023), peace journalism still stands out as a panacea to conflicts of all sorts. Yet, the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts in the Sub-Saharan region remained a very pivotal gap under-researched. Existing research on peace journalism had focused primarily on its application in international conflicts or particular internal conflicts (Gouse, et al., 2019) .There had been a general lack of research on the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts in the context of Uganda and South Sudan. The study assessed the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts between Moyo, Uganda and Kajo-Keji, South Sudan.

This proactive study has the prospect to influence practices and policies in several ways including; informing media practitioners on the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts; influencing policymakers on the need to promote peace journalism in conflict zones like borders and contributing to conflict resolution strategies adopted from the principles and practices of peace journalism. For instance, the study intends to cause changes in policies and practices such as global campaign for peace journalism training (Youngblood, 2016). Additionally, the study informs strategies for reducing hate speech and incitement (United Nations, 2020) and to secure effective government support for peace journalism initiatives (Raisani, et al., 2025). Likewise, the study's findings would be used to promote media freedom and independence (Article 19, 2018) and to encourage public engagement and participation (United Nations, 2018). Finally, the findings would be used to advance the advocacy for peace journalism (Abubakar, et al., 2025).

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research approach to explore the complex and nuanced issues surrounding the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts. Qualitative research is an interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary and sometimes counter-disciplinary field of inquiry (Lim, et al., 2024). This approach was justified for this study by the fact that it enabled the researcher to gather rich, contextualized data to provide detailed insights into the research questions (Lim, et al., 2024).

The design for this research was a case study approach as a strategy for conducting methical and procedural measures for collecting and analysing data (Ebneyamini, et al., 2018). The researcher used a longitudinal

context to have an in-depth examination of the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts from 2014 to 2025, as it provided rich, contextual data (Gasdia, 2024). The case study enabled the researcher to develop a thorough understanding of the context in which peace journalism operated in Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts (Leornardi & Santschi, 2021) for a decade as cross-border conflicts have ravaged the globe for decades. The case study offered adaptability, allowing the researcher to adjust the data collection methods and procedures as needed in conflict-affected areas (Ahmed, 2024).

However, case study findings might not be generalizable to other contexts. Such a variance was addressed through the use of multiple data sources and methods to enhance the credibility, trustworthiness and transferability of the findings (Ahmed, 2024).

The case study approach was used to assess the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts between Moyo, Uganda and Kajo-Keji, South Sudan from 2014 to 2025. The strategy was particularly suited for in-depth analysis of complex, real-world phenomena to allow the researcher to examine the contextual details of peace journalism in conflict-affected areas (Ochan, 2018).

Grounded in Johan Galtung's Peace Journalism Model, the study focused on how journalists applied approaches aligned with principles of peace journalism to report cross-border conflicts to mitigate (Lynch & Tiripelli, 2022). To ensure credibility, trustworthiness, generalizability and transferability, the researcher utilized triangulation by combining multiple data sources such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and document reviews of media, government and civil society organisations' outputs. While the findings might not be generalizable to other contexts, the use of diverse methods and data sources strengthened the study to provide actionable insights (Ahmed, 2024).

The general population in the two border regions of Moyo, Uganda and Kajo-Keji, South Sudan is estimated at 560,474 (Uganda Bureau of Statistics & Wikipedia, 2024), but the target population is a purposefully selected subset drawn from this population based on specific inclusion criteria of those involved in or affected by peace journalism and cross-border conflicts since 2014.

The actual study population of the two border regions included journalists from various independent media outlets, who reported on Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts, Civil Society Organizations' (CSOs) representatives, who engaged in peace-building initiatives; government officials responsible for conflict management, resolution, prevention and policy making as well as border community residents, who directly experienced the impact of cross-border conflicts for the specified period. The participants were selected to provide diverse perspectives on the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts to ensure comprehensive understanding from multiple angles. They were accessible through a combination of physical and virtual communication channels for effective and efficient data collection (Dihan, et al., 2024). The experiences, perspectives and opinions of the selected participants were crucial in understanding the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts (Gasdia, 2024). Journalists were key players in shaping public perception and influencing conflict dynamics (Abubakar, et al., 2025). Civil Society Organisations' Representatives were the advocates for peace, human rights and community development (Kimber, 2025). Government officials were the policymakers and implementers of conflict resolution strategies (Raisani, et al., 2025). Border community members were directly affected by the cross-border conflicts and had the first-hand experiences (Osborne, et al., 2021).

The study employed purposive sampling to select participants who were most knowledgeable and directly involved in peace journalism and conflict-related issues along the Moyo (Uganda) and Kajo-Keji (South Sudan) border from 2014 to 2025. Participants were drawn from key stakeholder groups, including journalists, Civil Society Organization (CSO) representatives, government officials, and local border community members (Chen, 2023).

A minimum sample size of 30 participants was deemed appropriate for this qualitative inquiry. Although qualitative research did not rely on statistical generalizability, this number was guided by thematic saturation principles. According to (Guest, et al., 2020) data saturation where no new themes emerge, typically occurs

within 12 to 30 interviews. Smaller, well-targeted samples allow for rich, contextual, and in-depth exploration of complex social issues (Shepherd, 2016).

The final sample included; eight (8) journalists reporting on border conflict and peacebuilding initiatives, six (6) CSO representatives involved in peace advocacy and community reconciliation, six (6) government officials with roles in conflict resolution and policy and ten (10) border community members offering lived experiences from the conflict-affected region (Leiwakabessy, et al., 2025).

This purposive and stratified selection ensured maximum variation sampling, capturing multiple perspectives from across the conflict-affected zones, while maintaining feasibility given constraints of access, time, and budget (Chirambwi, 2024). Therefore, the achieved sample size was sufficient to enable deep thematic analysis and meet qualitative rigor expectations.

Case studies prioritized detailed understanding over broad representation (Paparini, et al., 2020) Practical constraints limited access to conflict-affected populations in the Moyo, Kajo-Keji border region. Triangulation; combining interviews, focus group discussion, and document reviews increased the strength of the study (Natow, 2020).

A smaller sample size facilitated in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (Hennink, et al., 2019). A minimum sample of 30 was adequate for saturation, with no new information emerging from additional research (Guest, et al., 2020).

The best sampling technique for assessing role of peace journalism in mitigating border conflicts between Moyo, Uganda and Kajo-Keji, South Sudan was a non-probability sampling technique, such as purposive sampling. This technique involved selecting respondents based on their expertise, experience or knowledge of the research topic (Sherwood & O'Donnell, 2018). It enabled the collection of detailed, contextualized data, which provided in-depth insights into the research questions (Lim, et al., 2024).

The technique also offered flexibility in terms of sample size and composition, thus allowing the researcher to adjust the sampling strategy as needed (Ahmed, 2024). The purposive sampling was cost-effective as it eliminated the need for random sampling and reduced the sample size (Campbell, et al., 2020) and (Tajik, et al., 2024). Nevertheless, it could result in a lack of generalizability as the sample might not be representative of the larger population (Ames, et al., 2019).

The sampling technique could be prone to bias as the researcher might select participants who confirmed their preconceived notions (Danie, et al., 2024). As such countermeasures as triangulation were used to authenticate the findings by collecting data from multiple sources including in-depth interviews, focus groups and document reviews (Natow, 2020)

In addition, member checking was used to verify the findings by sharing the results with participants and seeking their feedback (Osborne, et al., 2021). Reflexivity was used to acknowledge the researcher's biases and assumptions to take steps to mitigate their impact on the research process (Thurairajah, 2018).

The researcher conducted in-depth interviews with respondents such as journalists, editors and media managers who had reported on Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts as well as conducting focus group discussions with government, civil society and border community representatives and document reviews as elaborated hereunder:

In-depth interviews provided rich, detailed data; allow flexibility and probing. It enabled the researcher to establish rapport with participants (Broache, 2022). In-depth interviews provided rich, detailed data, which could offer nuanced insights into the research questions (Ames, et al., 2019). The In-depth interviews enabled the researcher to develop a contextual understanding of the case, including the social, cultural and historical context (Leonardi & Santschi, 2021). They were particularly useful for the exploratory studies, where the research questions were still evolving (Ahmed, 2024). Case studies typically involved small sample sizes, and in-depth interviews were well-suited for gathering detailed data from a small number of participants (Osborne, et al., 2021). However, analysing in-depth interviews data could be time-consuming and challenging, requiring

careful coding, theme identification and interpretation (Deterding & Waters, 2021). Such a variance was redressed by engaging in reflexivity, where the researcher acknowledged and reflected on own biases and assumptions to mitigate the impact of bias on the research process (Leonidis, 2025).

The researcher conducted Focus Group Discussions with civil society organisations' representatives, government officials and border community members to gather more in-depth information on their perceptions and attitudes on the role of peace journalism in mitigating border conflicts. Focus Group Discussions were suitable for exploring collective and individual opinions, attitudes and experiences such as community perceptions of peace journalism (Ciboh, 2024). The discussions were a highly suitable method for a case study, particularly when exploring complex, exact and context-dependent phenomena (Lattie, et al., 2018). They enabled the researcher to explore collective perspectives, experiences and opinions of a group of individuals, hence; providing a more comprehensive understanding of the research questions (Nyumba, et al., 2018) The Focus Group Discussions stimulated discussion and debate among participants, thus easing the exploration of different viewpoints, opinions and experiences (Akyildiz & Ahmed, 2021). The discussions were cost-effective and time-efficient, allowing the researcher to collect data from multiple participants in a single session (Lattie, et al., 2018).

Civil Society Organisations' Representatives provided insights into the role of peace journalism in promoting peace and conflict resolution as well as the challenges, journalists face in reporting on cross-border conflicts (Pinto & Bhadra, 2024). Government officials provided information on the government's policies and initiatives related to peace journalism and conflict resolution as well as the challenges, the government faces in promoting peace in the region (Hakorimana, 2020). Border community members provided first-hand information on the impact of peace journalism on their lives as well as their perceptions and attitudes towards peace journalism and conflict resolution (Yontucu, 2022). Conducting Focus Group Discussions with different groups provided triangulation, letting the researcher to corroborate the findings by comparing data from different sources (Fusch, et al., 2018). The discussions empowered participants by providing a platform for them to share their experiences, opinions and perspectives, which could contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the research questions (Torabian, 2025). The researcher conducted thematic analysis of the interviews and Focus Group Discussions as they provided a systematic and rigorous approach to data analysis, ensuring that the findings were reliable and effective (Guest, et al., 2017).

