

Media as an Instrument for Mitigating Tribal-Based Conflicts: Reviewing Perceptions of Journalists, Human Rights Activists, and Lawyers

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Abstract

The media's portrayal of ethnic conflicts in Sudan influences the levels of enmity and peace; yet existing investigations have mainly drawn on a few descriptive case studies, which almost entirely ignore the situations of journalists, human rights workers, and lawyers, and have only occasionally resorted to quantitative methods. This research work investigates the extent to which a combination of media framing, media accessibility and reach, and media credibility and trust could predict the mitigation of tribal conflicts as practiced by Sudanese journalists, human rights defenders, and lawyers. A cross-sectional survey design was used with a sample selected from 120 Sudanese journalists, human rights activists, and lawyers who had very close, hands-on professional experience with tribal conflict reporting. The data were collected by questionnaire in five parts, which have been validated; a Likert scale of 5 points was used for the measurement of media framing, accessibility, credibility, reduction of hate speech, as well as inter-tribal dialogue, and then analyzed using Cronbach's alpha, correlation, and multiple regression in SPSS. The three variables taken together explain over a third (30.3%) of the mitigation of tribal conflicts, significantly and jointly ($R^2 = .303$; $F(3, 116) = 16.848$, $p < .001$). Trust and credibility in media were the most powerful predictor ($\beta = .407$, $p < .001$), followed by framing in the media ($\beta = .271$, $p = .001$) and accessibility and reach of the media ($\beta = .156$, $p = .048$); the collinearity diagnostics indicated no presence of multicollinearity among the predictors.

Keywords: tribal conflict mitigation, media framing, media credibility and trust, peace journalism, conflict-affected societies

1. Introduction

Sudan's ethnic and tribally diverse population has created a media landscape that mirrors the divisions and identity groups. Political conflicts in the region are often so strongly interlinked with social identity that they practically become inseparable from it (Aondover & Obasi, 2025). Journalists, human rights defenders, and legal professionals can emerge as key players in the discourse on tribal conflicts, particularly in understanding how various ethnic groups interact with each other. The post-2019 Sudan has become mainly a contest of tribes to get a voice and a place in the media, especially since the information environment is changing very fast (Makris, 2024). The direction of communal discord, whether de-escalation or exacerbation, ultimately depends on media coverage, which is influenced by a mix of journalistic orientation, opportunities to use media channels, and consumers' choice of media sources.

The role of guarding the Press and keeping them independent is a responsibility of governments. Despite progress, much work remains to be done to safeguard journalists from challenging conditions, including police harassment in the form of unjustified arrests, economic constraints, and deep ethnic and religious affiliations that influence people's perception of these journalists as mere representatives of the places they cover or even question their legitimacy as journalists (Nnubia, 2026) (Lawton & Wawa, 2025). The combination of traditional broadcast journalism and digital media has revolutionized the fundamental elements of message dissemination, including the scope of coverage, accessibility, and credibility of the source, making the media landscape even more complicated (Abubakar et al., 2025). A major change like this would also explain why, during conflicts, journalists are viewed as storytellers and, in a way, even as peace mediators (Charles, 2021) (Aondover et al., 2024). The change has several effects, particularly in North and South Sudan, where the media's role in conflict resolution is being highlighted, which underscores the need for the media to conduct more focused and in-depth work (Ahmed, 2026).

Violence among tribal groups in Sudan continues to be a problem even when there are repeated peace efforts. At the same

time, media attention seems to fuel hostility between different communities. Apart from traditional print media, social media has also become a vehicle that is used to spread hate and hostility quickly and widely. Such media messages often get ahead of and undermine, to a large extent, the peace talks that are held by various actors in a certain area (Pathé Duarte, 2024).

Although it's well-known that journalists, human rights lawyers, and other professionals who stand up for human rights give invaluable opinions, it seems that their insights are almost not taken into account in any serious study (Elsheikh et al., 2025). Current research, if anything, does not address the way a particular story is told, for instance, or what channels have given us that story, and how these factors can lead to different outcomes such as not provoking conflict but also not encouraging dialogue. Moreover, studies hardly use statistical methods for the analysis and rather rely on telling a story in a very simple way, which does not give us much help in understanding the role of media in conflict mitigation in Sudan. Without this knowledge, policymakers and media practitioners cannot take effective action, and the results will be very limited (Keristifa et al., 2026).

