Interagency cooperation among the key security agencies has remained very difficult and elusive to achieve both at conceptual and operational levels. The mandates that set up most of the regular security outfits are usually clumsy, overlapping and sometimes too bogus to operationalise. Besides, the roles of the citizens remain at best marginal in managing the nation's lopsided security outlay. Consequently, the Security Sector Reform was recommended to revamp and reposition the sector for effective management.

While this book may not have answered all the questions that confront the security sector in Nigeria, it has definitely provided the compass and the template for effective synergy among key stakeholders in the sector.

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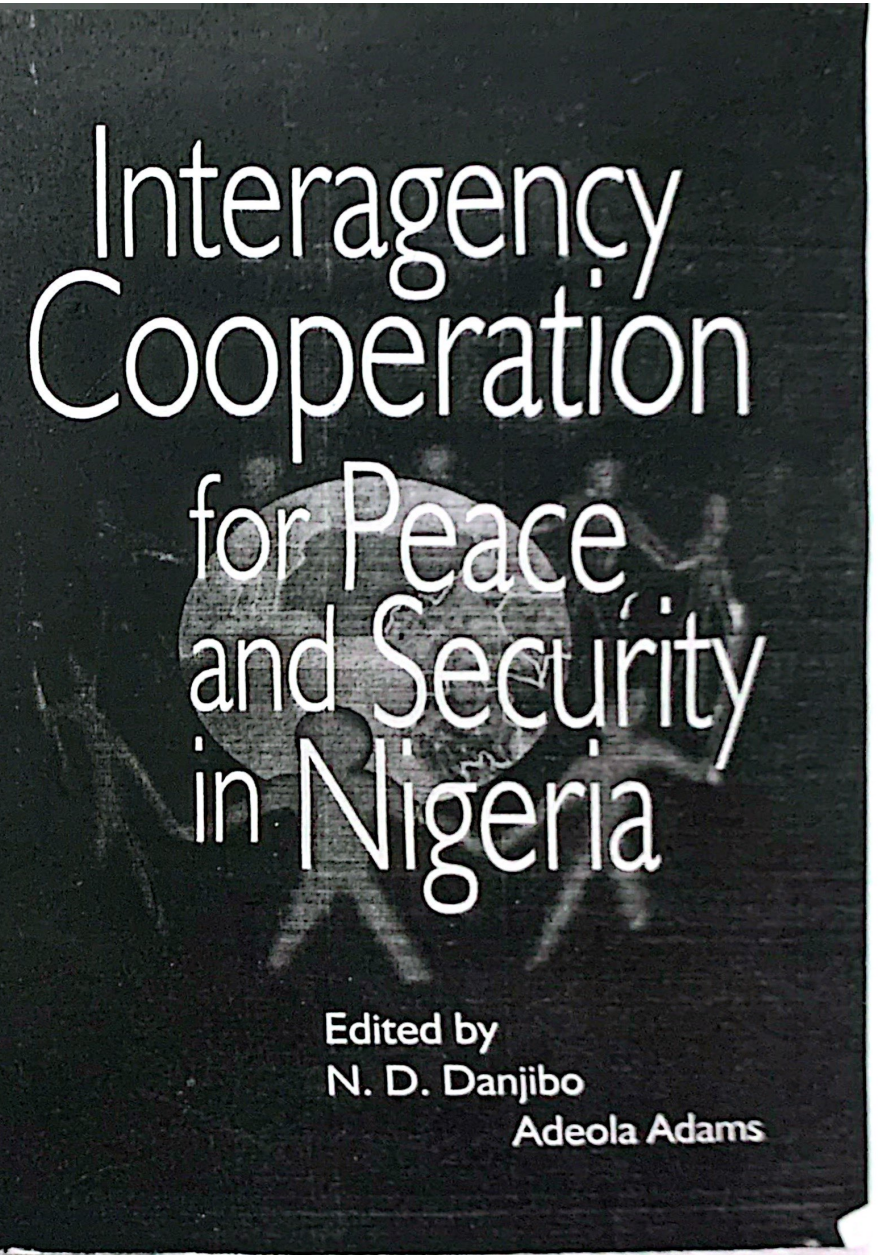
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Interagency Cooperation for Peace and Security in Nigeria

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CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Indigeneous Approaches to Building Peace and Social Solidarity in Nigeria

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Introduction

Conflict arises from the inequality, discrimination, domination, exclusion and injustice, which attends competition among persons and groups for scarce political, social, economic and environmental resources and benefits. Conflict can express itself whether in violent or non-violent ways. Hence, it is important to emphasise that conflict is not a synonym of violence. Although many believe that conflict must be avoided, conflict *per se* is a constructive force within the human society, being inherent in the process of change and development. It is the way human beings react towards conflict that leads to violence, armed conflict and war, or on the other hand takes the form of coexistence, cooperation and development. It is in fact in the absence of violence and armed conflict among states that peace is generally understood. The African way of promoting justice and social solidarity cannot be over emphasised. Settlement of disputes through indigenous methods have existed from time immemorial in different parts of the world. For example the Hawaiian islanders of Polynesian ancestry use the practice, known as *ho'oponopono* (set things right), under the guidance of a leader – someone

both sides look to with respect. He or she leads the session and acts as mediator. He opens the session with a prayer, asks questions of the participants, and at times will call for a moment of silence when tempers are running hot or one side is refusing to listen to the other (Barret and Barret 2004 cited – Boggs and Chun, 1990), and eventually works to bring about reconciliation.