Document Reviews permitted a discreet data collection, which meant that the researcher did not influence the data collection process (Tennent & Gillett, 2023).

The reviews involved analysing existing secondary data from news articles, reports, academic journals and policy documents, which could provide valuable insights into the research questions (Cheong, et al., 2023). The Document Reviews were cost-effective as they eliminated the need for primary data collection (Ames, et al., 2019). 20 (Twenty) Document Reviews provided comprehensive data on the research questions including historical context, conflict dynamics and peace-building efforts. The reviews provided objective data as the researcher was not influencing the data collection process (Gasdia, 2024). The reviews were time-efficient as the researcher analysed existing documents without having to collect primary data (Osborne, et al., 2021). However, the Document Reviews might provide limited data, as the availability and quality of documents might be limited (Gasdia, 2024). Document Reviews might be prone to bias, as the documents might reflect the biases and perspectives of the authors (Ames, et al., 2019). They had contextual limitations as the documents might not provide sufficient context or background information on the research questions (Osborne, et al., 2021). As such, combining Document Reviews with other data collection methods such as In-Depth Interviews and Focus Group Discussions addressed the limitations of Document Reviews (Ames, et al., 2019).

Accordingly, the researcher adopted In-Depth Interviews Guide, Focus Group Discussions Guide and Documents Review Checklists for data collection as qualitative researchers used a variety of data collection instruments to gather rich detailed data (Osborne, et al., 2021).

The researcher used an Interview Guide; a semi-structured interview guide to gather information from journalists, editors and media managers who reported on Moyo-Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts since 2014 (Silverman, 2017). In-depth interviews were a qualitative data collection method, which involved one-on-one,

semi-structured conversations with participants to answer the research questions on how journalists applied approaches aligned with principles of peace journalism in reporting on Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts since 2014, how peace-oriented media coverage impacted on public perception and attitude toward Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts since 2014 and what challenges journalists faced in implementing peace journalism in Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts since 2014? This method allowed for detailed exploration of individual perspectives, experiences and attitudes regarding the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts. The flexibility of In-Depth Interviews enabled the researcher to probe deeper into specific issues, uncovering diverse insights, which might not emerge in group settings. This method was particularly suited for engaging with key stakeholders such as journalists as it provided a safe space for participants to share sensitive or personal information (Rutledge & Hogg, 2020).

The researcher used Focus Group Discussions Guide; a semi-structured discussion guide to gather information from border community members, government officials and civil society organisations' representatives who were affected by Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts since 2014 (Silverman, 2017). The discussions involved moderated group interactions with 3–12 participants who shared similar characteristics or interests. The discussions were valuable for capturing collective perspectives, fostering dialogue and identifying shared concerns or consensus on the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts.

The dynamic nature of Focus Group Discussions encouraged participants to build on one another's ideas to provide a rich understanding through the research questions on how journalists applied approaches aligned with principles of peace journalism in reporting on Moyo, Kajo-Keji border conflicts since 2014, how peace-oriented media coverage impacted on public perception and attitude toward Moyo, Kajo-Keji border conflicts since 2014 and what challenges journalists faced in implementing peace journalism in Moyo, Kajo-Keji border conflicts since 2014? This method was particularly effective for engaging border community members, civil society organisations' representatives and government officials as it allowed them to express their experiences and opinions in a collaborative setting (Leeuwen, 2016). Additionally, the Focus Group Discussions were useful in conflict zones, where access to participants might be limited, as they enabled data collection in a single session (Nyumba, et al., 2018).

Document reviews were cost-effective they eliminated too much need for primary data collection (Ames, et al., 2019) and so, Document Review Checklist was used to systematically analyse the documents including news articles, reports, academic journals and policy documents to ensure that the data collection process was rigorous, reliable and valid (Armstrong, 2021). Document review involved the systematic analysis of existing written materials such as media reports, policy documents and organizational records relating to the research objectives to answer the research questions on how journalists used approaches aligned with principles of peace journalism to report on Moyo, Kajo-Keji border conflicts since 2014, how peace-oriented media coverage impacted on public perception and attitude toward the Moyo, Kajo-Keji border conflicts since 2014, what challenges journalists faced in implementing peace journalism in the context of the Moyo, Kajo-Keji border conflicts since 2014, what policy and regulatory frameworks governed media reporting on the Moyo, Kajo-Keji border conflicts since 2014, how policy and regulatory frameworks impacted on peace journalism and what role civil society organizations such as NGOs, community organizations and other stakeholders played in promoting peace journalism and conflict resolution in Moyo, Kajo-Keji border region since 2014? This method provided contextual background and supported triangulation by corroborating the data collected through interviews and Focus Group Discussions.

The Document Reviews were particularly useful for examining how peace journalism was accomplished in the Moyo, Kajo-Keji region since 2014 as it allowed the researcher to analyse media content and identified patterns or gaps in reporting. This method also ensured that the study was grounded in factual evidence, enhancing the credibility of the findings (Gasdia, 2024).

The combination of In-Depth Interviews, Focus Group Discussions and Document Reviews ensured a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach to data collection (Khan, et al., 2025). In-Depth Interviews provided depth and individual insights, Focus Group Discussions captured collective perspectives and fostered dialogue (Nyumba, et al., 2018). The Document Reviews offered contextual and factual foundation (Gai, et al., 2024). Together, these methods enabled triangulation to enhance the rationality and reliability of the study's

findings (Ahmed, 2024). This approach was principally suited for exploring the complex and context-specific role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts since 2014.

The researcher applied pilot testing by conducting pilot interviews and focus group discussions to test the data collection instruments, identified potential biases and refined the research protocol (Ames, et al., 2019). Data validation by using techniques such as member checking, peer debriefing and triangulation was made to corroborate the data and ensured that it accurately reflected the participants' experiences and perspectives (Bang, 2024). Data cleaning by carefully reviewing and cleaning the data to ensure that it was accurate, complete and consistent (Wang & Wang, 2019). Coding and Theme Development by using a systematic and transparent approach to coding and theme development was made (Deterding & Waters, 2021). Inter-Coder Reliability by using inter-coder reliability checks to ensure that multiple coders were interpreting the data in a consistent and reliable manner (Halpin, 2024). Data storage and security by ensuring that the data was stored securely and backed up regularly to prevent loss or corruption (Ahanger, 2024) and Data Anonymization to protect the participants' identities and maintain confidential (Husband, 2020) to minimize biases and errors; ensured that the data accurately reflected the participants' experiences and perspectives, increased the reliability and strength of the findings and maintained the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants.

The researcher met the supervisor to discuss and agree on the dissertation and its content, proceeded to defend it before an academic panel of the university. The researcher earlier on received data collection letter from the Postgraduate Programme Administration of Victoria University. The researcher proceeded to relevant Cross-Border government authorities, who endorsed the letters for the conduct of the research within the geographical scope. However, (Abubakar, et al., 2025) the researcher conducted a comprehensive review of existing research on the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts since 2014. The determination of research design such as a case study approach and sampling strategy and data collection methods (Sherwood & O'Donnell, 2018) was weighed in. Sampling by selecting a sample of journalists from media outlets, government officials, experts from civil society organisations and border community residents affected by border conflicts was decided (Lee, et al., 2021). The researcher interviewed journalists and had Focus Group Discussions with selected categories affected since 2014 by the border conflicts (Abubakar, et al., 2025). The researcher conducted case studies of media outlets in the affected zone of the cross-border conflicts (Lu & Wan, 2018). The researcher conducted document reviews, which permitted a discreet data collection without the researcher's influencing the data collection process (Tennent & Gillett, 2023). The document reviews involved analysing existing secondary data from news articles, reports, academic journals and policy documents, which provided valuable insights into the research questions (Bryman, 2016). The researcher also used In-Depth Interviews and Focus Group Discussions. He analysed the interviews data using thematic analysis (Sherwood & O'Donnell, 2018). The researcher verified the accuracy and consistency of the data through member checking, peer debriefing and data triangulation (Lynch & Tiripelli, 2022). The researcher coordinated with the supervisor from time to time and then finally submitted the findings, discussions, recommendations and conclusions in a report for defence and approval (Ramazanova, et al., 2024).

The researcher used thematic analysis to analyse the media coverage of the cross-border conflict and identify patterns and themes since 2014 (Halpin, 2024). Thematic analysis enabled the researcher to identify patterns and themes in the data, which provided insights into the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts (Nowell, et al., 2017).

Thematic analysis allowed for an in-depth examination of the data, enabling the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the complex issues surrounding peace journalism and cross-border conflicts (Nowell, et al., 2017). Thematic analysis was a flexible and adaptable method, letting the researcher to adjust the analysis to suit the specific needs of the study (Nowell, et al., 2017). Thematic analysis provided rich and detailed insights into the data, enabling the researcher to develop a nuanced understanding of the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts (Nowell, et al., 2017). Thematic analysis allowed for a contextual understanding of the data, taking into account the specific social, cultural, and historical context of the study (Nowell, et al., 2017). It enhanced the trustworthiness and credibility of the findings as it recognizes a transparent and systematic analysis of the data (Nowell, et al., 2017). The thematic analysis was a qualitative research method used to identify, analyse and interpret patterns and themes within data (Deterding & Waters, 2021). It involved several steps such as reading and re-reading the data to become familiar with the content,

assigning codes to the data to identify patterns and themes, identifying themes, which emerged from the coded data, refining the themes to ensure they were clear and concise and naming the themes to provide a clear description of the findings (Nowell, et al., 2017). For the compatibility of thematic analysis, the researcher used Nvivo as a qualitative data analysis software that provided tools for coding, theme identification and data visualization as a qualitative data analysis software that offered features for coding, memoing and network analysis (Rosen, et al., 2023). The researcher as well used Restream for online audio transcription into text for convenience of time-saving and accuracy (Das, 2024).

