
The Evaluation of the Role of Communication as a Management Tool for Crisis Resolution between Tiv-Jukun Crises in Wukari, Taraba State

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Citation: Paul Aondover Igbashangev and Victor Makinwa Ogunyemi (2022) The Evaluation of the Role of Communication as a Management Tool for Crisis Resolution between Tiv-Jukun Crises in Wukari, Taraba State, *International Journal of International Relations, Media and Mass Communication Studies*, Vol.8, No.2, pp.33-61

ABSTRACT: *Tiv-Jukun conflict has a long history of occurrence and reoccurrence over a period of time. In many instances, the conflicts have resulted in the destruction of lives and properties and internal displacement of civilians. The conflict has affected the relationship between the two ethnic groups who have been living together cordially. Previous studies on the conflict have not given proper attention to the role of communication in averting the conflict. This paper presents the root and remote causes of the Tiv Jukun conflict. Identifying the triggers and drivers of conflict between the two ethnic groups could help in bringing about a lasting solution to the crisis. Interviews were used to illicit the opinion of various demographics of both ethnic groups. Findings indicate among others competition over land resources and the desire for each ethnic group to attain political position for the benefit of its ethnic group in terms of socio-economic amenities such as education, healthcare services and employment. In order to promote a peaceful co-existence, the Nigerian government should implement the report of the previous committees, a proper sharing formula between the two ethnic groups and address the issue of citizenship rights constitutionally.*

KEYWORDS: role, communication, management tool, crisis resolution, Tiv-Jukun, Wukari, Taraba State.

INTRODUCTION

It is true that with communication, nothing will fail and without communication, nothing will work. Communication is indispensable to human existence, it is central to all aspects of life, hence, it occupies a vital parts of our everyday living. Communication has the ability to change behaviour of aggrieved person from negative to positive. This is why it is regarded as a useful tool in crisis management between the people of Tiv and the Jukun in Taraba State. There are different types of communication which mainly include intra-personal communication, inter-personal

communication, group communication, extra-personal communication, public communication, traditional communication, cultural communication, international communication and mass communication.

The different types of communication can be used at various times for various purposes to manage and resolve crisis between the people of Tiv and the Jukun in Taraba State. At any point in time, the use of traditional, interpersonal and mass media (newspaper, magazine, radio, television and the internet), have been acknowledged by communication scholars such as Nwabueze (2014), (Daramola, 2003), Dike (1988) as playing crucial roles in providing information or messages that can shape or change people perceptions. Crisis has been defined as a struggle or contest between people with opposing needs, ideas, beliefs, values or goals ((Foundation Coalition, 2001).

Crisis management is the ability to put crisis under control or the handling of a crisis situation with the intention of achieving peaceful co-existence between the parties involved in the crisis. According to Olajide (2011), crisis management is the process of reducing the negative and disruptive capacity of crisis through communication. Communication plays a number of roles in crisis management such as helping to calm fray nerves, educating parties involved in crisis, establishing and interpreting meanings, information exchange, instrument for growth and development, social transformation during crisis, promote better teamwork, stimulating debate and sensitization of people amongst others. Crisis between the people of Tiv and the Jukun in Wukari, Taraba State is at alarming rate. Some of the crises among tribes in Benue State are caused by a number of factors ranging from struggle for political participation, contest for access to resources, struggle for identity, welfare problem in the state, lack of respect for constituted authorities, etc. Crises between the people of Tiv and the Jukun occur on regular basis in the state and this tend to disrupt many activities in the state. For instance, in March 2020 a Jukun Boy from Idi community was arrested by the Police due to social vices related issue. Based on this, people of Jukun chased away the security men and locked the police station as early as 6.30 a.m. It took the timely intervention of the Commissioner for Police for the station to be opened.

The absence of communication or ineffective use of communication may result to a state of unrest among two communities who are in misunderstanding. Communication is the grease that keeps social relationship in motion or ongoing without or with minimal frictions. Once there is a breach or non-functionality of communication between two or more tribes, such may trigger crises or result to a state of unrest. Communication is very vital to crisis management and resolution among two nations or communities. Benard (1978) posits that in any exhaustive theory of organizations, communication occupies a central place because the structure, extensiveness and scope of every organization are almost entirely determined by the communication techniques employed.

Communication tools can be used to incite violence as well as carry messages that could help to prevent or manage unrest in any setting. Recognizing the importance and potential of communication as instrument for crisis prevention, management, resolution and peace building field, The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) has planned to launch a new grant program, on

communication which is designed to support learning and improved practice in the area of crisis resolution. USIP is interested in exploring ways that communication can be used to support the creation of new horizontal and vertical communication to assist in improving crisis monitoring, management, resolution, community-based responses to crisis, and participatory peace building. Crisis a dangerous situation but when it is well managed, it serves a blessing to the parties facing it.

Statement of the Problem

The conflict in Wukari of Taraba state that has been happening for years is mainly between the Tivs, and the Jukuns. The Jukuns being the major tribe in Taraba state, while the Tivs the major tribes in Benue state. Also there are Tiv minorities in Taraba, Nasarawa and Plateau states, and few Jukun minority in Benue state. The battle in Taraba state between the Tivs and the Jukuns is likely to focus on struggle over land, control over economic resources and political or administrative position. Political clashes have been especially strong around the influence of Wukari long existing traditional Jukun centre. Land has been the major contributing factor of the incessant conflict going on in Wukari local government area. The respondents interviewed agreed that land has been their major problem between the two ethnic groups of Tiv - Jukun. The Jukuns are not ready to let the Tivs have access to the land by claiming that it is their own inheritance and therefore want to protect the land as their inheritance for their future generation. While on the other side the Tiv argued that land is not the problem but fear of domination. The Jukuns are so concerned that the Tivs' population is fast growing and will one day over power the Jukuns, that's why the Jukuns are denying the Tivs access to penetrate into their land.

Another contributing factor is employment opportunities, the chances of employment to both ethnic groups differ, the Jukuns are given upper hand and more opportunity when it comes to employment. The Jukuns believe to be the indigenes and will not allow settlers (Tivs) to take over offices in their land in which the Tivs refused to accept that claim. The Tiv also claimed to be entitled to job opportunity in Wukari of Taraba state, because they have been living there for decades. Therefore need to be considered. Some of the Tivs respondents interviewed argued that they cannot fold their arms to see all the lucrative jobs given out to the Jukuns. While the Jukuns claimed is their right to be placed in the lucrative jobs being their own land. This has been causing a lot of problem between the Tiv –Jukun ethnic groups, that has been causing conflict up to today.

The ethnic conflict is global problem nowadays and its consequence is so huge on the nations' economic, political and peaceful co-existence of citizens. The world population is predominately within the age bracket of 30 years and the future hold that they stand to face great consequence of ethnic conflict if urgent attention is not given to this problem (WHO, 2009). In fact the peaceful co-existence of future generation societies/communities is at risk of being exposed to more violence that could affect their political and economic development. Also, United States Institute for Peace (2010) reported that ethnic conflict is a global problem, even though, its occurrence is more rampant in Africa and its consequences could be disastrous if not effectively managed. In this regard, no nation whether rich or poor, developed or under-develop is free of ethnics' violent

devastating effects. However, there are several forms of ethnic conflict which includes: land disputes, discrimination, belief and value difference; socio-cultural disposition. Nevertheless, disunity, disharmony and bitterness are the outcomes of ethnic conflicts which hinder progress and development in any given society.