Also, The Abkhazian of the Caucasus Mountains of Georgia in the former Soviet Union, have long practiced mediation by elders to resolve disputes. The mediators are generally respected elders. The mediators essentially shamed disputing sides into a reconciliation, which was followed up by a joint feast. This feast of reconciliation, according to participants, cements family bonds and is considered more sacred than any court document (Barret and Barrett, 2004 citing Garb, 1996). The Bushmen of the Kalahari who are hunter-gatherers, living in a large, arid plain in Namibia and Botswana, have largely stuck to their traditional way of settling disputes that avoids fighting and the courts. Rivalries over mates, food, and land are common. But when a dispute arises, they are slow to fight and quick to find others who will intercede. If small-scale intervention fails, the whole group is brought into the process. To Ury, (2002), "When a serious problem comes up (as cited by Barrett and Barrett):

> everyone sits down-all the men, all the women-and they talk, and they talk and they talk. Each person has a chance to have his or her say. It may take two or three days. This open and inclusive process continues until the dispute is literally talked out.

The processes involved here include mediation and consensus building.

For the Ubuntu societies found in Southern Africa, disputes are resolved through an institution known as the inkundla/lekgotla which served as a group mediation and reconciliation forum (Nomonde 2000). This inkundla/lekgotla forum was communal in character in the sense that the entire society was involved at various levels in trying to find a solution to a problem which was viewed as threatening the social cohesion of the community. In principle, the proceedings would be led by a Council of Elders and the Chief or, if the disputes were larger, by the King himself. The mechanism therefore allowed members of the public to

share their views and to generally make their opinions known. After listening to the views of the members of the society, the Council of Elders would then advise on solutions which would promote reconciliation between the aggrieved parties and thus maintain the overall objective of sustaining the unity and cohesion of the community.

Similarly, the Kpelle people of central Liberia have evolved a moot court to resolve family disputes that are too small or intimate for the traditional courts. The sessions, attended by a group of neighbors and family members, are presided over by someone with a kinship tie to the participants and usually political standing in the group. The process allowed everyone to be heard. In a particular family case, the group decided that the husband was mostly at fault. He was ordered to bring rum, beer, and food for the entire group and thus reintegrate himself and his family into the community (Barrett and Barret citing Gibbs, 1963).

In Nigeria, indigenous approaches to settlement of disputes among the Yoruba are through the "Magaji", "Baale" or "Oba", depending on the area and the type of dispute. The Igbo traditional institutions for conflict resolution include: the family, Amala (council of elders), Umunna (clan), Ohanaeze (assembly of the people and the king), and Agbara (local deities or oracles) among others (Olorunsola, 1972). For the Fulbe people, a section of Hausa-Fulani, approaches to conflict resolution are for inter-group and intra-group conflicts which ranges from *Pulaaku* ('Fulbeness'), *Kombol* (sanctioning), *Sulhotiral* (arbitration/mediation), *Lamlambe* (community leaders), among others.

Conceptual Clarifications

Peace

Two compatible definitions of peace are (Galtung, 1996: 9) which defined peace as *"the absence of violence of all kinds"* and *"Peace is not violent and creative conflict transformation"*. Both definitions look at peace from a positive perspective. In a strict sense, it will not be possible to eliminate all kind of violence, but they can be minimised. Peace and violence are both forms of struggle; neither is an end in itself, but vital interests govern each. One focuses on the well-being of human beings as a specie,

while the other seeks for the welfare of a few. Peace is ordinarily defined as *'quiet, calm freedom from or cessation of war; civil order'* (Swanell, 1992). This classical definition of peace as the absence of war or hostilities no longer stands in international law (Swanson, 1991).

The proposal by the renowned peace researcher, Johan Galtung, that the 'negative' definition of peace as freedom from war, should be supplemented by a 'positive' definition, is now widely accepted as representative of the concept of peace. Positive peace incorporates:

> the conditions for peace-building, such as "harmony, co-operation and integration" with the need for peace-keeping, and the activities necessary to ensure the freedom from war or hostilities (Galtung 1985).

Also, it is pertinent to note that earlier in 1975, at the Belgrade Conference of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), this broad view had been incorporated into a formal definition of peace. The positive values to be included in the concept of peace are integration, human fulfillment, freedom and social justice. Evident from this list are more or less the same set of values covered by the concept of human rights (Lodgaard).

The realist theory, called the Hobbesian tradition, sees war as the most typical international activity where peace is just *"a period of recuperation from the last war and preparation for the next."* Peace, hence, is the result of a balance practice of power among states. This theory is based on the function of states and their capacity to depend on themselves or maintain alliances as far as peace and security are concerned.

Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding began as a key focus of international attention in the early 1990s to provide relief for the many war-devastated states, with the United Nations (UN) playing a key role. The concept of peace-building and its agenda have since developed remarkably in international politics. Boutros-Ghali (1992:57) defined peace-building as,

> The process by which an achieved peace is placed on durable foundations and which prevents violent conflict from recurring by dealing with the underlying economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems responsible for the conflict

Boutros-Ghali further emphasised that, peacebuilding refer the actions undertaken by national or international actors to identify and support structures which intend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict. Liberal peacebuilding was thus, adopted by the UN to carry out the agenda of international commitment to transform post-war nation-states. Among other reasons, the elements of democratic elections, market liberalism, humanitarian assistance and the rule of law that underpin liberal peacebuilding gained this approach massive international support and was used by the UN and other large donor countries to transform war-torn nations (Hoffmann, 1995) including Angola, Namibia, and El-Salvador.

According to Newman and Richmond (2009), the prevailing paradigm of western conventional approaches to peace-building; liberal peace-building, liberal internationalism or the assumption that the best way to consolidate peace is to transform war-torn states into market democratic states and hold immediate democratic election, has been more problematic than anticipated. Moreover, formal court systems and interdictions applied under the liberal peace-building in some of the countries created an avenue for related challenges. According to Bukari (2013), the court system often leads to blame and punishment of some factions that tend to aggravate hostility among the conflicting factions and lead to the escalation of violence.

It is against this background that scholars have argued that indigenous approaches to peace-building and conflict resolution are more effective than western-conventional approaches (Zartman, 2000; Bukari, 2013; Issifu, 2015). Unlike the traditional peace-building methods, western-conventional approaches are not credited with local legitimacy, because they do not focus on psychosocial and spiritual dimension, and do not take into account the cultural milieu of Africans during conflict transformation (Kirby, 2006). Instead, the western-conventional approaches focus on holding immediate elections after peace agreements signed and introducing unfriendly economic restructuring policies without tackling the structural causes of the conflicts as well as appreciating the cultural needs of the vulnerable in society (Austin, Fischer and Giessmann, 2011). The failure to recognise the customs of the people, and to identify the structural causes of violence according to Kirby (2006) are the reasons why western-conventional approaches to peace-building have failed in Africa.

Social Solidarity

Social solidarity is a fundamental concept in sociology that seeks to determine how individuals develop a willingness to stand by others. This has been a recurring theme in the history of sociology, beginning in particular with Durkheim and extending through Parsons to Alexander (Kivisto, 2017). Solidarity refers to the integration, the degree of integration and the type of integration that is demonstrated by a society or a group. In other definitions, solidarity refers to a Christian virtue that was described by Pope John Paul II, and describes working for the common good (Actforlibraries, 2017). It can also be seen as the group bonding in unity to defend against an enemy or opposing interest, as with the unions and the corporation. Finally, solidarity has been incorporated into the language as any bond which holds people together in shared interest and mutual support where each individual works for the wellbeing and support of others (Actforlibraries, 2017).

The degree or type of integration of a society depends on the actual society involved. In simpler societies, solidarity is usually based on kinship ties or familial networks. In more complex societies, solidarity is more organic, referring to the interdependence of the component parts. Thus, social solidarity is maintained in more complex societies through the interdependence of its component parts.

Social Solidarity Theory

Emile Durkheim (1858-1917), who is considered to be a French social positivist, is easily recognised as the founding father of Sociology and the architect of schools of sociology. He is considered to be a French social positivist. In his construct of solidarity, Durkheim sought to explain the ways in which people develop social structures and bonds based on their divisions of labor and the ways in which they bond together in mutual interest and support. Durkheim classified the types of solidarity according to the type of society. He classified traditional and small scale societies where members shared ethnicity, work, education, religious training and lifestyle as having "mechanical solidarity". There is also

kinship, family and social ties with mechanical solidarity.

Durkheim explained that with "organic solidarity", the modern society brings together people based on a division of provision and need where individuals are dependent upon each other for their lifestyle. Societal cohesion in modern societies, then becomes a function of the interdependence of the components of the complex society. The content of the mechanical solidarity conscious collective tends greatly toward secularism. There is a concern about people, ahead of the society and discussions or arguments are called for and allowed. The supreme value of the society is to support the individual, not the other way around. The support of the individual is in the specific areas of work ethic, opportunity, dignity and social justice. Whereas, the content of organic solidarity conscious collective is concrete and specific, the content in the mechanical type is abstract and general. In terms of the state, order and coherence hold people together in the organic state, while the fear of the mechanical state is that individuals float freely, not in group cohesiveness.

In social stratification, there are elements of organic solidarity in the family and community structure which might be much stronger in rural, poor, ethnically non-assimilated and immigrant communities, while other communities might operate under a more mechanical form of personal solidarity. In a single person, there might be a mechanical solidarity at work, while there is organic solidarity at home and in private life.

Adaptation Theory

Adaptation is a component of Parsons' theory of social system survival. Adaptation is one of four "functional prerequisites" (the others being goal attainment, integration, and pattern maintenance) that any social system must exercise in order to prevail. Parsons asserted that specialised subsystems develop to fulfill these functional prerequisites (Sullivan, 2009). The subject of adaptation is treated in the sociology of organisations, faced with change (social, economic, technological). There exist organisations that are resistant to adaptation, but which must transform to avoid disappearance by accepting a gradual and permanent change, rather than an endured and brutal change. Henceforth, the

collective apprenticeship notion of the actors of new ways of being and doing constitutes social adjustments that represent the system that is changing with time. One of the first writings to suggest the notion of the evolution of life by adaptation to the milieu is attributed to Anaximander (Obenga, 2005). It deals with all the means that the system and its members must use in the pursuit of goals. In this way, adaptation becomes an endogenous process that enables the system to either assimilate the innovation, or to modify its internal structure in order to assimilate this innovation.

