

The Role of Conflict Management in The Restoration of Peace From Otuocha Land Conflict Between Aguleri and Umuleri in Anambra East Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria

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Abstract: *There is a grief over the increase in conflicts which have completely proved irresolvable in Igbo land. This study sought to determine the most effective model of Conflict management to mitigate such cases. It therefore, examines the peaceful role of conflict management as typified in Aguleri and Umuleri land conflict in Anambra East of Anambra state, Nigeria. This is with the view to discovering the effectiveness of such models in restoring peace where such had been lost. The study employed the qualitative survey model, where primary instruments like questionnaires were administered on respondents; participant observation and in-depth interviews were also used. Secondary data from books, journals, archives, newspapers, unpublished materials and others were also employed. These were analyzed and result presented in simple descriptive format. It was found out that the increase in these intractable conflicts was due to the fact that the people neglected their indigenous Igbo conflict management models which take care of their cultural peculiarities in conflicts and employed alien western models such as litigation and these could not handle their cases. It is consequently recommended that relevant Igbo traditional strategies for conflict management be revived and interfaced with current western models to form a more efficient model capable of restoring peace where same was missing.*

Keywords: *Conflict, Peace, Aguleri, Umuleri, Nigeria.*

INTRODUCTION

In his preface, Ohajanwa (2013:8) explained some important theoretical and empirical basics of conflict management. He made us understand first that the global quest for peace is increasingly taking dynamic dimensions. Both realists and idealists' perspectives are exerting pressures and expanding their horizons. Conflict Management Theorists view violent conflicts as ineradicable outcome of differences of values and interests within and between entities. Resolving conflicts is consequently perceived as unrealistic; the best that can be achieved is management and containment or occasional historic cooperation in which violence may be put aside and normal business activities resumed. This is in tandem with *Prescriptive* conception of conflict management.

Conflict Resolution Theorists, in contrast, reject this perception, arguing instead that, it is possible to transcend violent conflicts if parties can be helped to investigate, analyze and reframe their positions, interests and needs. And this agrees with the *Elicitive* theory of conflict resolution.

While prescriptive approach recommends new techniques and strategies for dealing with conflicts, the elicitive approach addresses the root causal uniqueness of conflict contexts and gives room for validation and employment of facilitative or jointly reached accords that recognize the core needs of all parties. Conflict resolution therefore emphasizes intervention by skilled third parties who work unofficially with conflicting parties to proffer new deals, new win-sum waves and new relationships.

However, according to Fisher et al (2007), conflict resolution is the last stage of conflict management. In other words, both management and resolution are integrated. In the bid to management conflict, therefore, the manager may eventually apply resolution especially if the conflict in question begins to prove intransigent. This is the case with Aguleri versus Umuleri conflict over Otuocha land.

Human history is said to be full of wars and conflicts over political issues, differing values, psychological matters, information variations, territorial (land) claims and other resources. Each of these issues is best tackled contextually by applying remediation resources originating from the environment of the conflict. It is not a misplaced statement therefore, to say that the abandonment of

the rich African traditional strategies for conflict resolution in Africa for the Western based models are the reasons behind the difficulties encountered in attempts to resolve basic and violent conflicts in Post-Colonial African communities. No wonder, today, common land disputes between two families or communities can escalate into mass destruction of thousands of lives and properties. This is unlike in the Pre-Colonial

African societies where there were systems put in place to monitor conflicts by nature and to prevent and resolve conflicts in order to avoid unhealthy rivalries and violence.

The researcher illustrates the potency of the African conflict management strategies by investigating and presenting the crucial role played by Oath-Taking (idu-isi) in the final resolution of the infamous Aguleri versus Umuleri land conflict. This crisis started at about 1933 and lasted for about 70 years. The bone of contention was claims over the ownership of the large Otuocha land by both communities. Neglecting African traditional models, the stakeholders were misled to take the case to court. Eventually the case moved from one court to another till 1984 without being resolved. According to Osisioma Nwolise (2004:17, unpublished), the first judgment on the land was rendered by Captain O'Conor in the Colonial Court. From the evidence before him, he awarded the land ownership to Umuleri in zero-sum outcome style. Aguleri was able to counter this judgment in another appeal in a superior court. The case was later referred to West African Court of Appeal, and later to the Queens Privy Council in London. This was the highest or Supreme Court of Nigeria then. All these occurred in the 1950s. In 1982, the case went to the Supreme Court of Nigeria again. In all these judgments, neither Aguleri nor Umuleri was able to consummate the decisions of the courts. This is largely because; the mechanisms for resolutions were basically foreign to the parties in conflict and did not take cognizance

of the values, traditions and cultures of the people. According to Ohajanwa (2011:viii) "an ideal resolution approach addresses the root causal uniqueness of conflict contexts and gives room for validation and employment of facilitative or jointly reached accords that recognize the core needs of all parties." It was however, traditionally resolved and transformed through indigenous peacemaking and peace-building mechanisms of oath-taking in the year 2000 by a joint effort of 7-man Committee set up by then incumbent Governor, Mbadinuju and the gritty efforts of Anambra East Traditional Leaders led by Igwe Nzekwesi. (Osisioma, 2004: 21 – 26).

In view of the existing situation, the need for a research, revival and probable formulation of the oath-taking practice as essential part of the people's justice delivery requirement becomes significant. This research therefore, studied conflict resolution potency of oath-taking strategy as typified by Aguleri and Umuleri conflicts in Anambra state. The model may also form part of conflict resolution mechanisms of other societies in Africa.

Statement of the Problem

Africa today is being threatened by the danger of theaters of conflicts and wars everywhere. Cases abound in courts awaiting trials that never seem to come. Adjudicated cases are escalating on daily bases and disputants hardly consummate the decisions. Minor disputes between relations are taken to the Police and eventually end in litigations. Similar community land disputes that can easily be handled and amicably resolved by our indigenous traditional mechanisms such as oath-taking are taken to courts. Eventually, the court after a long period of time interfaced by several adjournments and waste of materials, would give down decisions which neither recognizes the peoples' needs and values nor are valid to the people.

Today, some of the oath-taking instruments are getting defiled by some Africans who are either brainwashed or crazy for the Western models. Meanwhile, the Western models have proved ineffective since violent conflicts have become the order of the day. We have deliberately chosen to foster judicial systems that are corruptible as well as security mechanisms which are unreliable. There is no confidence any longer in justice delivery systems and people flout consensus decisions at will because there are no superior bodies for commitments as in oath-taking where, deities and ancestors are feared and revered. The traditional Anambra deities through oath-taking could reveal truths in criminal and unclear contests and facilitate fair judgments. Moreover, the traditional strategies encouraged the maintenance of peaceful relationships of parties even after resolutions by delivering win-sum outcomes of judgments. Cheating, lying, unfounded claims and other forms of selfish goaled activities enrooted in individualistic trait of Western lifestyle thrives without being tamed by any instrument.

It is in the light of these distortions and model shift from the traditional African concept of conflict resolution to western model, with its corresponding effects on the overall conflict scale, that this research work is relevant. Among other things, it justifies the idea that African conflict resolution mechanisms, which are also rooted in the peoples' cultures, as demonstrated by the Umuleri and Aguleri resolution, are more capable of and suitable for addressing conflict challenges in Anambra state, than western models.

Hypotheses/Research Questions

In the course of this research, the following **hypotheses** were used:

- a. The increase in violent conflicts in Anambra State is due to the abandonment of potential Igbo traditional conflict resolution models by the people for the Western
- b. Conflicts have become difficult to be resolved in Anambra State mainly because the applied resolution models are alien to the people and do not recognize the people's values, cultures and general traditions.
- c. The revival and integration of oath-taking as an essential conflict resolution model in Anambra State can help in resolving difficult conflicts among the people.

Based on the foregoing, the following **Research Questions** became relevant:

1. What were the causes and the origin of the conflict between Aguleri and Umuleri communities?
2. What efforts were made in other to resolve the conflict and restore peace to the two communities?
3. What roles did both traditional and western conflict resolution models play in attempts to resolve the conflict?
4. What role did Igbo Traditional oath-taking play in the final resolution and restoration of permanent peace in the lands?
5. Should the Igbo traditional models for conflict resolution such as oath-taking be revived and added to legal and official conflict resolution models used in justice delivery in Anambra State?

Purpose of the Study

The reason behind this research is to examine, highlight and demonstrate the increasing relevance of Igbo traditional models of peace in conflict resolution especially among the Igbo of Southeast Nigeria.

Significance of the Study

We need to understand that before the incursion of the British imperialists, the Igbo had peculiar methods of conflict resolution, which were effective in maintaining peace and harmony among the people. That these potent strategies are effective because, they account for the people's value system and traditions, which are relevant in probing the nature, reasons and how to resolve conflicts in the context of this environment.

The main significance of the research is that the Igbo realize the need for the abandoned traditional methods to be revived and utilized in the contemporary judicial dispensation for more efficiency in conflict resolution and achievement of peace among themselves.

This will be of immense benefits to the Ministries of Justice and other planners of peace strategies. More so, academic curriculum planners and the international agencies for peace will also find appropriate means for achieving peace and harmony in their tasks in different contexts.

Scope of the Study

Due to constraints of fund, time and convenience, the research concerned itself with oath-taking as a relevant Igbo traditional model for conflict resolution. This is also limited to the 21 Local Government Areas that make up Anambra State of Nigeria in the Southeast of Nigeria.

Research Methods

The research is qualitative and data was analyzed and presented in simple descriptive form. Both primary and secondary data were utilized; however, secondary data constituted more of sources of data. Past literature, books, journals, internet, magazines, newspapers and archives constituted the bulk of data for the research.

A supplementary source from questionnaire also contributed immensely towards the validation of literature information. The researcher also got information through participant observation having come from Anambra State.

Definition of Terms

For clarity of communication and to avoid misrepresentation of intended ideas of this research project, the following concepts have been used in the following described perspectives:

Role

According to Hornby (2006:1268), the word **role** can be used in several senses including “the degree to which somebody or something is involved in a situation or an activity and the effect that they have on it; the function or position that somebody or something is expected to have in an organization, in society or in a relationship; an actor’s part in a play, film or movie”. Relatively, the degree to which oath-taking can play a crucial role, function or do an activity as an indigenous strategy for conflict resolution among the Anambrans constitute the philosophy of this research. This research is of the view that conflict management played central role in the restoration of peace to Umuleri and Aguleri people from the dispute over Otuocha Land. This therefore informs the reflected propositions and perceptions over the necessity of inculcating relevant or effective proven African conflict resolution strategies into official legal delivery systems in relevant contexts as portrayed in this study.

Conflict Management

Conflict management refers to the long-term management of intractable conflicts. It is the label for the variety of ways by which people handle grievances standing up for what they consider to be right and against what they consider to be wrong. Those ways include such diverse phenomena as gossip, ridicule, lynching, terrorism, warfare, feuding, genocide, law, mediation, and avoidance.[citation needed] Which forms of conflict management will be used in any given situation can be somewhat predicted and explained by the social structure or social geometry of the case.

Conflict management is often considered to be distinct from conflict resolution. In order for actual conflict to occur, there should be an expression of exclusive patterns, and tell why the conflict was expressed the way it was. Conflict is not just about simple inaptness, but is often connected to a previous issue. The latter refers to resolving the dispute to the approval of one or both parties, whereas the former

Concerns are ongoing process that may never have a resolution. Neither is it considered the same as conflict transformation, which seeks to reframe the positions of the conflict parties.