Today, Nigeria has more than two hundred and fifty (250) major ethnic groups which belong to different socio-cultural values. Since independence, Nigeria as a nation has been facing the problem of diverse ethnic-religious, socio-economic and political conflicts (David, 2012). The dilemma of the characterization and diversity of Nigeria ethnic populace has resulted into persistent recurrence of socio-ethnic and political violent. In fact, these have constituted different ethnic interest group with selfish goals such as Bakassi Boys in the eastern; O' dua People Congress (OPC) in the west and; the Boko Haram in the northern Nigeria. Dahida (2015) and Sampson (2012) stressed that the existence of divided interest ethnic groups have propagated communities/societal intolerance that have created more violent and bloody with more devastating loss of life and properties using the ethnic local paramilitaries as the perpetrators of ethnic conflicts' dogmatic plan.

However, many authors have stated that youth violent is one of the problems confronting Nigeria as a result of ethnic conflicts. Researcher such as Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2010) stated that over 60% of the ethnic conflicts are perpetrated by youths within the age brackets of 20 and 35 years in Nigeria. In 2003, 2007 and 2011, Nigeria recorded more than 83,700 youths were killed in the ethno-religious conflicts, even though; most of these conflicts were politically motivated (Sampson, 2012; David, 2012). Also, in recent time in the northern Nigeria, over 13,000 young and old people were massacred (Usman, 2013); over 70% of these dead were males (Okereke, 2013) while their families (children and women) are living death to bear the grave consequence of these conflicts.

Presently, Nigeria is in the state of insecurity with political uncertainty and some ethnic regions are living in fear. According to Giroux and Gilpin (2014), majority of the northern youths are the ones caught up using sophisticated and dangerous weapons in both rural and urban areas of the country. The increased deaths of guiltless citizens have created more fear and insecurity than ever before.

In addition, it was observed in the literature that between the year 2005 to 2010, Nigerian police documented about 1.4 million conflicts/violent cases that truly occurred. Nwankwo (2015) and Aggestam (2014) stated that politics; religion belief and socio-cultural difference and; land resources disputes were the root causes of the ethnic conflicts (Federal bureau of investigation, 2011). On the contrary, economic factor and fear of domination were outlined in the study of Drobizheva et al. (2015) as the ground trigger of the ethnic conflicts. Giroux and Gilpin (2014) stated that in Nigeria ethnic conflict situation is ever evolving and there is urgent need to address it through rigorous empirical findings with the view to provide resolution for peaceful co-existence in Nigeria as a nation.

Furthermore, notable scholars buttressed this contention that numerous sections of the country today are convulsed in inter and intra-ethnic conflicts leading to loss of lives as well as the destruction of personal and government property. It is sad to note that gun begin to rule and ruin the country. Obviously, human lives seem worthless and all effort made by the various tiers of government to checkmate the wanton killings and destruction of property seem not to be yielding expected results, the problem is harmfully affecting the economic and social development of the nation. Essentially, the need to live in unity is nonnegotiable; hence, this inevitable march to perdition must be stopped.

Consequently, Ajayi (2014) extensive literature identified areas of challenges in the ethnic conflicts such as economic inequality; discrimination and mutual hatred and fear of domination. He further noted that ever since independent, “there exists persistent cavernous ethnic tension and crises engendered by horizontal inequality factors (fear of domination, ethnic identity and mistrust), resulting to exaggerated political competition”. Few studies examine the impact of horizontal inequality factors in the context of national peaceful co-existence for Nigeria integration process (Agbaje, 2013; Ajayi, 2014).

Ajayi (2014) noted that though the factors responsible for incessant ethnic conflicts within the community are of various types and likely to cause conflict among the people of Nigeria, socio economic factors are the major contributing factors. First, educational, employment and political inequalities that is knowledgeable and elitist untruth, district politics conveyed in tribal consciousness, division and afraid of domination. Second, all these stopped the growth of real loyalty or national-spirit but instead created the way for inter-ethnic hatred, argument, favoritism, dishonesty, misuse of power, politicization of census and security scheme.

In the recorded history, Nigeria since from the creation was thrown into misunderstanding and incessant difficulty by the presiding leaders who blown the glowing coal of the above disintegrative events into a blaze. Teething problems of nationhood, mostly rotating round the question of power-allocation, had taken Nigeria to the state of breakdown after the independence of October 1, 1960 (Ajayi, 2011). The Nigerian Military tried to change the condition but did not succeed because the system had previously been affected by prolonged favoritism and division, its act instead led to a series of happenings that ended up in the 1967’s civil conflict, political calamity and socio-economic conflicts till date. Intellectuals’ perceived democratic dispensation as preferable landscape for the Nigerians’ peaceful co-existence, but today’s reality is far from yesterday’s idealistic understanding. For this reason, it called for more empirical studies.

At the same time, Mertens (2014) stated that past research on the ethnic conflicts have focused on the elites’ opinions only (selected leaders in the community/society) with the application of subjective research approach that was only qualitative. On the contrary, the real answers to the conflicts’ strategic management lie within the ordinary people in the community who are the recipient of the negative impact of ethnic violent/conflicts. Therefore, to get to the causes of ethnic conflicts in the Nigeria’s Tiv - Jukun communities, there is need to find out what is happening in

the grass root that are aggravating the influx of insecurity, insurgents, ethnic disunity and socio-political violent and so on. Therefore this research will involve the opinion of all demography of the community within the study area in order to gain in-depth understanding of the issue.

Consequently, Dahida (2015) noted that a number of diverse countries in the world have employed their diversity as strength while in Nigeria it is an insurmountable problem. Today, Nigeria's unity political and socio-economic development is unpredictable as a result of ethnic conflicts. More so, the predicament of Nigeria's political, economic and internal security crisis cannot be adequately diagnose or clearly understood, except the appraisal and the findings of the underlining causes and effects and solution are provide through an objective research outcomes.

Every community from the simplest to the most complex has some form of social inequality. In particular, in Nigerian power, prestige is unequally distributed between individuals and social group. In many societies there are also marked differences in the distribution of wealth. Power refers to the degree to which individuals or groups can impose their will on others with or without the consent of those groups. Prestige relate to the amount of esteem or honor associated with social positions, qualities of individuals and styles of life. Wealth refers to material possession defined as valuable in a certain society. It may include land, livestock, buildings, money and other forms of property owned by individuals or communal groups (Vaezghasemi, Razak, Ng, & Subramanian, 2016). The term social inequality simply refers to the existence of socially created inequalities (Khandakar, 2016).

The research's outcomes is to find out the contributing factors responsible for the Tiv - Jukun's ethnic conflict in Wukari Local Government area of Taraba state in northeast Nigeria, and suggest strategies to resolve the conflict that could enhance peaceful co-existence in the study area. Thus, the research builds on the inequality theory of ethnic conflict resolution (Steward, 2011). The outcome of this research could provide the implications to advance the Tiv-Jukun conflict strategic management framework that could be adopted or adapted for the ethnic conflicts' resolution in other region in Nigeria and beyond.