In this vein, the study of the relations of power by the strategic and systematic analysis developed by Crozier and Friedberg (1977) enabled them to show that, the actor is free to take a step back from expectations in choosing a group of possibilities, rather than passively adapting to his structure. Thus, the combined application of social solidarity and adaptation theories presents a situation where the modern society brings together people based on a division of provision and need where individuals are dependent upon each other for their lifestyle. Societal cohesion in modern societies then becomes a function of the interdependence of the components of the complex society with kinship, family and social ties, which enabled them to show that the actor is free to take a step back from expectations in choosing a group of possibilities, rather than passively adapting to his structure, especially as relating to indigenous approach to settlement of conflicts.

Statement of the Problem

Armed conflicts, low human development and degradation of the environment belong to the most severe problems human beings are confronted with at the end of the twentieth century. Conflicts happen every day, everywhere and to everyone. The end of the Cold War has raised the hope for a world that is less violent, more developed and peaceful, where conflicts can be resolved in non-violent ways. Africa profiles the highest statistics of violent conflicts in the world. In the traditional African society, conflict may generally exist whenever or wherever incompatible events occurred and may result in "win-lose character".

Justice, peace, good governance, and reconciliation, thrive where

sturdy and stable democratic values and impulses prevail, and where there is a culture of constitutionalism to constrain arbitrariness and abuse of power. As Africa has progressed in building democratic institutions, more countries have paid attention to stopping the prevalence of impunity and enshrining values that underscore justice and reconciliation. Creating spaces for social and political contestation has provided the basis for vibrant discourse on how to end the spate of impunity that has characterised most African countries. While sometimes reconciliation through judicial process deeply divides societies, stable peace ultimately hinges on finding a judicious balance between the two objectives. Even where deeply divided countries have made short-term pragmatic concessions that privilege reconciliation and peace at the expense of justice, the purpose has ultimately been to strengthen institutions that diminish the persistence of impunity. In countries emerging from civil conflicts, wide-ranging and open discussions have been held across communities about the vital nature of institutions that enable consensus building and collective problem solving.

The non-implementation of various human rights treaties by African governments is another challenge. Since Africa is a critical author of and participant in the emerging international human rights regime, it is important for African countries to deepen their commitments to these instruments. This remains true despite the instruments' current flaws, especially their slow and slanted implementation. In the international search for mechanisms to reverse the patterns and practices of impunity, Africa as a whole benefits from the adherence to these norms. Africa's collective voice on the credibility of international norms and institutions helps to strengthen the case for national, regional, and continental indigenous instruments that meet the broader objectives of mitigating impunity and serve the ends of justice and reconciliation. Africa has contributed significantly to global ideals and norms that have informed international practices to end impunity and promote justice and reconciliation. Africa has also witnessed efforts to incorporate these norms and ideals into national, regional, and continental structures, but there is a need for more efforts to domesticate, monitor, and implement them. Thus, we have to turn to anthropological and sociological studies of traditional societies for a glimpse of some of the ways early humans

may have resolved disputes without the use of fists, clubs, or poison arrows. Many of these ways of resolving conflicts are starkly alien to our Western way of looking at the world. Nevertheless, they have much to teach us about the utility of conflict in airing the disagreements of everyday life and how to use them as opportunities to deepen relationships and achieve lasting harmony (Barrett and Barrett).

The general objective of this study is to discuss the indigenous ways of resolving conflicts without resorting to violence in Africa and particularly in Nigeria, while the specific objectives were:

(1) To discuss the causes of conflict in Africa with particular reference to Nigeria;
(2) To highlight indigenous approaches to *the settlement of* conflicts in selected Nigerian cultures;
(3) To analyse the role of culture in peace-building; and
(4) To proffer the way forward on how to encourage indigenous approaches to conflict resolution.

The study adopted the historical-narrative-cum-analytical approach, with a combination of primary and secondary sources of information which incorporates both qualitative and quantitative approaches, hinged on Social Solidarity Theory and Adaptation theory. It illustrates the fact that indigenous approaches to conflict resolution promote social solidarity in an organic way while adaptation of indigenous culture can help to drive the prevailing generation. The study examined the role of indigenous approach to conflict resolution in maintaining peaceful co-existence in the African society and especially in Nigeria. The case study of Yoruba, Igbo, Tiv and Hausa-Fulani were discussed.