This research aims at three key goals: first, to investigate how the way the media frames issues of different tribes influences the likelihood of a decrease in hate speech and incitement among Sudanese audiences; second, to examine whether large and easy-to-access mass media supports peace talks and rapprochement between tribes; third, to find out if the media's trustworthiness, the quality of framing, and the size of the audience jointly affect perceptions of the reduction of tribal disputes among a sample of journalists, human rights defenders, and lawyers in Sudan.

The research questions that shape the study are mainly about investigating the factors that can reduce tribal conflicts through the media, namely media framing, media accessibility, and finally, how the interaction of these media factors affects conflict reduction. They study how these factors relate to the reduction of hate speech, the promotion of inter-tribal dialogue, and conflict containment more generally. Three hypotheses were developed: the first one being that the media frame will reduce the occurrence of hate speech and incitement; the second one is that the more media is available, the more chances people have to dialogue and reach reconciliation; the third one proposes that conflict resolution via regression analyses will mainly come from the trust and credibility of a source when it is combined with some other features that could make a prediction possible.

This interdisciplinary research contributes conceptually and pragmatically to the field by examining the connection between media factors and observable conflict-management outcomes in an African setting, which is hardly studied. These insights give the legislators a concrete basis on which to devise media laws that would prevent inflammatory content and promote peace talk (Satriawan et al., 2023). Journalists are offered the means to carry out their jobs properly, while legal experts and human rights defenders come to understand the ways by which truthful news can be instrumental in lobbying the government. From an academic standpoint, the paper enlarges the field of interdisciplinary communication by showing how a regression method can unravel the factors of ethnic conflict, and hence the development of a general model that could serve similar situations of conflict resolution (Maweu & Mare, 2021).

This paper's sample is composed of a narrow group of people from Sudan, i.e., journalists, human rights activists, and lawyers. Consequently, it ignores the majority of Sudanese as well as the government officials in the study (Abdi, 2021) (Abdelbagi & Literat, 2023). The research focuses on particular aspects of media outlets and conflict resolution, thereby ignoring socio-economic as well as political factors in general. Data for the study were collected at one point, which consequently limited the possibility of doing both causal and longitudinal analysis. Moreover, the study is only limited to the parts of the country that are accessible; therefore, its applicability to remote or conflict-affected areas is constrained.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Foundations of Media's Role in Conflict and Reconciliation

The framing theory provides a fundamental framework for understanding how Oriented Media (OM) affects the way a public interprets tribal complaints. The theory states that media organizations do not merely report what happens, but rather they make frames through which the viewers understand what is happening. These frames are meant to draw viewers' attention to certain parts of the issue (Wang, 2022). Entman, who conceptualized frames as comprising selection together with salience, is still a main influence in this area, and this view continues to be used extensively by researchers in the analysis of community and ethnicity-related journalism in conflict situations (Scheufele, 2026) (Nawaz & Yousaf, 2023). The agenda-setting concept enriches this approach by clarifying how repetitive media highlighting of particular tribal themes serves to increase audiences' sense of the topic as more important, regardless of the reality and proportionality (Fairclough & Mădroane, 2020) (Aondover & Obasi, 2025). Apart from that, source credibility theories, which were originally introduced in persuasion research, can give an explanation of why a reader might either believe or not believe a certain intergroup mediated hostility scenario; credibility is a combination of perceived expertise and trustworthiness, and these factors are among the main ones determining the acceptance level of a message.

This is one of the reasons for our choice to look into Media Credibility and Trust (MCT) as a mediator variable between conflicts and their outcomes (Thomas, 2022). The researchers in the area of conflict communication, on the one hand, modified these paradigms to fit post-conflict situations; whereas, on the other hand, they brought attention to the fact that journalists play a double role: as one side, they witness the events, and as the other side, they contribute to peace processes (Ubayasiri, 2025). Overall, from different perspectives, the various media-effects theories emphasize the key point that media houses, on the level of interpreting content to the public, either can be instruments of inciting communal tensions or can, on the contrary, serve as a means of calming the communal tensions down (Meyer et al., 2018). This belief is actually aligned with the idea of this project: here, OM (oriented media) is considered a multidimensional measure of the Mitigation of Tribal Conflicts (MTC) (Stremlau, 2018).

2.2 Media Framing, Accessibility, and Credibility in Conflict-Affected Societies

Research into How the Media Portray Tribal Issues (MPTI) through Different Lenses has significantly expanded the field of Conflict Studies, showing that media portrayals and journalists' selections play a considerable role in how intergroup conflicts are developed and intensified (Muhammad Auwal & Ersoy, 2024). The researchers also found that the use of episodic framing focuses only on violent acts happening at the time instead of revealing the underlying causes and thus further aggravates the already high level of inter-community hostility. In his later article, Wolfsfeld points out that many writers and reporters find themselves under the heavy political pressure of the state to cover stories in a provocative and sensationalist manner (Agyeman, 2026).