Objective of the Study

The primary aim of this research is to evaluate the impact of horizontal inequality factors on the peaceful co-existence of Tiv - Jukun in Northern Nigeria with the purpose of proposing Tiv - Jukun conflict strategic management framework for the peaceful coexistence between the two ethnic groups. Hence, the objectives of the research are as follows:

- i. To ascertain the current statuses of factors responsible for the ethnic conflict of Tiv-Jukun in Wukari, Taraba State northeast Nigeria.
- ii. To determine the dominant factor responsible for the Tiv - Jukun conflict in Gidan idi wukari Taraba state northeast Nigeria.
- iii. To ascertain the effectiveness of information management on the relationship between Tiv and Jukun crisis?

Research Questions

The research's questions are as follows:

- i. What are the current factors responsible for the ethnic conflict in the Tiv - Jukun communities in Gidan idi Wukari Taraba state northeast Nigeria?
- ii. Which dominant factor influence the Tiv – Jukun conflict in Gidan idi Wukari
- iii. How effective is information management on the relationship between Tiv and Jukun crisis?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ethnicity and Identity

The term “ethnic” is derived from an ancient Greek word, *ethnos* meaning a number of ‘distinct’ people living and acting together (Tastsoglou, 2001). Ethnicity refers to a collection of people with a common socio/cultural identity such as language, religion, common cultural traits and common worldview (Boateng, 2000, Boateng, Matadamas, Sharma, & Winkler, 2015). Hence, these ethnic groups are social formations distinguished by the communal character (such as language and culture) of their boundaries (Nnoli, 1995). Culture is an important component of ethnic identity and not only refers to beliefs, language, distinct customs and food, but also includes sharing and identifying with the unique experience of a group. Nagel, (1994) added that ethnic identity consists of internal and external aspects and is a socio-psychological process whereby, individuals situate themselves in a community internally by states of mind and feelings, and externally by behavior appropriate to the internal psychological states. Nevertheless, even though the external and internal aspects of ethnic identity are interrelated, their degree of importance varies between individuals. External aspects are linked to observable behaviors, and include: speaking a particular language, practicing ethnic traditions, participating in ethnic personal networks, such as family and friendships, involvement in ethnic institutions like churches, schools, enterprises, and media, participating in ethnic voluntary association like clubs, societies, and youth organizations and participating in functions sponsored by ethnic organizations such as picnics, concerts, public lectures, rallies, and dances (Isajiw, 1993).

Ethnic Conflict

Conflict is a global and normal part of social living. It can be an expressed disagreement between “at least two interdependent parties who perceive conflicting goals, limited resources and interference from others in reaching their goals” (Hocker & Wilmot, 2003). Ethnic conflict is the type of conflict that exists between and among ethnic groups. It can be caused by the struggle for power or authority, chieftaincy, land or boundary, dominance, exclusion or marginalisation as well as superiority and recognition. There are two main categories under ethnic conflict. These are intra-ethnic conflict and inter-ethnic conflict. The former is the type of conflict that exists between the same ethnic groups for example the Dagbon violent conflict between the Abudus and the Andanis which led to the death of the Yaa Na (Yakubu Andani) (Anamzoya, 2004). Tonah, (2012) described it as a war of emancipation or secession. The latter, is the type where conflict exists

between and among different ethnic groups. Cordell and Wolff (2009) argued that inter-ethnic conflicts are mostly caused by feelings of superiority by one ethnic group (mostly the indigenes) over others. For example, the underlying interest is either over land ownership, chieftaincy succession, competition over land usage or location of institutions and services. Ethnicity has been a major source of violent ethnic conflict despite the existence of peaceful and cooperative ethnic groups in Africa (Horowitz, 1985). Ethnic conflict has been defined as one of the greatest hurdles to meaningful development in Africa. In Nigeria, this type of competition and struggle among various ethnic groups is seen as a product of colonial contact. Ethnic identity played a significant role in conflict and violence. The ethnic aspect however, did not decrease with the coming of independence; rather, it became a criterion for allocating and sharing of power and economic resources.

Human Development

Human development connotes the nation's standard of living, life expectancy and literacy of her citizenry. People living within a defined boundary or state should live above the poverty level, exhibit a high level of literacy and good life expectancy. To ensure human development and growth, the United Nations (2003) declared fundamental human rights and freedom to live together without violence, intimidation or fear. Conflict human development form a self "reinforcing cycle". In countries where conflict abound, long term investment in times of both physical and human cannot be secured, resulting in a sloppy economy in these countries. On the other hand, countries with a low level of development have less capacity to improve institutions, increase productivity and this hampers the growth rate of a country (Conceição, P., Kim, N., & Zhang, Y. 2009). This mandate has reinforced the need for governments all over the world to ensure that there is security of lives and properties of inhabitants within their territorial space, and the promotion of good governance for healthy development and growth is of pivotal concern. Since the end of the Civil War in 1970, Nigeria has experienced conflicts of varying proportions consisting of both inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts. Such conflicts among others are Mangu versus Bokkos conflict in Plateau state, Ife – Modakeke in Oyo state, Zangon Kataf of Kaduna state and Tiv Jukun of Taraba State. For example, after the Nigerian civil war of 1970, funds meant for meaningful development was spent on national reconstruction (Luckham, Ahmed, Muggah, & White, 2001). In the crisis zones, schools, hospitals and business sectors were closed down hence resulting in low human development.

Communication strategies for managing crisis.

Communication is just not for conveying information, but to persuade and influence people. Although, communication skills have always been important to people facing crisis, the ability to persuade and influence others is even more critical today. To persuade and influence, conflict resolution team has to communicate frequently and easily with others. Daft (2008) notes that people find interpersonal communication experiences unrewarding or difficult and thus tend to avoid situations where communication is required. Effective persuasion doesn't mean telling people what you want them to do; instead, it involves listening, learning about others' interest and needs, and learning people to a shared solution. Over the years, the behaviourists have shown

interest in finding out the causes of certain human behaviour with the intention of finding a standard pattern of human action and inaction based on “cause” and “effect” phenomenon. Communication is not just sending information, honoring the distinction between sharing and proclaiming is crucial for successful management.

To corroborate this, Daft (2008) asserts that: *When people interact, they put themselves into each other's shoes, try to perceive the world as the other person perceives it, try to predict how the other will respond. Interaction involves reciprocal role-taking, the mutual employment of empathetic skills. The goal of interaction is the merger of self and other, a complete ability to anticipate, predict, and behave in accordance with the joint needs of self and other. It is the desire to share understanding that motivates executives to visit employees on shop floor, hold small informal meetings, or eat with employees in the cafeteria. The things managers learn from direct communication with employees shape their understanding of the organization.* (p. 659).

The roles of management in championing communication entails gathering important information from both inside and outside the organization and then contribute appropriate information to others who need it.