Causes of Conflict in Africa

The causes of conflict in Africa are numerous, they include disputes about borders, global financial crisis, rising costs of living, high unemployment – especially of educated youth, power struggle and electoral violence, conflicts over basic resources, intolerance in ethnicity, religious and political belief, tribal groupings, insurgency (Nwanegbo and Odigbo), poverty based on the state of insecurity and bad governance, political instability, armed conflicts and proliferation of

cheap weapons. However, all these are linked to the deep rooted corruption of the political leaders who use force to arbitrarily stay in power and exploit their people politically and economically. Oyeniyi (2011), summarised the causes of conflicts in Africa to include over-population, economic or religious disparities, oppression, demands for democracy, communal or ethnic violence related to economic, social, religious, cultural or ethnic issues, *persecution or* violations of human rights, mass movements of refugees, poverty or instability caused by the mismanagement or ineptitude of the government, including evident and perceived levels of corruption by the government beyond any acceptable limits of traditional toleration, *poor economic performance and debt problem*

Nsifo (2017), identified thirteen **causes of ethnic conflict in Nigeria. They are: Amalgamation** of the northern and southern protectorates to form Nigeria, **Tribalism which** impedes true nationalism and unity, **Favoritism in preference of incompetent** relatives and friends, even when they are not qualified for government appointments, positions or carrying out contracts, **Corruption and Inept Leadership, Resource Control** and environmental degradation in the Niger Delta, **Marginalisation of Some Ethnic Groups in the Country, Constitutional Reform, Religious Intolerance** between Christians and Moslems, **Introduction of Sharia Criminal Legal System, Herdsmen Attack and** failure of government security forces to stop brazen attacks of one ethnic group over others, **Disputes over Ownership of Land, Long Military Incursion in Government, and Lack of vision** for which citizens fight to uphold.

Moreover, conflicts arising from the activities of Boko Haram in the northeastern Nigeria has resulted in threats to lives and properties, death of many and displacement of several people. National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) Displacement Tracking Matrix XI DTM (August, 2016), put the figure of people that are internally displaced in Nigeria to be 2,093,030 being 370,389 households. The majority of the IDPs were identified in Borno (1,446,829), followed by Adamawa (163,559) and Yobe (135,442). While 89.74 percent of IDPs were displaced by the insurgency alone, 8.85 percent were displaced by communal clashes and 1.41 percent by natural disaster.

Indigenous Approach to Settlement of Disputes

Colonialism had its tolls of pros and cons on Africa. It did not only destroy the basis upon which Africans could define themselves, but where it could, it also co-opted the indigenous structures and mechanisms of governance and dispute resolution to serve the interests of the colonial administration. Indigenous traditions with regard to governing, and resolving disputes in African societies were therefore corrupted by the centralising power of colonialism. Africa is not a monolithic continent, there is a multiplicity of ethnic, cultural and linguistic groups, so we cannot generalise the extent to which cultural traditions do or do not have progressive norms and principles which can inform our approaches to building peace and social solidarity.

Conflict Resolution Among Selected Ethnic Groups in Nigeria

Ajayi and Buhari, (2014) have reported that, in the traditional Nigerian societies, the law enforcement agents, traditional police and courts were responsible for ensuring compliance with the laws of the land. Disputants often take their cases to elders and neighbourhood mediators, who can be depended upon to resolve conflicts with dispatch in local language, using familiar standards of behavior. For practical purposes, four ethnic groups in Nigerian societies shall be examined, viz: The Yoruba (mainly in southwest), The Igbo (southeast), Hausa/Fulani and (northern region) and the Tiv (North central).

The Yoruba

Yoruba people are a large ethno-linguistic group or ethnic nation in Africa most of whom speak the Yoruba language. They are an ethnic group of southwestern and north-central Nigeria, as well as southern and central Benin (cometoNigeria, 2016). The Yoruba constitute approximately 35 percent of Nigeria's total population and around 40 million individuals throughout the region of West Africa (cometoNigeria, 2016). While the majority of the Yoruba live in western Nigeria, there are also substantial indigenous Yoruba communities in Benin, Ghana, Togo and the Caribbean. The Yorubas are the main ethnic group in the states of Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, and Oyo, which are subdivisions of

Nigeria; they also constitute a sizable proportion of Kwara and Kogi states as well as Edo state. Traditionally, the Yorubas organised themselves into networks of related villages, towns and kingdoms with most of them headed by an Oba (King) or Baale (a nobleman or mayor) (cometoNigeria, 2016).

In Nigeria, the Yoruba people live in modern cities but cling to traditional ways of resolving disputes. When a matter between Yorubas ends up in court, it is generally considered a mark of shame on the disputants. This is not to say that the people do not feel conflict has a place in life. An old Yoruba saying makes this clear: "The tongue and teeth often come in conflict. To quarrel and get reconciled is a mark of responsibility" (Albert, Awe, Herault, and Omitoogun, 1995: 9).

Among the Yoruba people, indigenous laws are essentially derived from customs and traditions. Literacy was not associated only with the written word, but also very essentially, with verbal art and remembrance. The Yoruba people derived their sources of adjudication from wisdom and traditional knowledge of the forebears which were always dramatised. Olaoba (2001), confirmed that, the elders (by old age or seniority) being the force behind order or decorum in traditional society, sit under a tree, and talk until they agree. This indicates that, elders, within the culture of the Yorubas, are the repositories of wisdom and knowledge. (Olaoba, 2001: 1-2).

According to Ajayi and Buhari, (2014) cases of fighting among adolescents or young people were in the past accorded an impromptu settlement by the passers-by who normally ensured instant restoration of peace and harmony. There existed various community associations and guilds saddled with the responsibility of maintenance of peace and order. In certain circumstances, gods and ancestors (the living dead) are called upon, their spirits invoked and every one especially the disputants are reminded of the aftermath of their wrath if they refuse to say the truth. Spirits which could be either malevolent or benevolent are present in the markets, and the palace benevolent (Olaoba, 2002: 9).