RESULTS

The data collected through interviews, focus group discussions and document reviews revealed several themes and patterns about the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts as per the research questions on application of approaches aligned with principles of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts, impact of peace-oriented media coverage on public perception and attitudes on reporting Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts and challenges journalists face in implementing peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts since 2014 up to 2025.

The response to the interviews, focus group discussions and document reviews met 100% and further justified by contextual relevance, data saturation and participant engagement.

Collaboration Approaches

The study unveiled collaborative approaches involving information sharing. Nearly all eight respondents representing 90% in the in-depth interviews asserted the application of collaborative approaches by information sharing with media colleagues, press secretaries and other key government officials across borders of Uganda and South Sudan.

"One, the aspect of peace journalism gives us a mandate to cross check information from the both sides. When information comes to us, we always balance our story by giving a side view from other parts there. Of course, the conflict along the border has two communities. The leaders of the both sides were always put into cross checking in such information. When, we get information, we always verify this information", one male respondent declared during the in-depth interviews.

Another male journalist agreed to collaborative approach as a core practice;

"Of course, you have to, do fact checking…verify information from both sides to ensure accuracy and fairness."

A similar response was shared by a female;

"…Then they can call their counterparts, say, in Kajo-Keji to tell them what has happened. Mhmm. Yeah. And another advantage is this radio would cut across borders. Mhmm. So even people there would listen…"

Some stakeholders equally subscribed to the collaborative approaches to cross-border peace journalism;

"Like, for example, if the media personnel of Moyo must be in a good relationship with the media personnel of Kajo-Keji, they can easily share information. Mhmm. And in that way, you will find that in our discussions like right now, you find many listeners analysing the radio from here…" a group of government officials affirmed.

A review of a feature story by South Sudan's Waakhe Simon and Uganda's Scovin Iceta on The Niles, entitled, "Unresolved border dispute haunts local communities" evidenced the collaborative approach to peace journalism in mitigating Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflict.

"Historic differences of opinion are now leading to tension between South Sudanese Kuku and the Ugandan Ma'di border communities. This tension has escalated with violent clashes in Kajo-Keji and Moyo. In 2014,

one of the deadliest and most bloody conflicts broke out between the two communities. According to local officials, at least 20 people were killed, and 200 huts were torched.”

The collaborative approaches were not used in isolation, the above review indicated conflict-sensitive reporting flashing back in the impact of the border conflict on humanity suggesting the need for peaceful resolution.

Conflict Sensitive Approaches

The study indeed revealed conflict-sensitive approaches including creating understanding of root causes and truthfulness. One journalist like others affirmed how conflict-sensitivity was applied in reporting Moyo, Kajo-Keji border conflicts in 2014;

“Like, for us, we knew the numbers of people who were killed there that time. Mhmm. But we felt we cannot give that accurate number Mhmm. At that particular time because it will provoke Mhmm. The what? It will keep on provoking more. Mhmm. Yeah. Mhmm. And then how we selected some pictures to be published. Mhmm. Selected. We don't collect everything. Mhmm. Others, we keep it. We kept it for ourselves. Mhmm. Yeah.

Okay. So you were selective in the information. Yeah. Information dissemination. Like, numbers of casualties. And the animals looted at and number of casualties and, also you avoided what we call sensational pictures. Sensational images”.

A focus group of government officials, among others, affirmed on the approach with precaution for journalists;

“Secondly, accuracy is also needed . . . Because if you are not accurate and, you are listening from other people, you don't know whether the source is the right one or it is the wrong one. And then at the end of the day, you're getting yourself inciting violence without knowing the source of the problem. So as a journalist, you must always be very, very careful. And then, you follow your principles. You must also be principled. You should look at your principles as a journalist.”

Another pattern of the conflict-sensitive approaches the journalists in relation to peace journalism was adherence to truthfulness.

“Best of all that is the one of accuracy. It's a core value. Accuracy is a core value and fairness. Of course, as I said earlier, the journalists cannot stop conflict to exist. But it's through, accuracy, and fairness”, a male respondent asserted referring to truthfulness.

“And avoid working on assumptions. Avoid. Working on assumptions, rumours. Yeah. Assumptions. And avoid indoor reporting. Desk reporting. Mhmm. Avoid desktop. I said desk reporting. Where you sit here and rely on whatever is coming on through social media. Mhmm. Let's get a quote here. Have clear what they say, reliance. Have and then have clear Online information. And then have clear, evidential, reliable sources of information. Yeah. Evidence. Basic information. Evidence based information”, a female respondent scribed her views.

“At all costs, learn to balance. Be sure… Free and fair action…Like, free journalists. Be factual, accurate, don't work on assumptions”, a female respondent asserted.

“Focus on great positive change in the community. So as far as Pacis is concerned and the program that I think you've read in the station”- a male respondent emphasized.

In addition to conflict-sensitive approaches, the study revealed the application of conflict transformation approaches comprising community-based approaches, moderation, and mediation of border conflicts.

Conflict Transformation Approaches

A male journalist from a faith-based media house cited running a cross-border peace forum on radio for transformation of the border conflict into peace-building efforts;

"In the peace forum, basing on the conduct of relationship between Moyo and the Kajo-Keji community that, actually went into conflict. And then, the stories, the topics that usually we develop include, forgiveness, reconciliation. What about forgiveness? Giving us reconciliation. Mhmm. And then, peace, togetherness, co coexistence".

The same male respondent testified on the application of conflict transformation approach during 2014 Moyo, Kajo-Keji border conflicts;

"So the rumours that were circulating from Moyo side, there were people here, and the rumours that were circulating back that there were people who were already murdered and they were dead. They were killed by the community of people here. That was the kind of information, actually, a propaganda that was circulating all around. So what happened is I had to go direct to the people who are alive. I record their voices and all they testify. Then I get it to edit it properly, put it on the radio, and then the people from that side, they were able to hear the voices of the people who were reported to have been killed, who were alleged to have been killed. And so when they hear their voices, it reduced their tension and harmony was restored."

From another dimension of the conflict transformation approaches, journalists and community figures acted as neutral facilitators who guide peaceful dialogue, reduce tensions and mediate disputes across conflicting parties.

"This is very particular program, 'Fix My Community' …Was a platform where people would call and discuss even the current issues happening…And so these issues of the border conflicts. They started surfacing, I think, from the time I went on air up to date. Mhmm. Yeah. Mhmm. And respective leaders Mhmm. be it security, be it political or civil. Mhmm. are there, we can then take action, okay, accordingly", a female respondent asserted.

"You know, the radio is taken to be as a gospel truth, whatever comes from where. Yeah. And then how did we do this? By peace spot radio messages, talk shows", the female respondent added.

Not only had the journalists concentrated on the key approaches, but also applied some reporting techniques to cultivate peaceful coexistence between the two communities.

Contextual and Dialogic Reporting

The study found out reporting or dialogue that explored the historical, social, and political causes of the conflict, aiming to promote a deeper, shared understanding among stakeholders and the public.

"I've at least been involved in issues to do with resolution of the land conflict, especially in Abaya. Where there was a conflict between Kuku community and some, you know, Ma'di community over a plot of land… The one for peace and conflict resolution. At, Afoji Border Post. After us paying a visit to Abaya on the contested land", a male respondent disclosed.

"Another example is actually the issue of the border demarcation where they also, leaders of both Moyo and Central Equatoria State remind their governments to, you know, expedite the process of demarcating the boundary", the same male respondent added.

"… South Sudan and Uganda to harmonize Border dispute", another male respondent asserted.

"Yeah. Of course. And there was also demonstration, peaceful demonstration that was held. Mhmm. It was led by the two MPs", a male respondent pointed out.

Akin to the above approaches, the study uncovered reporting methods, which engaged directly with local communities to ensure culturally grounded, inclusive, and participatory storytelling. These approaches amplify grassroots voices and prioritize community perspectives in peace journalism.

"In regards to the border demarcation and also issues to do with the land conflict. Mhmm. So I'm so much involved in, I'm so much interested in covering issues to do with the environment, health. Border conflicts, land conflicts", a male respondent revealed. *"...Illegal logging along the border"*, another male respondent disclosed.

"Environment, Health, Education. Science and technology or innovations," a male respondent asserted.

"Well, to me, actually, peace journalism refers to the aspect of committing yourself to exploring root causes of conflicts in order to create opportunities for society to consider and value nonviolent responses to the conflict", a male respondent defined.

In contrast, a fraction of the respondents including civil society organizations, government and border community residents cited some anomaly of incitement of violence by some journalists and media houses.

"Then it is Voice of the Nile. Voice of the Nile (VON). Yeah. Yes. Yeah. Okay. So The one on the side of Moyo SS. That one there. Mhmm. So, that radio has made so many people to wake up and go and fight each other. Mhmm. Simply because, they were looking at a journalist. They asked you know how people always look at a journalist? Because they always think whatever comes from a journalist is the right thing. Where did you hear it? I heard it from the radio. Definitely, so therefore, if you are reporting for peace journalism. Please stop being biased. And, of course, you promote peace rather than promoting violence in the community", a group cited a case of biases in media houses and journalists during 2014 violence.

Overall, however, the study revealed application of positive approaches aligned with the principles of peace journalism.

Furthermore, by examining the impact of peace-oriented media coverage on public perception and attitudes towards Moyo, Kajo-Keji border conflicts, the study found out the following:

Evidence of Peace Agreements and Negotiation Outcomes

The study discovered evidence of peace agreements and negotiation outcomes measured by formal peace processes: signed agreements, negotiations, or peacebuilding resolutions influenced by media or without participation of media fraternity.

"There are also series of meetings and conferences that often the two community members often do come together", a male respondent asserted in relation to audience and stakeholder engagement.

"And then we also have the cross border dialogues by cross border peace committee has been set in place", a female respondent indicated.

Impact of Peace Journalism Style

The study also found out the effectiveness of peace-oriented media coverage attributed to solution-oriented, impartial or ethically responsible reporting style.

"Yeah. It at least saw a sign of hope, and there was reconciliation. Yeah. Because the team came from Central Equatoria, and they also team from this side... And many parties were involved, religious leaders, cultural leaders..." a male journalist asserted.

"....we tried on the radio to use the radio as a means for people to get information that promote peace, information that gives people the confidence, information that gives people the sense of thinking we are together, although we have some other differences", he added.