Counseling

When personal conflict leads to frustration and loss of efficiency, counseling may prove to be a helpful antidote. Although few organizations can afford the luxury of having professional counselors on the staff, given some training, managers may be able to perform this function.

Nondirective counseling, or "listening with understanding", is little more than being a good listener something every manager should be.

Sometimes the simple process of being able to vent one's feelings—that is, to express them to a concerned and understanding listener, is enough to relieve frustration and make it possible for the frustrated individual to advance to a problem-solving frame of mind, better able to cope with a personal difficulty that is affecting his work adversely. The nondirective approach is one effective way for managers to deal with frustrated subordinates and coworkers.

There are other more direct and more diagnostic ways that might be used in appropriate circumstances. The great strength of the nondirective approach (nondirective counseling is based on the client-centered therapy of Carl Rogers), however, lies in its simplicity, its effectiveness, and the fact that it deliberately avoids the manager-counselor's diagnosing and interpreting emotional problems, which would call for special psychological training. Listening to staff with sympathy and understanding is unlikely to escalate the problem, and is a widely used approach for helping people to cope with problems that interfere with their effectiveness in their place of work

Conflict

The word conflict is as old as human being because it has been in existence in all spheres of human lives since the inception of the whole world. In the recent past, the whole world socio-political environs have been on the boil despite the colossal amount of human and material resources expended on global peace and conflict management by several Nations, States, Regional organizations and the United Nations. Rather than the global crisis diminishing in spite of the several steps taken, it is becoming more virulent and destructive because it has continued to drain the energy and man power resources of the troubled spots.

There are multiple definitions of conflict, including perceived differences in interests, views, or goals (Deutsch, 1973); opposing preferences (Carnevale & Pruitt, 1992); a belief that the parties’ current aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously (Rubin, Pratt,

& Kim, 1994); and the process which begins when one party perceives that another has frustrated, or is about to frustrate, some concern of theirs.

While for many people the idea of conflict has negative connotations, it can be argued that conflict itself is better seen as "value-neutral." Whether outcomes are positive or negative will depend on the way in which the conflict is handled (Deutsch, 1973). Conflict can have damaging consequences. It can create suspicion and distrust, obstruct cooperative action and damage relationships, escalate differences in positions, and even lead to violent confrontation. But, conflict can sometimes have positive effects. It can open up issue for analysis, leading to greater clarity and improving the quality of problem-solving. It can encourage more spontaneous and open communication leading to growth in the parties and in their relationship. In this study, our object of conflict is the fight over the exclusive ownership of Otuocha land by Umuleri and Aguleri communities, all in Anambra East Local Government Area of Anambra State. The conflict became open in 1993 and lasted till 2000, when it was finally resolved.

Restoration

According to Microsoft® Encarta® 2009, restoration refers to 1. Bringing back of something removed: the return of something that was removed or abolished calls for the restoration of curfews. 2. Bringing back of something to former condition: the restoring of something such as buildings or furniture to an earlier and usually better condition. Invariably, peace was lost in

Umuleri and Aguleri villages because of their gravious conflict over Otuocha land. At last however, peace was restored through conflict management.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Concept of Conflict

What is Conflict? Definitions and Assumptions of Conflict

We define conflict as a disagreement through which the parties involved perceive a threat to their needs, interests or concerns. Within this simple definition there are several important understandings that emerge:

Disagreement - Generally, we are aware there is some level of difference in the positions of the two (or more) parties involved in the conflict. But the true disagreement versus the perceived disagreement may be quite different from one another. In fact, conflict tends to be accompanied by significant levels of misunderstanding that exaggerate the perceived disagreement considerably. If we can understand the true areas of disagreement, this will help us solve the right problems and manage the true needs of the parties.

Parties involved - There are often disparities in our sense of who is involved in the conflict. Sometimes, people are surprised to learn they are a party to the conflict, while other times we are shocked to learn we are not included in the disagreement. On many occasions, people who are seen as part of the social system (e.g., work team, family, and company) are influenced to participate in the dispute, whether they would personally define the situation in that way or not. In the above example, people very readily "take sides" based upon current perceptions of the issues, past issues and relationships, roles within the organization, and other factors. The parties involved can become an elusive concept to define.

Perceived threat - People respond to the perceived threat, rather than the true threat, facing them. Thus, while perception doesn't become reality per se, people's behaviors, feelings and ongoing responses become modified by that evolving sense of the threat they confront. If we can work to understand the true threat (issues) and develop strategies (solutions) that manage it (agreement), we are acting constructively to manage the conflict.

Needs, interests or concerns - There is a tendency to narrowly define "the problem" as one of substance, task, and near-term viability. However, workplace conflicts tend to be far more complex than that, for they involve ongoing relationships with complex, emotional components. Simply stated, there are always procedural needs and psychological needs to be addressed within the conflict, in addition to the substantive needs that are generally presented. And the durability of the interests and concerns of the parties transcends the immediate presenting situation. Any efforts to resolve conflicts effectively must take these points into account.

So, is it still a simple definition of conflict? We think so, but we must respect that within its elegant simplicity lies a complex set of issues to address. Therefore, it is not surprising that satisfactory resolution of most conflicts can prove so challenging and time consuming to address.

Conflicts occur when people (or other parties) perceive that, as a consequence of a disagreement, there is a threat to their needs, interests or concerns. Although conflict is a normal part of organization life, providing numerous opportunities for growth through improved understanding and insight, there is a tendency to view conflict as a negative

Experience caused by abnormally difficult circumstances. Disputants tend to perceive limited options and finite resources available in seeking solutions, rather than multiple possibilities that may exist 'outside the box' in which we are problem-solving.

A few points are worth reiterating before proceeding:

A conflict is more than a mere disagreement - it is a situation in which people perceive a threat (physical, emotional, power, status, etc.) to their well-being. As such, it is a meaningful experience in people's lives, not to be shrugged off by a mere, "it will pass..."

Participants in conflicts tend to respond on the basis of their perceptions of the situation, rather than an objective review of it. As such, people filter their perceptions (and reactions) through their values, culture, beliefs, information, experience, gender, and other variables. Conflict responses are both filled with ideas and feelings that can be very strong and powerful guides to our sense of possible solutions.

As in any problem, conflicts contain substantive, procedural, and psychological dimensions to be negotiated. In order to best understand the threat perceived by those engaged in a conflict, we need to consider all of these dimensions.

Conflicts are normal experiences within the work environment. They are also, to a large degree, predictable and expectable situations that naturally arise as we go about managing complex and stressful projects in which we are significantly invested. As such, if we develop procedures for identifying conflicts likely to arise, as well as systems through which we can constructively manage conflicts, we may be able to discover new opportunities to transform conflict into a productive learning experience.

Creative problem-solving strategies are essential to positive approaches to conflict management. We need to transform the situation from one in which it is 'my way or the highway' into one in which we entertain new possibilities that have been otherwise elusive.

Conflict is Normal: Anticipating Conflicts Likely to arise in the Workplace

Consider your own work environment for a moment:

What are some key sources of conflict in our community or workplace?

When do they tend to occur?

How do people respond to these conflicts as they arise?

When we solve problems, do we do so for the moment, or do we put in place systems for addressing these types of concerns in the future?

In reflecting upon your answers to these questions, you may begin to understand what we mean by anticipating conflicts likely to arise in the workplace: Normal, healthy organizations will experience their share of conflict, and workplaces experiencing a certain amount of dysfunction will experience it in greater quantities. Anticipating conflicts is useful in either situation for transforming these situations into opportunities for growth and learning. Consider:

Are there seasonal peaks in our workload that tend to occur annually? Chart the occurrence of such challenges, and consider whether they can be managed as a normal period of stress and transition. For example, a school had a large population of students who arrived after long bus rides without breakfast, who tended to arrive at school ready to fight. The school identified 10 minutes at the start of the day to give these students a healthy snack, and worked with teachers to pull out students who weren't yet ready for school before they became disruptive. After food and a little counseling, students entered their classrooms in a better frame of mind (and body) to participate.

Do we have channels for expressing normal problems and concerns in a predictable, reliable manner?

Staff meeting should be used as a tool for effective problem-solving in a range of situations, including anticipated conflicts. If such channels are perceived by staff as closed, unsafe, and non-productive, they will be replaced by gossip, 'end runs' and back-biting.

Are there certain factors in the environment that make problems worse, especially at times of conflict?

Take stock of your processes for managing during stressful times. Look at how phones are routed, noise is managed, client lines are queued, distractions are managed, etc. Often, our response during times of stress is to meet less frequently, because 'we have no time to meet.' And we continue to do things the way we've been doing them, because 'we have no time to create new procedures.' This approach dooms us to repeat the same errors, rather than to learn from the opportunities. Examine your systems for managing problems, including dispute resolution systems, and use times of "harmony" to identify process improvements that can be implemented in times of stress.

Conflict Styles and Their Consequences

Conflict is often best understood by examining the consequences of various behaviors at moments in time. These behaviors are usefully categorized according to conflict styles. Each style is a way to meet one's needs in a dispute but may impact other people in different ways.

Competing is a style in which one's own needs are advocated over the needs of others. It relies on an aggressive style of communication, low regard for future relationships, and the exercise of coercive power. Those using a competitive style tend to seek control over a discussion, in both substance and ground rules. They fear that loss of such control will result in solutions that fail to meet their needs. Competing tends to result in responses that increase the level of threat.

Accommodating, also known as smoothing, is the opposite of competing. Persons using this style yield their needs to those of others, trying to be diplomatic. They tend to allow the needs of the group to overwhelm their own, which may not ever be stated, as preserving the relationship is seen as most important.

Avoiding is a common response to the negative perception of conflict. "Perhaps if we don't bring it up, it will blow over," we say to ourselves. But, generally, all that happens is that feelings get pent up, views go unexpressed, and the conflict festers until it becomes too big to ignore. Like a cancer that may well have been cured if treated early, the conflict grows and spreads until it kills the relationship. Because needs and concerns go unexpressed, people are often confused, wondering what went wrong in a relationship.

Compromising is an approach to conflict in which people gain and give in a series of tradeoffs. While satisfactory, compromise is generally not satisfying. We each remain shaped by our individual perceptions of our needs and don't necessarily understand the other side very well. We often retain a lack of trust and avoid risk-taking involved in more collaborative behaviors.

Collaborating is the pooling of individual needs and goals toward a common goal. Often called "win-win problem-solving," collaboration requires assertive communication and cooperation in order to achieve a better solution than either individual could have achieved alone. It offers the chance for consensus, the integration of needs, and the potential to exceed the "budget of possibilities" that previously limited our views of the conflict. It brings new time, energy, and ideas to resolve the dispute meaningfully.

By understanding each style and its consequences, we may normalize the results of our behaviors in various situations. This is not to say, "Thou shalt collaborate" in a moralizing way, but to indicate the expected consequences of each approach: If we use a competing style, we might force the others to accept 'our' solution, but this acceptance may be accompanied by fear and resentment. If we accommodate, the relationship may proceed smoothly, but we may build up frustrations that our needs are going unmet. If we compromise, we may feel OK about the outcome, but still harbor resentments in the future. If we collaborate, we may not gain a better solution than a compromise might have yielded, but we are more likely to feel better about our chances for future understanding and goodwill. And if we avoid discussing the conflict at all, both parties may remain clueless about the real underlying issues and concerns, only to be dealing with them in the future. If you'd like further insights into the conflict styles you tend to use take the Situational Conflict Styles Assessment Exercise on this site. If you have further questions contact us!

