

EDU REKHA INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ARTS, LAW AND SOCIAL SCIENCE



Journal Homepage: <https://edurekhapublisher.com/erijalss/>

Volume- 2 Issue – 4 (July-August) 2026

ISSN: 3107-5169 (Online)

Frequency: Bimonthly



PAGES: 109-116

ARTICLE TITLE:



CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES, SUSTAINABLE PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT IN NORTH EAST NIGERIA

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ARTICLE HISTORY

RECEIVED

21-07-2026

ACCEPTED

25-07-2026

PUBLISHED

01-08-2026

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Abstract

This study explored the place and role of conflict prevention strategies on sustainable peace and development in North East Nigeria. It was stated that as humanitarian situations in the North Eastern region deteriorates due to displacement and damages to infrastructure while the conflict rages, it produced an adverse effect on the productive sector of the economy like the agricultural production which is tied to food security and by extension it may affect the nutritional requirement of the population. The study employed the use of two (2) theoretical underpinnings Classical Theory and frustration-aggression theory to reveal that in most cases, conflict happens as a result of denying the individual basic rights, necessities of life, justice or access to other values. The study discovered that for over a decade of a fierce battle between the Nigerian army and the Boko Haram sect, it has been difficult for the Nigerian military to defeat the Boko Haram insurgency even with the logistical support coming from the neighbouring countries. Therefore, there is need to adopt effective conflict prevention strategies with which sustainable peace can be attained in North East Nigeria. From the foregoing, the study recommends that there is need for increase budgeting and tracking it's spending so as to ensure efficient fund utilization in addressing human security and the plight of the vulnerable in NE Nigeria

Keywords: Conflict, Management, Socio-economic Development, Sustainable Peace, North East, Nigeria

Introduction

In this paper, efforts were geared towards exploring the dimensions of conflict prevention especially conflict prevention strategies and the attainment of sustainable peace and development in North East Nigeria. Recent studies have revealed that the North Eastern region as it is today was part of the defunct Northern region in the colonial era and the period preceding it up to 1967 when it was carved as the North Eastern State in one of the first political restructuring in the post-independence period. Subsequent balkanization of the country further dismantle the political space as a bigger entity, thus, at present, it is made up of Six States of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe. Indeed, the region is blessed with vast arable land amounting to about 1,794,400 ha under cultivation according to National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2018). Unfortunately, a sizeable portion of this arable land could not be cultivated due largely to displacement of many villages and towns especially in the most affected states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe by Boko Haram insurgency.

Statement of the problem

Generally speaking, peace is said to be an intangible commodity with a priceless tag, which once shattered, gaining it back requires huge investment in terms of human and material resources. Therefore, absence of peace implies that a given community, region or country has been inflicted with instability particularly if the nature of the conflict is overtly violent in character. Johan Galtung, a leading scholar on peace, popularized what he refers to as 'negative peace' and 'positive peace'. Emphasizing that, positive peace is the absence of physical hostilities while negative peace is the absence of structural violence imbued in the society (Galtung, 1964). Nonetheless, violent conflicts usually take its toll on both material and human lives living the survivors with scar and gory tale of psychological trauma. From the foregoing therefore, it is therefore important to explore conflict Prevention and sustainable peace in North East Nigeria.

Key Objectives

This study is motivated by the following objectives namely: to;

1. Examine conflict Prevention and sustainable peace in North East Nigeria
2. Evaluate conflict Resolution strategies towards sustainable peace in North East Nigeria
3. Analyse effective conflict management in the attainment of socio-economic development North East

Research Questions

1. What is the role of conflict prevention in the attainment of sustainable peace in North East Nigeria?
2. What conflict resolution strategies can be adopted towards sustainable peace in North East Nigeria?
3. How can effective conflict management improve socio-economic development in the North East?

