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Conflict Management and Resolution Strategies amidst Nigerian Political Situations

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Abstract

Peace building is the development of constructive personal, group and political relationship across ethnic, religious, class, national and racial boundaries. It aims to resolve injustice in non - violent ways to transform the structural conditions that generate deadly conflict. Peace building can include conflict prevention, conflict management, conflict resolution and transformation and post - conflict reconciliation. Religious, however, can play an important role in peace - making and conflict prevention and resolution. It is often claimed that religion causes conflict and war. It true that sometimes deeply held beliefs, can, lead to clashes and there have been, many wars that were caused by disputes over religion and beliefs. However, for many people, religion can be a power for peace. A message of peace and love towards others is at the heart of all of the major world religions. This is called The Golden Rule. It is the principle that you should treat others as you would like to be treated yourself and it is found in one form or another in every major Religion. Most religions gears towards forgiveness as a strength, and discourage people from taking revenge on those who have wrong them. The Hindu Leader, Mohandas Gandhi (often called Mahatma Gandhi) led a successful Non - Violent Struggle to free India from British rule. Dr. Martin Luther king found inspiration in Gandhi's non - violent struggle. Martin Luther believed that Jesus had preached a message that you should love everyone, including your enemies. He led the struggle for black people to be given equal rights in the U.S.A, and he did go without the use of violence.

Key Words: Conflict, Management, Resolution, Strategies, Nigerian Political Situations

Introduction

Conflicts which scholars simply identify as clash of interest, is as old as mankind and has formed a salient feature of the human society. It is a major problem in any society as it remains inevitable factor

in human existence since the communities, social groups or societies are structured and organized to achieve the goals set by the organs and members of the society (Itumo&Nwobashi2017). In pursuit of these various individual or

group interests, there are bound to be disagreement in some means of achieving these goals which result in disagreement. This has made conflicts inevitable in any society no matter its level of development, prompting Orji (2015) to believe that conflicts cannot be totally expunged from the inter-relationships that exist among individuals, groups, communities or societies at large.

Since conflicts stem from misunderstanding arising from the means of achieving individual, group, community or societal interests, it therefore show that conflicts can be caused by various factors, prompting Albert, (2011) to state that factors that could lead to conflicts and violence are numerous especially in Africa. These factors could range from political, Religious, economic and social reasons. Some scholars have classified causes of conflict to range from internal to internal causes.

As people are organized into groups to seek a common goal, the probability of conflicts greatly increases, as noted by Ekpenyong (2011). Conflicts are therefore inevitable phenomena that cannot be

totally expunged as long as human interests continue to exist and judging from its consequences as noted by Bassey and Eugene (2012), as conflicts generate social division, reverse economic progress, impedes sustainable development and frequently results in human rights violation, loss of lives and property. In order to reduce these consequences to its barest minimum, it becomes imperative for societies to come up with strategic plans on how to manage conflicts. It is based on this believe, that Odoh (2006), avers that conflicts management is more desirable and attainable goal for intractable conflict peace records than conflict resolution, stressing that most ethnic group conflicts such as the Niger Delta conflicts may be manageable but not resolvable.

It is the process of managing conflicts that different societies and states such as Nigeria has developed different strategies aimed at managing conflicts at different levels. Such strategies include, peace education, communication, Negotiation, Policy dialogue, promotion of social justice, workshop, National Boundary Commission, Ministries of Internal

Security and Boarder Peace, constitutional provisions among others.

This chapter seeks to identify the various forms of conflicts in Nigeria, its causes, resolution and management strategies applied to manage conflicts in the country for a peaceful and orderly society where people live in peace and harmony in the pursuit of their various interests in the society.

Concept of Conflict

Conflicts seen from different perspectives, connote a serious or protracted disagreement or an existing state of disagreement or hostility between two or more people, group, communities or societies. (Nicholson, 1992). It is often seen as clash of interest, which shows that two or more parties do not agree and are as such on two different parallels on the same issue. It is a deliberate attempt to oppose, resist or coerce the will of another or others as observed by Alabi (2010). This shows that one group is in opposition to the views or position of the other. As there are different causes of conflict, so are there different interpretation to the concept. In politics, conflict could be seen to exist when two or more groups engage

in a struggle over values and claims to status, power, and resources which the intention of the other group is to neutralize or eliminate the rivals (Jega, 2003), and as a demonstration of disagreement, it often leads to violence.