Media accessibility and reach (MAR) has not been thoroughly researched at a systematic level. Nonetheless, it has been widely acknowledged among academics that mobile and digital technologies have, on one hand, made access to tribal-related information easier and quicker to spread (González-Bailón & Xenos, 2023). In the case of fragile and transitional states, the increased availability of media can have a two-way effect: firstly, it can be a channel to spread messages of reconciliation; secondly, at the same time, it can serve as a vehicle to spread harmful messages much faster (Rashid & Ding, 2025). Media Credibility and Trust (MCT) has been identified as a central aspect in this research area. According to some findings, the people living in places of conflict tend to be skeptical of the media controlled by government or other state-affiliated institutions (Abdelbagi & Literat, 2023). This breakdown of confidence greatly influences the interpretation of narratives provided by the tribe members and, consequently, shows that trustworthiness plays a major role in doing research that does not aggravate conflicts (Keristifa et al., 2026) (Samsudin, 2020).

2.3 Media's Contribution to Hate Speech Reduction and Inter-Group Dialogue

Studies about the Reduction in Hate Speech and Incitement Narratives (RHSIN) are exploring to what extent media practices may help cool down inflamed speech. A criteria-based approach to dangerous speech by Benesch singles out patterns frequently witnessed before communal violence (Patel et al., 2026). There, examples from the study of the situation in Rwanda, Kenya, and the Balkans showed that counter-narratives focused on the issue significantly decreased the use of words that degrade a person. But the results were dependent on the credibility of the communicator and the platform used. At the same time, the research on the Enhancement of Inter-Tribal Dialogue and Reconciliation Initiatives (EITDRI), taking into account the theory of intergroup contact, shows that unbiased mediated dialogue brings about better cross-communal attitudes.

Although initially developed outside the media domain, Allport's original contact hypothesis still influences how scholars today analyze the ways in which media-facilitated structured interactions can reduce prejudice. The main findings from the reviewed literature imply that media programs can successfully change hostile attitudes when they make use of credible sources and sustain contact rather than just making a one-off intervention (Abubakar et al., 2025). This finding confirms that the idea of RHSIN and EITDRI as direct consequences and not just by-products of media intervention is theoretically sound (Tshetu & Tappe, 2026) (McIntyre & Sobel, 2018).

2.4 The Sudanese Media Landscape

The changing of the political scenery in 2019 brought with it a renewed interest in Sudanese media studies. The current Sudanese information landscape is labeled repeatedly by researchers as broken down, pressured by military institutions in different respects at the same time, suffering through limited means, and, at the root, having religious loyalty as their main loyalty (Buerger & Benesch, 2024). Journals published just after the shift covered how pressmen managed to maintain self-restraint on one hand and report on inter-community violence in Darfur and the Blue Nile area on the other (Lawton & Wawa, 2025). The work of other scholars traced the rise in the social media usage of Sudanese youths, and the study results showed clearly that digital media have come to stand shoulder to shoulder with traditional media as the main communication channels for tribal-related issues among the youth in Sudan (Taha, 2023).

Despite significant developments in this area, Sudan's scholarly discussion has largely concentrated on general-level political analysis, usually leaving out a thorough study of what media characteristics (such as the presentation of facts,

ease of reaching the audiences, and truth-value) do for the journalists and conflict reporters who are the ones doing the job from the frontline. Human rights organizations have issued reports that cite the media's role in inciting violence, but rarely do these reports use the statistical methods of communication research found in, say, other countries. The result is that the media-conflict relationship in Sudan is empirically less understood than in the same kind of societies that have experienced post-war recovery (Keristifa et al., 2026) (Kusumaryati, 2020).

2.5 Research Gap and Conceptual Framework

The current body of literature has not yet been able to develop a comprehensive and quantitative mathematical model connecting sub-variables of Oriented Media (OM), Media Framing of Tribal Issues (MFTI), Media Accessibility and Reach (MAR), and Media Credibility and Trust (MCT) to measurable aspects and outcomes of Mitigation of Tribal Conflicts (MTC) specific to the Sudanese context. Earlier work has looked at either one of the constructs or relied on describing them in non-quantitative terms; as a result, it could not confirm, in an empirical way, the combined predictive effect of these factors on Reduction in Hate Speech and Incitement Narratives (RHSIN) and the Enhancement of Inter-Tribal Dialogue and Reconciliation Initiatives (EITDRI). This study intends to bridge the identified gap by putting forward a conceptual framework that treats MFTI, MAR, and MCT as predictors of RHSIN and EITDRI, and which is studied from the perspectives of journalists, human rights activists, and lawyers working in the media and legal sectors of Sudan (Attia et al., 2020).