How we respond to Conflict: Thoughts, Feelings, and Physical Responses:1

In addition to the behavioral responses summarized by the various conflict styles, we have emotional, cognitive and physical responses to conflict. These are important windows into our experience during conflict, for they frequently tell us more about what is the true source of threat that we perceive; by understanding our thoughts, feelings and physical responses to conflict, we may get better insights into the best potential solutions to the situation.

Emotional responses: These are the feelings we experience in conflict, ranging from anger and fear to despair and confusion. Emotional responses are often misunderstood, as people tend to believe that others feel the same as they do. Thus, differing emotional responses are confusing and, at times, threatening.

Cognitive responses: These are our ideas and thoughts about a conflict, often present as inner voices or internal observers in the midst of a situation. Through sub-vocalization (i.e., self-talk), we come to understand these cognitive responses. For example, we might think any of the following things in response to another person taking a parking spot just as we are ready to park:

"That jerks! Who does he think he is! What a sense of entitlement!"

Or: "I wonder if he realizes what he has done. He seems lost in his own thoughts. I hope he is okay."

Or: "What am I supposed to do? Now I'm going to be late for my meeting... Should I say something to him? What if he gets mad at me?"

Such differing cognitive responses contribute to emotional and behavioral responses, where self-talk can either promote a positive or negative feedback loop in the situation. **Physical responses:** These responses can play an important role in our ability to meet our needs in the conflict. They include heightened stress, bodily tension, increased perspiration, tunnel vision,

Shallow or accelerated breathing, nausea, and rapid heartbeat. These responses are similar to those we experience in high-anxiety situations, and they may be managed through stress management techniques. Establishing a calmer environment in which emotions can be managed is more likely if the physical response is addressed effectively.

The Role of Perceptions in Conflict

As noted in our basic definition of conflict, we define conflict as a disagreement through which the parties involved perceive a threat to their needs, interests or concerns. One key element of this definition is the idea that each party may have a different perception of any given situation. We can anticipate having such differences due to a number of factors that create "perceptual filters" that influence our responses to the situation:

Culture, race, and ethnicity: 2 Our varying cultural backgrounds influence us to hold certain beliefs about the social structure of our world, as well as the role of conflict in that experience. We may have learned to value substantive, procedural and psychological needs differently as a result, thus influencing our willingness to engage in various modes of negotiation and efforts to manage the conflict

Gender and sexuality: 3 Men and women often perceive situations somewhat differently, based on both their experiences in the world (which relates to power and privilege, as do race and ethnicity) and socialization patterns that reinforce the importance of relationships vs. task, substance vs. process, immediacy vs. long-term outcomes. As a result, men and women will often approach conflictive situations with differing mindsets about the desired outcomes from the situation, as well as the set of possible solutions that may exist.

Knowledge (general and situational): Parties respond to given conflicts on the basis of the knowledge they may have about the issue at hand. This includes situation-specific knowledge (i.e., "Do I understand what is going on here?") and general knowledge (i.e., "Have I experienced this type of situation before?" or "Have I studied about similar situations before?"). Such information can influence the person's willingness to engage in efforts to manage the conflict, either reinforcing confidence to deal with the dilemma or undermining one's willingness to flexibly consider alternatives.

Impressions of the Messenger: If the person sharing the message - the messenger - is perceived to be a threat (powerful, scary, unknown, etc.), this can influence our responses to the overall situation being experienced. For example, if a big scary-looking guy is approaching me rapidly, yelling "Get out of the way!" I may respond differently than if a diminutive, calm person would express the same message to me. As well, if I knew either one of them previously, I might respond differently based upon that prior sense of their credibility: I am more inclined to listen with respect to someone I view more credible than if the message comes from someone who lacks credibility and integrity in my mind.

Previous experiences: Some of us have had profound, significant life experiences that continue to influence our perceptions of current situations. These experiences may have left us fearful, lacking trust, and reluctant to take risks. On the other hand, previous

experiences may have left us confident, willing to take chances and experience the unknown. Either way, we must acknowledge the role of previous experiences as elements of our perceptual filter in the current dilemma.

These factors (along with others) conspire to form the perceptual filters through which we experience conflict. As a result, our reactions to the threat and dilemma posed by conflict should be anticipated to include varying understandings of the situation. This also means that we can anticipate that in many conflicts there will be significant misunderstanding of each other's perceptions, needs and feelings. These challenges contribute to our emerging sense, during conflict, that the situation is overwhelming and unsolvable. As such, they become critical sources of potential understanding, insight and possibility.

Much more can be said about this subject. Let us examine an additional resource: "**Managing Intercultural Conflicts Effectively**," by Stella Ting-Toomey, 1994.

This topic is well addressed in the writings of Professor Deborah Tannen, who has focused extensively on gender differences in communication.

Why do we tend to avoid dealing with conflict?

Engaging in dialogue and negotiation around conflict is something we tend to approach with fear and hesitation, afraid that the conversation will go worse than the conflict has gone thus far. All too often, we talk ourselves out of potential dialogue:

"Why should I talk to her? She'll bite my head off and not listen to anything I have to say!"

OR

"I should talk to him about this problem, but maybe it will go away on its own. There's no sense stirring up something that makes us both uncomfortable."

OR

"If I go to him, I'm making myself vulnerable. No, that's his responsibility - he should come to me and ask me to talk!"

Our responses, as noted earlier, tend to include behaviors, feelings, thoughts and physical responses. If any of these responses indicates stress factors that make us reluctant to talk things out, we are more inclined to follow the pathway of avoidance. In addition, if we have history with the individuals involved in this conflict (i.e., we've tried to negotiate with them in the past, without success), it will "filter" our perceptions of this situation and make us reluctant to negotiate.

In addition, consider that our society tends to reward alternative responses to conflict, rather than negotiation: People who aggressively pursue their needs, competing rather than collaborating, are often satisfied by others who prefer to accommodate. Managers and leaders are often rewarded for their aggressive, controlling approaches to problems, rather than taking a more compassionate approach to issues that may seem less decisive to the public or their staffs. In other circumstances, those who raise issues and concerns, even respectfully, are quickly perceived to be "problem" clients or staff members... they tend to be avoided and minimized. In any of these approaches, negotiated solutions to conflicts are rarely modeled or held in high esteem.

Finally, we should keep in mind that negotiation requires profound courage on the part of all parties: It takes courage to honestly and clearly articulate your needs, and it takes courage to sit down and listen to your adversaries. It takes courage to look at your own role in the dispute, and it takes courage to approach others with a sense of empathy, openness and respect for their perspective. Collaborative approaches to conflict management require us to engage in the moment of dialogue in profound and meaningful ways, so it is understandable if we tend to avoid such situations until the balance of wisdom tips in favor of negotiation.

Concept of Peace

Ohajanwa, (2013:10-19) explained in great details the ideas, scholarly and empirical dimensions of peace. According to him, peace is an abstraction! It exists in conception and can neither be physically touched nor seen. It is a state, which is experienced solely in the psychological dynamics of one's own mind. It resides side by side with war in the chambers of our spirits. Pragmatically however, peace can easily be observed to be one of the greatest movers and shakers of every aspect of our lives.

Peace deals with all good aspects of the society, which we desire for ourselves. It includes economic well-being, ecological balance and other core values (Fisher, et al, 91:2). Peace involves responding to diversity and conflict with tolerance, imagination and flexibility; fully exercising one's responsibilities to ensure that all totally enjoy human rights (US Department of Justice, 1996:2).

How Do We Achieve Peace?

The search for peace has been one of the primary pre-occupations of mankind. Old and dire as this search may be, peace has to man's chagrin, constantly eluded him, both as an end as well as instrumental to an end. The reason for this elusion is traceable to some conspiring variables. Prominent among these is the fact that both man's actions and in-actions towards peace and conflict issues tend to contradict each other. For instance, it is a truism to say that everybody enjoys peaceful life, but people's reactions become rational and unpredictable when they are faced with life challenges from tedious competitions over scarce resources, despairing value systems, psychological matters and nature of information received. This sole indictment has correspondingly informed the development of many other contradictions and impediments towards the achievement of peace by man globally. All these are significantly pre-played in the mind maps. Hence, the *UN documents on Global Agreement*, for instance, critically argue that:

"Since war begins in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed", (1999: Sept. 13).

On the other hand, viewing hostility such as arms-race, through the lens of Von Clausewitz's argument, a desire for peace may also teach us that we should as well *'prepare for war'*. (Akinterinwa 2001:149).

This view tends to agree with the dreaded concept of the Devil's Theory of War, which encourages the acquisition of war strategy as a deterrent to possible attack. Now, in as much as this strategy for peace achievement has been both theoretically and empirically proven to be functional, it produces at its best, *unstable peace*; a sort of peace which is achieved through mutual suspicion or dilemma of respect. Here, there is conscious and careful effort to avoid armed hostility, not because the nations in question love each other, but largely because, none of them is sure about the military capacity of the other. At least, a man should not start a course he would not be able to accomplish. That can be akin to walking through a swing door and changing one's mind midway. Peace which exists between such nations can be described as 'fragile peace'. This also indicts peace for hiding behind tension and playing insincerity. In this prevailing state, peace covertly, is no more the opposite of war as it now seems to exist in the presence of war and acrimony. But what peace can this be? Peace of the *Grave Yard*? But Martin Luther king Jnr. once wrote:

"True peace does not want the 'absence' of tension, but the presence of social justice"(In Nwolise, 1997:27).

This again depicts Luther bluffing and emphasizing that even though conflict or tension may not be avoidable in human relationships, but peace can certainly be achieved through the presence of social justice. Social justice is all about fair and honest judiciary; it's all about true democracy and good leadership, reliable security apparatus, protection of human rights, right atmosphere for citizens to satisfy their needs within the ambits of law, etc.

- The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) are at the verge of being the international agencies saddled with the 'contradictory' responsibility to regulate the development or acquisition, use of and eventually stop proliferation of the Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) among nations of the world, which have signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. This clause however, does not have implicating effects on nations like Israel, Pakistan and India, which have not and don't seem to be willing to sign the pact. Interestingly, one of the agency's considered best strategies to carrying out this task is by granting concessions to nations which already possess the nuclear power and at the same time making sure that intending or new nations do not develop same. Curiously, this whole noise is all about achieving peace for the world. Now, if any rational mind accuses the superstructure of playing double standard in this issue, which may produce hydra-headed peace, the person may be justified; but again, there is this smart explanation that some nations are still naive and unduly fanatical and may not be able to restrain themselves from indiscriminate use of the chemical substance at the slightest provocation. This may explain why America and her 'tag-along' uncle Britain championed the 'domestication' of Iraq in 1993 and also accounts for her present frowning posture at Iran's suspected nuclear strategy project. This makes sense in a way, but a typical ambitious nation that wants to be internationally respected security-wise, would also give anything to arm itself with the nuclear potentiality. After all, it has been proven (in a sense) that the possession of the strategy is one sure means to deter flimsy attacks from other nations, maintain peaceful (pseudo) relationship with them and earn some respects for your country. Now, in the global quest for enduring peace, the big question is: which is best: to forestall all new entrants into the nuclear world club; permit all interested and capable nations

to freely develop their own nuclear strategies; to annul, disband and destroy all existing nuclear weapons and run a nuclear free world? Your choice may be as good as mine.