When groups pursue incompatible goals, there are bound to be disagreement, and this opposing views may result into hostility. In some cases, conflicts may not necessarily lead to direct or sharp confrontation, but when goal differences reach a crescendo, a manifestation of actual hostility or clashes is inevitable. Conflicts also connotes different perceptions that may not necessarily result in confrontation. In this way, it may simply mean different things to different people depending on the situation, as noted by Onwe (2006). These aspects include, religion, customs, cosmologies or values. Such differences may never culminate indirect and sharp confrontations. They note as well that on the other hand however, different perceptions, values or world-views may transcend just differences and result in the extreme connotation of conflicts.

Anifowose, in his *Violence and Politics in Nigeria* (1982), explains that conflict is an acceptable weapon to ventilate anger. This implies that one or group can only fall back to conflicts as a means of showing its position. Anifowose cited the Nigerian civil war period between 1967 and 1970 when Nigeria witnessed a total breakdown of relations and concord, when the Eastern region because of irreconcilable differences with the rest of Nigeria degenerated to the Civil War, which further aggravated the conflict because the East pursued the cause of sovereignty and nationhood which ran contrary to the cause of unity that the Nigerian government pursued. Again, splinter group of Moslem brotherhood known as Boko-Haram in the North East of Nigeria emerged as a result of growing differences in perceptions, motives interests and values, which have claimed thousands of lives, destroyed property and rendered millions of people homeless (Itumo & Nwobashi, 2017). Furthermore, the people of Niger Delta resulted to destruction of federal interest in their area to show their anger over the neglect of the area in terms of infrastructural and human development

despite the resources generated from the zone (Nweke & Elem, 2017).

In general literature, Anifowose notes that conflict is interchangeably used with other terms such as; contrast, disharmony, discord, struggle, contest, strife, antagonism, controversy, clash, rivalry, contest, contention, brawl, fisticuff, fight, battle, feud, combat and war. He explains that that conflicts technically means an existing state of disconnect between two or more parties on a prevailing issue, stressing that conflicts is different from war. Stressing further, he avers that though certain degree of conflicts may be related to war, but technically different from war, and while conflicts is a general description of a state of chaos, including that of war situations; war is a legally declared course of action by constitutionally recognized authority. In general terms, conflicts represent a situation that pertains to the opposing ideas and actions of different entities which results in an antagonistic state.

Characteristics of Conflicts.

Conflicts as a situation that pertains to the opposing ideas and actions of different entities which results in an antagonistic

state has the following characteristics as noted by Onwe, (2006).

1. It is universal process found in every society
2. It is the result of deliberate and conscious efforts of individuals or the groups
3. The nature of the conflicts is personal and direct. In conflicts, the participants know themselves
4. Its aim is not directed only with the achievement of the goal or objective but to dominate or eliminate the opponent
5. Conflict is of brief duration, temporary and intermittent in nature, but once begun, the conflicts process is hard to stop. It tends to grow more and bitterer as it proceeds.
6. It is process loaded with impulsiveness of human emotions and violent passions. it gains force and burst open
7. It may be latent or overt. In the latent form, it may exist in the form of tension, dissatisfaction, contravention and rivalry. It becomes overt when an issue is declared and a hostile action taken
8. It is mostly violent but may take the form of negotiation, party politics, disputes or rivalry
9. It is cumulative; each act of aggression usually promotes a more aggressive rebuttal, thus termination of conflict is not easy
10. It tends to be more intense when individuals and groups who have close relationships with one another are involved
11. Groups previously in conflicts may cooperate to achieve a goal considered important enough for them to unite despite their differences
12. It may emerge as a result of opposing interests. It is layered in a history of binary perceptions: exile/homeland, outsider/insider, us/them, patriotic/unpatriotic
13. It has both disintegrative and integrative effects. It disrupts unity in a society and is a disturbing way of setting issues. A certain account of internal conflict, however, may serve indirectly to stimulate group inter-action. External conflict can have positive effect by unifying the group.