Peace journalism restored interpersonal and institutional trust, rebuilt social fabric, and nurtured emotional resilience. There were shifts in public perception, which increased confidence, reduced prejudice and promoted inter-community respect and understanding were recorded.

"Peace journalism is a means of gathering and disseminating information that promotes coexistence among communities…Who have a long history of being together", a male respondent observed.

"…These stakeholders' conferences that were held in.2023, 2024 and now 2025…" A female respondent cited.

"The communities living along the common border. They always have that panic, but because of this kind of engagements and the approaches, it has reduced that aspect of the panic among the public. And then, I'm seeing there's some bit of hope that is now coming between the two communities", a male respondent asserted.

Media-Induced Action and Policy Change

Respondents generally attested to tangible outcomes such as joint patrols, agreements, scheduled resolutions attributed to media efforts.

"…There was a… because after those stories, I'll publish those stories, you know, a lot of engagement that took place. For example, the IGP's, the both IGP's are in Uganda and the South Sudan came together. What should be done? But before that also, other leaders were involved like the Deputy Prime Minister. That was Moses Ali. He also came, engaged the team from South Sudan and the teams from here. I think the meeting was even held here…" A male respondent observed.

"The army from that side and the one from this side started patrolling together along the border", the male respondent added attributing to the action to media reporting.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Willingness to Engage

Respondents made descriptions of how media houses assessed the openness of both leaders and citizens to engage with peace messages.

"There are also series of meetings and conferences that often the two community members often do come together", a male respondent asserted in relation to the willing audience and stakeholders' engagement.

"And then we also have the cross border dialogues by cross border peace committee has been set in place", a female respondent indicated.

Positive Audience Perception of Media

The study found out that there was public trust in the media as reliable peace actors or advisors in conflict mitigation.

"I know. Faith based. Faith based media", a group of government officials recognized the media impact among others.

"There are also series of meetings and conferences that often the two community members often do come together", a male respondent asserted in relation to audience and stakeholder engagement.

"….we tried on the radio to use the radio as a means for people to get information that promote peace, information that gives people the confidence, information that gives people the sense of thinking we are together, although we have some other differences", another male respondent stressed.

"I think when the negotiation process started, the two parties were involved. Then I saw at least the positiveness of the what? The leaders, they acted very fast. And to me, the channel they used was very helpful", a male respondent recalled the influence of news and event-based coverage.

"One, issues of peace that I'm talking about is of coexistence", a male respondent disclosed.

"We brought in different religious sectors to preach peace…We had drama, music, dance, and drama recorded from various schools. Where children from both South Sudan and Uganda as well going to school here", a female respondent asserted.

"Music, dance, and drama. …They were focusing on peaceful coexistence", a female respondent cited.

Overall, the impact of peace oriented media coverage was noticed in the decline of tension and mistrust. Before intensified media efforts, there were alarming reports of phobia.

The study noted reports of improved relations, reduced hostility or conflict symptoms as indicators of media success.

"Yeah. It at least saw a sign of hope, and there was reconciliation. Yeah. Because the team came from Central Equatoria, and they also team from this side… And many parties were involved, religious leaders, cultural leaders…" A male respondent observed.

"And then we also have the cross border dialogues by cross border peace committee has been set in place", a female respondent indicated.

And I want to say there's even a cross border trade", a female respondent asserted among others.

However, study discovered that the sustainability of the impact of peace oriented media coverage remained at stake, given the crests of stumbling blocks to the effective implementation of peace journalism in the border regions.

Challenges Faced by Journalists Covering Cross-Border Conflicts

The study unearthed risks, dangers, and hostility journalists encountered when reporting on border conflicts. It recognized the challenges inherent in peace-oriented media coverage during volatile conflict situations.

"Some of the information will become distorted. Instead of getting the from the horse's mouth or from the leader's mouth, it becomes always challenging. Mhmm. We get a second hand information from the press secretaries. The moment a press secretary gives information, definitely, he gives that, information in a second hand", a male respondent among others cited challenges.

"One is the safety concerns…these areas of physical harm is priority for some people. In the community could be in Uganda side or South Sudan side… Yes… Intimidations." Another male respondent observed among many others.

"Limited resources and, capacity…" All respondents agreed.

"Communication sometimes becomes a problem. Mhmm. So that is a very big challenge just like one example I gave you when I went to Kajo-Keji and, the vice president by then decided to speak Arabic and Bari, of which I don't understand the language", a male respondent like others cited language barrier as a major challenge.

Institutional and Political Barriers

These challenges stemmed from external control, censorship, and systemic limitations that restrict journalistic freedom and impartiality.

"The example is about two years ago, there was a meeting that was held at Jale Border. And that was concerning government I mean, border issues. A high level government delegation was sent from Juba to make assessment about the border. And so there we, as journalists from this side, we were there, and then also another journalist came from the neighbouring districts of Moyo to cover the meeting. But that journalist was

sent back. He was denied. He was sent back. He was not allowed to cover a meeting", a male respondent narrated.

"And then, the issue of also too much protocols, especially in the sense that you need to get an information from someone, but you needed to go through a number of protocols to reach to these people", another male respondent among others decried.

"Intimidation by some leaders. Yeah. Some warnings…Yeah. The government leaders. Mhmm. Because, like, in some of their meetings, related to this conflict, whenever we are called, they warn us. We don't want to hear this one on air. Oh, it's a gun for you. What? Use those threatening words. Like we'll come for you later", recounted one male respondent.

Capacity and Resource Limitations

The lack of skills, tools, and financial or logistical support hindered effective peace journalism.

"Most of us including myself whom you are actually interviewing, I have not had really, the formal training on journalism. Although I had some training on programming and production, but I have not had any training on journalism apart from attending some seminars and workshops, which actually sometimes is not to the point in order that can allow one to professionally perform well. So there's really need for training for the journalists, especially at our level here in our media house. There's that great need", a male respondent disclosed.

"Tension as South Sudan claims ownership of 20 villages in Uganda", The Observer made a polarizing headline.

"Meanwhile, in Kochi sub-county, the villages that are being claimed by South Sudanese authorities include Fitina Mbaya, Alema, Milia, Feyo, and Gobiri. James Gale, LC III vice chairperson for Kerwa sub-county explains that over the past few months, South Sudanese authorities have been forcibly allocating land to their people in the affected villages, which are deep inside Ugandan territory", The Observer made one-sided reporting without balancing from South Sudanese sources.

Safety and Psychological Risks

Threats to physical and emotional well-being, especially while reporting from conflict zones.

"Intimidation by some leaders. Yeah. Some warnings…Yeah. The government leaders. Mhmm. Because, like, in some of their meetings, related to this conflict, whenever we are called, they warn us. We don't want to hear this one on air. Oh, it's a gun for you. What? Use those threatening words. Like we'll come for you later", a male respondent testified.

"I can remember, when those were arrested, they were even tortured", another male respondent recalled.

"They will threaten you. They will, you know, interrogate you to produce more evidence", a group cited a case.

Societal and Cultural Resistance

Highlighted issues related to public perception, media culture, and internal biases among journalists.

"Then it is Voice of the Nile. Voice of the Nile (VON). Yeah. Yes. Yeah. Okay. So The one on the side of Moyo SS. That one there. Mhmm. So, that radio has made so many people to wake up and go and fight each other. Mhmm. Simply because, they were looking at a journalist. They asked you know how people always look at a journalist? Because they always think whatever comes from a journalist is the right thing. Where did you hear it? I heard it from the radio. Definitely, so therefore, if you are reporting for peace journalism. Please stop being biased. And, of course, you promote peace rather than promoting violence in the community", a group cited a case of biases in media houses and journalists during 2014 violence.

"...you journalists get away from here. This is a security matter. It's not supposed to be. Mhmm", a male respondent cited societal resistance against information disclosure.

"The NTV journalist Yeah. They poured the petrol on him. He was almost to be burnt. It is only the journalist from interview. Yeah. And that was at Metu. It was, almost one. Survived because of the intervention of the Metu DLC that time", a male respondent narrated.

Safety, Access, and Logistical Barriers

Physical threats, limited mobility, and restricted access to accurate or official information especially in conflict-prone or border areas.

And so there we, as journalists from this side, we were there, and then also another journalist came from the neighbouring districts of Moyo to cover the meeting. But that journalist was sent back. He was denied. He was sent back. He was not allowed to cover a meeting", a male respondent narrated.

"Because I can remember, when those were arrested, they were even tortured. Mhmm. Yeah. They were tortured, detained. And then, of course, also torture, detention. Yeah. You can definitely have mentioned. Yeah. Yeah. And then, also, let me say gadgets. Lack of gadgets. Some information we are not able to capture because we lack some gadgets. And there was challenge of transport because sometimes the leadership may be gonna have them, but still we fail to capture those stories and we sometimes we struggle", another male respondent explained.

"One is the safety concerns...these areas of physical harm is priority for some people. In the community could be in a Uganda side or South Sudan side... Yes. Mhmm. Intimidations. So there's, safe concern relating to physical harm Yes. From both sides.... For me, I like citing them ... Yes. Even those in authority...Yeah..." a male respondent recalled.

"Especially issues to do with, you know, issues involving security and security matters. I think on several occasions, I've also been a victim of that. Whereby you feel like getting some information. On certain specific issues, and then they tell you, you journalists get away from here. This is a security matter. It's not supposed to be..." a male respondent submitted.

"That is limited accessibility or limited access to accurate information. Then you have also brought in the point of fear. Fear of insecurity", another group added.

At most the study revealed that most journalists in the border regions lacked formal training in peace journalism or conflict-sensitive reporting. This led to unethical or biased reporting, sensationalism, and failure to uphold journalistic standards in conflict contexts.

"Most of us including myself whom you are actually interviewing, I have not had really, the formal training on journalism. Although I had some training on programming and production, but I have not had any training on journalism apart from attending some seminars and workshops, which actually sometimes is not to the point in order that can allow one to professionally perform well. So there's really need for training for the journalists, especially at our level here in our media house. There's that great need", a male respondent disclosed.

Institutional and Political Support

Cooperation between governments of Uganda and South Sudan indicated political will from leaders, strategic security at border points and support from humanitarian and civil society organizations. These institutional and political frameworks created a bit of an enabling environment for peace journalism to thrive.