Conflict in the court of peace requires the elimination of the causal root-factors of conflict, the restoration of justice and provision of basic human needs; this is what is construed as *stable or sustainable peace*. In most cases, however, what we achieve is just containment or occasional historic cooperation in which violence may be put aside and normal business activities resume in the guise for peace: this is *temporary peace, pseudo-peace or truce*. The former, however, is more desirable.

Towards a Definition of Peace

It is fairly problematic to propose a definition of peace that is generally acceptable. The word “peace” comes from the French stem *pais* or Latin term *pax*, meaning peace, armistice or truce, harmony, calm and quiet.

Many scholars consider peace and war as two sides of the same coin. In this sense, peace is regarded as the absence of war (Kirkpatrick, ‘ed’, cited in Haruna ‘ed’, 2003:5); Evans and Newham, (1950:250).

But if war or conflict already exists, peace is regarded as the removal of the causes of conflict through the restoration of justice (Nwolise, 2003:31).

A common meaning of peace provides that it is freedom from war, hostilities, strife, dissection and civil commotion. It is also taken to mean a state of tranquility and quietness. The big challenge, however, is that, it is rare to find in any relationship, where there are no hostilities, whether overt or covert. People may be angry with each other, but decide not to make any complaint, because they have also decided to tolerate one another. In such situation would we say there is peace? Well, to an extent yes, but not sustainable peace. For instance, in a context where an ethnic or militant group embarks on strategic ethnic cleansing of another group and the victim group plays to the gallery by tolerating and keeping the peace, would we claim to have sustainable peace between the two groups? Sure not, because, hell is bound to be let loose one day, except the conflict is resolved and all negative synergies transformed.

Concepts of Peace

Several conceptions, perceptions and interpretations of peace, ranging from Realists to Idealists standpoints have been offered by scholars.

Oke Ibeanu (in Best ed. 2006, 3-11) dissects peace conceptions’ spectrum and discerns about four major views of peace parallel to some disciplines or fields of study. These are Philosophical, Sociological and Political descriptions of peace, and Peace as a Process. We shall examine these.

Philosophical Conception of Peace:

According to him, philosophers view peace as that original and inviolate state of nature which was designed by God for human and other animates’ co-existence. Peace, from philosophical perspective therefore, is a mental recapture of an ideal and perfect world where everybody and everything lacks nothing and therefore encounters no adversarial events which could lead to dispute or conflicts.

Ever paused a moment to imagine what the world would be like without conflicts? What if there were no problems and everyone got along very well with virtually everything? Then heavens, Christmas and Santa-Klaus and even utopia fantasies would not have been far-fetched. Curious enough, this philosophical view about conflict can only be achieved in the Kingdom of God. After all, the Holy Book says everybody has sinned and came short of His glory. That places a roof on the potentialities of humans to achieve the peace expectations of the philosophers. The mere imagination of such state however is psycho - therapeutic to man. This is probably what pre-occupied Karl Max’s mind when he opined that ‘religion is the opium of the people’.

Really, life comes in bi-sides; hence we distinguish between good and evil, up and down, male and female and of course peace and conflict. Consequently St. Augustine of Hippo discerns between two cities: the City of God and the Earthly City of Man. While the former idealizes a perfect ‘heavenly peace and spiritual salvation’, the latter is replete with desires and possessive impulsions. Again, while the former thrives on creative and developmental outputs, the later experiences destructive adversaries, conflicts and underdevelopment. In the same vein, John Jacque Rousseau envisages a world, peaceful, free and gentle and devoid of pressing desires. He however, counters this by lamenting again that this tranquil world has been, in real life (i.e. contemporarily), corrupt by presence of heavy desires, which has given rise to injustice, conflicts, wars and destructions.

Another philosopher, Thomas Hobbes views this from the other way round. In his belief, the world is naturally replete with conflicts, chaos and violence. To him, the state of nature is so rampant with fracas that a great man could be murdered in his serene sleep or simply weighed down by stress. Hobbes regretted life as it is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short. Significantly, he rather sees man, in bid to opt out of these horrible circumstances, surrendering himself to an entity which he feels is stronger and more capable of providing him with the much needed defense which he cannot provide for himself.

Much as these philosophical perspectives to peace delve deep into the relationships between peace and traditional propensities and wishes of man, they fail to address the contemporary distressing fabrics of peace and conflict.

Sociological Conception of Peace

Sociologists deal with a realistic perspective to peace. Rather than dwelling on the benchmarks of peace or what peace ought to be, Sociological interpretation veers a bit away from this normative view onto a realistic view of what peace really is in the contemporary. As explained by Oke, sociologically peace envisages a state of harmony in which there are no societal rivalries.

In bid to achieve the above, Oke suggests two strategies: Structural Functionalism and Dialectical Materialist approaches. Structural Functionalism advocates for a collaborative or systemic commitments. Here, the achievement of peace to a level or state of harmony in which there are no societal rivalries, demands that everybody, profession or entity perceives himself or themselves as integral part of a central whole. From this perspective therefore, each and every part is expected to relate appropriately to each other (i.e. proper social justice, etc.). This way social harmony where there are no social acrimonies is maintained. This is the platform on which Diamond and McDonalds proposed the Multi-Track Diplomacy. Multi-Track ideal urges every profession to contribute to international peacemaking endeavor with resources from its field so as to generate adequate synergy to forge effective peacemaking efforts against cardinal conflicts.

Dialectical Materialism was propagated by Karl Marx, the German Philosopher. As usual, Marx is concerned about the system of society's produce, distribution benchmarks and involved struggles. He is concerned about how the Bourgeoisies (the affluent class) and prolaterates (have-nots) could interrelate with each class in a manner that would generate conflict free society. In societies where there exist social classification, allocation of rewards and jobs, and positions and perceptions come in sharp disparities, it is then difficult to rule of conflicts. Industrialists for instance, would always exploit their workers, who would in turn always stage protests and violence. Peace deriving from such relationship can never be sustainable. Oke, therefore concludes that Marx is indirectly inferring that peace is not feasible in such societies.

Political Conception of Peace

Achievement of peace by politics demands that Government, Leaders and institutions of the state employ administration strategies which ensure a peaceful society. A peaceful society is one where: there are established rules and regulations guiding all conducts of citizens in the state; all citizens are aware of these rules and regulations, and are willing to abide by these rules and regulations. In other words, peace requires that government has least needs for the employment of the coercive instrument such as the Police, Army and other armed forces in co-coordinating daily affairs. This is because, in this society, there is reasonable political order. There is at least, no significant threat to the functionality of the law.

Sometimes however, the political conception of peace is measured by safety of the hegemony of the political class. In this variable, if the political class does not record significant adversaries from the citizens, there is an assumption of peaceful society. But, this form of peace cannot be completely relied upon, because, it may be conflict in disguise. If the ruling class has hegemonic capacity, possibly through the use of state coercion or any other manipulation, then, it has only succeeded in postponing the dooms day.

Peace Conceived as a Process

This refers to several processes aimed at restoring peace to humanity. It also applies to processes, projects and investments which are channeled to boosting societal developments and human capacities. John Jacque Rousseau made a monumental statement when he laments that:

“All men are born free and exist as gentle savages, but subsequently social conditions put them everywhere in chains (Best, 2006:9).”

The above critical circumstances illustrate the fact that originally man is born without conflict in his mind. At birth, man is peaceful, pure, immaculate and perfect. As man grows and begins to interact with his environment, he faces life challenges and he gets involved with conflicts. To overcome these challenges in order to survive and forge ahead with life, he takes some peaceful steps. These

processes and steps towards the achievement of peace are sometimes conceived as peace itself. It is important however to also note that these processes of peace are not necessarily non-violent in nature. According to Professor Nwolise (personal communication), when war becomes necessary for the attainment of peace, then that war should be fought. This is construed as *just war*.

Now, this conception of peace as a process is not limited to individuals alone. It is also peculiar to institutions, government and agencies. The United Nations (U.N.), African Union (A.U.) and other peace structures, for instance, involve in various forms of peace processes which are conceived as peace. These include peacemaking, peacekeeping, peace-building, peace-enforcement and many other forms of humanitarian and peace interventions

The Concept of Conflict Management and Approaches

The concept of Conflict Management Approaches has always generated divergent interpretations from various conflict theorists and writers. Some construe the concept in line with Handling Styles, while some describe it as a spectrum of various approaches to mitigate intransigent conflicts; yet others conceptualize it from standpoints of political, judicial and conciliatory.

In the foregoing academic rage, the need for us to define our frame of interpretation here becomes imperative; even though it lays claim to no universally accepted paradigm, never-the-less, it provides for clarity and consistency necessary for our study.

In our description model, therefore, we use management approaches as a cover term which describes various strategies utilized in preventing, controlling or limiting and resolving or transmuting conflicts. This begins from preventive to conflict transformation. At close review, they portend a conscious form of step by step arrangement of strategies applicable to conflicts at different phases. It can as a matter of fact, constitute a continuous process or effort applicable to end an intractable conflict:

Conflict Prevention

Since human nature is replete with conflict, it is therefore axiomatic that conflict exists at all times in our lives, whether expressed or cold. Conflict prevention, against rational interpretation, does not suppose a total obliteration of conflict from our environment; it empirically refers to measures designed to prevent outbreaks of violent conflicts. The goal of conflict prevention is essentially to create a situation in which differences and conflicts can be tackled in a non-violent and destructive manner.

According to the reports by *Carnegie Commission on the Prevention of Deadly Conflicts* (1999), conflict prevention includes actions or policies to:

- prevent the emergence of violent conflicts and identification of non-violent means of resolving tensions;
- stop on-going conflicts from spreading,
- and finally, deter the re-emergence of violence.

The report went further to categorize international approaches to conflict prevention into:

Operational Prevention or Direct Prevention: this refers to measures used in addressing immediate crises such as sending high level diplomatic missions to mediate between parties using economic tools like sanctions and inducement, disarmament and demobilization of armed hostile units.

Structural Prevention or Root Causes Prevention: these are activities which address poverty, unjust resource sharing, political repression and other root causes of conflict which can escalate into violence.

Conflict Settlement

This is also called dispute settlement and is intended to achieve a temporary discontinuity of violent hostility on agreed peace terms or truce. It is primarily the act of separating, ending, or stopping disputing parties from further hostility without treating the underlying cause of dispute.

According to Evan and Newnham (1992:52),

“ if a settlement is imposed by a strong third party, or victorious group, then only the fighting is halted, while the actual cause of the conflict remains festering under the surface.”

As the saying goes, “there can be no true peace without full justice.” Dispute settlement fails short of dispute resolution and may be a pre-course to conflict resolution only.

Conflict Management Proper

Conflict management functions on the premise of presence of conflict. According to Fisher et al, conflict management “aims at limiting and avoiding future violence by promoting positive behavioral changes in the parties involved” (2000:7). Schmid (2000:23-24) also explains that conflict management refers to

- interference in an ongoing conflict process in such a way as to contain and if possible, reduce the level of violence and destruction;
- prevent the vertical escalation towards the use of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), and
- Prevent the horizontal expansion into other theatres.

Conflict management is *prescriptive in approach* and does not share the goal of *elicitive* possible total conflict resolution.

Conflict Resolution

This is a conflict solving approach where causes of conflict are probed and addressed so as to build new and lasting relationship between aggressive parties.

Lund (1997:3) perceives conflict resolution as efforts to increase co-operation among parties to a dispute, and to deepen their relationship by addressing the conditions that led to the dispute, festering positive attitude and allaying distrust, and promoting reconciliation initiatives and processes through which parties interact.