Forms of Conflict

Experience in human society has shown that there are various forms of conflicts as there are various forms of human groups, race, religion, culture, lineage, beliefs, color, government, politics etc. Conflicts are in types. Psychology as a discipline

has espoused on intra-personal conflict. Sociology identifies inter-personal as well as intra-group or intra-unit conflicts, as well as inter-group conflicts. Political Science and History have identified inter-ethnic or intra-state conflicts as well as international conflicts. There are such other conflicts such as; *Intra-personal conflict*, *Inter-personal conflict*, *Man against society*; *man against nature*, *Family conflict*, *Inter-Group conflict*, *Intra-State conflict* as well as *Global conflict*.

These various forms of conflict shall be narrowed to the following areas for the purposes of the scope of this paper to include;

- a. Communal Conflict
- b. Ethnic Conflict
- c. Resource Conflict
- d. Religious Conflict
- e. Militancy Conflict
- f. Inter-State Conflict

Communal Conflict

Communal conflicts is described as a struggle between non state groups that are organized along a shared communal

identity over the control of power and the available scarce resources (Galtung, 1965). In his views, Lyam (2000) describes communal conflict as a struggle over scarce resources that are not controlled by share rules. This may constitute attempt to eliminate or destroy rules, ones rival among others. It is always associated with antagonistic interest between two or more opposing forces or groups within the society and can be seen in a continuum range from early signals to violent crisis or war as opined by Imobighe (2003). This was corroborated by Akinwale (2010), when he states that this situation usually arise when those concerned are dissatisfied with existing social conditions and as a result seek the same goals.

Conflict in itself refers to the fact that the parties use lethal violence to gain control over some disputed and perceived indivisible resource, such as piece of land or local political power, which follows a generally accepted conceptualization of armed conflict as stated by Galtung, (1965). The groups involved are non-state groups, meaning that neither actors control the state and armed forces

(although state actors may be involved as an important supporting actor in a communal conflict).

Furthermore, the groups are organized along a shared communal identity, meaning that they are not formally organized rebel groups or militias but that the confrontation takes place along the line of group identities. Some would equate the concept of communal identity with ethnic or religious identity, but as conceived here, the conflict is along village identity. The bottom line is that what constitutes the basis for a communal identity may differ across time and space.

Causes of Communal Conflict in Nigeria

Communal conflict arises in a bid to secure the interest of one group of communal or village identity over the others. It is an interaction between interdependent people who perceive incompatible goals and who expect interference from the other party if they attempt to achieve their goals (Onwe, 2006). The following are some of the causes of Communal Conflict in Nigeria;

a. Indigene and Settler Conundrum

b. Land Dispute

c. Socio-economic and political power struggles

d. High level of illiteracy

e. Frustration and aggressive displacement

f. Unequal distribution of wealth among the people

g. Domination and oppression by majority group and its collaborators

h. Accusation and allegation of neglect

i. Exploitation and violation of human rights

j. Non-tolerance, victimization and discrimination

k. High level of poverty

Indigene and Settler Conundrum

The contestation arising from the indigene-settler dichotomy arises from the conception, definition and perception of who is an indigene and who is not or who is a settler and what rights does one have which the others should not have, as noted

by Oji (2015). This gets to identity structure of indigene-settler relation as the indigenes see the settlers as tenants and as such should be controlled to certain level in their rights of possession and participation in the community activities. This identity provides recognition, definition, reference affinity and coherence and meaning for individual members of the group acting individually or collectively.

Judging from the attitudes of the indigenes, the settler communities' latch on the constitutional provision on human rights including the right to settle in any part of the country, to assert their rights in their places of settlement. Yecho (2006) explains that the history of migration before slavery, during slavery and after slavery makes yesterday's immigrants today's indigenes, and yesterday's settlers today's natives. On this context, the question of who qualifies as an indigene becomes a serious problem, since by history, everyone is a settler in one way or the other, irrespective of the time of settlement.

The differences between the indigenes and the settlers have continued to create

serious hostile relationship between various communities, resulting in communal conflicts in Nigeria as has been witnessed in the Tiv-Jukun conflict in Taraba State, Ijaw and Itskeri crisis in Delta State, Ezillo- EzzaEzillo conflict in Ebonyi State among others.