Furthermore, among the Yoruba people, there are levels or phases of conflict resolution: there were dispute resolutions at the inter-personal or family level, the extended family level and village or town level (chief in council) (Ajayi and Buhari 2014). These tiers represent the political

units that make up the community. The smallest unit called Idile (nuclear family) is headed by a "Bale" (the head of household which includes the man's immediate family of wife or wives and children). As the saying goes *"Agba kin wa loja, ki ori omo tuntun wo"* (The intervention of elders into conflict settles cases among young ones). The next unit is the "Ebi", (extended family headed by "Mogaji/Olori Ebi" who is the most influential or usually the eldest person in the Ebi. The extended family includes all persons who have blood ties. The last tier of the units is the quarter which comprises of several family compounds, which is headed by a "Baale", (the chief-of-ward/quarter).

Cases resolved by the Bale include conflicts among co-wives, brothers and sisters, truants, and street fights involving his children and his foster children or dependents. Conflicts resolved immediately include scolding the trouble makers and appeasing whoever was offended. The "Bale" is required to visit the offended person, even to thank him/her for accepting a peaceful resolution of the conflict. It is the duty of Bale to call together his household and warn them to desist from making any more trouble. The court imposes no fine. However, appeals could be made from the court to the second court which is the court of the ward-chief (Ile-ejo ijoye Adugbo). This court tried civil cases. It could not try criminal cases but it had the authority to conduct preliminary investigation into criminal cases, before transferring them to the court of the king (Ile-ejo Oba) (Oguntomisin, 2004, p. 10). The "Baale" (chief) also controls the relationship between members of his family and outsiders. Such cases can threaten the survival of the entire lineage or ward. Once the matter is resolved, emphasis is put on how neighbourliness could be achieved and preserved. Land disputes, the neglect of familial duties by a husband, infidelity by the women, dispute over inheritance are the commonest in this category.

Dispute resolutions by the Chief-in-council (Igbimo Ilu) in Yoruba land was the highest traditional institution for conflict resolution. In the pre-colonial era, the council had the power to pass a death sentence on any offender brought before it. The court of the king was the highest court. It was also the last court to which appeal could be made. Although, among the Egba and Ijebu, the Ogboni court seemed to be the last court of appeal (Oguntomisin, 2004: 11). When matters are brought before

the council, while stating her case, a woman is traditionally expected to be on her knees and to offer the traditional greetings unless the chief gives her permission to stand up. A man has to start by prostrating which is a way of offering traditional greetings. Whatever judgment is given is accepted. In the traditional judiciary system in Yorubaland, fines or damages are not usually awarded by the mediators in civil cases. The utmost aim is to restore peace by settling disputes amicably.

It is noteworthy that the restoration of harmony is what is paramount in the Yoruba traditional judicial system. Sometimes, mediators award simple fines as a deterrent to the occurrence of particular anti-social behavior. This may be demanded in form of kola nuts or local gins both of which have ritual significance. Some of the kolanuts are broken and passed round for everyone to eat as a way of celebrating the resolution of the conflict. The drink is also passed round for all to taste. If gin or palm wine is unavailable, ordinary drinking water can be used. In some traditional settings, the palm wine or gin is used to pour libation to the gods and ancestors of the people involved in the dispute (Ajayi and Buhari, 2014). These actions help to reinforce the terms of the reconciliation.

Igbo

Igboland is the home of the Igbo people. It covers most of south-east Nigeria, with a total land area of about 15,800 square miles (everyculture, 1998). This area is divided by the Niger River into two unequal sections – the eastern region (which is the largest) and the midwestern region. The river, however, has not acted as a barrier to cultural unity, rather it has provided an easy means of communication in an area where many settlements claim different origins. The Igbos are also surrounded on all sides by other tribes (the Bini, Warri, Ijaw, Ogoni, Igala, Tiv, Yako and Ibibio) (Slattery, 2018). They are socially and culturally diverse, consisting of many subgroups. Although they live in scattered groups of villages, they all speak one language. The Igbo population is estimated to be between 5 and 6 million (everyculture, 1998). The Igbo speaking people are found in the five states of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo. Some are found in Rivers and Delta states. The main cause of conflict among the Igbo is land, chieftaincy tussle as well as matrimonial fallouts (Mezie-Okoye, 2018).

In the pre-colonial era, the Igbo people used non-centralised forms of government: Elders and the Council of Elders as most important peacemaking and conflict resolution mechanisms; they had no chiefs but alter chiefs were introduced during the colonial era (Mezie-Okoye, 2018). Today, the institution of kingship is well established, with Igwes or Eses providing leadership, in collaboration with kindred chiefs.

The Igbo had institutions for controlling the suppression of weak by the strong. These institutions carried out the task of peace education, peace building, confidence building, peacemaking and peace enforcement as well as conflict monitoring, prevention, management and resolution (Nwolise, 2004). According to Ajayi and Buhari (2014) the institutions included: the Family; Amala (council of elders), Okpara system (eldest male), Umunna (clan), Umuada (female born in a town but married out), age grades, assembly of the people, Ohanaeze (assembly of the people and the king), hunters' Association, and agbara (local deities or oracles) (Ajayi and Buhari, 2014). These institutions are not different from those found in other traditional African societies. However, Olorunsola, (1972) stated that prior to the advent of the Europeans, the Igbos consisted of over two hundred independent territorial groups divided into villages. The internal organisation of these groups rested upon patrilineal clans and lineages. These groups were autonomous with regard to governmental processes, but social bonds were strong among them. (Olorunsola, 1972: 157).