In a more explicit form, Fisher, et al (2000:8) conceives conflict resolution as comprising of strategies that are applied to tackle open conflict in the bid to find, not only a common ground to end the violence (as in conflict settlement), but also to resolve the inconsistent goals beneath it.

Conflict Transformation

This is the advanced stage in conflict resolution where an in-depth change in the entire context of the conflict is achieved by empowering disputing individuals or parties with resolution capacities. It contains the most thorough and far-reaching strategies, but it is also the approach that demands the longest and most wide-ranging commitment.

In the words of Fisher, et al (ibid: 7), “conflict transformation addresses the underlying social and political sources of conflict and seeks to transform the negative energy of war into positive political change”.

In conflict transformation, disputing individuals may be put through capacity building training workshops. At these forums, actors (interested parties), issues (agenda), rules (norms and values) and structure (inter-actors relationships) are highlighted, and transformations into fresh and peaceful relationships are facilitated.

Multi-Track Diplomacy

The term Multi-track Diplomacy refers to a conceptual framework designed to reflect the variety of activities that contribute to international peacemaking and peace building. It stresses the concept of “all hands on deck” in conflict resolutions endeavor by discerning nine fields or departments of work and life as distinct, but important parts of the whole efforts for international peacemaking and peace building. These are:

- Government
- Non-governmental/professional organizations
- Business Organizations
- Private Citizens
- Research, Training and Education
- Activism
- Religious Organizations
- Funding

➤ Communication

Wikipedia, the free Encyclopedia (accessed 3rd March, 2011) reveals that the term is based on the original distinction made by Joseph Montville in 1981, between official, governmental actions to resolve conflicts (track one), and unofficial efforts by non-governmental professionals to resolve conflicts within and between states (track two).

Louise Diamond coined the phrase “multi-track diplomacy” recognizing that to lump all track two activities under one label did not capture the complexity of breadth of unofficial diplomacy. Ambassador John W. McDonald then wrote an article expanding track two into four separate racks: Conflict Resolution Professionals, Business, Private Citizens, and the Media. This frame however, still had the four unofficial tracks operating with the exclusive purpose to affect or change the direction of track one.

In 1991, Diamond and McDonald expanded the number of tracks to nine by adding the new tracks: Religion, Activism, Research-training - education, and Funding (Philanthropy).

They also re-organized the abstract graphical representation of the multi-track diplomacy into a circle, signifying a systematic relationship, where no one track is more pertinent than the other as each complements the efforts of others.

The Arlington County, Virginia based Institute for Multi-track Diplomacy (IMTD) utilizes a multi-track approach in its work by involving as many different tracks as possible when implementing projects.

Understanding Conflict Resolution

Although the term conflict resolution dominates our discussion in this book, the author does not want to ride on the general assumption that the reader has understood all the discourse doled out on it so far. Practical experiences from classroom and field interactions, have taught us that there are conceptual issues that always need more clarifications. To straighten out these issues, I will approach the definition of conflict resolution from a layman’s standpoint.

We all are aware of the fact that there are several avenues we can employ in resolving our disputes and conflicts. For instance, we can decide to surrender our needs to our opponents (compromising), avoid the conflicts (run away), over-power our opponents with violence (confrontation), strike a balance (collaboration) or better still by filing a lawsuit, etc.

These are conventional models for settling our daily disagreements. However, they have been relatively faulted on various grounds of, inconsistency and inefficiencies for non-satisfactory justice delivery.

Similarly, our modus operandi to conventional litigation procedure has also become extreme adversary and zero-sum goaled. Most occasions, the court emerges with outcomes where single winner takes home all the resources competed for. Sometimes, the winner of a property case for instance, may actually not be the rightful owner of the property. Accused persons are piling and languishing in detentions and some may wait for longer periods than their offences would have attracted, before their cases are adjudged. Appeals and counter-appeals abound.

The need for a paradigm shift or an expansion in justice delivery system thus, became imperative. The consequent movement towards some Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) models, which are sometimes referred to as Conflict Resolution, grew out of this belief that there can be better options to a more satisfactory justice delivery than using violence or litigation. Today the terms ADR and Conflict Resolution are used to some extent,

Interchangeably and refer to a wide range of processes that encourage non- violent, non- adversarial, pacific and collaborative dispute resolution outside of the traditional court system.

The field of conflict resolution is prominent in national and international arena but, it also includes efforts in workplaces, communities and schools to reduce violence and bullying and help young people develop communication and problem-solving skills. It is useful in solving most family conflicts including divorce, custody, child-parent dispute, etc. Common forms of ADR or conflict resolution models are briefly explained below.

Spectrum Of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

Joint Problem Solving

1. Negotiation/Bargaining

Negotiation is a joint problem solving process where two or more persons hold a discussion with the view to arriving at a mutual agreement over an issue of common disagreement. It involves back and forth trading of compromise and concession of needs and interests on the issue of disagreements. According to Albert (2001:72), negotiation is an everyday exercise, but only a few people are skilled in the art of professional sense of the word.

Before going into negotiation process, one is advised to assess his negotiation approach and opponent's attitudes, as they determine his/her success or failure. For instance, a **positional negotiator** is one who insists on his literal or outward demand rather than his real interest, while an **interest based negotiator** realistically bases his negotiation on his interest or need. A **soft bargainer** is always ready to accept most terms or conditions, while a hard bargainer hardly accepts any condition except on his own terms. Now, while the former brings home a poor successful outcome, the later makes it impossible to arrive at an agreement at all. A **principled negotiator** however agrees on fair, just and merit grounds. This form of approach results in a creative and win-win negotiation outcome.

A negotiator is also advised to watch out for facilitators and destroyers among his opponent's team. For instance, negotiator **stabilizers** are characters who are eager and ready to accept or attain negotiation agreement at all means, while **non-stabilizers** are unwilling, not ready and unconcerned over attaining peace or negotiation agreement. **Quasi-negotiators** not only depict trait of willingness to attain agreement terms, but are also ready to help mediators discover areas of practicable way out for easier peaceful agreement. You are advised to utilize both stabilizers and quasi-stabilizers, and avoid non-stabilizers at sessions.

Negotiation decorum might be **bilateral**, where a team of negotiators constitute delegates or representatives of a party. It can also be **unilateral conciliatory** where everybody that is concerned over the issue at stake is present. A **unilateral-vested-interest** (or under the table bargaining) is a form of decorum where negotiators meet stakeholders in secrecy and lobby their interests. Each of these forms may be applicable on situation demands. Unilateral vested interest bargaining outcome, however, can easily be dismissed as 'sell-out' or an 'unauthorized intrusion' as it is always influenced by vested personal rather than consensus interest.

At the end of a negotiation session, negotiators should ratify the outcome by reporting back to their **bureaucratic constituency** (for those who are sent by formal agencies such as government and corporate bodies), who must follow lay down rules or constitutions for implementation of negotiations outcomes. Those who are potential/immediate authorities on the negotiation issues are said to have **horizontal constituency**, where adoption and implementation of agreement outcome is more flexible.

Third Party Intervention

1. Mediation

Mediation is a form of facilitated dialogue whereby a neutral third party intervener sits at a venue with disputants and tries to guide them through their dispute and to jointly arrive at a consensus term of settlement. In mediation, the facilitator has no decisive power on terms of agreement as disputants decide their own terms of resolution. The intervener only guides, maintains peace, harmony and facilitates the smoothness of the reconciliation process.

Mediation has four basic phases namely introduction, story-telling, joint problem solving and agreement.

2. Arbitration:

This is also a form of third party intervention process where the intervener (i.e. Arbiter) reserves the right or power to hand down resolution decision or terms on disputants. After reviewing evidence and listening to arguments from the parties, an Arbiter issues a verdict to settle the conflict. In arbitration, disputants lose their rights to decide their own agreement terms. They however have rights for appeal.

Arbitration is more often utilized in commercial and or management disputes.

3. Conciliation:

Conciliation is a third party non-adversarial intervention process, where an intervener conducts a form of "shuttle diplomacy" between disputing parties in bid to achieve a mutually acceptable terms of conflict resolution for them.

In conciliation, the facilitator takes messages thro and fro the disputants who probably are not on talking-terms or may evolve shouting-match when summoned together to a common venue. This process is usually utilized to restore communication where such has broken down. Conciliation at the best scenario could resolve a conflict or prepare disputants for a later mediation session.

4. Hybrids:

Conciliation with Arbitration, Mediation, Negotiation and Others

Conciliation can also be combined with other models like mediation, arbitration and negotiation in a session as the case may demand.

In this case, it functions as a forerunner for a subsequent model. The objective is to prepare the minds of disputants to accept and allow a negotiation, mediation or any other necessary model that can resolve their impasse successfully.

Med-Arb

As the term indicates, Med-Arb is an ADR hybrid where both mediation and arbitration are applied in one session to resolve a particular conflict. This could be as a result of failure of disputants to agree on their own resolution term in a mediation session. This is common with intractable conflicts.

If the disputants are still willing and eager to resolve their case, then they will usually be made to formally request for the ruling or decision of the mediator. With such mandate, the mediator tactfully steers the process model from mediation to arbitration, where he can pronounce judgment. Med-Arb can also be a consensual agreement prior to the outset of a resolution session.

As Med-Arb usually begins with mediation and ends in arbitration, it therefore affords an intervener a prerogative to transmute or acquire dual status and mandates of both mediator and arbiter in a particular facilitation.

5. Peer Mediation

This refers to an ADR process in which young people act as mediators to help resolve disputes among their peers. Student mediators are trained by professional mediators and handed over to their teachers or other adults or better still, visiting mediators for supervisions

6. Early Neutral Evaluation

This is a situation where a court attorney is appointed to review a case before it is presented formally for trial. The essence is for the attorney to review the merits of the case and encourage the parties to come to an agreed resolution term instead of going in for litigation.

If consensual resolution fails, then the attorney enlightens the involved parties on how to proceed to litigation and his opinion on possible outcome.

7. Multi-Door Court-House

This is a condition where disputants are offered options described as doors, to choose between litigation and other ADR models in the resolution of their cases. This model was founded by Professor Sanders of the Harvard Law School, United States, in 1976.

8. Community Conferencing

This is a sort of planned or structured dialogue involving all members of a community (offenders, victims, family, friends, etc.) who have been in one way or the other affected by a conflict or crime.

Usually the facilitator arming himself by a list or a script invites the community members one by one to express their views on how they have been affected by the crime or conflict in question as well as how they feel best to repair the harm done.

9. Collaborative Law

This is a form of ADR where lawyers or attorneys decide to appear together in their official decorum but, with a commitment to resolve a dispute without resorting to litigation. It can be a follow up to an Early Neutral Evaluation positive response.

10. Negotiated Legislation

This is an official avenue for seeking fresh solution to a conflict that has proven intransigent through government agencies. Through collaboration with relevant variety of stakeholders, the agency formulates new resolution terms based on consensual inputs.

The Relevance of Conflict Theories in Conflict Management

Human needs theory of conflict begins with the hypothesis that in addition to obvious biological needs of food and shelter there are basic socio, psychological human needs that relate to growth and development like needs for identify, security, recognition, participation and autonomy. Individual and / or groups are responsive to opportunities for improvement in life-style and in this sense

malleable; there is no flexibility in acceptance of denial of ontological needs such as security, recognition participation, autonomy and dignity. Consequently, any political system that demise or suppresses these human needs must eventually generate protest and conflict.