According to Agu and Anyikwa (2002), information communication refers to all technical gadgets that are used for the generation, retention, and transmission of information like the computer, the e-mail, the fax, telephones, the internet etc. All these gadgets provide fast and easy way of collecting and disseminating data in instructional communication. The channel richness of communication is the amount of information that can be transmitted during a communication episode. In crisis management, the capacity of an information channel is influenced by three characteristics: (1) the ability to handle multiple cues simultaneously; (2) the ability to facilitate rapid, two-way feedback; and (3) the ability to establish a personal focus for the communication.

The use of communication to resolve communal crisis entails that all strategies such as meetings, novelty matches, courtesy visits, are efficiently and effectively put into regular usage in the dissemination of information before and during crisis. All these strategies provide fast and easy way of collecting and disseminating data in instructional communication. It is also important to note that the channel richness of communication should be a major focus in resolving communal crisis.

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High channel richness has the advantages of being personal, two-way, and fast feedback, while the disadvantages are no record, spontaneous, and dissemination hard. On the other hand, Low channel

richness advantages are provision of records, premeditated, and easily disseminated, but with a disadvantage of been impersonal, one-way and slow feedback.

Overview of Tiv and Jukun conflicts in Wukari.

Southern Taraba State has experienced several conflicts that have either ethnic or religious coloration or both. Wukari has the highest share of this nature of conflicts with devastating effects to not only the area, but the state and the nation at large. These conflicts are inter-ethnic, religious or both, thus “ethno-religious” conflicts. Prominent among the conflicts are the Tiv-Jukun conflicts of 1990-1992, 2001-2002 and 2019- 2020. All these conflicts have their devastating effects on women and children from the area and the state at large.

Jukun and Tiv Conflicts: According to Agbu and Varvar (2017, p.23), the historical link between the Tiv and the Jukun predates colonial period. During that period, their relationship was cordial. However, between the colonial and post-colonial periods, at different occasions, their relationship went sour resulting in outbreak of violent communal clashes between them, such as in 1990-1992, 2001-2002 and 2019-2020. Many scholars such as Atoshi (1992), Adi (1992), Agbu (1992), Adda (1993), Adamu (2002), Hagher (2002), Akombo (2005), Wuam and Ikpanor (2013), Nyitse (2014), Akombo (2016), and Agbu, Zhema & Useini (2019), among others, have come up with different opinions, sentiments and perspectives on the causes and consequences of the Tiv-Jukun conflicts. Agbu and Varvar (2017, p.19) believe that colonial policies imposed on the two groups were responsible for the emergence of sour relationship between them before other factors. The imposition of colonial policies of cash crop production, tax payments, forced migration and monetization, among others, created rural poverty among the peoples (Tiv and Jukun), and in their resolve to solve the problem of rural poverty, viable alternatives such as migration in search for fertile land for farming became necessary. However, the activities of the migrants’ in the host communities created conditions for communal conflicts between them (Agbu and Varvar 2017, p.23).

In 1990-1992, violent conflict erupted between the Tiv and the Jukun in Wukari affecting almost all settlements. According to Akombo (2016, p.95), the conflict between the Tiv and Jukun erupted on 25th September, 1990, on a disputed piece of land in Nwuban in Katon Bagha District. Both communities accused one another of attacking its members in cold blood while working on a piece of land. The incident heightened Jukun-Tiv tension in the District, which eventually engulfed the entire Local Government Area. Furthermore, Best, Idyorough and Shehu (2004) see the causes of the 1990-1992 conflict from different perspectives to include political issues, (political participation in, and control of, Wukari Local Government Council as well as political appointments and other resources); there was also the membership of the Wukari Traditional Council, precisely the desire by the Tiv to be part of the Council (Best, Idyorough and Shehu 2004, Pp.99-100). Other factors included land, rapid population growth of the Tiv, renaming of

settlements in Tiv and so on. All these together led to the outbreak of the Tiv-Jukun communal conflict of 1990-1992 which Alubo (2006, p.104) considers as the longest running conflict in which whole villages were razed and there were wide spread of killings and looting.

Maier (2000. Pp.199-207) notes that the 1990-92 crisis recorded widespread devastation: burnt out villages, littered corpses in various stages of decomposition and household items strewn all over. The crisis also triggered large-scale refugees both of Jukun fleeing areas of violence seeking sanctuary in Wukari town and of the Tiv fleeing into Benue State. In the course of the crisis, statistics by Atoshi (1992, Pp22-51), Adi (1992, Pp7-10), and Agbu (2012, Pp98-102) show that almost all settlements along Wukari-Ibi-Sarkin/Kudu; Wukari-Tella; Wukari-Jootar; Wukari-Rafin/Kada-Abako; and Wukari-Tsokundi were burnt down either by the Tiv or the Jukun, affecting severely women and children.

The 1990-92 crisis stands out as the longest running single out-break in the festering conflicts between the Jukun and the Tiv. However, both in magnitude and intensity, it was surpassed by the 2001/2002 crisis (Alubo, 2006, p.106). The immediate cause of the Tiv-Jukun crisis of 2001/2002, according to Agbu (2012, p.97), was an encounter between Fulani herdsmen and Tiv farmers, but later involved the Jukun when Chonku, a Jukun settlement on the border between Benue and Taraba States, was attacked by the Tiv on the reason that the Jukun were supporting the Fulani. Nevertheless, there were remote causes of the crisis as acknowledged by Alubo (2006, Pp.109-110) to include:

1. The refusal by the Jukun to grant the Tiv demand for a place in the Wukari Traditional Council, on the ground that the Jukun traditional council is a forum to propagate Jukun language and cultural heritage, both of which differed from the Tiv (Adamu, 2002), and that just as it is unreasonable for the Igbo in Gboko to demand membership in the Tiv traditional council, or the Igbo in Kano to demand representation in Kano Emirate Council, so also is the Tiv demand for a place in the Wukari Traditional Council similarly unreasonable.
2. The Jukun allegation that the Tiv were engaged in land grabbing without either following due process nor paying respect to the Jukun paramount ruler (Taraba Joint Legal Team 2002, p.21).
3. The persistent demand by the Tiv for recognition as indigenes, with all rights and privileges as the Jukun rather than as settlers with limited rights.
4. The Tiv proclivity for domination of Jukun land and viewing wherever they settled as part of Tivland, and with the Tor Tiv regarding himself as the leader of the Tiv Worldwide thereby seeking to control Tiv people everywhere.
5. The persistent allegation by the Jukun of the Tiv elite from Benue State consistently seeking to influence and tele-guide affairs in Taraba State and elsewhere in support of 'Great Tivland' thereby stirring trouble in the process in Taraba State.

6. The persistent allegation by the Tiv of the determination by the Jukun to marginalize them politically through always precipitating crisis in order to disperse them before elections, as placing Tiv villages under Jukun villages even when the former are much larger.

7. The allegation by the Tiv of the desire by the Jukun to hold them in perpetual bondage, thereby blocking any move for the creation of an additional Local Government Areas out of Wukari LGA because of the fear that this would lead to loss of control over most of this vast area to the Tiv.