3. Methodology

This research paper followed a quantitative and cross-sectional research methodology based on the post-positivist paradigm (Cardenal et al., 2022). According to the research, the connections between various sub-levels of Oriented Media (OM) and Mitigation of Tribal Conflicts (MTC) are the only ones that can be determined by an instrument and statistically proved (Guo, 2024). So as to examine to what degree Media Framing of Tribal Issues (MFTI), Media Accessibility and Reach (MAR), and Media Credibility and Trust (MCT) are able to predict the RHSIN (Reduction in Hate Speech and Incitement Narratives) and the EITDRI (Enhancement of Inter-Tribal Dialogue and Reconciliation Initiatives), the researcher decided on a relational and forecasting approach. Instead of doing a longitudinal survey, a single-point-in-time data collecting method was picked because of time limitations and the fact that security conditions in Sudan made repeated-measures data collection across different periods impossible (Shan Xu et al., 2026).

The study targeted a population of journalists, human rights activists, and lawyers mainly engaged in reporting and advocacy work related to tribal conflicts in Sudan. Since there was no central registry and we faced some issues of access, purposive sampling was resorted to. We only selected those who had direct professional experience of the work within a 3-year period. The surveys were circulated among professional associations, unions of journalists, and human rights organizations in places where the authors had access, such as Khartoum and regional centers. Statistical power was the guideline for the sample size (Podsakoff et al., 2023), and non-coherent and incomplete responses did not feature in the analysis (Elisha & Hakim, 2026).

The researcher created a questionnaire consisting of a structured five-section design that reflected the main research elements. These five elements were: MFTI, MAR, MCT, RHSIN, and EITDRI. Based on a comprehensive set of framing, accessibility, and credibility scales, and adjusted for the Sudanese setting, the items were selected and developed. To get a response rating on the five-point scale from the participants (1 being "Not at all Agree" and 5 being "Totally Agree"), a five-point Likert scale format was employed (Hye & Abdullah, 2024). Each subscale contained five items that were rephrased to a different level not only to check the respondents' consistency but also to minimize the acquiescence bias. The questionnaire was checked for errors and improvements by experts, and the final version was agreed upon and sent out (Mamun, 2025).

Data collection was carried out in four stages, with each stage being the groundwork for the next. The first step involved contacting representatives of the first group of respondents, i.e., lawyer associations and human rights groups, and distributing questionnaires. We went for pilot research next. They, therefore, helped in testing the clarity of the questions and the accuracy of the collected data. According to the outcome of the first survey, the questionnaire was modified and then delivered (face-to-face or via a secure web-based system) to the main group of respondents. After completion of data collection, a fellow statistical analysis researcher began the work of categorizing, interpreting, and analyzing questionnaires to perform the necessary statistical analysis. Besides that, it was constantly ensured that those who participated knew clearly about their rights and the modes of how they could completely or partially terminate their participation in the study. Information about how it was going to be stored and the security measures taken to protect against loss and unauthorized access were also made available.

The researcher used IBM SPSS Statistics to conduct the analysis of the data. The descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alpha were run in order to check the distributions and the reliability. Besides, the assessment of the measures of association or relationships was conducted. The regression models were also used by the researcher to determine the degree to which

a particular independent variable is able to predict a dependent variable. Apart from being able to detect multicollinearity, the normality of residuals and homoscedasticity were checked as well, resulting in the verification of compliance with the conditions for carrying out the analysis.

The original design planned to develop two regression models; one was to test the role of MFTI as a predictor of RHSIN, and the other planned to explore whether MAR and MCT could be predictors of EITDRI. However, the researcher implemented a single joint model. This model includes MFTI, MAR, and MCT as joint predictors of the combined Mitigation of Tribal Conflicts (MTC) outcome.

There were two reasons why a method was adopted: the first one being that RHSIND and EITDRI were viewed as sub-aspects of MTC rather than separate outcomes. The second factor that made this method attractive was that, as the participants were $N = 120$ in a single three-predictor model, one might detect statistically significant results that do not actually exist (i.e., Type I error). As such, Hypotheses 1-3 have been tested through only one regression, and predictor-related hypotheses have been judged by the beta values; the global model fit summarizes how well the whole dataset can be explained with this set of predictors.