Dahrendorf (1958) sees conflict as necessary for achieving an end in the society or for realization of social goals. He holds that social conflict produces change in the system which is necessary and good. He contends for two different kinds of struggles in an organization: “*Exogenous*” and “*Endogenous*”.

1. The endogenous conflict: - Is the conflict that is generated within the organization, system or a society.
2. Exogenous conflict: - Is brought upon or into a system from the outside.

The theory asserts that certain conflicts are based on certain social structural arrangements and hence are bound to arise whenever such structural arrangements are given.

Weber sees conflict as highly contingent on the emergence of “Charismatic leaders” who could mobilize subordinates. He opined those subordinates are more likely to pursue conflict with superordinates. When the withdraw legitimacy from political authority when the correlation among members in class, status group, and political hierarchies is high, the discontinuity or degree of inequality in the resources distribution within social hierarchy is high and when of social mobility up social hierarchy of power, prestige and wealth are low.

Karl Marx opines that the degree of inequality in the distribution of resources generate conflict of interest. The more the subordinate segments become aware of their true collective interests, the more likely they are to question the legitimacy of the existing pattern of distribution or allocation of scarce resources.

Cultural ethnocentrism have been linked to sources of conflict in the society. *Cultural ethnocentrism* believe that their culture is superior to any other culture irrespective of whether they are presently in their own countries or host states. The theory contends that ethnic or racial images of deep-rooted nature can become sources of conflict in the society, especially in multi-ethnic or plural societies. Gaha Best insists that such attitude sometimes makes certain group feel that others are inferior and should have less access to economic resources.

The biological theory contend that even though men have surrendered their individual right of might to the sovereign state, traces of behaviors of man in “the state of nature” is still found in our every day life. That conflict in the society is general of these innate tendencies leading to anger, demonstration, aggression, especially when such anger and might coalesced into uniting a group of people for example, the Military – Police clash in Nigeria 2005 in which many lost their lives.

The *systematic theory* anchors conflict as generic element of changes in the socio-structural processes. Changes in peoples’ materials conflict, economic adjustment programmes or environmental degradation that waste and destroy domestic resources may constitute sources of conflict in the society. For example: - the structural adjustment programme (SAP) generated series of conflict or clashes between the Nigerian University students and Gen. Babangida regime from 1986-1990.

Givigiri (1999) opines that one of the major causes of conflict in the Niger-Delta region can be attributed to *perceived injustice* in the principle of allocation that was reversed in the 1960 constitution during its amendments/changes in the 1980s & 1990s.

Finally, theory is near science, but not exactly in the sense that it helps to situate or locate the premise of an action. Theoretical underpinning helps us to understand not only the step by step processes of third party intervention, but also it enables us to learn the behavioral attitude that should be demonstrated by a third party so as to be able to assure parties in conflict that no side is destined to be intimidated, demeaned or defeated.

Place of Culture in Conflict Management

Until recently, the issues of culture was under estimated – if not altogether ignored – by practitioners in conflict resolution, now most would agree that culture does matter, while conflict is universal, the ways in which it is expressed and handled are not. Each specific culture framework has its own conception of conflict and techniques and processes for managing and resolving it. When we think of culture, we often think of concrete observable phenomena like art, language food and dress etc. values and beliefs are also an integral part of culture.

Culture means set of attitudes, values, beliefs and behaviors learned and created by individuals themselves or passed onto them by members of a group through social experience.

Culture value shape the way people perceive the world, including the way conflict is perceived and addressed.

Two approaches to culture and conflict resolution:

- a. *Prescriptive approaches* – generally assume universal models of conflict resolution which are then applied or adopted in particular cultural situation
- b. *Elicitive approaches* – Recognize the existence of distinctive cultural understanding of conflict and it's elucidated and enhanced through reflection and dialogue.

This project therefore looks into the role of indigenous (Traditional) conflict resolution model in Africa especially, in Anambra East Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria. In this project, indigenous and Traditional will be used interchangeable.

Sources of Conflict in Traditional Indigenous African Society

It is significant to note from the onset that, the derivatives of conflict in indigenous African societies was germane to the cultural activities of the people. Hence, peace and conflict are indices of culture allied to governance and social engineering in Indigenous African societies

Conflict derived from the families' level even though it has been considered as the basic unity of indigenous African political culture the individual in the family had the right of protest showcasing annoyance over many things. This could be over property inheritance, interpersonal relations and marital situations/matters

From the economic point of view, It became inevitable in indigenous African societies. This justifies Coser's approach to the phenomenology of conflict even across cultural boundaries of the world, land encroachment, territorial dislocation, house sequestration, and trade in balance and non- payment of tributes or loans can be identified as the reason d'être of conflict origination Indigenous African societies.

Chieftaincy imbroglios are prevalent in African societies. These have hard there origin, from time immemorial, from the inevitability of competing forces to the royal throne especially when the norms and customs and tradition and impeachment/ dethronement.

Conflict can also derive from the breakdown of diplomatic relations among various indigenous African societies this often led to inter-communal conflict and violence.

The insult to the supernatural, breaking of communal taboo, breach of sacred sanctuaries / groves has been the derivatives of religions conflict in indigenous African societies.

The brake down of covenant and the negligence of social responsibilities were obvious ground for engineering conflict, cultural norms which often occasioned social engineering, especially, during the celebration of festival.

Ijeoma says that in Igbo land of south east, Nigeria, wars (Conflict) were caused mainly by Land or territorial disputes, the need to obtain restitution for an injury suffered by a citizen in another community and sex furthermore in typical indigenous African societies there were no pitched battles and expeditions over religious or ethnic differences, no agenda to overthrown rulers of other State, to impose one's Ideology over another community.

Characteristics of Indigenous Conflict Resolution Model

Indigenous conflict resolution model was anchored on the dramatization of the issues involved in conflict. The performance level of conflict resolution in indigenous societies enable participants in the ensuring drama to further understand and depreciate that customs and norms bequeathed to them by their ac ancestors. Historically the performance had always been stage managed by not able dramatic personae, which include experience elders, priests, age-grades, Chiefs and kings in African Society. The stage as set for the drama of adjudication include homes (as family court), markets, (as commercial Court), village square (as an open Court) as Palace (as royal Court) and colonial court if heritage (as customary court).

The dramaturgical device always involved a systematic radiation of all sides (scenes) to the conflict (drama). In a sense, the parties to the conflict normally resorted to adopting flashback (mnemonic memory) with a recitation model. The asides to the conflict were stage managed by the witnesses who adequately provide the knots of stagecraft. The levels of performance by the adjudicators are triangle focusing or view the parties to the conflict, witnesses and the audience. Proverbs and maxims were used in the drama of conflict resolution in indigenous African societies. Among the Igbo of Nigeria, Ashanti (Ghana) etc. the lore's were verbally dramatized to sharpen the memory of the audiences thus educating them of the crucial aspect of their cultural heritage. In the process of resolving conflict traditional African societies, certain rules were observed by all participants in the drama of conflict resolutions the rules were tailored to equitable distributor of Justice and the maintenance of law and order.

Fundamentally, and aspect of the concluding scene in the drama of conflict resolution which will interest you, was the celebration of reconciliation among the parties to the conflict. Significantly, the characters were dance fully thrilled in the songful tone of "give a little, get a little". The regal steps, swilling mien and embracing gestures exchanged among the hitherto aggressive parties to the conflict provided funfair with a mood of pomp and pageantry at the closing session of the stage craft.

Principles of Conflict Resolution in Indigenous African Society

Fundamentally, parties to the conflict usually submitted themselves for cross-examination based on the fact that they had radiant confidence in the conflict resolution principles that were to be applied to the conflict in vogue. As a matter of fact, no one was adjudged an isolated entity in African society. This was why the principles of collective responsibility was in place, the concern of the populace was always directed to the parties in conflict borne out of sympathy and reverence to the forebears, who looked from afar and had the where withal to punish the wrong doers or offenders among the parties to the conflict. J.H. Driberg maintained that such a wrong doing must be propitiated by all the members of the society in the area of contributing toward procuring ritual materials. This was also akin to the practice of being your brother's keeper in the tie of crisis.

1. Truth which is associated with the positive conduct of life was quite at home with conflict resolution in indigenous African society. Truth had been adjudged by African elders as the objective-section of scientific trust and ethical modesty showcasing movement of tie in development process.
2. Impartiality, neutrality and transparency:- Were tripod principle of conflict resolution in indigenous African societies. They were adopted by the African forbearers to showcase the tension associated with peace-making and peace-building.
3. Parties to the conflict in indigenous African societies had the mutative of persuasion and submission to reasonable claims to justice. Hence they had the chance of letting off the steam of conflict forgiving, loving and tolerating one another for mutual orientation and adulation. This you should understand was the basis of reconciliation and restoration of harmonious relationship or esprit de corp.
4. Fairness, Equity and Justice:- Were tripartite principle of conflict resolution in indigenous African society. Parties to the conflict were usually given fair hearing and representation to the degree that no one had its case treated in absentia as during so announced to misplace of justice and assault to the enforcer of justice. The Africans believe that justice delayed was justice out rightly denied which was to spell doom for the community.

Traditional Institutions in Conflict Resolution

1. Family

Family is the basic unit of every society. In a patriarchic setting where the father is the head of the house, man is charged with the responsibility of not only providing that material needs of the family but also directing his energy towards maintaining order and peaceful coexistence among the members of the family as well as between his family and other families in the community. Whenever there is a conflict between two or more members (children) of the family, the father in collaborative net solving the conflict but also adopt conflict

Transformation and peace building strategies to promote harmony, peace, love, true reconciliation and communication between the parties.

2. Elders

Elders function as a court with broad and flexible powers to interpret evidence, impose, judgments, and manage reconciliation. Traditional leaders use their position of moral strength to find acceptable solutions. Councils of elders and Chiefs usually seek resolution through consensus. The solution often involves forgiveness and compensation. In Igbo land the council of elders usually referred to as Amaala. In any of conflict the decision of Amaala is unanimous but when unanimous decision cannot be reached, then the final decision shall be made by the Oracle as impartial and neutral arbiter.

3. Clan

Elders from another clan are sometimes called upon to intervene in the conflict between parties that come from the same village for the purpose of neutral third party, adjudication and transparency. Sometimes a clan may intervene in the conflict between another two clans with the desire of striking reconciliation between the parties, which is the foundation of African's code of honor.

4. Community Assembly.

The people of a community in a traditional setting often converge to discuss pertinent issues that promote peace and security of the community. They may also gather in the administration of justice and reconciliation between the disputing parties. Whenever people of the post conflict community are of the view that the bloody conflict that formerly pervaded their relationship might have caused displeasure to their god, they may converge to discuss and fathom ways to cleanse the whole community and seek for god's forgiveness for breaking the age long customary covenants that object spilling of blood, injustice and murder. This they do to forestall any form of calamity which their god may have directed against them in the nearest future for the spilling blood and killing of innocent souls.

5. Palace

The palace is the highest court in traditional Africa. The political culture evolved in African society recognized the king as the overall boss and father of the kingdom he was the sacred representative of the supernatural of his kingdom. The king often played pivotal role in the governance of his kingdom. The nature of kingship in African traditional societies was that of a human being in the grab of godliness, which endowed on the personality, the power to issue out authority that cannot be queried.