Furthermore, in 2019, another violent conflict erupted between the Jukun and Tiv. Starting from Kente in Wukari LGA on 1st April, 2019, the crisis soon engulfed the whole LGA and eventually to other Local Government Areas in southern Taraba State, with the exception of Ussa LGA and Yangtu Special Development Area. Agbu, Zhema & Useini (2019) have attempted to itemize some of the issues that led to crisis to include suspicion by the Tiv, of Jukun allying with the Fulani in attacking their settlements. However, the trigger incident for the outbreak was the chasing away of Tiv women from Kente market by one Solomon Ihom (Tiv). The incident led to a fight which eventually escalated into violence. However, Fwaje, Paul & Tino (2020, p.137) summarize the causes of the conflict to include dispute arising from the use of land resources, agitation for traditional and political recognition, and claim of land ownership. Between 2019 and 2020 (violence still on-going), hundreds of people have lost their lives, thousands displaced and several settlements and communities destroyed by both Tiv and Jukun. It is even understatement to say that the crisis has devastating effects on women and children.

Wukari Ethno-Religious Crises, 2013-2015: Between 2013 and 2015, Wukari Local Government Area experienced series of ethno-religious crises leading to wanton loss of lives, destruction of property worth billions of naira, and with thousands of people displaced. According to Aku-UKa in Adamu (2016, p.151), “by far, the most devastating event that afflicted my domain was the ethno-religious crisis between the Muslim Hausa/Fulani and non-Muslims, especially the Jukun, which led to wanton killings and destruction of lives and property in Wukari town between 2013 and 2015”.

Cases of crises which that took place inside Wukari town included the 23rd February, 2013, crisis, consequent of football field incident; the 15th April, 2014, crisis; the 15th June, 2014, crisis; the 23rd & 24th September, 2014 crisis; and the 8th November, 2014, crisis; and finally, the 8th November, 2015, crisis (see Adamu 2016, p.158; Zhema and Agbu 2015, Pp.289-290). In addition to these crises, there were series of attacks on most Jukun villages in Wukari LGA in the name of Fulani herdsmen attacks. Jukun villages such as Ndo-Ikwe, Riti, Sondi, Nwuban, Ndo-Yaku, Nwukyon, Yamini, Nayinawa, Nwunyun (Gidin-Dorowa), Tunari, Rafin-Kada, Nwuko, Nyankwala, Byepyi, Ndo-Idi, Tapari, and Ndo-Manu. Similarly, smaller Jukun settlements all came under attacks during the period under review, leading to people abandoning their ancestral homes. Zhema and Agbu (2015, p.283) note that in this manner, the attacks seemed to be endless.

Apart from these attacks resulting in loss of lives and property, there was mass exodus of people from these communities into Wukari town.

The causes of the Wukari ethno-religious crises of 2013 to 2015 were both remote and instantaneous. The remote causes include politics; attack on police Area command and commercial banks in Wukari; indiscriminate road-blocks in Wukari on prayer days; illegal arrest of some youths in Wukari by secret security agents and the Ibi crisis of 2012 (Zhema and Agbu 2015, Pp.283-289). However, Aku Uka (Adamu 2016, p.156) attributes the protracted conflict between Christians/traditionalists and Muslims in Wukari to some external factors which manifest political and religious dimensions. He states thus:

There is this phantom claim that the Muslims are in majority in the town. In addition to this sensitive and totally false claim, some Muslims in Wukari suddenly woke up one morning and made wild claim of being founders of Wukari, which they publicized through paid advertisements in some national newspapers. This no doubt may have triggered the February 23 and May 3, 2013, crisis in Wukari (Adamu 2016, p.158).

The immediate causes were, among others, the 'Football Field' incident of 23rd February, 2013, the obstruction of traditional procession of the Jukun people by some Hausa-Muslim youths in Wukari on 23rd May, 2013; inciting publication by one Sa'any Sule in the Daily Trust of 16th April, 2013, and other national newspapers, claiming that Wukari was established by Sambo and Dikko who were Hausa from Kano, which, by extension, means that Wukari is owned by Muslims. There was also the speech of the Acting Governor of Taraba State, Alhaji Garba Umar (UTC), at the inauguration of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry on the Ibi and Wukari crisis on 2nd May, 2013, and published by the state-owned newspaper- Nigeria Sunrise Vol.3, No.17 of 6th – 12th May, 2013, that: "Henceforth traditional rulers and Local Government Chairmen in the State would be held responsible for any breach of peace in their domain". The Hausa-Muslims in Wukari capitalized on this statement and saw it as an opportunity to implement their grand design and desire of removing the Chairman of Wukari LGA and dethroning the Aku-Uka. Thus, they disrupted the traditional burial procession of Abon Ziken Manu Abe Ashumate on 3rd May, 2013, to create another crisis situation that would give the Acting Governor reason to take action against the Chairman of Wukari LGA and the Aku-Uka, to achieve their goal (Adamu 2016, Pp.164 -166).

The combination of the aforementioned remote and immediate factors complicated friction in the relationship between the Hausa/Fulani Muslims and the Jukun in Wukari town. The outcome of this development was the eruption of intense crisis between the two blocs. Due to the corrosive nature the relationship between the two blocs was, once crisis erupted in 2013, it lingered up to 2015. The phenomenon destroyed mutual trust between the groups in the town.

Theoretical perspectives about causes, nature and impact of Tiv-Jukun conflicts.

Scholars have written extensively on the causes, nature and consequences or impact of conflicts. Depending on the school of thought to which they represent, such explanations have tended to place a lot of emphasis on one particular or a set of related theories, while diminishing the importance or explanatory relevance of other competing theories (Ademola 2009, p.41). In order to employ a theoretical approach to this research, a number of theories of conflicts are examined for the purpose of adopting the most appropriate theory. The first to be examined is the Innate theory which is broad in coverage, incorporating scholars with biological backgrounds such as human physiology, ethnology, socio-biology, psychology, etc. It contends that conflict is innate in all social interactions, and among all animals, including human beings. However, it argues that humans as animals, albeit higher species of animals, would fight naturally over things they cherish such as cultural/religious identities (Ademola 2009, p.46). Furthermore, when man feels the fulfillment of his socio-cultural and economic needs/goals are threatened, there is the tendency for confrontation of those assumed to be responsible for denial or frustration of their needs/goals. This explains why the Frustration-Aggression theory propounded by John Dollard in 1939 and Ted Robert Gurr's Relative Deprivation theory propounded in 1970 become very relevant in explaining the causes and consequences of Tiv-Jukun conflicts in Wukari of Taraba State in particular.

Another theory that is relevant to this research is the Psycho-Cultural conflict theory which emphasizes the role of culture, ethnicity and religion (identity) in inducing conflict. The theory contends that even though there are different forms of identities, the one that is based on people's ethnic origin and the culture that is learned on the basis of that ethnic origin is one of the most important ways of explaining violent conflicts. Identity is thus seen to be the reason for social conflicts that take long to resolve with far reaching negative consequences. On another hand, it is apt to say that eruption of violent conflicts is linked with group pluralism and interactions to achieve their diverse objectives (Deeka, 2002). In seeking relevance or retention of political power, the elites manipulate and massage religious and ethnic sentiments. Many of the ethno-religious crises of Nigeria in general, and Taraba State in particular, are rooted in the context of the group conflict theoretical assumption.