Theoretical Underpinnings

Classical Theory

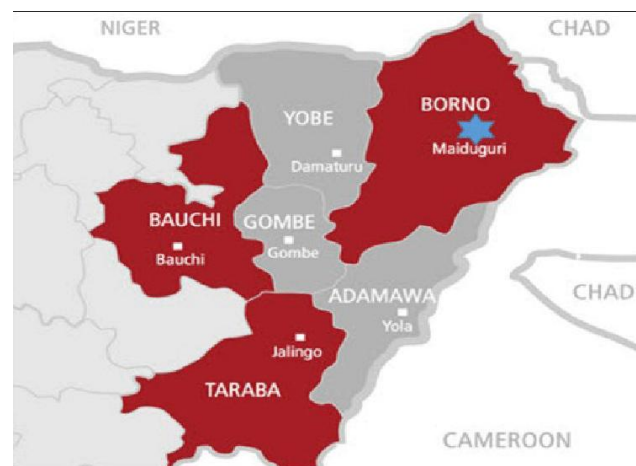
Classical theorists such as Thomas Hobbes, St. Augustine, Thomas Malthus, and Sigmund Freud among others identified inherent tendency of man to be selfish, sinful and driven by the natural quest for the ceaseless pursuit of power as the main reasons why conflict occur and continue to rise in human society. The theorists however differ on how the conflict could be resolved. For example, according to the theologian St. Augustine, religion plays an important role in regulating the sinful impulse in man, and to Hobbes, conflict could

be averted when different individuals in pursuit of selfish interest in a "state of nature" agree to surrender their will (natural rights) to the leviathan (a Sovereign).

Frustration-aggression Theory

Frustration-aggression theorists such as John Dollard, Ted Robert Gurr, Feirabend, Monga, Berkowitz and Yates see conflict arising from frustration-aggression in a given society. These theorists see conflict as the direct response to accumulate frustration and anger particularly in societies where scarce resources hardly satisfy human needs and want. It is therefore assumed that to be a natural reaction or a matter of instinct as postulated by frustration aggression theory. In most cases, a conflict happens as a result of denying the individual basic rights, necessities of life, justice or access to other values.

Fig 1 Map of North East region



Source: NBS (2025)

Conceptual Review

Concept of Conflict

The definition of conflict just like the concept of peace is contentious. However, most scholars are of the opinion that conflict usually reflects a class of interest or goal between parties, which may be individuals or group of individuals, or ethnic groups or states. Conflict according to most scholars occurs "when two or more people engage in a struggle over values and claims to status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals. He further explained that conflict emerges whenever one party perceives that one or more goals or purposes or means of achieving a good or preference is being threatened or hindered by the activities of one or more parties."

Put together, in conflict parties perceive or treat each other as a stumbling block that results in frustrating the other in attaining a set of goals, or even furthering one's interest through their attitudes, behaviours or actions (Akpuru-Aja, 1997). Generally, the conflict has been considered an obstacle to progress, political stability, economic prosperity and overall socio-economic development of any society because of its destructive impact. This therefore means that conflict must be timely averted or managed properly as failure to do so will reflect a determined action or struggle over a goal, which may be overt or subtle; manifest or imaginary.

While it is not easy to classify conflicts in a categorical way, not all conflicts in Nigeria are of the same kind as can be seen from dimensions of ethnicity, religion, politics and economy, etc. In ethnic conflict, Nigeria is a country of many nations with hundreds of tribes and ethnic groupings. The relationships between for instance political parties in underdeveloped nations like Nigeria are

likely to be more conflictual than those in advanced polities (Tyoden, 2016). Given the social differences in Nigeria, the quest for power mostly depends on the existing nature of the relationship between these sectoral groups. It is therefore no wonder that the visibility and relevance of the Afenifere, the Ohaneze N'digbo, the Arewa Consultative Forum, the Southern Leaders Forum, and the Ijaw National Congress etc- each is articulating its own agenda for the ethnic groups they belong instead of the overall development of the country (Abbas, 2016).