6. Chief / Village Heads

African Chiefs have the wherewithal of conflict resolution in the society. This they have learnt by heart and experience from their forebears who bequeathed the art to them. The Chiefs were often respected for the wealth of knowledge in reconciliation and enduring sense of history of the culture of the community. Indeed, chiefs in their various quarters and wards had court session where parties to the conflict often met for the resolution of their conflict. In the event of mobility to handle the conflict, the Chiefs of such a quarters or ward engineered the process of transferring the matter to the higher level, where kings and other Chief listened to and resolved the conflict.

7. Age-Grades.

In traditional African society, people who born at one period or the other, group themselves to various age-grades or association. The people of any age-grade are expected to be people who were born this same period, and these people ascribe a name to their group for public recognition and appreciation. The involvement of the individuals (with their oratory talents and mediating skills) in a given age-grade association resonated in the fact that conflict never remained unresolved in African Indigenous society. The existence of the age-grade association was one good innovation which have prove quite successful in the sustainability of law and order in the sustainability of law and order in African indigenous societies.

8. Hunters Association.

This association is another traditional institution, which is very essential building peace. They are not only involved in hunting of animals in the forest and bush but that also partake in peace building exercise. Through their periodic rites and symbolic machinations, they contribute in peace process. They also have a code of conduct for their members and assist the community to get some of the natural materials, which can only be gotten in thick bush and forest for virtual projections, which may be designed to appease the gods of the land for peace to reign in the community.

9. Oracles/Deities

The Oracles are the final arbiters in resolution of any conflict in traditional African society. Oracles are supernatural orchestration of truth, reconciliation, peace and social harmony. They are very effective machineries of peaceful resolution of conflict. They guide the conduct of state affairs and provide opportunities to avert any future calamity or outbreak of blood conflict or pestilence.

African ancestors have been adjudged one of the key personalities in conflict resolution. It has been established that the ancestors once lived the earthly universe before they transformed into the spiritual universe where they reflectively watched over the affairs and activities of the living person. By so doing they had the experience and wherewithal of peace – making far and above the living persons. Indeed, the ancestors bequeathed the art of conflict resolution to the living person while quitting the earthly universe. (C.J Calhoun is assertive on the presence of the ancestors in the process of conflict resolution-an approach which looms large in African societies. He submits thus: Alternately, the ancestors maybe called upon to resolve a dispute to put it another way, disputants may carry out their arguments in the language of ancestral authority. Specific ancestors hold primary authority over groups larger than households (that is, larger than those headed by living parents). They are also the prime referents in the definition and differentiation of these corporate groups. The primary means of brining the ancestral voice into the affairs of the living, and thus rendering an authoritative decision through divination (Galton 1980: 306).

10. Secret Societies

The act of conflict resolution required some element of power and authority. Secret societies perform such roles as to resolve conflict in traditional African society. Members of secret societies enforce social ethic and public probity in the society secret societies in Africa had devised the extra-judicial means of seeking to resolve an almost difficult conflict. It usually involves vidual performance oath taking and the administration ordeals. For example, the edan was a symbol of virtual detection of crime in Ogboni cult among the Yoruba of Southwest Nigeria.

During the year of traditional leadership in Africa various conflicts caused by different issues attracted various approaches to their resolution methods at that time uses predominantly local. Conflicts were between individuals, villages, communities or tribes, who lived in the same or adjoining areas. Those who intervened were often local elders, ago-grades, secret society, and or tribal leaders.

When kingdom developed about the 5th century AD in West African, stronger and wider authority came into, power but the traditional method instigating and resolving conflict have gone through very small changes.

Traditional Values

The concept of “warp and weft which is about two basic and interwoven elements, has been used from the very beginning of weaving through the date.

The concept denotes that even if the most complex of design are woven into a piece of cloth, the basic structure is formed by two inter woven sets of thread traditionally called the warp and weft. The concept is evident in conflict transformation system of Africa. One of the two basic elements – the warp –is the traditional family or neighborhood negotiation which is normally facilitated by the elders. The other basic element – the weft- is the altitude of togetherness in the, spirit of human hood: - “Kparakpor” is a word for human hood in Yoruba language of south western Nigeria. “Otummadu” in Igbo language of south eastern Nigeria (denoting a family feeling of togetherness)

This concept points to the commitment to the community as men and women of all ages are allowed to participate meaningfully in co-operation.

The concept emphasizes association and relationships as well as a collection goal, which is peace.

Indigenous Conflict Transformation

Conflict should be viewed as non-Isolated event in their social consist. When Africans, sit down to discuss a conflict, the talking usually covers all kinds of relevant background and goes into the thought and intentions of others. The elders from a family, clan or state sees their traditional Objective in conflict resolution as moving away from accusation and counter accusation to soothe hurt feelings and to reach a compromise that may help to improve future relationship.

They also dwell on values, aspirations, perception and vision. All over Africa, people have deeply rooted cultural commitments, and in many of the conflicts in African this culture heritage played a decisive role.

Community networking are constantly respected, maintained and strengthened when there is a dispute between different parties; priority is given to restoring the relationships. During the dispute settlement, which would normally involve supporters of the disputing parties and the elders meant to talk the matters through relationship are given prime attention. The relationships are viewed according to the past and the tense or current conflict and then the aim would be to improve future relationships.

Indirect relationships are analyzed along with direct ones to see cross-stitching potentials. The fear of sorcery or divine punishment is also used to show what the breach of peace would bring upon the society and the conflicting parties. Western mediators may begin the exploration by retracing the steps of the parties to the point of the initial conflict. But experienced indigenous elders, considering the social realities, may start from a vintage point further back and try to form a frame of social reference. He may ask questions as: - who are you and where are you from? Explain your family link, where did you grow up?

“What do you like doing? Etc.

These may provide clues, not only about immediate causes, but will reveal long-standing grievances, thus, offer a wider and deeper insight into the differences and similarities between the parties.

The decision making process is characterized by consideration of the social importance of conflict solving as social relation and internal solidarity are crucial. At this stage, having looked at both sides, your community may suggest that you – the one party make this concession. It would then be fair to expect you the other party to respond by reciprocating concession from your side.

Concession seeking is the next important approach, this may develop into an extended search, and much patience is needed here. Every new consensual outcome confirms the validity and value of this process. It also create confidence that such a jointly development decision will prove to be effective and long lasting.

When an agreement is eventually reached, the good news is shared with the groups and communities concerned. The agreement is then affirmed as a social contract in a virtual way. The affirmation can range from handshake in public to an elaborate ceremony as required by tradition. The purpose of this is to spread the news about the satisfactory conclusion of the conflict resolution process. This also places an additional obligation on the parties to observe the agreement.

From this stage, all the parties and the entire community can be checking whether the parties are really keeping to their commitment. If a party needs face- saving empowerment, or encouragement, sympathetic members of the community often render valuable assistance. This is the revival of cultural value for peacemaking.

People derive their sense of meaning from their culture. This notion feed into the attitude and value that we choose to embrace, which in turn determine how we interact with each other. Cultural attitude and value therefore provide the foundation for the social norms by which people live, through internalizing and sharing these cultural attitude and values with their fellow community members and by handing them down to future generations, societies can – and do i.e. construct themselves on the basis of particular cultural image.

When we survey various parts of the world, we are confronted with images and cultures of violence. Societies appear to be tearing themselves apart and the attitude and value in these societies seem to be based on self interest, private accumulation and the competitive drive for power and resources.

This cultural logic promotes exclusion on a fundamental level and field a cycle of poverty, debt and economic marginalization. By extension, this logic also generates and regulates the vicious cycles of perpetual violence that we are currently witnessing. Any effort to arrest these vicious cycles requires an intervention of the level of culture with specific reference to how people perceive themselves and their responsibility in relation to others. Until significant steps can be taken to reduce the adherence to culture of violence and exclusion we will continue to postpone genuine peace. But where do we begin in our attempt to reverse this persistent and pernicious culture of violence?

In order to initiate the social reconstruction of war-affected communities, a key step would be to find a way for members of these communities to re-inform themselves with cultural logic that emphasizes sharing and equitable resources distribution. This in effect, means reviving cultural attitude and value that can foster a climate within which peace can flourish.

METHODOLOGY

1 Design of the Study

The descriptive survey method was applied. Since the research examined the role of conflict management in the restoration of peace from the age-long Aguleri and Umuleri land conflict, the chosen method was to enable him reach his respondents closely and to ensure validity of data collected. Questionnaires were administered to individuals who are informed on issues of conflicts and peace in the Local Government Area. Literature also contributed immensely to the bulk of the data.

2 Area of Study

This study was carried out among residents of Anambra East Local Government Area of Anambra State. It was centered on the role of conflict management in the restoration of peace from the age-long Aguleri and Umuleri land conflict.

3 Study Populations

The study concerned residents of Anambra East Local Government Area in Anambra State. It involved both traditional and western backgrounds such as traditional rulers, the courts, the Nigerian Police, Teachers, Students, traders and particular individuals from this Local Government Area.

4 Population Sample

A total of 250 respondents were interviewed. This covered persons and experienced staff of both traditional and western peacemaking bodies and institutions as well as individual persons in the area.

5 Sources and Methods of Data Collection

Both primary and secondary data were utilized in the study. Primary data was accessed through questionnaire, visits to archives and cites of traditional palaces, shrines and others, while literature such as newspapers, journals, seminars and workshops and others provided the rich secondary sources of data here.

6 Method of Data Analysis

The gathered data were analyzed by simple content descriptive method. As a social research, the study was purely qualitative with data presented logically and convincingly.

RESULTS, ANALYSES AND FINDINGS

1 Foundations of the Otuocha Land Conflict

Apparently from their names, Aguleri and Umuleri communities come from one Ancestral father known as “Eri” and lived together peacefully as neighbors in Otuocha for decades before the land dispute started. Today, they also belong to the same Anambra East Local Government Area alongside other communities such as Nsugbe, Igbariam, Umuoba Anam and Nando. As commonly acclaimed, one of the incessant sources of conflicts in traditional Africa is struggle over land; these brother- communities unfortunately were victims of this circumstance.

The bone of contention was about ‘who’ has an exclusive ownership right over Otuoch land: Aguleri or Umuleri people? This question tags closely along with another disputed struggle: which of the ancestors was the first to settle down in Otuocha land; Aguleri’s or Umuleri’s? Possibly, the correct answer to the later question will provide an indisputable lead to the disputed answers to the first and more tedious question. This marks another grievous resource induced conflict in Nigeria, and as Boulding (1990:26) interprets: “conflict is a goal directed activity designed to improve the position of one party at the expense of the other”, the conflict gradually escalated into war. The dispute had been on latently within the communities, but when it was taken to court in 1933, it escalated and assumed a major issue.

2 Botched Litigation Efforts

Series of peace entreaties were recorded over Aguleri – Umuleri land dispute. When it was taken to the first court in 1933, the dispute remained in courts, moving from one court to the other till 1984 without actually being resolved. According to Nwolise (2004:17), the first judgment on the land case was given by a Colonial Court presided over by Captain O’Conor, who, based on the evidence

before him awarded exclusive ownership of the land to Umuleri. Unfortunately, the Umuleri's could not consummate this judgment, because the Aguleri got it nullified. The case was then taken to West African Court of Appeal. When this failed to satisfy them, it was taken to England (London) to be settled at the Queen's Privy Council. This was the highest court in British Colonies and therefore, like the Supreme Court of Nigeria. All these litigations took place in the 1950s.