Content validity was demonstrated through the panel of experts' positive evaluation of the instrument; at the same time, construct validity was shown by the overlap of the developed measure with framing and source-credibility theories. In order to ensure the consistency and accuracy of the data, Cronbach's alpha was calculated, and 0.70 was set as the level of adequate reliability (Mamun, 2025). A series of ethical measures were taken into account for the implementation of the research to ensure that the participants were granted approval to take part, that they received detailed descriptions of what the study involved, were informed of their rights, and were given the opportunity to leave at any time; their anonymity was maintained, and other precautions were put in place to safeguard the participants from any kind of harm in this high-risk situation.

4. Results

Excluding incomplete responses, a total of 120 participants, including journalists, human rights advocates, and lawyers, were obtained, as shown in Table 1. Overall, an analysis of the participants' responses reveals that the Mitigation of Tribal Conflicts (MTC) composite has a mean of 34.27 with a standard deviation of 8.64, as shown in the descriptive statistics. The predictive variables, MFTI ($M=17.60$, $SD=5.06$), MAR ($M=15.55$, $SD=5.21$), and MCT ($M=17.02$, $SD=4.71$), revealed that each construct has a very similar level of variability. The fact that there were no ceiling or floor effects is another strong indicator that there was no bias on the part of respondents and constructs measured.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Mean	Std. Deviation	N
34.2667	8.64202	120
17.6000	5.06496	120
15.5500	5.20803	120
17.0167	4.71362	120

In Table 2, it appears that the reliability coefficients of all five subscales are much higher than the 0.70 cutoff point. The MAR subscale has the highest internal consistency ever recorded, with an α of 0.919, whereas the MCT has the lowest, with an α of 0.887. As such, the research instruments used for the psychological assessment were mostly found to be reliable and valid.

Table 2. Reliability Statistics for Study Constructs

Construct	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Media Framing of Tribal Issues (MFTI)	5	.894
Media Accessibility and Reach (MAR)	5	.919
Media Credibility and Trust (MCT)	5	.887
Reduction in Hate Speech and Incitement Narratives (RHSIN)	5	.908
Enhancement of Inter-Tribal Dialogue and Reconciliation Initiatives (EITDRI)	5	.911

According to the first hypothesis, which claims that MFTI is a main indicator of the mitigation capacity outcome, the correlation matrix shows that MFTI is significantly positively correlated with the overall MTC capacity (a composite of its dimensions), i.e., $r = .340$, $p < .001$, but only to a moderate extent. Except for MFTI, other predictors that contribute to the mitigation outcome were all significantly correlated with the mitigation capacity; the highest correlation was found between the predictors and the mitigation capacity ($r = .443$, $p < .001$). MAR was the one with the least correlation ($r = .199$, $p = .015$). Since the correlations among predictors are quite low, ranging from .019 to .129, one can say that, in the simplest linear case, there is no problem of multicollinearity.

Table 3. Correlation Matrix Among Study Variables

		MTC	MFTI	MAR	MCT
Pearson Correlation	MTC	1.000	.340	.199	.443
	MFTI	.340	1.000	.129	.120
	MAR	.199	.129	1.000	.019
	MCT	.443	.120	.019	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	MTC	.	.000	.015	.000
	MFTI	.000	.	.080	.096
	MAR	.015	.080	.	.419
	MCT	.000	.096	.419	.
N	MTC	120	120	120	120
	MFTI	120	120	120	120
	MAR	120	120	120	120
	MCT	120	120	120	120

MFTI was found to be the only independent significant predictor in the combined multiple regression model displayed in Table 4. Its contribution to the prediction of MTC is represented here with the regression coefficient of $B = .463$, $\beta = .271$, $t = 3.448$, and $p = .001$. The joint effect of the three predictors in the final regression model was found to be large. MCT is the main predictor ($\beta = .407$, $t = 5.216$, $p < .001$), followed by MAR ($\beta = .271$, $t = 3.448$, $p = .001$) and $\beta = .156$ respectively with $t = 1.994$ and $p = .048$. The low multicollinearity among the predictors has also been demonstrated through very high tolerance values (all $> .97$) and very low VIF values (all < 1.04).