"I remember when I did that story ...the Moyo leaders petitioned the government over delayed demarcation? It attracted attention of European Union. Yes. It attracted the attention of European Union. Then immediately, another reporter from Kitgum also released a similar story. Then, they come up with the entry to give funds for that demarcation", a male respondent recalled.

"Political will is an opportunity. There's a political will. We can see our politicians are now talking language of peace in most cases", a group observed.

"You know, obvious for government is to create a peaceful environment. Okay. And then also provide information for journalists..." a group asserted.

Media Infrastructure and Resources

The study discovered the availability and access to essential tools and platforms for peace journalism, such as local radio stations, equipment for journalists, shared infrastructures, and skilled human resources. There were employment opportunities specifically for peace journalists and training programmes to build their capacity as respondents disclosed;

"The existence of the media houses. If this one, they look for existence of local, radio stations. It's an opportunity." a group identified.

"I have built a relationship with the media practitioners in South Sudan. And I sometimes I do collaboration story within them", a male respondent affirmed.

"Actually, ideally, I'm saying that you know, in peace journalism, if you want to provide solutions. You should know what type of messages you're providing. So to me, through formation of platforms, associations between the Moyo and Kajo-Keji media personnel would help to promote easy sharing of information. And that we will send a positive image to both the two sides", a group submitted.

Journalistic Collaboration and Capacity Building

The exchange of information among journalists, advocacy efforts by media professionals and training opportunities, which enhanced skills and promoted peace reporting. This theme emphasized strengthening the journalistic community's ability to effectively cover peace-oriented content.

"...Because, I remember collaboration. I did collaboration. Collaboration, it says, one, the media fraternity. Two, even the security system. Collaboration with media. Media and the security system. And then security of the both sides..." a male respondent asserted.

"For example, Radio Pacis, at least once in a while, they engage the teams for some training...Uganda Human Rights Network for the journalists. Those ones are the people who engage the journalist-military meetings and trainings", a male respondent recalled.

"First of all, I collaborate with other media houses, especially issues to do with the journalists. I mostly collaborate with some journalists", another male respondent stressed.

Community Engagement and Social Cohesion

Public demand for peace, existing peaceful coexistence in border communities, community dialogues, and social ties like intermarriages.

These social dynamics fostered a grassroots' environment, which supported and sustained peace journalism by encouraging local acceptance and participation.

"....we tried on the radio to use the radio as a means for people to get information that promote peace, information that gives people the confidence, information that gives people the sense of thinking we are together, although we have some other differences", a male respondent asserted.

"Cultural habits have been assimilated on either side. Positive. Cultural habits you say adapted. Assimilated. For example, the marriages, the naming the foods, other foods and way of life", a female respondent observed.

Training opportunities

Peace Journalism Foundation's News Project: The Voice for Peace and Development (VPD) could offer a platform for promoting peace journalism, with a focus on radio's role in conflict resolution and community building. They had featured journalists from Uganda and South Sudan, showcasing the potential for cross-border peace journalism initiatives.

"Aciro discussed some of her foundation's upcoming projects, including a peace journalism project in South Sudan (before elections currently scheduled for December) and in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. This is in addition to their ongoing work, including two outlets which regularly publish peace stories of success, focused on peace, refugees, humanitarian and environmental work, and development journalism: Voice for Peace Development (VPD) and Refugee Online News (RON). On the local level, the Foundation has established six community peace clubs in Uganda, which assist in the nonviolent resolution of disputes through engagement with communities and community leaders. In the future, the Peace Journalism Foundation plans to expand their cross-border collaborative peace journalism projects throughout East Africa, building on their considerable current work", a document review indicated.

"Except, other media houses, they engage their staff. For example, Radio Pacis, at least once in a while, they engage the teams for some training. And then they were doing a time. Uganda Human Rights Network for the journalist. Those ones are the people who engage the journalist-military meetings and trainings. But apart from that… it is rare that we will get opportunities for those trainings to transform", a male respondent explored opportunities for related trainings.

Bilateral cooperation (policy and regulatory frameworks)

Initiatives like the Uganda–South Sudan Border Committee facilitated coordinated responses to conflict reporting and border management.

"…These stakeholders' conferences that were held in.2023, 2024 and now 2025…" A female respondent cited.

"The theories, the negative theories that people have about the relationship between …so we have joined initiatives in, like, in sports and trade", a group among others asserted.

"The two governments actually…Agreeing to beef up security along the common borders. To prevent criminality across the two nations. To prevent criminality across the two nations", a male respondent narrated.

Editorial policies

Media organizations should establish editorial policies, which promote conflict-sensitive reporting, including checks and balances to control harmful influences on cross-border communication.

"…avoid indoor reporting. Mhmm. Desk reporting. Mhmm. Avoid desktop. I said desk reporting. Where you sit here and rely on whatever is coming on through social media", a female respondent stressed.

"So often in our reporting, in our program presentation, we develop program that promote peace among the two communities of Moyo and Kajo-Keji", a male respondent among others commented on matters of policies.

International norms

Peace journalism principles aligned with international media freedom and human rights standards, offering a framework for improved local media governance.

"The policy and regulatory frameworks governing media reporting on the Moyo, Kajo-Keji border conflicts include agreements and memoranda of understanding between South Sudan and Uganda aimed at resolving

border disputes and promoting peace. For example, in September 2024, Uganda and South Sudan signed a border management pact to enhance border security and resolve conflicts", a document review indicated.

"You know, obvious for government is to create a peaceful environment. Okay. And then also provide information for journalists", a group revealed conventional government norms.

"The two governments actually…Agreeing to beef up security along the common borders. To prevent criminality across the two nations. To prevent criminality across the two nations", a male respondent added.

Support for promotion of peace journalism from civil society organizations, governments and border communities

"…need for the conducive environments…" a group submitted.

"The example is I was also involved in covering some of the conference. Mhmm. And all the meetings, deliberations, will I do like, for instance, when the 2014 conflict erupted between the Moyo and Kajo-Keji community, the two communities were already in tension not until the leaders had to settle and set for a meeting that was held in multipurpose hall", a male respondent recounted the support offered me to effect peace journalism.

Capacity Building and Collaboration among Journalists

Activities, which strengthen journalists' skills and promote teamwork, including collaboration among journalists, sharing news bulletins, discussion of challenges with solutions, and providing visibility and equipment to enhance reporting quality.

"…Because, I remember collaboration. I did collaboration. Collaboration, it says, one, the media fraternity. Two, even the security system. Collaboration with media. Media and the security system. And then security of the both sides…" a male respondent asserted.

"…I was already in good terms with one or two of, you know, the journalists around, they were able to help me translate and at least have something to…So that is how we always coordinate", another male respondent attested to collaboration efforts.

Creating a Safe and Conducive Environment

Ensuring the safety and security of journalists, establishing regulations for journalistic integrity, protecting journalists in conflict zones, and creating a supportive environment for peace journalism to thrive.

"You know, obvious for government is to create a peaceful environment. Okay. And then also provide information for journalists", a group submitted.

"My recommendation is that the journalists will be able to report exactly. That's what we want to achieve. And the focus should be for peace. Because if we don't attain peace, we don't achieve", a group member among others confirmed.

"The two governments actually…Agreeing to beef up security along the common borders. To prevent criminality across the two nations. To prevent criminality across the two nations", a male respondent recalled.

Infrastructure and Communication Enhancement

Improvements in telecommunication and road networks that enable journalists to access and report on border areas effectively, as well as regular border meetings that facilitate cross-border dialogue and coordination.

"…These stakeholders' conferences that were held in.2023, 2024 and now 2025…" A female respondent cited.

"Like, for example, you find journalists who want to travel from here, actually becomes a problem, maybe its insecurity. But when security is provided by the government, in fact, it becomes easy for people to move from

here to Moyo and even for people from Moyo here. So this way, it will also promote peace journalism”, a group among others scribed to communication enhancement.

Community Engagement and Information Accuracy

Awareness activities to educate communities on peace journalism, facilitating dialogues to promote understanding, and ensuring the dissemination of accurate and reliable information to build trust and support peace efforts.

“Through talk shows. One hour's talk show. And some of those leaders would even be with us in the field”, a female respondent cited.

“Well, to me, actually, peace journalism refers to the aspect of committing yourself to exploring root causes of conflicts in order to create opportunities for society to consider and value nonviolent responses to the conflict”, a male respondent subscribed.

“I've at least been involved in issues to do with resolutions of the land conflict, especially in Abaya where there was a conflict between Kuku community and some, you know, Ma'di community over a plot of land”, the respondent added.

Role of Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community organizations and other stakeholders in promoting peace journalism and conflict resolution

Advocacy and Policy Influence

NGOs could play a key role in advocating for stronger policies, which protect journalists and promote ethical, peace-supporting journalism practices. This could help create a safer and more responsible media environment conducive to peace journalism.

“NGOs advocate for policy changes and reforms, which promote peace and conflict resolution, holding governments accountable for their actions. Emphasize the importance of “advocacy and policy change in promoting peace journalism” (Chris, et al., 2021) as verified from document review.

“Granting freedom of, speech and expression…Financial support. Security. Financial support to the journalists. Providing, or provision of safety and security…” a group asserted.

Training and Capacity Building

NGOs and community organizations could provide training, workshops, mentorships, and cross-border exchanges for journalists to enhance their skills and understanding of peace journalism principles. This improves the quality and impact of media coverage in conflict-sensitive contexts.

“NGOs provide training and capacity-building programmes for journalists, community leaders and residents to promote conflict-sensitive reporting and peacebuilding. According to (Abubakar, et al., 2025) *“training and capacity-building programmes are essential for promoting conflict-sensitive journalism”* as found from a document review.

“Capacity building for journalists on peace journalism and then advocacy for promotion of peace journalism”, a group asserted.

Local Engagement and Community Participation

Communities could be active participants and information sources, helping localize peace narratives and ensuring media coverage reflects genuine community concerns, experiences, and solutions. This grassroots involvement strengthens the relevance and acceptance of peace journalism.

“…These stakeholders' conferences that were held in.2023, 2024 and now 2025…” A female respondent cited.

"Civil societies are capable of doing that capacity building by maybe sponsoring that. Yeah. Yeah. And then the government can also sponsor that. Oh, Advocate. Yeah... Capacity building for journalists, on, peace journalism and then you say advocacy, for promotion of peace journalism. Yeah. Okay." A group observed.