Again another theory that is relevant to this research is the Social Atavistic Conflict theory. The Social Atavistic Conflict thought was first used by Lombroso in 1863 when he did a study called the "criminal man." The core idea according to Lombroso is that some people have biological and mental traits that make them crime prone. These traits are inherited and present at birth. Mental and physical degeneracies are the cause of crime and conflict in the society.

In theory of Social Atavism, there is natural tendency on the part of creatures to migrate, expand and dominate space or territory using a means possible-peaceful or the use of force. In conflict thought, it is the tendency to expand one's territory that breeds resistance or clash of occupation. In the human context, according to Aja (2007, p.21), migration and territorial expansion leads to

disputes over the control of either the landmass or territorial waters or air space. In its corollary in space and environmental theory, claims and counter-claims over any territory is rooted in the economics of land, in terms of its fertility, including natural endowments in hydro-carbons. By extension in strategic theory, territorial expansion arises out of the security or defense consideration to reposition a society or a group in a position of environmental advantage over the adversaries.

Alluding to the above fact, Isichei (1976), commenting on the causes of the Tiv-Jukun conflicts, posit that the role land disputes is very marked in the history of these wars. Much value was not attached to Wukari land by any of the two tribes of Tiv and Jukun at the initial stage but as the 20th century progressed, each community began to value the area and efforts intensified to claim the ownership of the area.

In Nigeria, the Tiv and Jukun struggles have lasted for many bloody decades. As above examples show, the communal disputes are between groups that share even common cultural characteristics but deny the confidence of employing traditional methods of peace and conflict resolutions.

The Tiv and its Jukun conflict is aptly captured by the philosophical and ideological underpinnings of the social Atavistic theory. The Tiv and Jukun conflict manifested in the intense struggle for the ownership of Wukari and the taciturnity of the Jukun people that strangers should not disposes them of their ancestral homeland.

Conflict is inevitable and there is natural tendency on the part of human to strive to acquire resources with any means possible. Land is one of the scarcest resources. Undoubtedly, the struggle over who owns or occupy land has been the root causes of communal conflict in Nigeria and Africa in general. This singular fact has resulted to the conflicts between Tiv and Tiv Jukun. Conflicts are two parallel lines that can never meet. Conflict situation does not allow for any meaningful development.

From the forgoing, one can deduce that there are several theories applicable in research on ethno-religious conflict. However, the blend of the four theories captured above, provides much closer explanation to the understanding of the causes, nature and consequences of Tiv-Jukun conflicts in Wukari of Taraba State.

Communication Skills Used So Far In Managing the Tiv and Jukun Crisis

There are various communication skills/strategies that have been used in resolving the Tiv and Jukun conflict and they are discussed below:

a) Negotiation

Negotiation is the simplest and the most effective communication skill/strategy used in resolving communal conflicts. It consists basically of discussions between both the parties in a dispute and their allies with a view to reconciling divergent opinions or views or at least, understanding the differing positions of the stakeholders. It does not involve any third party. Those concerned decide among themselves how best to resolve their differences. The eminent leaders of the communities concerned do come together to discuss on the best way to resolve the conflict. They therefore arrange on the day the parties concerned will meet to discuss the matter. On the meeting day, each party will be given opportunity to explain, interpret and clarify issues at stake. Some members of the community who have no proper knowledge on the fundamental causes of the conflict will now be in a better position to understand more about the conflict. Negotiation involves discussions, arguments and counter-arguments though with the hope of resolving the conflict. It is by mutual discussions and understanding that the remote causes of the differences will be revealed and the opposing contentions elucidated. Negotiation is the most satisfactory public relations strategies used in resolving communal conflicts because the parties are directly involved. They discuss continually on the issue until the conflict is resolved. Once the conflict is resolved, communication skills/strategies will be used to make the parties concerned to forgive and forget. They are also encouraged to cultivate mutual understanding and live in harmonious relationship with each other.

b) Mediation

Mediation is another communication skill/strategy used in resolving communal conflicts. Mediation involves the use of third party in settling of the conflict. The communication expert encourages the contending parties to come to settlement. The communication expert will make frantic efforts to influence and persuade the opposing sides to enter into negotiation. Through efficient application of public relations by the mediating parties which usually comprise of the public relations experts and the influential community or religious leaders from both communities, the conflict will come to an end. This worked successfully in the conflict between Umuode and Oruku in Enugu state when the leaders of Catholic Church waded into the settlement of the conflict in 1995.

c) Inquiry

Inquiry is one of the communication skills/strategies used in resolving community conflicts. Where differences in opinion on factual matters underline a conflict between parties, the logical solution is to institute a commission of inquiry to be conducted by reputable observers such as public

relations experts and other experts from other disciplines to ascertain precisely the facts in contention. The commission will probe deeply the cause of the conflict and make concrete recommendations on how to terminate the conflicts and through such process, community conflict can be resolved.

d) Conciliation

Conciliation is also a communication skill/strategy used in resolving community conflicts. It involves a third party investigation of the causes of the dispute and the submission of report embodying suggestions on how to resolve the conflict.

Conciliation involves elements of both inquiry and mediation and in fact, the process of conciliation emerged from treaties providing for permanent inquiry commissions. The report of conciliation may stimulate negotiations between the parties concerned. The Public Relations consultant serves the third party. They carry out research by investigating on the causes of the conflict. They also make recommendations which can stimulate negotiation between the parties involved.

e) Arbitration

Arbitration is one of the communication skills/strategies used in resolving community conflicts. It involves resolving a conflict between two parties by a neutral body, panel or tribunal. This body is usually composed of legal luminaries and public relations expert who know how to handle proceedings.

Public relations is used to appeal and persuade the opposing parties to cooperate by attending to the proceedings of the arbitration. Through this process, a decision is reached which is binding on the both parties concerned.

f) Mass Media

Use of the media is another communication skill/strategy used in resolving communal conflict. Mass media consist of Newspapers, Magazines, Radio, Television, Films etc. According to Ogbuoshi (2002) "Film is the effective medium of passing important information to the target audience, the audience hear and see facts being discussed." When the media report conflict resolution, they leave serious impact for good or for ill, directly or indirectly. The media can resolve conflict situation by avoiding inflammatory reports, sensation captions or playing to the gallery by maintaining a neutral position and reporting conflict as it is without allowing emotion to be judged.

The media either print or electronic or both can be used to create a conducive atmosphere for effective persuasion of the conflicting communities to see reason on why they should resolve their differences. The Tiv-Idoma experiences present a good case in point. While the crisis rages, the

mass media in the country were awash objective, interpretative and investigative reports of the crisis. These reports created room for proper understanding of the remote and immediate causes, nature and dimensions of the crisis which by extension motivated some concerned citizens to wade into the matter and broker lasting peace in the area.

g) Public Opinion

Public opinion is one of the communication skills/strategies used in resolving communal conflicts. Public opinion is expression of views held in common by members of the community on controversial or salient issues. Public relations are used to monitor public opinions in a community so as to know their feelings and views on the matter under dispute. Knowing the views or feelings of the parties disputing will help immediately in resolving any communal conflict.

h) Propaganda Devices

Propaganda is one of the communication skills/strategies used in resolving communal conflicts. Propaganda is a conscious effort on the part of persons, pressure groups or government to influence the formation of attitudes. It is an organized effort to spread a particular doctrine or information to change people's attitudes or opinions. The public relations expert uses various propaganda techniques such as glittering generalities, plain folk device, bandwagon effects and name calling to achieve their motive.