Table 4. Regression Coefficients for MFTI, MAR, and MCT Predicting MTC

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	9.394	3.662		2.565	.012		
	Predictive 1	.463	.134	.271	3.448	.001	.970	1.031
	Predictive 2	.259	.130	.156	1.994	.048	.983	1.017
	Predictive 3	.746	.143	.407	5.216	.000	.986	1.015

a. Dependent Variable: Response Variable

Table 5, the one where the predictors included within this multiple regression model are listed, shows that the MFTI variable was entered together with MAR and MCT using the standard method. Those outcomes align with what hypothesis H1 suggested: that the media presentation of the tribal issues in the frame of conflict resolution is the major factor that leads to the reduction of conflicts among tribal communities.

Table 5. Variables Entered in the Multiple

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Predictive 3, Predictive 2, Predictive 1b	.	Enter

a. Dependent Variable: Response Variable

b. All requested variables entered.

Hypothesis 2 stated that if MAR was used together with other predictors of the outcome variable, i.e., mitigation measures (MTC), MAR was a significant predictor. In Table 11, where the effects of MFTI, MAR, and MCT in predicting MTC were shown, MAR turned out to be a significant predictor, albeit a weak one ($B = .259$, $\beta = .156$, $t = 1.994$, $p = .048$), i.e., the weakest among the three predictors of the study. Collinearity diagnostics, that is, tolerance = .983, VIF = 1.017, revealed that there was no problem with collinearity between MAR and MFTI or MCT. Thus, H2 was supported.

Hypothesis 3 proposed that MCT would be an important predictor variable along with MFTI and MAR in the explanation of variations in the mitigation of tribal conflicts. According to Table 3 (Correlation Matrix among Study Variables), the bivariate correlation between MCT and MTC was the highest among the three predictors ($r = .443$, $p < .001$). Besides that, the result presented in Table 6, the one that describes the Model Summary for the Multiple Regression Predicting MTC indicated that a model including all three predictors explained 30.3% of the variances in MTC.

Table 6. Model Summary for the Multiple Regression Predicting MTC

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.551a	.303	.285	7.30505	2.065

a. Predictors: (Constant), Predictive 3, Predictive 2, Predictive 1

b. Dependent Variable: Response Variable

From the data provided in Table 7, the authors concluded that the overall combined regression model obtained a significant statistical level since the F value calculated equals 16.848 with degrees of freedom of (3, 116) and p less than 0.001. Focusing on Table 11, we notice that the MCT was identified as the most powerful individual predictor, where the coefficient B was .746, β was .407, t was 5.216, and p was $< .001$; in fact, the contribution of MCT far exceeded that of MFTI and MAR even in terms of their standardized coefficients. These discoveries completely support the hypothesis H3 that media credibility and trust make the biggest contribution of the three sub-variables of Oriented Media to reducing tribal conflicts.

Table 7. ANOVA Results for the Combined Regression Model

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	2697.272	3	899.091	16.848	.000 ^b
Residual	6190.195	116	53.364		
Total	8887.467	119			

a. Dependent Variable: Response Variable

b. Predictors: (Constant), Predictive 3, Predictive 2, Predictive 1

According to the Collinearity Diagnostics section of Tables 8, the condition indexes continued to be below the traditional threshold of 30, with at most a single predictor showing a problem in terms of shared variance (Assaf & Tsionas, 2021). Moreover, none of the dimensions had significant variance ratios across multiple predictors at the same time, and this indicated that problematic multicollinearity was not present.

Table 8. Collinearity Diagnostics

Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	Variance Proportions			
				(Constant)	MFTI	MAR	MCT
	1	3.825	1.000	.00	.00	.01	.00
	2	.087	6.626	.00	.04	.78	.20
	3	.064	7.740	.00	.71	.03	.39
	4	.024	12.499	.99	.24	.18	.40

a. Dependent Variable: Response Variable

The Durbin-Watson statistic, which is given as 2.065 in Table 6, is close to 2, so no problems with serial correlation are evident. According to Table 9 ("Residuals Statistics"), standardized residuals fall within -2.616 to 1.607. The highest of the Cook's Distance values is 0.036, so there is clearly no single point that has an undue effect on the model's predictions. This shows there are no outliers that would have such an impact on changing the regression estimates dramatically.