When Nigeria became independence in 1960, the case took a political dimension. In 1964, during the Ministerial era of Dr. M.I. Okpara, in the then Eastern Region, Aguleri youths fraudulently changed a document of 'Amaeze Ward 12 Otuocha' to 'Otuocha Aguleri.' This sparked off a serious protest and eventually a riot. In the heat of this, Umuleri youths sued the Government in 1984 asking for the legal notices to be annulled. The case remained in the court till January 1966 when the first coup by the Military was carried out and Col. Ojukwu who headed Eastern Region examined the case and cancelled the legal notices. This action returned both communities to square one: nobody owns the Otuocha land in dispute.

In 1975, Aguleri sued Umuleri at Onitsha for trespassing on the land but the court dismissed the case. They therefore took the case to the Federal Court of Appeal which finally gave a judgment in 1981 and this time in favor of Aguleri. The following year, 1982, Umuleri took the case to the Supreme Court of Nigeria. Now, the case has broken a record of having been to the Supreme Court twice. The Supreme Court however disappointed them being declaring that neither of the communities owned the Otuocha land, and rather advised them to go home and make peace among themselves.

In September 1995, Aguleri and Umuleri relationships degenerated into a war. Public properties including schools, banks, post offices, town halls, churches and about 200 private homes were destroyed. On the 4th day of the crisis, the then Military Governor of Anambra State, Col Attah allied with the Police Commissioner Mr. Ali Jos and intervened in the war. They were able to achieve truce, while arresting more than 400 belligerents. He then constituted a commission of enquiry headed by Justice Nweje. At the end of it, the first official white paper on the land dispute was published and it was recommended that the disputed land be demarcated permanently. Another Military Governor took over from Col Attah and did not implement this decision. Having waited for about 4 years without consummating the former Government's decision, the communities who had been experiencing some cold and latent face-offs finally elapsed into full scale war in April 2nd, 1999. Properties and lives were lost more than ever before in the history of their dispute. One of the remote causes was the incident concerning an Aguleri illustrious son, Mr. Mike Edozie, the Chairman of the Local Government Council, who was killed in the 1995 mayhem; during his burial, youths from Umuleri swooped in on the mourners and about 100 people lost their lives in fight that ensued. At a point during the war, Umuoba Anam alleged that Umuleri soldiers attacked their people and joined Aguleri forces against Umuleri. The war raged on till about January 2000, when indigenous strategy was finally implemented.

3. Significance of the Botched Efforts

Africa is predominantly the continent of the black people; consequently, we have peculiar lifestyle, culture, traditions and general context. As explained by Paul Lederach, the negligence of specific cultural traits of any particular group of people in bid to resolve conflicts among them, accounts for much of the failures experienced in the field. As Nwoliise rightfully puts it, the Aguleri/ Umuleri conflict exposes the weaknesses and failures of the colonially inherited peace mechanisms. It principally exposes the inadequacy of the western mechanism in many contexts in African peace quests. Indigenous of the communities Okolo, Madu and others (personal communication) are of the consensus view that the western strategies never really addressed their needs and feelings (values) in the way and manner they gave their judgments. Besides, the courts neither made efforts to study or understand the people's cultures.

Another major failure to the failures was the irresponsiveness of the Government in both taking the right steps and implementing agreed decisions. For instance, if the succeeding Governor to Col. Attah had implemented Attah's resolution over the dispute, the 1999- 2000 war may have been avoided.

4 Accomplished Restoration of Peace by Conflict Management

Finally, on the 25th January 2000, a bench of Anambra East Traditional Rulers headed by Igwe Nzekwesi Kelly was given the opportunity and legitimacy to intervene and began the oath- taking rituals.

Initiatives by Ohaneze Ndi Igbo, the highest Igbo Institution, set the ball rolling. They summed up courage and waded into the raging war to call for truce. Stakeholders met at Awka; Chief Obi Anosike of the Federal House of Representative also moved a motion for peace in the House; Governor (Dr) Mbadinuju Chinwoke responded by setting up a 7-man peace committee headed by Justice Araka, to facilitate the traditional process and invited President Olusegun Obasanjo to observe damages and dynamics of the dispute so far.

The first traditional oath was administered between Aguleri and Umuleri on January 25th, 2000 and this was captioned “Declaration No More War”. Other communities in the area excluding Umuoba, who had some rituals to clear with Umuleri first, joined in the oath with their various deities as witnesses. These included the following;

- Aguleri with their “Aro Olome Nkilisi” deity
- Umuleri with their “Isimkpume deity”
- Igbariam with “Ududo Onu Ogwu deity”
- Nando with “Isi Ogwugwu deity”
- Nsugbe with “Iyi Ojii deity”

This relaxed the generally psyched tensions among the five communities and at least, overt hostilities were stopped. The temporary truce provided the ample opportunity needed for the proper resolution to take place. All hands were put on deck as assessments, fact findings, consultations, mediations and decisions were made by stakeholders and the traditional interveners together. Finally, the Traditional Council summoned every party and administered a win- win decision on the disputed land. Since, both parties have dire needs and commitments on the disputed land, it was considered pertinent for them to benefit from the property. The traditional Council therefore shared the land into two between the two communities and commenced partitioning immediately. For the first time since 1933, both communities expressed open satisfaction over the decision. To avoid any breaking of the accord by any of the parties, a second oath was administered on the parties on April 6th 2000, including Umuoba Anam this time, who were allowed to bring in their “Iwele” deity to join the other deities already on ground as the oath was read and sealed by ‘ofo’.

After this, some individuals who were biased to Christianity were given an opportunity to be accommodated by swearing an oath with the Bible. A Christian Priest then read Psalm 185 and called on God Almighty to deal with any community or individual who violets the peace treaty.

The “Iko Nmee” (blood cleansing) ritual was carried out to cleanse spilt blood from the lands. Then, members from all communities marked the end of the conflicts with celebrations, where food, drinks and music were enjoyed together as mark of reconciliation. Finally, the Government and Town Unions began the efforts of reconstructing many of the destroyed major properties in the affected communities. Peace was finally restored.

5 Significance of the Accomplishment

The successful resolution of the disputes was possible because, most importantly, the traditional strategy afforded the conflict parties the opportunity to be adjudged by their own standards. The people were treated by the canons of their own values, traditions and beliefs and therefore, their emotions were captured. This is the crucial strength of “Ellicitive Theory” of conflict resolution adumbrated by Paul Lederach. The inherent cultural traits, which are always behind conflicts among particular group of people, are also relevant to the resolution of the same conflicts. Aguleri and Umuleri are typical Igbo communities, which depict Igbo cultural traits. Overtly or latently, these traits were embedded in their conflict over Otuocha land, and will also need to assuage the same traits in the resolution entreaties of the same conflict.

For instance, injunctions and decisions of the courts would be violated with ease by the communities as they felt no psychological commitments to them. But no community would joke with commitment to any of their deities, especially, when it was consensually enacted and sealed with an “ofo”.

Again, those who felt they had defiled their lands by spilling of blood, which are abominations in Igbo land, would gladly take part in any peace treaty involving “Iko nmee” (blood cleansing) rituals. This is because, to them, they are no more condemned before men, their ancestors, deities and Almighty God. Consequently, major generational curses have been lifted from them. So, they gladly accepted resolutions on these terms.

They were also allowed to contribute freely to the terms of resolving their own case and this way, they were held committed to their own resolution. This is unlike the courts which were giving down their judgments consecutively and which were never obeyed by any of the communities.

The strategy of win-win resolution outcome played significant role here. The Traditional Council acted in wisdom by dividing the disputed land between the two communities rather than awarding the whole competed property to one party alone. This also afforded the communities to benefit from the land and also get compensated for lost materials and human over the year on the dispute. Needs were also satisfied by both parties and every party became peaceful.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

Apparently and as stated by W. Zartman, conflict is an unavoidable feature of human interaction. This is common in all environments both Western and African. The causes or origins of these conflicts have roots in the cultures, perceptions and other traits of the actors in those environments specifically, and it follows therefore, that strategies to resolve the conflicts should also come from the same environments, specifically. The negligence of this and the importation and imposition of foreign strategies towards the resolution of specific contextual conflicts will always not work. Until particular conflicts are treated in cognizance with specific environmental traits, the conflict remains intractable.

Similarly, Otuocha land has illustrated this point beyond reasonable doubts. The case, which occurred in a typical Igbo setting in Anambra State of Nigeria, obviously has both its causes and remedies enrooted in the land and the people. Unfortunately, it was wrongly and continuously given foreign treatment (litigations). This kept the problem intractable and the conflict parties suffered escalations and their tolls. However, when finally, a resolution strategy of oath-taking, which was indigenous to the conflict parties, was applied to the case, the conflict was quickly resolved and sustainable peace was restored among the people.

CONCLUSION

It is a truism that the inherited western models of conflict resolution are not effective in Aguleri and Umuleri. This is because the two environments are different. Some factors that can cause conflicts in Aguleri and Umuleri may not cause conflict in England or America. This is because cultural values differ from one context to another. For instance, an Igbo man will fight vehemently to restore from a trespass, a land where his umbilical cords are buried, while an English man will not be worried over such beliefs. This is because, while the Igbo man has a cultural belief that lands where umbilical cords are buried must be passed on to one's generations only, the English man does not believe in such 'senseless emotional outbursts'.

[The functions that culture plays in determining human relations and social conflicts are so enormous that we are beginning to witness a growing focus on the impact of culture on conflict resolution. Every society since the beginning of time has developed its own mechanisms and institutions for managing disputes in a way that preserves the integrity and fabric of the society. It should come as no surprise therefore that cultural approaches for managing conflict around the world will play a vital role in promoting peace and social order in communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Conflict Management agencies and policy makers should promote the further development of conflict resolution and conflict management services to indigenous people based on.
 - a. recognition of Indigenous perspectives on conflict and their management.
 - b. Consultation with indigenous people at the local level.
 - c. Flexibility and adaptability of service.
 - d. Long term and sustainable outcome
 - e. Integrated approaches across program, process and jurisdictional boundaries
2. Traditional Indigenous conflict management processes should be recognized and supported subject to any constraints arising out of civil, criminal, human rights and equal opportunity laws and professional conduct requirement and other legal obligations relevant to the conduct of ADR
3. Mainstream agencies and policy makers need to respect and allow the development by Indigenous people of new indigenous-specific dispute resolution and conflict management services. The role of mainstream agencies and policy makers should also extend to providing encouragement and support.
4. Mainstream conflict management agencies should address the barriers that affect the effectiveness of other services for indigenous people and modify their practices to take account of indigenous needs.

5. Agencies should continue to identify and promote effective dispute resolution and conflict management practices in dispute involving indigenous people.
6. Agencies should support the development of cross- cultural sensitivity and competence among ADR practitioners. Training program for both indigenous and non-indigenous practitioners should be developed and evaluated.
7. Professional and accreditation structure should be developed for indigenous conflict management practitioners. Accreditation standards should be based on recognition of special skills and assessment of abilities, rather than academics qualifications such as those in the customary law regulations should be reviewed in this regard.
8. Funding arrangements need to reflect the complexity of indigenous problems ensure that process and outcome measure mesh with indigenous experience and encourage dispute resolution and conflict management services to work collaboratively to meet indigenous needs.
9. A national Indigenous conflict management network should be established in order to support local conflict resolution initiatives. Such a network could study and distribute information on best practice case studies, promote information sharing among indigenous practitioners.
10. Policy makers and service providers should consider the most effective means of evaluating indigenous conflict resolution and conflict management services including the use of case studies.

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