An instance of conflict resolution was the case of the Umurebo Umokuzu, and Umuleri-Aguleri land diputes, where the elders of Obokwu village made several third party mediation efforts and the indigenous method of oath swearing by the communities involved restored peace in the warring communities. Mezie-Okoye (2018), reported that since 1933, the pathetic dimension of the conflict is that the Aguleri and Umuleri people have one ancestral origin in Eri, and had been living peacefully side by side in Otuocha for decades before the division and anarchy occasioned by land disputes.

The disastrous conflict was only resolved through traditional means after other alternatives had been exhausted: law courts, political, bureaucratic, and the military (Nwolise, 2005: 159-161). However, the traditional formula which led to the peaceful resolution of the Aguleri-

Umuleri-Umuoba Anam war involved oath-taking, declaration of "No more war" peace treaty and the performance of a cleansing ritual called Ikomue.

The oath which was binding on every indigene of the participating communities was taken to the effect that the contracting parties accept peace and there would be no more war and bloodshed among the five communities and sanctions proclaimed on would-be violators. From that day onwards, peace was restored, true reconciliation begun and social harmony was restored among these communities (Nwolise, 2005: 160-166). It was however observed that the traditional leaders and rulers were also being touched, encouraged and propelled into action by the message of peace, and the direct challenge to them in President Olusegun Obasanjo's speech when he visited Aguleri-Umuoba-Anam conflict area. In his words; *what has happened to our traditional way of life where elders intervene and help to resolve differences? Are there no more elders in the community? If there are, have they abandoned their responsibility? Then what are they doing?* (Olusegun Obasanjo cited in Nwolise, 2005).

Thus, with regard to the Igbo traditional institutions, one cannot but agree that there is continued efficacy of both traditional methods as well as sanctions for conflict resolution.

The Tiv

According to Mezie-Okoye (2018), the north-central geopolitical zone of Nigeria has experienced an overwhelming number of intra- and interethnic violent conflicts since the 1990s. This phenomenon has adversely affected stability in the zone. Astonishingly, some of these unresolved conflicts involved the Tiv, who hitherto had efficient traditional methods of mediating and resolving conflicts. However, those methods have either not been exploited to address the surging conflicts or they have proved ineffective in curbing them. Traditional Tiv society is described as stateless, dispersed or non-centralised in the pre-colonial period. There was no elaborate political, religious or social hierarchy. There was the "*ya*" (compound) council in which the oldest male member of the family was the head, while the next political unit was the "*iyeingyor*" council, which was made up of the elders of several compounds whose membership depended on close blood relations. The

"*Ityo*" council was made up of representatives from different "*iye-ingyor*" groups. Some of the major cases tried by it included murder, organised communal labor, witchcraft, land disputes, siting of new markets and construction of bridges. The "*Tav*" council was the highest decision making body of elders in Tiv land. The council deliberated on major issues affecting the people such as warfare involving other groups, initiation into mystical forces (akombo) and burial ceremonies. The office of the "*Tor Tiv*" (paramount ruler of the Tiv people) came into existence during the colonial era. On 3 April, 1947, Makir Dsekpe was officially installed as the first Tor Tiv.

Usually, when any of the above institutions meets to deliberate over matters affecting them, it is called "*jir*". This is an assembly of neighbors and kinsmen which decides disputes from the simplest to the highest level (Mezie-Okoye 2018). Bitter territorial disputes were handled by "*jir ityo*" and the one comprising all the segments of Tiv society, forming a court of judicature. *Jir* is held in the compound or homestead of the person who initiates it; all the elders of his lineage come as guests, to be his judges and mentors. Tiv call this sort of *jir* a *"jir at home"* or *jir* of the agnatic lineage (jir ityo). Lastly there is a *jir* that embraces the entire Tivland.

In order to have influence in *jir*, an elder must have a good memory of genealogies, for most of the cases touch on genealogy in some way or other. He needs an extensive and sure knowledge of the principles and details of Tiv religion, magic and witchcraft. He must know all the ramifications of personal relationships within his small community, for most of these important factors are not brought out in the case, but are presumed to be known to all hearers. In a nutshell, Tiv elders use *jir to sor tar* (repair broken down relationships at interpersonal, community level and in handling cases involving other groups). In this regard, they act as peacemakers and they keep the community running smoothly (Mezie-Okoye, 2018). Since much of the suspected wrong doing occurred on a mystical sphere, it could be affirmed by oath. Rituals in the jir include *Hamber Ifan* (blowing out the curse), *Bum swem* (taking oath using the swem cultic emblem), and *hembe swem* (broken swem to dispel evil done). Using these means, the elders could reach a decision accepted by all.

and resolution. The first and commonest approach of resolving any intra-group conflict is by resorting to "*Pulaaku*". This entails demonstrating patience, perseverance and accommodation. In this way the Fulani must overlook the gravity of any offence as a source of conflict. The Fulani is expected to accommodate the "offence" of other person because it is an act of *Pulaaku* which is a great virtue that breeds self-respect and mutual understanding. No matter the level of provocation, one is encouraged to abide by *Pulaaku*.