Propaganda is effectively used in conflict resolution. It is used to change beliefs or views of the parties making them to change their mind or agree to negotiate their differences. For instance, propaganda was maximally used during the June 12, 1993 political crisis which nearly tore Nigeria apart. The Yoruba interpreted the annulment as Yoruba affairs based on tribalism. This led to serious crisis. This made the then federal military government to appoint Uche Chukwumerije as the Information minister and he used propaganda to preserve the unity of the country.

Interview

Peaceful relations between the Tiv and Jukun ethnic groups dates back to centuries, but now, it has hit rock bottom. This research takes a look at the current wave of hostilities, the communication strategies and why the bloodbath has refused to abate.

Interviewee 1 (The King of Kwarrarafa Kingdom the Aku Uka of Wukari and Chairman, Taraba State Council of Chiefs, Dr. Shekarau Angyu Masa Ibi)

Question 1: What efforts have the two affected states Taraba and Benue made to curtail the crises between the two tribes?

Answer: Taraba and Benue state governments have made so many effects to intervene in the Tiv and Jukun crisis especially the Wukari crisis, and so far it has yielded little results. Security

operatives including Operation Whirl Stroke headed by Major General Adeyemi Yekini also played reconciliatory roles yet the crisis remained intractable to the extent that schooling activities are paralyzed in areas affected.

Question 2: Why are the crisis refusing to stop despite government's intervention?

It is because of the struggle for dominance. See the Jukun youth leader posited that the Tiv were requesting for traditional leadership in Taraba for the purpose of acquiring more land in order to dominant Taraba that is why Jukun would not shift grounds and this lingers the crisis.

Interviewee 2 (Special Adviser on Media and Public Affairs of Chairman, Taraba State Council of Chiefs, Barr. Danjuma Aduma)

Question 1: Why are Jukun people refusing to agree to terms in order to end the crisis?

Answer: It is because of unfair share. Let me ask you, how many of Jukun communities or persons have been given such recognition in Benue State, whether political or traditional, even the Abinsi, a Jukun community in Benue, which he alleged had no such status of any recognition.

Question 2: Do these crisis affect people in their daily routine?

Answer: It has affected a lot of people, urrently people of Abinsi community had fled to safety in neighbouring towns because they were attacked severally by alleged Tiv militia and our people were killed and their property burnt down.

In the style which the Tiv militia attacked us in their numbers, they killed many Jukun so we have all deserted home. No Jukun man can go to farm in all those border villages, the militia will kill any Jukun person found in the farm.

To make matter worse, the militia vandalized the police station located in the community. Our maize, yam and other crops were also destroyed. We fled to towns. The only people at border areas now are our Muslim brothers who have no stake in the crisis.

Question 3: What is the solution to this crisis so far?

Answer: The police in Benue State said its operatives were on routine patrols alongside other security agents at flashpoints to prevent crime.

Interviewee 3 (Chairman Wukari and the Head of the Local Government Council Hon. Adi Daniele)

Question 1: What do you think is the way out of this crisis?

Answer: To me, forgiveness is the best weapon, let the Jukun and Tiv bury their differences and embrace peace they are known for.

Question 2: Will only forgiveness serve as the lasting solution to the crises?

Answer: No, let dialogue be employed. You know Taraba and Benue state governments had done their best towards bringing to an end the crisis but such effort was not successful. Several meetings were held between Governor Ishaku and stakeholders while similar meetings were equally held by his Benue State counterpart to bring an end to the situation. Taraba Governor Darius Ishaku recently said he was working tirelessly with his Benue counterpart, Samuel Ortom, to end the crisis between the Tiv and Jukun in the border area of the states. I hope this will be of good help.

Interviewee 4 (Taraba State Commissioner of Police, CP. Ahmed Mohammed Azare)

Question 1: There is no smoke without fire, do you think government is behind this crisis between Jukun and Tiv in Benue and Taraba states?

Answer: Yes, the governor of Taraba State and Gen. Theophilus Danjuma were accused of fueling the crisis. Tiv Youth Council (TYC) had at a news conference accused Gov. Ishaku and TY Danjuma of inciting Jukun militia to attack Tiv people in the state.

Question 2: How can we validate their accusation then?

Answer: we call on security agencies to investigate the governor Gov. Ishaku and the former Chief of Army Staff, Gen. Theophilus Danjuma for their alleged roles in the crisis.

Interviewee 5 (The Youth Leader of Jukun Wukari Town, Eric Yohanna)

Question 1: It was alleged by Tiv Youth Council (TYC) that Gov. Ishaku and TY Danjuma are inciting Jukun militia to attack Tiv people in the state. As a spokesperson of the governor what do you have to say?

Answer: That is a baseless allegation, Gov. Ishaku and Gov. Ortom had adopted various methods including meeting with stakeholders from both tribes to ensure peace returned to the area. He cannot afford trading peace with crises by inciting Jukun militia to attack Tiv people in the state.

Interviewee 6. (President of the Tiv Youth Council Taraba State, Mike Muswan)

Question 1: what are the factors responsible for the persistence of conflicts between Tiv and Jukun?

Answer: The first and foremost factor is the neglect or total abandonment of the traditional conflict resolution methods (discussed above) that the Tiv people hitherto utilized in checkmating conflict

situations in their land. This neglect is surprisingly more pronounced in Tiv land and by Tiv people themselves. Thus, the Kwav, Ityo and Ijir Tamen have been dispossessed of their utility and the potency that they used to bring to bear on the behavioral patterns of Tiv people through the moderation of whatever action or inaction was to be taken by individuals, groups, and communities in Tiv land. Following this development, it has become inherently difficult to avert the escalation of disputes into full-scale violent conflict among Tiv communities and between Tiv and their neighboring ethnic groups. One explanation often offered for this neglect is the influence of Christianity in Tiv land. The embrace of Christianity by Tiv people has erased their reverence for traditional religion and institutions, which are now considered “abominable” by the Tiv because of the newfound faith. This scenario has made the management of conflicts in Tiv land complicated today; earlier in Tiv traditional society, “the fear of mbatsav (priests) . . . silently settle[d] almost all quarrels, political decisions and subdue[d] discontent and raging revolt” (Abeghe 2005: 8). The inability to control upheavals among the Tivs due to the erosion of their traditional methods of conflict resolution has therefore unavoidably accentuated conflicts in the north-central geopolitical zone of Nigeria. This is because of other factors like the dominance of the Tiv population in the zone and population explosion in the area that, as a corollary, translates to skirmishes and then violent confrontations with other ethnic groups resident in the zone.