"Community residents serve as peace ambassadors, promoting peace and tolerance in their communities. (Rölker, 2024)*; notes that "peace ambassadors can play a crucial role in promoting peace and reconciliation",* according to a document review.

"That was the story I've covered. Leaders demanding for border demarcation? Yes. Actually, the leaders of Moyo and Kajo-Keji. They are demanding for the immediate demarcation of the border. Then, I've also covered a story about the land conflict in Abaya", a male respondent disclosed about local engagement and community participation.

Peace Dialogues and Reconciliation Initiatives

Organizations could sponsor and facilitate peace dialogues and reconciliation programmes using media platforms like radio talk shows to encourage mutual understanding, dialogue, and peaceful resolution of disputes in the border region.

"Civil societies are capable of doing that capacity building by maybe sponsoring that. Yeah. Yeah. And then the government can also sponsor that. Oh, Advocate. Yes. Advocate is also one. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Mhmm. Capacity building. Capacity building for journalists, on peace journalism and then you say advocacy, for promotion of peace journalism..." A group submitted.

"We brought in different religious sectors to preach peace. And then, we had music, dance, and drama recorded from various schools where children from both South Sudan and Uganda as well going to school here", a female respondent cited.

Accountability

NGOs could help hold media and other stakeholders accountable by promoting transparency and ethical standards in peace journalism and conflict reporting.

Drefs and Thomass in a literature review emphasizes the importance of accounting for specific needs when it comes to media assistance in conflict-ridden contexts. The reviewed recommendations boil down to establishing communication between different actors such as oppositional players or media and public professionals and to institutionalising communication in the form of round-tables, press conferences, or other modified content, media and communication of dealing with one another in a democratic way. They cited two aspects as salient throughout the reviewed areas of "journalism training", "capacity building for civil society actors", and "capacity building for political leaders": The need for multi-stakeholder dialogue and an emphasis on creating awareness of the general value of communication (Drefs & Thomass, 2015).

(Democratic Progress Institute, 2015); *emphasizes the importance of accountability and justice in promoting peace and reconciliation* and so NGOs could ensure accountability by holding governments and media agencies accountable to promote a more just and peaceful society.

"Don't Touch My Constitution! Civil Society Resistance to Democratic Backsliding in Africa´s Pluralist Regimes" is another case in point on the role of civil society (Rakner, 2021).

"Interviewing somebody who was not there. People who were not there, they did not take part in that agreement", a group alluded to the need for accountability.

Resources needed for effective implementation of peace journalism in the border region

"You know, obvious for government is to create a peaceful environment. Okay. And then also provide information for journalists", a group submitted.

"Appropriate pay. Remuneration. And then media freedom, I think I talked of it. That entails a lot", a male respondent among many others added.

Capacity Building and Professional Development

The need for structured training, ongoing education, and regional collaboration to enhance the skills, ethics, and quality of peace journalism.

"Most of us including myself whom you are actually interviewing, I have not had really, the formal training on journalism. Although I had some training on programming and production, but I have not had any training on journalism apart from attending some seminars and workshops, which actually sometimes is not to the point in order that can allow one to professionally perform well. So there's really need for training for the journalists, especially at our level here in our media house. There's that great need", a male respondent disclosed.

"Concerning my background, I'm a diploma holder… though it's not in the media, not in mass communication or anything. Journalism. No. But, I went through some trainings which prepared me to become reporter", another male respondent disclosed.

Operational Resources and Infrastructure

Focus on the practical tools and financial means required for journalists to work effectively and sustainably.

"… Lack of gadgets. Some information we are not able to capture because we lack some gadgets. And there was challenge of transport because sometimes the leadership may be gonna have them, but still we fail to capture those stories and we sometimes we struggle", a male respondent disclosed.

"The payment is not sufficient. So if it is not sufficient, it can easily make them slide off professional ethics", a female respondent asserted.

Access and Visibility

Highlight the importance of journalists' access to information and the promotion of peace journalism in the public sphere.

"Free access to information. Yes. And also that, the media owners should understand the roles of journalists and the challenges they go through and listen to them when things happen. Understand and they respond", a female respondent made an appeal during in-depth interviews.

"I think there's need for facilitation. Like, maybe when you are covering something in South Sudan. Without resources, you cannot go there. Then we need that good environment, conducive environment for journalists. Because we are not only going there for one party. We are going for justice', a male respondent observed.

Safety and Protection

The physical and legal safety needs of journalists, especially those reporting in sensitive or conflict-prone areas

"There was a time, I think, one journalist was almost burnt. The TV NTV journalist Yeah. They poured the petrol on him. He was almost to be burnt. It is only the journalist from interview. Yeah. And that was at Metu. It was, almost one. Survived because of the intervention of the Metu DLC that time", a male respondent among others recalled.

"Demand from money from journalists, arrest and detention. Even your gadgets may be confiscated", another male respondent revealed concerns for safety and protection.

All in all, the assessment of the role of peace journalism in mitigating Moyo, Kajo-Keji border conflicts from 2014 to 2025 revealed positive response with an alarm for further engagements.

DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the discussion of the study findings based on analysis of the approaches aligned with peace journalism principles, journalists use in reporting on Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts from 2014 to 2025; examination of the impact of peace-oriented media coverage on public perception and attitude toward Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts from 2014 to 2025 and identification of the challenges, journalists face in implementing peace journalism in Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts from 2014 to 2025.

The study revealed that journalists categorically used collaboration, conflict-sensitive, and conflict transformation approaches at varying magnitudes to report on Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts since 2014 to date. Journalists applied collaboration approaches through information sharing across borders. For conflict-sensitive approaches, journalists applied the technique of sensitivity by creating understanding of the root causes of the cross-border conflicts in their reporting and adhering to truthfulness in reporting by means of verification and fact-checking.

Journalists applied conflict transformation approaches through community-based sessions, moderation, and mediation of border conflicts. The findings verified that collaboration, conflict-sensitive, and conflict transformation approaches were aligned with the principles of peace journalism. For example, the peace journalism approach prioritizes conflict resolution, humanizing all parties and promoting nonviolent responses (Lynch & Tiripelli, 2022).

The finding on collaborative reporting where South Sudanese journalists worked with their Ugandan counterparts was consistent with a previous research, "where journalists from different countries work together to investigate and report on cross-border issues, sharing resources and expertise" (Meyer, 2025).

An aspect of conflict-sensitive approach focusing on creating understanding on the root causes of the border conflicts rhymed with a previous study of Orgeret, which it involves reporting on the root causes of conflicts, the impact on civilians, and the efforts of peacebuilders (Orgeret, 2022). This meant that the finding on this approach was not a mere isolated case, but one that seems to resonate globally. This very study, therefore, was proven replicable.

The conflict-sensitive approaches uncovered in the study resonated with conflict-sensitive reporting, where journalists employed conflict-sensitive reporting approaches to prioritize accuracy, balance, and fairness (Hussain, 2019). Thus, upholding the practicality of peace journalism principles in mitigating cross-border conflicts, which have ravaged the globe for reasonable decades.

The conflict transformative approaches in form of community-based dialogues could be a subset of Pan-Africanism approach, which emphasizes African solidarity and cooperation, often promoting a peaceful resolution to conflicts (Hassan, 2023). With evidence of local and transnational agreements on border conflict resolution, the study paved a clear way for application of peace journalism principles to transform conflicts to peace and development.

The findings indicated that the principles of peace journalism were incorporated in reporting Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts through ethical standards, conflict-sensitive framing, depth and relevance application and constructive journalism. The study explored the practicality of balancing the need for accuracy and fairness with the pressure to meet deadlines and attract audiences. The practices included editorial integrity and ethical standards, audience and stakeholder engagement, field presence and contextual accuracy, strategic planning and workflow management as well as verification and fact-checking.

Given the objective to analyse the approaches aligned with principles of peace journalism, journalists use to report on Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts and the research question: 'How do journalists apply approaches aligned with principles of peace journalism in reporting on Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts? The findings ascertained the achievement of the study beyond a reasonable doubt.

The study uncovered physiological, psychological, linguistic and economic impact of peace-oriented media coverage of public perception and attitudes towards the Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts since 2014 up to 2025.

Trust and social rebuilding were resultant of peace-oriented media coverage on Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts. These were achieved through broadcast-based coverage, news and event-based reporting, cultural and social media management as well as policy and political influence. Like the study of the media's coverage of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) hearings helped to promote national reconciliation and healing in South Africa (Baron, 2021), the context of Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts saw trust and social rebuilding, which are the bases of transnational reconciliation and hearing.

Coexistence and collaboration were the impact of peace-oriented media coverage on the Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts. Broadcast-based coverage, news and event-based coverage, cultural and social media engagement as well as policy and political influence, ushered in coexistence and collaboration. This finding confirmed a previous study by Lokang, which stated that peace-oriented media coverage has been instrumental in promoting conflict resolution and reconciliation in Moyo, Uganda, and Kajo-Keji, South Sudan, highlighting the importance of community-based media in promoting peace-oriented media coverage and conflict resolution (Lokang, 2018).

The study revealed that peace-oriented media coverage on Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts impact on economic and structural powers, indicated by improved public perception to enable tangible, practical benefits such as cross-border commerce, security coordination, and access to services. The outcomes stabilized peace and made it visible in everyday life.

Unlike global studies, this contextual case study confirmed that peace journalism reduces conflict escalation and promotes reconciliation (Lynch & Tiripelli, 2022); however, it went beyond to project the economic and structural influences of peace-oriented media coverage on cross-border conflicts.

The finding on narrative shifting and media influence as an impact of peace-oriented media coverage on cross-border conflicts manifested through change of perception on the conflict to fostering understanding, reducing hostility and encouraging peaceful social interaction across communities was peculiar to the context of Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts. However, it resonated with scholarly views as "peace-oriented media coverage promotes empathy and understanding between conflicting parties, which can help to reduce tensions and promote peace" (Candea, 2020).

The study explored media's role in shaping public perception and attitudes towards peace as ethical journalism and collaborative peacebuilding efforts, peace advocacy and promotion of cross-border unity, changed attitudes and behaviour, culture of peace promotion and increased public awareness.