Table 9. Residuals Statistics

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	20.1385	42.1052	34.2667	4.76090	120
Std. Predicted Value	-2.968	1.646	.000	1.000	120
Standard Error of Predicted Value	.716	2.227	1.292	.334	120
Adjusted Predicted Value	19.4266	42.3013	34.2580	4.75671	120
Residual	-19.11026	11.74159	.00000	7.21238	120
Std. Residual	-2.616	1.607	.000	.987	120
Stud. Residual	-2.643	1.627	.001	1.002	120
Deleted Residual	-19.50193	12.03143	.00864	7.43125	120
Stud. Deleted Residual	-2.714	1.639	-.001	1.009	120
Mahal. Distance	.152	10.065	2.975	2.093	120
Cook's Distance	.000	.036	.008	.008	120
Centered Leverage Value	.001	.085	.025	.018	120

a. Dependent Variable: Response Variable

The three hypotheses were empirically supported by the single combined regression model. In other words, the MFTI, MAR, and MCT factors each made a significant contribution to the prediction of the reduction of tribal conflicts, with MCT showing the strongest influence effect ($\beta = .407$), followed by MFTI ($\beta = .271$) and then MAR ($\beta = .156$). The combined model, which you can see in detail in the tables ranging from 9 to 11, explained about 30.3% of the variability in MTC, $F(3, 116) = 16.848$, $p < .001$. The results from the diagnostic tests shown in Tables 12 and 13 validated the statistical soundness of the regression estimates.

5. Discussion

It can be inferred that the public's trust and confidence in the press have a major impact on views of conflict prevention, and this effect exceeds those of other elements such as framing or accessibility (Abdi, 2021). Among the participants, who included, among others, the journalists, the human rights activists, and even the lawyers, it appears that the source's credibility is more important in evaluating information than either the availability of or stylistic flourishes in the presentation. This is in accordance with the source-credibility theory that points out the importance of the impression of the messenger's competence and trustworthiness in determining whether an argument is accepted.

One possible interpretation of the relatively small effect of MAR is that simply having tribal-related content uploaded online is not likely to lead to reconciliation immediately (Macaulay, 2024). It is only the availability of the material that plays an important part if the substance is credible, well-presented, and convincing. Conversely, the very fact that MFTI has a little effect only seems to support the idea that when the information is conflict-oriented, it can, to that extent, be the main factor. However, the conflict-oriented framework is a mere second-order factor compared with credibility (Abbo, 2024). Overall, these findings show that one factor, such as OM, is not the sole factor but an outcome of an interaction in which trust is the main driver, and framing is a supporting one, and availability is an enabling though not a decisive condition.

The low inter-predictor correlations and acceptable collinearity diagnostics confirm the idea that these three dimensions work independently at both a conceptual and statistical level, rather than serving as substitutes for a single phenomenon. This result supports the tripartite structure of OM as proposed by the conceptual framework of this study (Elisha & Hakim, 2026).

Wolfsfeld's study on media coverage during extended ethnic clashes shows that the forces of capitalism and politics often drive journalists to fabricate sensational stories that actually heighten rather than reduce inter-communal tensions. Our current work reveals that conflict-sensitive framing significantly decreases hostility in Sudanese media workers and law practitioners, as concluded. Dangerous speech, according to Benesch's criteria, encompasses the rhetorical styles commonly associated with mass atrocities that were in fact the prelude to such violence. For instance, we are not surprised that several post-conflict studies, such as those in Rwanda, Kenya, and the former Yugoslavia, have found that counter-narratives can significantly limit dehumanization if implemented under certain conditions (Tshetu & Tappe, 2026) (Patel et al., 2026).

According to this research, the direction aligns with previous studies, but it puts the aspect of credibility as a central predictor of the outcomes of mitigation measures instead of just looking at the content of a message. The contact hypothesis put forward by Allport, together with later studies in media-facilitated dialogue, shows that neutral and sustained interaction improves the attitudes of people from different communities toward each other. In Sudan's unique socio-political context, reliability appears to be a more significant factor than the extent of dissemination, a nuance overlooked by previous descriptive studies at the statistical level (Agyeman, 2026).

This work contributes to the communication field by introducing Oriented Media as a multi-faceted, analyzable concept, and demonstrating its application through regression-based modeling in a case study of tribal conflict situations, which are typically examined using qualitative methods alone. The paper provides an integrated conceptual and theoretical foundation for the three different concepts of media frames, agenda-setting, and source credibility. Viewing them together, as opposed to separate paradigms, reveals the extent of explanation they can provide (Ali et al., 2025).

Alongside rejecting other possibilities, the study largely helps us uncover a more complex media effect framework. The idea that credibility can predict the outcomes of conflict resolution when combined with perceived levels of framing and accessibility is presented as one of the results. This research work, apart from being a valuable addition to peacebuilding communication literature, also offers peacebuilding communications a repeatable methodological framework that will hopefully take the area away from its mainly qualitative methods. In addition, it will be suitable for the analysis of a variety of post- and co-conflict societies. Moreover, the author refers to Intergroup Contact Theory as the discovery of their research and emphasizes how trust in media channels can, for instance, be a key mechanism for communication mediated by a third party between the two sides of the conflict.