Lending credence, Jega (2002) earlier assert that the major aspect of the most ethnic conflict in Nigeria is the contesting hegemonic power used in making members react negatively in given situation. With regards to political conflicts, since the amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914, most incidents of political conflicts have been associated with appointments, national population census, resource allocation and electoral processes leading to election rigging, vote buying, corruption, the use of political thugs and other electoral malpractices as well as unfair sharing of political gains. In the electoral process, according to Abbas (2013) from 1999 to date political violence has continued to assume an alarming dimension, including assassinations and abductions, inter and intra party conflicts, religious intolerance which created suspicion and acrimony leading to many communal and sectarian violence.

As Onuoha (2003) further argues, those interested in retaining power or winning at all costs, and especially actors who were in control of the instrument of the state simply "fixed" the result of the elections they desired to win leading to protests. The reasons for such do or die politics is not farfetched from the fact, since the state is the major means of capital accumulation in Nigeria and considering the prevalence and ubiquity of poverty and dependence in the country, the struggle for the control of the state and its resources, take on a life-and-death struggle. Simply put, in Nigeria access to political power is seen as access to economic power.

Economically, looking at the Nigerian society and its environment, the quest for control and distribution of economic resources is majorly the basis for many conflicts among the citizenry with the relationship between parties taking cues from this basic consideration. It is in this similar view that liberal structural theorists such as Galtung see conflict as a phenomenon that is built in human societies according to how they are structured and organised. That is to say conflict emanates as a result of deep-rooted structural dysfunction which looks in to problems such as the inequality in the distribution of income, endemic corruption, injustice, poverty, illiteracy, high unemployment rate, hunger, disease, inflation, exploitation and tax havens on citizens, high rates of crimes, overpopulation and general economic underdevelopment. Galtung (2011) argues that whenever economic and political discrimination and lack of tolerance in plural societies are embedded in human relationships, conflicts are bound to occur higher than the societies where opposite socio economic relationships are established. All political economist there by start by asking a common but a general question as to what are the reasons for poverty, hunger and the general underdevelopment of Nigeria despite all its abundant natural and human endowments? As it can be observed, these system's dysfunctions involve deliberate policies and structures that cause human suffering and death which are quite avoidable if good governance exists in the society.

Concept of violence and violent extremism

While conflict in most societies, remains inevitable, it is the armed conflict that leads to violence. According to Gambo and Mohammed (2007) violence is a state of tension which exists when one party

perceives its goals, needs, desires or expectations are being blocked by the other party. Violence in other words means any act of aggression and abuse which causes injury or harm to person, property and animals. Violence in recent years is on the increase in Nigeria from the Niger Delta militancy in the south to the ethno religious conflicts and later the Boko Haram insurgency in the north. People tend to cause trouble when their interest is jeopardised, thereby causing unnecessary tension with the price of these conflicts been paid by those least responsible such as the youths, women and children.

Since violence causes injury or harm to person, property and animals, it is usually destructive in behaviors and actions which can be divided into two forms as either random or coordinated. Random violence implies unpremeditated or small scale violence while coordinated violence refers to violence that is carried out by sanctioned or unsanctioned violent groups such as war with direct (overt) violence, e.g. direct attack and massacre. The UN General Assembly (2015) has identified certain recurrent drivers, which are common among a wide variety of countries and regions leading to radicalization and violent extremism. These include: lack of socio-economic opportunities; high rate of youth unemployment; extreme poverty; gross inequality; marginalization in politics, governance, administration, economy, culture and religion; poor governance associated with cases of corruption, impunity, violations of human; abuse of rule of law; unresolved conflicts; and radicalization and recruitment in prisons. Although poverty cannot be said to have a direct causal relationship to terrorism, the impact of extremist violence has been borne most heavily by the citizens of poorer countries, where there are considerable youth bulges which often acts as a challenge multiplier (Kessels & Nemr, 2016).