The second factor is the quest for land acquisition for agricultural activities by the people of the north-central region. The majority of the population in the region, like their counterparts in other parts of Nigeria, are agriculturalists. As a result of an increase in population and upsurge in farming activities with the attendant result of depletion of the land in some parts of the region, there has been a population drift to more fertile areas where other people have already settled. This has set the migrant population on a collision course with the already settled people. As a result, crises over land are generated because of the “indigene-settler” factor. Best (2005: 8–9) attempts an explanation of conflicts arising from the indigene-settler divide in Nigeria in general, which he sees as resulting from the mode of relations between the majority and minority ethnic groups. Best’s argument is that the majority ethnic groups that are more mobile are inclined to eclipse the minority ethnic groups in their own lands; he cites the overshadowing impact of the Tiv who are a majority group in north-central Nigeria over the Jukun in Wukari, Taraba State and Alago in Nasarawa State, Hausa/ Fulani over the Kataf in Zangon Kataf, etc. as some of the cases to underscore the causative influence of the indigene-settler factor in conflicts in central Nigeria.

Third and similar to the land issue discussed above is the problem evoked by contestation for citizenship rights in north-central Nigeria. This contestation has in turn engineered an identity crisis not only in the region but in Nigeria as a whole (Alubo 2006: 243; Egwu 2004: 40; Egwu 2009: 183). The agitation for citizenship rights is as a result of the exclusion of some Nigerians from enjoying certain rights like equal representation, and political and social rights in the states or LGAs where they reside. Indeed, it is centered on the distinction between formal “national” citizenship and “local” citizenship and the associated patterns of exclusion meted out to Nigerians on the basis of ethnic, regional, and religious and gender identities. Those who see themselves as “natives/indigenes” exclude those considered as ‘strangers’ [or ‘non-indigenes’] from the

enjoyment of certain rights and benefits, which they ought to enjoy as Nigerians upon the fulfillment of certain civic duties such as the payment of tax. (Egwu 2009: 183–84) Examples of conflicts that have resulted from the political exclusion described above include the Tiv-Jukun conflict in Taraba State, the Tiv-Azara crisis in Nasarawa State, and the Zangon-Kataf conflict in Kaduna State.

The fourth reason conflicts persist in the north-central geopolitical zone of Nigeria is the failure of reconciliation processes to address core issues involved in the numerous crises that have occurred in the zone (Alubo 2006: 248). Whenever a conflict occurs, the government takes measures to address the issues involved in the crisis, such as setting up a judicial commission of inquiry to investigate the causes of the conflict and proffer solutions to guide government action. However, the recommendations in the reports submitted by such commissions are hardly implemented by the same government that set them up in the first instance. For example, following the 2001 Tiv-Jukun ethnic conflict, the federal government under the former President Olusegun Obasanjo set up a judicial commission of inquiry headed by Justice Okechukwu Opene after the cessation of hostilities between the Tiv and Jukun to investigate the conflict and come up with workable solutions.

Unfortunately, as Asuni (1999: 4) and Alubo (2006: 135) have observed, such commissions of inquiry in Nigeria rarely solve the problems, they end up in futility. This is because either the commissions fizzle out after their ceremonial inauguration or, if they work and come forth with recommendations in the form of a report, those recommendations are not implemented by the government. As if to vindicate the assertions of Asuni and Alubo, the commission set up in 2001 indeed submitted its report to the federal government in 2003, but no practical action has been taken in relation to the report to this date.

There is also the fifth factor, the issue of the manipulation by the political elite, which has fueled most of the conflicts in central Nigeria. Members of the political elite in some of the states and LGAs who have lost out in the political process especially during electoral competitions have capitalized on existing ethnic divides in those areas to foment conflicts to destabilize them. This point was echoed in February 2008 during field research interviews to investigate the TivJukun conflict. According to an interviewee who was responding to a question on the role of politicians in exacerbating the conflict: So if we are fighting today, it's because there are stupid young politicians from both sides who are greedy and don't know the past. It is because of people like . . . [a name was mentioned] started all this rubbish . . . when they come into politics, they believed that their weight of number should put them on top of Jukun people and then they want to take the land.

These factors have heightened the spate of conflicts between Jukun and Tiv, thus making the tribes the conflict-prone Tribes in Nigeria

Interviewee 7 (Taraba State Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) Deputy Superintendent of Police, David Missal)

Question 1: What advice do you have to Tiv and Jukun who are in crisis?

Answer: They should know that crisis may come and go but friendship and neighbourhood will continue so they will spare lives and properties while in crisis.

Summary

The research present the background of the study, statement of problems in accordance to subject matter of the study discussed. Hence, research questions, research aim and research objectives clearly outlined. The research will also discuss conceptual framework, research's scope and plan in accordance with the layout structure of the thesis presented logically. The work also dwell on the literature review with the primary purpose of discussing the trends, development of the key components and research gaps of the past studies on the ethnic conflicts globally and locally within Nigeria context.

CONCLUSION

The study has x-rayed the application of communication strategies that were used in the resolution of communal conflicts between Tiv and Jukun conflict in Wukari of Taraba State. Despite clarion calls by different individuals, groups and government for cessation of communal conflicts in Nigeria, it is rather becoming endemic. Communication strategies should therefore be used to resolve conflicts quickly and appropriately so that it will not result in ugly consequences. It can therefore be said that conflict is inherent in man. That is why the researcher's theoretical framework of analysis has shown that there is a natural tendency on the part of creature to migrate, expand and dominate space or territory using any means possible-peace or through the use of force. The study has established that the immediate cause of the Tiv and Jukun conflict was the struggle between Tiv people and Jukun people over who is the rightful owner of and should occupy small portion of land in Wukari Local Governmepnt, indigene settler problems and competition for resources has been responsible for the conflict. The above factors have been the major causes of communal conflicts in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular. One common feature of these conflicts has to do with their confrontational and violence dimension which led to loss of lives and properties of people who hitherto lived in relative harmony. No meaningful development can be achieved in an environment where people cannot sleep with their two eyes closed. Government cannot comfortably administer development in such an area. With all these, there will be promotion of peace and harmonious coexistence among Nigerian communities and by extension usher in healthy development and progress in the country in particular and the world in general.

Recommendations

1. Public relations strategies that is, participatory or people-driven approach to conflict resolution should be adopted. The participatory approach to conflict resolution is no doubt an invaluable tool which would enable a wide cross-section of people share information and opinion about their lives and environment. People (the youth, the church, women and elders) who under normal circumstances are voiceless and powerless in the community are empowered to gain confidence and to speak out. The face-to-face which it provides, creates the opportunity for policy makers to gain an understanding of the issue at stake and to develop community trust and confidence for the government and its interventions.
2. Those who lost lives and properties in the conflict should be compensated. Though no amount of money or other resources can equate life but it should serve as commitment to building a lasting peace in the area. Public properties such as primary and secondary schools, medical centers, markets should be rebuilt and employment and scholarship be provided for the youths.
3. Enlightenment campaign should be encouraged and extended to the Tiv and Jukun communities on the need to embrace peace at all times and why the rule of law should be observed in dealing with contentious issues. The campaign team will constitute representatives of the governments and the communities especially those who have been adequately counseled to accept the realities of the situations.
4. Robust and vibrant social communication model should be put in place to bridge the current sociocultural and communication gaps noticeable in the area. This could be through the activation of social networks such as clubs membership, sports etc.

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