Conflicts among and between Fulbe are also settled through the instrumentality of traditional authorities. These are elders (*Ndottien*) and leaders (*Ardibe*) who are called upon to intervene and mediate, and in some cases, apportion blame in interpersonal and intra-clan disputes. But, in the case of intra-clan disputes, the various heads meet with the district head to resolve the conflict. A common example of inter-clan dispute is the observance of quarantine zone to avoid infections in animals and conflict between owners. Perhaps, related to the above approach is the resort to the "*walderu*" or age-grade system. Some matters concerning individuals are referred to the age-group for resolution. In the *walderu*, peer pressure is applied to resolve whatever conflict that is at stake. In the same vein, a youth who is initiated into the world of 'elderhood' is expected to shirk off all conflicts surrounding him to qualify into the new status of an elder (Pate and Daodu, 2009).

Another common approach to resolving intra-personal disputes is through "*hunayeere*" (oath taking) where disputants swear in the name of Allah to demonstrate the validity of their stand. This is based on the belief that if an individual swears falsely, something terrible would befall him. By taking the oath, the conflict is considered resolved and thus closed. The case is thus referred to Allah for his judgement. Both parties are expected to wholly abide by the oath taking with all honesty (Pate and Daodu, 2009).

The Role of Culture in Peacebuilding and Social Solidarity

The role of culture in building peace and social solidarity cannot be overemphasised. Cultural ties enable people to resolve their disputes amicably and strengthen their bonds. People derive their sense of meaning from their culture. Cultural attitudes and values, therefore, provide the

foundation for the social norms by which people live (see Malan, 1997; Abu-Nimer, 2000 and Avruch, 1998). Through internalising and sharing these cultural attitudes and values with their fellow community members, and by handing them down to future generations, societies can – and do – re-construct themselves on the basis of a particular cultural image.

In order to re-establish social solidarity in war-affected communities, a key step would be to find a way for members of these communities to 're-inform' themselves with a cultural logic that emphasises sharing and equitable resource distribution. This, in effect, means emphasising the importance of reviving progressive cultural attitudes and values that can foster a climate within which peace can flourish. Globally, each culture has a way of settling conflicts amongst its people. Unfortunately, Africa's wisdom in such matters is in a state of demise as the elders who were familiar with traditions pass on without imparting their wisdom to the younger generations (Murithi and Pain, 1999). Several strategies are required to ensure that this indigenous wisdom does not disappear completely. Thus, there is a need for future generations to be given opportunity to learn about these traditions through the development of a curriculum on how indigenous approaches will be transmitted in educational programmes; by confronting corruption and promoting power sharing; inclusive governance and the equitable distribution of resources among all members of society among other strategies.

Conclusion

In sum, this study has established that peace is not just the absence of violence but the presence of social solidarity and that in Africa there are indigenous traditions for building peace and social solidarity for reconciliation purposes. The indigenous approaches and institutions discussed are robust enough to be incorporated into ongoing peace building processes. Therefore, what is required is to find a way to combine the best lessons that tradition has to offer with progressive modern norms and standards for the protection of human rights.

Progressive cultural principles which promote human dignity and the well-being of the individual and society can provide valuable insights into how Africa can be peacefully reconstructed by using its own indigenous value systems which emphasise promoting social solidarity.

In practice, promoting social solidarity means confronting corruption and promoting power sharing, inclusive governance and the equitable distribution of resources among all members of society. To enable culture to begin to play a significant role in the reconstruction of Africa and particularly Nigeria, we have to create a framework that is a hybrid between indigenous African traditions and modern principles to ensure human dignity in conflict resolution.

Recommendations

For Africa to return to its place of leadership in civilisation, it must revalue its traditional culture making adjustments that meet contemporary demands. Traditional Nigerian culture is embedded with a vast, rich knowledge of conflict resolution, upheld by traditional morals for peace and the promotion of human rights and dignity. This study therefore recommends that the traditional conflict methods of ethnic groups in Nigeria be revived towards sustainable peace. There is a need to go back to the traditional methods of conflict resolution as discussed and possibly integrate them into the modern methods, in order to achieve social harmony and lasting peace.

Nigerians at all levels and of all religious bias should recognise the efficacy of indigenous way of conflict resolution and encourage same, so that peaceful co-existence and social solidarity can be promoted in the country.

Also, to improve ethnic relationship among Nigerians, recognition should be given to place of birth, whereby individuals can see themselves as indigenes of that locality and emulate their culture. This will solve the problem of internal discrimination of people where they live in an area where indigenous methods of conflict resolution can not be applied to their cases.

To stem the increasing conflict and violence in Nigeria, intense advocacy on religious tolerance and improved security to defend the sovereignty of the country from terrorists and other militancy attacks should be improved upon .With regard to Fulani herdsmen, ranches should be built by the owners of these cattle in other to mitigate the farmer-herdsmen conflicts.

Moreover, professionals and law enforcement agents should be

trained in traditional indigenous settlement processes for necessary applications in their schedules, in order to ensure social solidarity and peace in the Nigerian society. Including indigenous settlement approaches into the educational curriculum will ensure that the knowledge and practice is sustained through generations.

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