Most worrisome, as extremist violence continued, the state prioritizes security measures thereby leading to diversion of major resources away from investments in socio-economic development. Generally, the socio-economic implications and consequences of violent extremism whether it is the case of BH or others similar to it, violent extremism leads to different forms and types of terrorism (social, political, economic, religious, environmental and cultural) with numbers of implications beyond immediate costs of security responses and the management of Internally Displaced Persons or refugees (Kessels & Nemr, 2016). The consequences of violent extremism therefore:

- a. Disrupts peace, law and order
- b. Disrupts economic activities and revenue generation
- c. Damage infrastructure and social amenities
- d. Reduce available land for agriculture and livestock rearing
- e. Threaten natural resources and ecosystem
- f. Scare away investors and development partners

In the last decade for instance, armed conflict had assumed an unimaginable dimension with a profound threat to peace and human existence (Wessells, 2016). The evidence of armed conflict and its negative consequences in Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Pakistan, Mexico, Colombia, Somalia, South Sudan, and Nigeria are nothing but a human catastrophe. The interconnection between armed conflict and terrorism are also evident in Syria spearheaded by ISIS (Wessells, 2016) and Boko Haram (BH) in Nigeria.

Furthermore, various armed groups have continued to undermine Nigeria's security as evidenced in the activities of Niger Delta militants, and cattle rustlers where youth joined the armed group that has become a serious national, regional, and international threat. The BH insurgency alone had claimed more than Twenty thousand lives so far. A special report of the United State Institute of Peace (2016)

indicated that BH draws its members from disaffected youth, unemployed high school and university grads, and destitute children (Onuoha, 2016). Their terrorist activities have kicked citizens out of their homes and destroyed properties and communities worth billions of Dollars.

These series of attacks have further compounded the already existing socio-economic development challenges particularly in the North Eastern region of the country. The United State Institute of Peace (2016) report further suggested that poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, weak family structures, among others make or contribute to youth being vulnerable to radicalization (Onuoha, 2016). Unsurprisingly, unemployment and poverty considered serious socio-economic challenges that are not only intricately interconnected but glaringly evident in northern Nigeria where BH thrives. Similarly, wondering preachers thus capitalize on the existing situation by preaching an extreme version of religious teachings thereby conveying a narrative that government is weak and corrupt. It should however be noted that while Boko Haram insurgency remains at the center of violent extremism in Nigeria, several other armed groups have perpetrated similar or worse act than BH.

Over the years, there are reports of ethnic cleansing in Plateau, Benue, Taraba, and Nassarawa states. Due to certain ethnic stereotype, Fulani or Hausa people were on several occasion attacked and killed simply because of their tribe. While similar reprisal attacks were also recorded, in most cases, these armed groups motivated by politics or economy recruits and train youth for criminal activities such as killing, kidnapping, destruction of properties and suicide bombings.

Conceptualization of peace

Peace is regarded “as the absence of war, fear, conflict, anxiety, suffering and violence and about peaceful coexistence” (Francis, 2006; Igbuzor, 2011). Although this definition has captured elements of peace, it was criticised by scholars like Ibeanu (2006) for lacking the adequate concept of peace. To overcome this limitation Ibeanu (2006) thus defined peace as a “process

involving activities that are directly or indirectly linked to increasing development and reducing conflict, both within specific societies and in the wider international community”.

In this respect, peace therefore connotes the absence of violence or war, the presence of justice, equality and development; the existence of rule of law, respect for human life and dignity, and tolerance among and between people; maintenance of a balanced ecosphere and more importantly, having inner peace and wholeness. To add to this debate, Johan Galtung, a renowned Norwegian theorist provided three types of violence (direct, structural and cultural) to help understand the concept of peace across the globe. Galtung (2011) consider direct violence as the physical, emotional and psychological aggression caused by a direct attack through fighting or war thereby resulting in to deaths, destruction of property, and displacements of citizens among other consequences. He sees structural violence as caused by an unjust structure not to be equated with an act of God which involves structures that cause human suffering and death which are quite avoidable if good governance exists. In his view cultural violence occurs as a result of the assumptions that bind one to structural violence. For instance, one may be indifferent toward the plight of the poor which create discrimination, injustice and suffering thereby leading to the absence of peace in the society (Agi, 2019).