Land Dispute

Land dispute is a major cause of communal conflicts in Nigeria. When there is a disagreement between the ownership of land and the accepted boundary of land, it degenerates to conflicts among such communities. This in some occasions arise from claim of ownership of land which the other community might have been in possession of, or the fact that the other community claims that they were the original inhabitants of the area, and as such determines where they should allow the settlers have. This generally leads to conflicts when the communities involved were unable to settle their differences to the acceptable level.

Socio-Economic and Political Power Struggles

Several communal conflicts arise due to socio-economic and political power struggle. This is visible in rural communities where these communities divide along party politics, each supporting a particular party or candidate with the intention of gaining political power over the other community if their preferred candidate wins in an election. With this winning, they gain control of the economic and socio resources of the other community whose own candidates or party failed to clinch to political power. Believing that this community would continue to support the ruling party, the politicians give backing to their supporting community to control the other community and their resources. Efforts to resist this type of control always result to communal conflict.

High Level of Illiteracy

Most of these communities are characterized by people who do not understand the need for peaceful resolution of disagreement as they always feel cheated. A community with high level of uneducated youths are prone to incessant communal conflict, as they see

this conflict as avenue to show their strength and bravery.

Frustration and Aggressive Displacement

When a community is displaced by either war or natural disaster, such community may settle in other communities for survival and as such, if it becomes difficult to reclaim their original area, they may tend to settle and start their lives as a community in such new place that originally belonged to other communities.

These other communities may not find it comfortable to allow the other group to occupy their land, and in the process of driving them away, there may arise a conflict. The new settlers as a result of frustration and aggression as a result of their displacement from their own community, would have no any other option than to resist such move since they had no any other place to go.

Resolution/Management Strategies

Communication

This is the process of sharing and exchanging information between individual, groups and potential parties in

a conflict situation. It is also the process of interacting and relating with others, meaning that parties to a conflict situation still talk.

Collaboration

The collaboration process is one in which parties work together on their own to resolve problems through constructive dialogue or other activities like joint projects, sharing of community schools and health centers, markets, bridges and culverts, as well as other utilities (Alagoa, 2001).

Negotiation:

This is the process whereby the parties within the conflict seek to settle or resolve their conflicts. Also negotiation is a direct process of dialogue and discussions taking place between at least two parties who are faced with a conflict situation or a dispute. The benefits of compromised solution, it is believed, out-weigh the losses arising from refusal to negotiate. The goal of negotiation is to reach agreement through joint decisions between parties. Negotiation is a key approach to peaceful resolution of dispute and conflicts that

may arise among parties. It is also within the reach and control of parties.

Conciliation: Conciliation is close to mediation. It is a third party activity, which covers intermediary efforts aimed at persuading the parties to a conflict to work towards a peaceful solution. Conciliation involves facilitation.

Mediation: Mediation has been presented by the United Nations University for Peace as the voluntary, informal, non-binding process undertaken by an external party that fosters the settlement of differences or demands between directly invested parties.

Arbitration: This is another type of third party intervention that is a step higher than mediation in the conflict management spectrum or process. The parties to a conflict who select to use arbitration, even though they choose a non-violent method of settling their disputes, lose more control over their situation than those who select mediation and other lower levels of intervention.

Adjudication: Adjudication is another non-violent method of conflict

management. This involves the use of the courts and litigation processes. Parties to a dispute may choose not to use any of the methods we have so far discussed. They may opt instead to take their case to a court of law, before a judge of competent jurisdiction. Legal counsel may represent them.

Education: Education is a means of fostering good understanding. Government should implement its policy on compulsory education to at least junior secondary school or its equivalent. This will assist to reduce the level of illiteracy especially in the communities where these conflicts occur frequently. This will increase the understanding of these illiterates that are normally used to generate these conflicts between communities.

Ethnic Conflict: Ethnicity is a state of belonging to the same social group that has a common national or cultural tradition. It shows a category of people who identify with each other based on similarities such as common ancestry, language, history, society, culture or nation. It is an inherited status based on the society in which one finds himself.