The findings had indicators of the impact of peace-oriented media coverage as community feedback and audience response, evidence of peace agreements and negotiation outcomes, impartial and inspiring reporting, media-induced action and policy change, monitoring and evaluation of willingness to engage, positive audience perception, reduction in tension and misunderstanding as well as stakeholder engagement and dialogue.

Overall, the objective of the study 'to examine the impact of peace-oriented media coverage on public perception and attitude toward Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts from 2014 to 2025' and the research question; 'how does peace-oriented media coverage impact on public perception and attitude toward Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts?' The study was by far met since diverse perspectives were explored.

The findings of severe challenges journalists face in implementing peace journalism in cross-border conflicts categorized as institutional and political barriers, capacity and resource limitations, safety and psychological risks plus societal and cultural resistance highlighted crests of stumbling blocks to surmount to increase the impact of peace journalism in mitigating Moyo and Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts.

Institutional and political barriers stem from external control, censorship and systemic limitations which restrict journalistic freedom and impartiality. The findings correlated with the global phenomenon, where journalists are often censored, harassed, or even killed for reporting on conflict and promoting peace (Jacobs, 2020).

Capacity and resource limitations included the lack of skills, tools, and financial or logistical support hindering effective peace journalism. Like the global perspective, journalists in the border region often lack the necessary training and resources to report on conflict and promote peace effectively (Alankus, 2016).

Safety and psychological risks included threats to physical and emotional well-being, especially while reporting from conflict zones. Just as locally in the border regions, journalists face huge challenges, globally journalists may face security risks when investigating cross-border issues, particularly in countries with high levels of corruption or violence (Meyer, 2025). Journalists may struggle to access reliable information in conflict zones. Journalists may face censorship, harassment, or other restrictions, which limit their ability to report on conflicts. Journalists may face physical harm or intimidation when reporting on conflicts (Orgeret, 2022).

Societal and cultural resistance included issues related to public perception, media culture and internal biases among journalists. It was noticed by three out six focus groups that an individual journalist and a particular community-based radio station was used to mobilize masses for the 2014 cross-border conflicts between Moyo, Uganda and Kajo-Keji, South Sudan. This was definitely a beacon for professional capacity building. Such contextual resistance seemed to resonate with previous findings that journalists may face cultural and linguistic barriers, which hinder their capability to report on conflict to promote peace effectively (Kamili, et al., 2024). In East Africa, for instance, journalists may struggle to report on conflict in a sensitive and responsible manner; hence, exacerbating tensions and promoting violence (Eye Radio, 2025).

Overall, the objective to identify the challenges journalists face in implementing peace journalism in Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts from 2014 to 2025 and the research question; 'what challenges do journalists face in implementing peace journalism in Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts?' The study was met with full comprehension and thoughtfulness for action to overcome the setbacks.

The study identified ways of navigating complexities of reporting on sensitive or controversial issues while maintaining peace journalism approach in the context of the study. The navigating techniques include collaboration with stakeholders, cultural sensitivity and ethical communication, journalistic integrity and ethical principles, neutrality and balanced storytelling, peace-centred story framing, resilience and commitment to peace journalism, source protection and anonymity, use of multiple sources and expert input as the Eye Radio demonstrated.

The findings unearthed support or resources needed to effect peace journalism in mitigating the border conflicts as capacity building and professional development in the form of structured training, ongoing education and regional collaboration, ethics and quality of peace journalism, operational resources and infrastructure, access and visibility plus safety and protection.

The findings revealed bilateral cooperation initiatives of Uganda-South Sudan, editorial policies, international norms and media regulation against hate speech, laws and professional standards; critical for shaping responsible journalism (Johnson, et al., 2021)

The findings explored the role of government, NGOs and community organizations in capacity building and collaboration among journalists, creating a safe and conducive environment, infrastructure and communication enhancement, community engagement and information accuracy, advocacy and policy influence, training and capacity building, local engagement and community participation, peace dialogues and reconciliation initiatives and accountability.

The findings exposed opportunities for promoting peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts including institutional and political support, media infrastructure and resources, Journalistic collaboration and capacity building, community engagement and social cohesion as well as training opportunities.

The study objectively demonstrated the effectiveness of peace journalism in mitigating Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts. The application of the framing theory by (D' angelo, 2019) provided a valuable system for perceiving how peace journalism shapes public perception and attitudes towards peace. Drawing from the study, journalists would better receive training in peace journalism, media organizations should prioritize peace-oriented media coverage, governments and Non-Governmental Organizations should support peace journalism initiatives. Community engagement and social cohesion as well as policy and regulatory frameworks supporting responsible and peace journalism principles should be bolstered to realize greater impact. The novelty of this study lies in the contextualization of peace journalism in mitigating Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts.

The study on the role of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts, a case of Moyo, Uganda, and Kajo-Keji, South Sudan, ultimately demonstrated the virtue and practicability of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts by applying collaboration, conflict-sensitive, and conflict transformation approaches aligned with the principles of peace journalism. The study provided a novelty to the scholarly world through contextualized assessment of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts; a case in point of Moyo, Uganda, and Kajo-Keji, South Sudan from a longitudinal perspective. It provided a comprehensive understanding of peace journalism's role in promoting peaceful coexistence, trust-rebuilding, and conflict resolution in border communities. The findings were based on empirical evidence, ensuring accuracy and reliability in their conclusions about the impact of peace journalism. The study highlighted key peace journalism approaches aligned with its principles, the impact of peace-oriented media coverage, challenges, and implications, providing a concise overview of its role and effectiveness in conflict reporting. It took into account the perspectives of journalists, government officials, civil society organizations' representatives, and border community residents, as well as document reviews, demonstrating the consideration for diverse stakeholders and perspectives.

The study was civil and polite as it promoted respectful and constructive communication, reflecting the principles of peace journalism in its approach to conflict reporting. It provided concrete examples and recommendations for promoting peace journalism, including capacity building, media infrastructure development and institutional support.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that peace journalism played a significant role in promoting peaceful coexistence, trust rebuilding, and conflict resolution in border communities. By applying conflict-sensitive approaches, collaborative reporting, and truthfulness, journalists shaped public perception and attitudes, promoted trust building and contributed to peaceful conflict resolution. The findings suggested that peace journalism was an effective tool in mitigating cross-border conflicts by promoting peaceful narratives and reframing conflicts; building trust and social cohesion; encouraging collaborative problem-solving and providing solution-oriented reporting. However, the study similarly underlined huge challenges to implementing peace journalism in mitigating Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts, including institutional and political barriers, capacity and resource limitations, safety and psychological risks, societal and cultural resistance. To enhance the impact of peace journalism, the study recommended capacity building and professional development for journalists, media infrastructure development and resource support, institutional and political support, community engagement and social cohesion initiatives. Overall, the research demonstrated the potential of peace journalism in mitigating cross-border conflicts and promoting peaceful coexistence, and provided valuable insights for journalists, policymakers, and stakeholders working towards conflict resolution and peacebuilding in border communities. Peace journalism was a viable tool for mitigating border conflicts. Its practice in Moyo, Kajo-Keji cross-border conflicts contributed to de-escalation, mutual understanding and public trust. Journalists, despite risks, were key actors in conflict transformation. Stronger systems and institutional support were needed to scale its impact.

The practical implications of this study included governments and media organizations should provide enabling environments for peace journalism, including policy support and resources; strengthening media capacity and ethics through specialized training and resources to enhance peace journalism practices; increased peace dialogues and cross-border collaboration foster peaceful coexistence and conflict resolution. The

practical implications inform strategies for promoting peace journalism in cross-border conflict contexts, ultimately contributing to conflict mitigation and peacebuilding efforts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study came up with the following recommendations:

❖ Governments and media organizations should provide institutional support for focused peace journalism initiatives on cross-border conflicts.

❖ Media practitioners should receive specialized training on conflict-sensitive reporting and peace journalism with focus on cross-border conflicts.

❖ Policymakers should develop policy frameworks, which promote specialized peace journalism and protect journalists reporting on cross-border conflicts.

❖ Media organizations, civil society, and governments should collaborate to promote specialized peace journalism and conflict resolution initiatives with focus on cross-border conflicts.

❖ Media practitioners should utilize social media to promote focused peace journalism and engage with border community members on peace and conflict issues.

❖ Governments, media and civil society organizations should invest in media infrastructure development and resource support for specialized peace journalism through provision of media equipment and infrastructure support to media outlets in Moyo, Uganda and Kajo-Keji, South Sudan to enhance the capacity to report on peace and conflict issues.

REFERENCES

1. Abubakar, U. I., Ibrahim, A. M., & Ibrahim, A. T. (2025). Mediating Conflict versus Peacebuilding through the Lens of Journalism: A Nigerian Perspective on Conflict-Sensitive Reporting. *education*, *16*(1).
2. Ahanger, A. S., Masoodi, F. S., Khanam, A., & Ashraf, W. (2024). Managing and securing information storage in the Internet of Things. In *Internet of Things vulnerabilities and recovery strategies* (pp. 102-151). Auerbach Publications.
3. Ahmed, S. K. (2024). How to choose a sampling technique and determine sample size for research: A simplified guide for researchers. *Oral Oncology Reports*, *12*, 100662.
4. Alemayehu Moges, M. (2024). Freedom of the Press, and Journalism Practices in Times of Uncertainty in the Case of Ethiopia. *Journalism Practice*, 1-19.
5. Ali, A. C., Yimam, S. M., Semmann, M., Ayele, A. A., & Biemann, C. (2024). Silenced Voices: Exploring Social Media Polarization and Women's Participation in Peacebuilding in Ethiopia. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2412.01549*.
6. Amano, T., & Berdejo-Espinola, V. (2025). Language barriers in conservation: consequences and solutions. *Trends in Ecology & Evolution*, *40*(3), 273-285.
7. Aondover, E. M., Onyejelem, T. E., & Garba, S. (2024). Media role in conflict resolution and peaceful coexistence in indigenous communities. *Journal of African Conflicts and Peace Studies*, *6*(1), 2.
8. Ayaz, F. (2024). *Public Opinion Shift, Post-Truth, and Hybrid Warfare: Contextualizing The Nexus Of Post-Truth And Hybrid Warfare In Pakistan* (Doctoral dissertation, Centre for International Peace and Stability, National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST)).
9. Bang, T. C. (2024). Ensuring credibility and trustworthiness in qualitative inquiries. In *applied linguistics and language education research methods: Fundamentals and innovations* (pp. 70-85). IGI Global.
10. Blacksin, I., & Mitra, S. (2024). Straddlers not spiralists: Critical questions for research on fixers, local-foreign news work, and cross-border journalism. *Journalism*, *25*(6), 1271-1289.