In addition, Galtung's positive and negative peace framework is the most widely used model by most scholars. While negative peace refers to the absence of direct violence, conflict and war at international, national, community and individual levels, positive peace refers to the absence of indirect and structural violence, inequality and injustice, unjust structures and policies and inner peace at individual levels. Due to its comprehensives, this conception becomes the most widely used by peace and conflict researchers. As earlier provided Ibeanu (2006) has attempted to provide an understanding of peace which centers on increasing sustainable development and reducing conflict, both within societies and in the wider international community. He further pointed out that despite the general knowledge of peace; there are variations its meaning especially through the lenses of philosophy, sociology and politics (Beland, 2021).

According to a philosopher, peace “is a natural, God-given state of human existence without the corruptive tendencies of man”. According to sociologists, peace refers to a condition of social harmony in which there are no social antagonisms among people or group in a given community. For the political scientists, peace is a political condition that makes justice possible in any given society thereby entailing political order. Similarly, cultures and civilization have different viewpoints of peace. For instance, in a society that is constantly perpetuated with violence and armed conflict, it will view peace as the absence of war and violence. In a political community governed by unjust policies, it may interpret peace with the presence of freedom and justice. In a society that is materially deprived or in poverty situation, it may perceive peace as equality, development and have the basic needs of life. From whichever perspective, renowned scholars, practitioners and activist of peace have attributed different related meanings of peace into six:

1. Peace is the absence of war
2. Peace is the absence of direct violence
3. Peace is the absence of injustice
4. Peace is the absence of fear
5. Peace is the presence of respect and
6. Peace is the presence of tolerance

Although several conceptions and models of peace have been advanced in which peace research might prosper (Ibeanu, 2006; Francis, 2006; Galtung, 2011; Igbuzor, 2011), it should further be understood that peace is a natural social condition, and war is not. For peace scholars, students and advocates, such information is good enough for a rational group of decision makers to avoid conflict, violence or war. This is because, violence is considered morally sinful, and therefore non-violence which is virtuous should be cultivated in the society as advanced by a variety of religious traditions. Indeed, its importance lies in the fact that:

- a) Peace is a sine qua non to development.
- b) It is being eroded by perennial conflicts.
- c) Their occurrence pervades virtually all spheres of the national life.
- d) The effects of the conflicts are many and multi-dimensional.
- e) Insecurity of lives and properties is one of the consequences of conflicts.

Methodology

Research Design refers to the structure of an enquiry: it is a logical matter rather than logistical. Research design is a term used to describe a number of decision which need to be taken regarding the collection of data before other data are been collected for a particular

study. In this paper, a combination of *historical and descriptive methods* of research will be used as research designs. It is of great importance to identify the method and procedure adopted in describing transnational dimensions to Conflict Prevention and Sustainable Peace in North East Nigeria, since it gives the reader background information on how to evaluate the findings and conclusion. Historically, the article examined writings in the past concerning security sector reforms and security in the North East. Descriptively, the paper provided answers to the what, why, when, where and how of the subject under review.

Besides the research design, this study adopts the qualitative methods of data collection and analysis and therefore data was collated primarily from secondary sources and analysis was based on the content analysis

Results and Discussion

Conflict Prevention and sustainable peace in North East Nigeria

As humanitarian situations in the North Eastern region deteriorates due to displacement and damages to infrastructure while the conflict rages, it produced an adverse effect on the productive sector of the economy like the agricultural production which is tied to food security and by extension it may affect the nutritional requirement of the population. As observed from the study, the cluster on food security in the four year plan is close to 2 billion US Dollars followed by nutrition which perhaps have a correlation to food production. As stated earlier in the background of the paper, the North Eastern region has about 1,794,400 ha under cultivation according to National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2018).