Odoh (2006) sees ethnic group as affiliation resulting from racial or cultural ties with distinctive ways of living. This group has the same cultural background, the same belief system; worship the same god, the same traditional pattern; clothing, food, festival and as well has the same ancestral origins or brotherhood.

In Nigeria, every ethnic group strive to protect its identity by preserving their identity and as well strive to have their rights protected in a heterogeneous society like Nigeria. Such rights could stem from the distribution of common resources such as economic resources, social and political within the society. Ethnic conflict is a very serious social issue due to its complex nature and the social and political threats it poses to the society. Nigeria with an estimated population of 180 million people as noted by Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (2018) and constitutes of over 350 ethnic groups as noted by such noted scholars as Obikeze and Anthony (2003) and Nnoli (2008), with three recognized major ethnic groups of Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba have continued to strive, each making efforts to protect its own ethnic group.

Ethnic conflicts in Nigeria occur along tri-dimensional trajectory which according to Odoh (2006) includes;

- a. Conflicts among the majority ethnic groups
- b. Conflicts between the majority and minority groups
- c. Conflicts among the minority group

Causes of Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria

Ethnic conflict arises in Nigerian when ethnic identities are politicized, ethnic interests challenged, identities threatened and communication insufficient that differences cannot be effectively addressed. When group perceive that they are being excluded from access to what they consider to be their right: It may be in the area of political, economic, administrative, commercial, religious or linguistic right.

In Nigeria, various factors have been outlined as the major causes of conflicts and they include; amalgamation, tribalism, favoritism, corruption and bad leadership, Marginalization, Resource Control among others.

Amalgamation: Another major cause of ethnic conflict in Nigeria is the amalgamation of the Northern and the Southern protectorates by the colonial masters in 1914 when the two British colonial territories were merged. This merger was carried out without consideration to the different ethnic groups, as each ethnic group perceived each other as rivalry group that each must struggle to avoid domination. This created suspicion, hatred, lack of trust and discrimination among the major ethnic groups in addition to numerous other regions with ethnic and religious minorities holding grievances against the other three major ethnic groups they perceive as oppressors. This continued to breed un-reconcilable difference occasioned by suspicion and hatred.

Tribalism: This is one of the major causes of ethnic conflict in Nigeria. Various ethnic groups in Nigeria resorted to ethnic loyalty instead of national loyalty. This brought about the division of the country along ethnic groups which has affected the oneness. Any member of ethnic group that finds himself to position of authority, sees it as an opportunity to take care of his

ethnic group to the detriment of other ethnic groups. This never goes down well with other ethnic groups that feel marginalized. A typical example could be seen in the employment into public offices, ministries, agencies and directorates of the federal government that are usually characterized by ethnic sentiments. The division of the country into thirty six states with six geopolitical zones, where North West had seven states, others had six states each with only the south East geopolitical zone having only five is a serious case at hand.

The creation of these states were done by the Northern military leaders, thereby increasing the perceived oppression and marginalization against other ethnic groups by others. This usually breeds conflict since there is no more trust among the various ethnic groups.

Favoritism: This is a situation where those in political power tend to favor their relatives and friends especially those from the same ethnic groups. This is seen in the appointment of such members of the same ethnic groups to good positions, even when such persons were not qualified for such government appointments, neglecting

other ethnic groups. This in most cases leads to distrust and lack of loyalty to the political authority by other ethnic groups that feel marginalized and maltreated. This is a source of ethnic conflict in the country which was the reason for the introduction of federal character principle in the 1999 Nigerian constitution.

Corruption and Leadership: Corruption and bad leadership cause ethnic conflict in Nigeria. When corrupt leaders mismanage the collective national resources and throw the citizens to untold hardship while very few of the leaders live in affluence, the people feel aggrieved. This could lead to frustration since people have been impoverished and denied opportunities to survive in a country endowed with abundant natural resources. This situation leads to agitations by citizens that most times degenerates to ethnic conflicts.