11. Chen, X. (2023). Understanding the role of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the "central government-local government-society" framework: A case study on public crisis management during the pandemic in China. *International Public Management Journal*, 26(4), 570-588.

12. Cheong, H. I., Lyons, A., Houghton, R., & Majumdar, A. (2023). Secondary qualitative research methodology using online data within the context of social sciences. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 22, 16094069231180160.

13. Chirambwi, K. (2024). Rethinking research methods in protracted violent conflicts in Mozambique: fieldwork in complex emergencies. *Journal of Humanitarian Logistics and Supply Chain Management*, 14(2), 160-170.

14. Ciboh, R., Torwel, V., & Jev, A. A. (2024). Journalism educators' evaluations of conflict reporting and the imperatives for peace journalism in Nigeria. *Media, War & Conflict*, 17506352241293767.

15. Danie, E., Tafida, A. M., Abubakar, S. A., Abdulrahman, A. O., & Abubakar, S. O. (2024). Sampling bias and its implications for research validity. *African Journal of Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 14(7).

16. Das, R. P. (2024). *Exploring the Potential of LLM Enhanced Engineering Problems Through Student Performance, Preferences, Mental Workload and Emotion* (Master's thesis, University of Georgia).

17. Dharma, Y., Seneru, W., & Obi, S. N. (2025). The Role of Communication in Building Tolerance and Unity in a Diverse Society: A Systematic Literature Review. *Journal of Communication, Religious, and Social Sciences (JoCRSS)*, 3(1), 13-24.

18. Dihan, M. S., Akash, A. I., Tasneem, Z., Das, P., Das, S. K., Islam, M. R., & Hasan, M. M. (2024). Digital twin: Data exploration, architecture, implementation and future. *Heliyon*, 10(5).

19. Doll, M. E. (2024). New models, same practices? Examining professional values and peace journalism training. *Journalism*, 14648849241272193.

20. Egwu, P. & Saint, E. (2024). Secrets, Leaks, Rivers: How Cross-Border Investigative Journalism is Covering Africa. Global Investigative Journalism Network.

21. Eye Radio.org. (2025). Expert explains Kajo-Keji, Moyo border dispute, proposes solutions.

22. Gai, Z., Tong, L., & Ge, Q. (2024). Achieving higher factual accuracy in Llama Llm with weighted distribution of retrieval-augmented generation.osf.io.

23. García-Perdomo, V., Harlow, S., & Brown, D. K. (2024). Framing the Colombian peace process: Between peace and war journalism. *Journalism Practice*, 18(4), 991-1014.

24. Gasdia, J. G. (2024). *Peace Is Prosocial: Emotion and Conflict Behavior in the Somali Context, 1991–2024* (Master's thesis, Georgetown University).

25. Gjerazi, B. (2023). Media and communication strategies for conflict prevention and resolution. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research and Development*, 10(2), 52-52.

26. Halpin, S. N. (2024). Inter-coder agreement in qualitative coding: Considerations for its use. *American Journal of Qualitative Research*, 8(3), 23-43.

27. Hassan, J. T., Baba, D., Ibrahim, A. A., & Elisha, J. D. (2024). Media's role, challenges, and ethics in journalism amid socio-political conflicts in contemporary society. *Journal of Language, Literature, Social and Cultural Studies*, 2(1), 46-58.

28. Hofmann, B. (2024). Polarization in research: What is it, why is it problematic, and how can it be addressed? *Accountability in Research*, 1-23.

29. Ittefaq, M., Ejaz, W., & Jan, M. W. (2024). Cross-Border Journalism in South Asia. In *The Palgrave Handbook of Cross-Border Journalism* (pp. 445-460). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

30. Jehangir, A. (2024). Peace journalism: a cosmopolitan approach to conflict prevention. Political Science and Public Policy. Pages- 236-261.

31. Jehangir, A. (2024). Peace journalism: A cosmopolitan approach to conflict prevention. In *Research Handbook on Conflict Prevention* (pp. 236-261). Edward Elgar Publishing.

32. Khan, N., Khalique, F., & Saini, K. (2025). Qualitative research methods: harnessing interviews, focus groups, observations, and document analysis. In *Qualitative Research Methods in Air Transport Management* (pp. 27-56). IGI Global Scientific Publishing.

33. Kimber, L. R. (2025). Civil Society Inclusion at the United Nations. In *Civil Society and Intergovernmental Negotiations at the United Nations* (pp. 14-60). Bristol University Press.

34. Kulumba, F.N. (2023, September 11). How South Sudan claimed ownership of 20 villages in Uganda. Africa Press-Uganda (link unavailable).

35. Lawton, C., & Wawa, B. (2025). Hybridizing Just War Theory and Peace Journalism to Report Violent Conflicts. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 10776990251326133.

36. Leiwakabessy, J. E. M., Matakena, F., Litaay, S. C. H., Picauly, A., Polnaya, T., & Safiteri, P. (2025). Participatory Community Empowerment for Conflict Management and Peacebuilding in Multicultural Island Settings. *DEVOTIONIS*, 41-50.

37. Leonidis, L. (2025). *Exploring the Dating Experience of Millennial Males That Self-Identify as Being Anxious in Social Situations: An Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis* (Doctoral dissertation, University of East London).

38. Lim, W. M. (2025). What is qualitative research? An overview and guidelines. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, *33*(2), 199-229.

39. Meyer, R. (2025). The threat within: Power dynamics impeding cross-border journalism practice–perspectives from African investigators. *Journalism*, *26*(4), 800-822.

40. Mugahed, A. (2023). How to determine the correct sample size of a research: Cohen's (d) measures the size of the difference between two groups.

41. Newton, NI. (2023). Communication Strategies for Peacebuilding: a case of Radio Peace in the Effutu Municipality.

42. Olayinka, A. P., & Odunayo, S. (2024). The role of media ethics in shaping public perception: A critical analysis of biased reporting and its impact on public opinion. *Journal of African Innovation and Advanced Studies*..

43. Pinto, R., & Bhadra, A. (2024). Independent Journalism in the Digital Era: Combating Hate Speech for a Peaceful Society. *Journal of Communication and Management*, *3*(04), 341-350.

44. Radio Pacis. (2023, May 19). South Sudan delegation to meet North West Nile leaders after armed attack in Moyo District. Retrieved from (link unavailable).

45. Radio Pacis. (2024, April 5). UPDF deployment enhances security at Uganda-South Sudan border. Retrieved from (link unavailable).

46. Radio Pacis. (2024, December 24). Uganda, South Sudan border demarcation set for 2027. Retrieved from (link unavailable).

47. Radio Tamazuj. (2023, September 21). Border dispute: South Sudanese chief, 13 Ugandans released. Retrieved from (link unavailable).

48. Raisani, N. M. J. K., & Singhaputargun, N. (2025). Understanding Conflict and Reconciliation: Lessons from Balochistan, Pakistan. *Connexion: Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, *14*(1), 1-26.

49. Ramazanova, D., Togaibayeva, A., Amangeldiyeva, G., Yessengulova, M., & Akhmetova, Z. (2024). An Alternative Way to Prepare Graduate Thesis: The Effect of Case-Based Approach on Candidate and Supervisor Development. *Journal of Pedagogical Research*, *8*(3), 176-190.

50. Rölker, S. (2024). Community Volunteers as Ambassadors of Peace: Strategies for Conflict Resolution and Management in Laikipia West Sub-County. *LAIKIPIA UNIVERSITY JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, EDUCATION AND HUMANITIES*, *1*(1).

51. Rosen, R. K., Gainey, M., Nasrin, S., Garbern, S. C., Lantini, R., Elshabassi, N., ... & Levine, A. C. (2023). Use of framework matrix and thematic coding methods in qualitative analysis for mHealth: The FluidCalc app. *International journal of qualitative methods*, *22*, 16094069231184123.

52. Sehl, A., Malik, M. S., Kretzschmar, S., & Neuberger, C. (2023). Peace journalism in the digital age: Exploring opportunities, impact, and challenges. *Weizenbaum journal of the digital society: WJDS*, *3*(3).

53. Sehl, A., Malik, M. S., Kretzschmar, S., & Neuberger, C. (2023). Peace journalism in the digital age: Exploring opportunities, impact, and challenges. *Weizenbaum journal of the digital society: WJDS*, *3*(3).

54. Tajik, O., Golzar, J., & Noor, S. (2024). Purposive sampling. *International Journal of Education and Learning Studies*, *2*(2).

55. Tejel, J. (2023). *Rethinking State and Border Formation in the Middle East*. Edinburgh University Press.

56. Tennent, K. D., & Gillett, A. G. (2023). How to research in an archive. In *Handbook of historical methods for management* (pp. 104-120). Edward Elgar Publishing.

57. The Observer. (2023, September 4). Tension as South Sudan claims ownership of 20 villages in Uganda.

58. Torabian, J. E. (2025). Empowering Voices: Participatory Research for Educational Equality. In *Equity in Education: A Handbook for Participative Approaches in Research and Development to Address School Inequalities* (pp. 10-62). Ceeolpress.

59. Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBS), NPHC. (2024). Report.

60. Ugba, G. H. (2024). Information for Conflict Resolution and Peace Building: Examining the Role of the Mass Media in Tiv-Jukun Ethnic Conflicts in Central-Eastern Nigeria. *Environmental Sustainability, Economic Development, and Conflict Resolution*, 53.

61. Valdez, R. (2025). Las Jefas: Latina Leadership on the US-Mexico Border Region Las Jefa's Fronterizas. Dissertation.

62. Wikipedia, Kajo-Keji County. (2024). Kajo-Keji County 2024 Population Projection.

63. Zhang, S., & Lu, J. W. (2025). Artificial states, ethnicity, and the survival of private participation infrastructure projects in Africa. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 1-19.