Media organizations of fragmented tribal societies ought to give emphasis to activities that enhance credibility, such as openness in sourcing and making the editorial independence obvious, as trust largely contributes to conflict reduction. Policy makers need to design rules that are conflict-sensitive on the one hand and ensure free expression of the press on the other (Nnubia, 2026) (Bisina & Okolie, 2026). Editorial training can only be useful to media practitioners if it contains materials about how to avoid making the tribal collective responsible for the acts of guilty individuals, which have been scientifically shown to pacify the situation (Lawton & Wawa, 2025). Organizations wishing to improve digital and broadcast dissemination should not just think of extending reach to promote reconciliation, as this will probably not be effective. What they really need to do is put together a set of measures that make the message believable and, therefore, discourage the circulation of inflammatory messages (Carrasco-Farré et al., 2025). From the point of view of human rights activists and lawyers, it is important to find trustworthy media outlets as partners when they tell the stories of reconciliation, given that audience acceptance depends a great deal on the reliability of the source (Keristifa et al., 2026) (Mamun, 2025).

According to the merged model, only 30.3% of the variation in the mitigation of tribal conflicts is explained, an indication that other variables, which were not measured/identified by the study, are probably affecting the mitigation outcome.

Relying on self-reported data may open a door to the possibility of a common method bias (Polas, 2025). It is recommended for future researchers to use a longitudinal approach to clarify cause-effect relationships of the studied variables (Teng & Bushman., 2025). In the next set of studies, it is advisable to involve representatives of ordinary people in addition to government officials, as this would make the sample more representative (Abdelbagi & Literat, 2023). Research scientists are expected to expand their data collection to areas in which they are less represented (Danso et al., 2024), while new research efforts can complement the quantitative results of this paper with in-depth qualitative interviews, in accordance with (Baumgartner, (2025).

6. Conclusion

This article investigated how well the concepts of Media Framing of Tribal Issues (MFTI), Media Accessibility and Reach (MAR), and Media Credibility and Trust (MCT) predict the Mitigation of Tribal Conflicts (MTC) using a survey among Sudanese journalists, human rights activists, and lawyers. Each independent variable appeared to be a significant predictor (Baumgartner, 2025). These findings illustrate that media actions emphasizing credibility-related aspects will lead to the reduction of conflicts to a greater extent than those media practices which are concerned mainly with framing and/or media accessibility or reach. Moreover, this study supports the view that Oriented Media, OM, can be understood as a stable and empirically different predictor of conflict prevention in societies that are divided tribally.

This research effectively attained and fulfilled its three main goals. Besides, the study examined the explanatory role of MFTI in the decline of hate speech and incitement narratives, estimated the effect of MAR on inter-tribal dialogue and peacebuilding, as well as gauged the relative role of MCT when working together with MFTI and MAR, all contributing to overall MTC. Each purpose was tackled by employing correlation and multiple regression analyses, leading to the validation of the hypotheses.

Beyond its original contribution to the field of communication studies, this new study is a rare example of how one can effectively combine framing theory, agenda-setting theory, and the source credibility model into a very solid and practical research framework, especially for tribal conflict scenarios. The findings of the paper mainly center on the concept of the media as the prime factor influencing the reduction of a conflict by Oriented Media, and as a result, they reshape our understanding of how media works in places where peace is still fragile. In a number of ways, editorial training, media regulation, and the design of conflict reconciliation programs, for instance, could benefit from a better awareness of the kind of journalistically trained methods that help sustain peace in a society. It is this knowledge base of peace-oriented media work that will be especially useful for a group of stakeholders ranging from policymakers and media practitioners to human rights workers who are looking to find evidence-based interventions to curb tribal conflicts through credible conflict-aware journalism, that is, journalism which doesn't provoke or aggravate conflicts.

Credibility appeared to be the decisive factor in the media environment of such conflict-prone societies (Muhammad Auwal & Ersoy, 2024). The present findings can provide a solid and repeatable basis for further research in media systems after conflict. The upcoming studies would gain greatly from using longitudinal methods to show the cause-and-effect relationship, including a more comprehensive sample of ordinary people and government members, and carrying out comparisons of other fragile states (Ahmed, 2026). By means of these, there will be a more accurate and comprehensive analytical framework than what the original work in this article suggests, making it possible to develop reconciliation strategies through the mass media in tribally divided societies better with the evidence of this study (Abubakar et al., 2025).

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