Marginalization: Marginalization of some ethnic groups that make up the country is one of the causes of ethnic conflict in Nigeria. When any ethnic group in political position decides to neglect some other ethnic groups in the provision of the needs of the people as done to other ethnic groups, the neglected ethnic groups may

rise to agitate against such treatment. This could be seen in the emergence of various ethnic militia such as the Movement for the emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), the Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF), Niger Delta Avengers, Niger Delta Liberation Front, Oodua People Congress, Arewa People's Congress, Boko Haram, Obatse Cult, Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Biafra Zionist Federation (BZF).

All these groups are ethnic base and claimed that their various ethnic groups were being denied their rights as full citizens of the country, in the areas of appointments, infrastructural development, and social amenities among others. Such agitations if not checked could lead to ethnic conflicts.

Resolution/Management Strategies

True Practice of Federal Character.

One of the major reasons for the establishment of federal character principle is to promote national unity and to command national loyalty that would ensure that there shall be no

predominance of persons from a few state or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in government or in any of its agencies as contained in section 14(3) of the 1999 constitution as amended.

This principle if strictly adhered to, would go a long way in minimizing the rate of ethnic conflicts in Nigeria.

Zoning of Leadership Positions.

The zoning of leadership positions in Nigeria is not new, especially the presidency though they are done at political party level, since it is not a constitutional matter. This is equally applicable to such other positions as Vice President, President of Senate and Speaker of House of Representatives. However, this arrangement was not maintained as could be observed during the first tenure of President Muhammed Buhari, where the President, President of the Senate and the Speaker of House of Representatives were all Northerners (Hausa), with only the Vice President who hailed from South West (Yoruba), while the Igbo and other ethnic groups were schemed out of the zoning. This was not good for a heterogeneous society like Nigeria that is desirous of unity. Zoning of key position

should be maintained and should be made a constitutional matter for equal representation.

Ethnic Equality: Nigeria has over 350 ethnic groups with the three major ones as Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. The other minority groups still need to be recognized and treated as equal in the scheme of things in Nigeria, without necessarily compromising the population of the major ones. All these ethnic groups are unique in their different ways. There are some that are more populated than others, some have more national resources than others, some are more educated, but all these form the entity known as Nigeria, and each should be treated as equal without discrimination or marginalization.

Resource Conflict

Resource control is seen as a way and manner the resources available to government are harnessed and shared among the various tiers of government. It has been actually argued that the extent of independent decision making by various tiers of government as to the provision of social and economic services is a function of the portion of the total revenue allocated to them. In a clear time, the

greater the portion of total revenue allocated to both state and local governments the greater the degree of autonomy of these governments in carrying out various economic tasks. Owugah (2008), sees resource control to involve the access of communities and state governments to natural resources located within their boundaries and the freedom to develop and utilize these resources without inference from the federal government. Deeka (2002) in his explanation, avers that resource control is the management of resource by the people who live in the areas where these resources are harnessed for the enhancement of their living standard. Following from this, there is general believe that if the states and regions are allowed to control their resources, it would enhance fast growth and development in such places.

In Nigeria however, the processes of harnessing and controlling of these resources especially the mineral resources is directly under the federal government. The federal government as well determines how these resources are allocated to various tiers of government,

including the derivation given to the regions whose areas these resources come from. These principles do not go down well with these communities and ethnic groups, as they feel that the federal government is not fair in the allocation of these resources judging from the damages these communities suffer in the cause of exploration of these mineral resources in terms of environmental degradation. This situation has led to struggle and clamor for resource control, where states agitate that they should be allowed to use their resources themselves to develop their areas, and this has continued to generate conflict as those who felt shortchanged in the sharing formula, resort to conflict as a measure of showing their grievances (Owugah, 2008).

Causes of Resource Conflicts in Nigeria

- a. Political Exclusion and Marginalization
- b. Environmental Degradation
- c. Corruption
- d. Developmental Needs

Political Exclusion: When a region or state that contribute immensely to the national income of the country feels that they are not given good opportunity to be part of

the decision making body in terms of political appointments, the state or ethnic group will feel excluded from the management of the country which their region contribute its endowed resources to its development. When this situation is perceived by the people, there will be increased agitation for resource control that generally leads to conflicts, as the region may resort into destruction of federal government installations in their regions, or sources of federal government revenues in such areas.

Environmental Degradation: One of the major causes of resource control conflict in Nigeria is environmental degradation. Environmental degradation is the deterioration of the environment through depletion of resources such as air, water, and soil. It is the general destruction of the ecosystem; habitat destruction, extinction of wildlife and pollution.

In Nigeria, environmental degradation induces conflict, especially in communities where the explorative and exploitative of natural resources such as crude oil are carried out. In these communities, farmlands, water resources and forest are polluted, depleted and

degraded, thereby destroying their means of livelihood. The people in such environment suffer from lack of good water, food, health and general means of economic activities, thereby subjecting the people to abject poverty.

Dzurgba(2006), explains that a situation where the federal government controls the resources and fail to protect the people against these hazards, there arise frequent agitations and clashes between the communities and business corporations as well as between communities and government agencies.

Corruption: Corruption is another major cause of resource control conflict in Nigeria. This results from situation where the leaders of various groups, ranging from state, local government and community leaders collect what is due for communities where these resources come from, and instead of using such royalties of derivation to the development of such places, or use it to address the challenges caused as a result of exploring such resources, turn such to their preferred purposes or personal use. Such situation leads to conflict especially when the people are made to know that what is

meant for them to use in addressing their challenges have been diverted by their leaders to the detriment of the entire area.

Developmental Needs: Developmental needs is one of the major causes of resource conflict in Nigeria. This is a situation where the areas that produce the income of the nation is left undeveloped, while the money generated from the resources from their areas are used to develop other parts of the country. This people feel neglected and cheated and would want their place to be developed as well, and when such is not forthcoming, there arise the quest for resource control to enable such areas use the resources to develop their own areas. This situation generally leads to resource control conflict.

Resolution/Management Strategies

States Autonomy over Natural Resources

Many states and communities have been denied access to the resources in their areas. This is as contained in section 44 (3) of the 1999 constitutional of the federal Republic of Nigeria as amended, which provides that Notwithstanding the

foregoing provisions of this section, that the entire property in and control of all minerals, mineral oils and natural gas under or upon any land in Nigeria or in, under or upon the territorial waters and exclusive economic zone of Nigeria shall vest in government of the Federation and shall be managed in such manner as may be prescribed by the National Assembly.

The states and communities by this provision accuse the federal government of using the resources from their areas to develop other places to the detriment of their own areas, as they are neglected in the areas of social amenities and infrastructural development.

Government should provide these communities with the needed socio amenities and infrastructural development to enable them benefit from the resources that come from their region. The government can as well amend the constitution to consider giving access to these communities to partake in the exploration and management of the resources in their area.

Judicious use of Natural Resources.

Nigeria is blessed with abundant natural resources especially crude oil and natural gas, and the nation's economy over the years was built on the proceeds from oil sales. These proceeds from oil sales have not impacted positively on the living standard of the people, as only privileged few benefit from this resources, thereby continuously creating a wide gap between the poor and the rich.

The government should adhere to the principle of equality where every citizen should be treated equally and given equal opportunity to thrive. The people whose land these resources come from should be considered first and be assisted both as groups or individuals to develop their areas to improve their living condition.

When people see that resources gotten from their area are used to build individuals from other regions while those from their own area are allowed to wallow in abject poverty, it breeds hatred and acrimony that fans the ember of resource control conflict.

Conclusion and Recommendation:

Conflict can be caused by competition, inordinate ambition, and struggle over limited resources, poor communication, lack of openness and trust, incompatibility goals among others. For this reason, efforts should be made to avoid the sources or causes of conflict by playing down those factors that increase or facilitate the occurrence of conflicts.

From the work, it can be discovered that conflict may not always be negative or positive. Bearing this in mind, positive aspects of conflicts should be harnessed and utilized for organizational and societal progress. There should be complete and total fact in all communications involving members of a group or organizational or conflicting parties. Since conflict can occur at individual, group, organizational level, a multi-media approach should be adopted in managing conflict so as to accommodate varying and different social, cultural, political, economic and religious differences of conflicting parties. Proactive public relations practice is hereby recommended so as to nip crisis and conflict in the bud and totally avoid

fire Brigade approach to crisis and conflict management.

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