Unfortunately, a sizeable portion of this arable land could not be cultivated due largely to displacement of many villages and towns especially in the most affected states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe by Boko Haram insurgency. Health, water and sanitation, if properly transformed as peace-building efforts in the North East, it will go a long way in addressing humanitarian situations, thereby encouraging productive ventures going by the popular adage that 'a healthy nation is a wealthy nation'. Other areas as it appears on the table in the cluster of physical protection, early recovery and livelihood are equally having a direct bearing to peace-building in the North East (Eze, 2014).

Be that as it may, been that the cluster needs above is an appeal plan for a period of four years from 2017, what would be required is the commitment to adhere to it and by extension successfully implement it as at when due. Moreover, the passage of the North East development

Commission (NEDC) bill and its subsequent signing into law, would serve as albatross to the plight of the humanitarian needs of the people especially the internally displaced (FGN 2015). The NEDC would help greatly in long term planning in reconstruction, resettlement, rehabilitation and reintegration. As the Boko Haram insurgency over time attracted the attention of the international community, many collaborative efforts internationally and assistance in military hardware and funds have been on for some time.

It is clearly observed that, the levels of international humanitarian assistance over the years have steadily rise from less than 200 million in 2014 to well over 1 trillion US Dollars by appeal in the preceding year 2017, even though the funded intervention is a little above 800 million US Dollars. Away from the humanitarian perspective, it has been observed that, the Nigerian government and its armed forces have since 2010 tried to put a stop to the operation and sustained attacks of the Boko Haram group, but has not been

able to do so despite arrests and killings of many of the Boko Haram fighters in different encounters (Kingma, 2000). Though substantially, the spate of attacks have been reduced to minimal especially after the 2015 general elections. While the preceding government has tried to address the challenges by increasing the defense budget from 100 billion in 2010 to 927 billion in 2011 and 1 trillion in 2012, 2013 and 2014 respectively (Gamawa 2017), yet, it was incapacitated in the requisite strategy to defeat the insurgents.

By this graphic evidence, as depicted above, it is worthy of note that peace is priceless, but once shattered regaining it requires huge investment in both human and material components of intervention. It also clearly shows level of commitment from both the government and the international community in addressing the plight of the people. As argued by former UN Secretary General Kofi in his Agenda for Development report, 2004, he posits that, the requisite for peace-building effort is pegged on a sustained cooperative work on the underlying economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems (Annan 2004). Going by this context advanced by Annan, sum up the holistic and pragmatic approach to peace-building which invariably should be pegged on both short-term and long-term processes (Gilbert, 2014).

Conflict Resolution strategies towards sustainable peace in North East Nigeria

This includes a variety of approaches aimed at terminating conflicts through the constructive solving of problems, distinct from management or transformation. By conflict resolution, the deeply rooted sources of conflict are expected to be addressed and resolved and the behaviour is no longer violent, nor are attitudes hostile any longer, while the structure of the conflict has been changed (Ramsbotham et al, 2016). Furthermore, at this level, the outcomes of the resolution are to be mutually acceptable by parties concerned for sustained peace. However, there are differences in the approach to conflict resolution depending on the culture and civilisation of the people and their society. For instance, the African Traditional Dispute Resolution (ATDR) differs from the Western Alternative Dispute Resolution (WADR) (Lederach, 1999).

Although in Africa, the approaches differ from one culture to another most communities have traditional leaders known as Chiefs or Emirs and have some traditional powers conferred on them to solve disputes. On the other hand, the WADR promote the use of non-violent means to the conflict including grass root community based activities through good governance, communication collaboration, negotiation, and mediation etc. It can be said that in principle conflict resolution connotes a sense of finality, where the parties are mutually satisfied with the outcome of a settlement and the conflict is resolved in a true sense. There are also other ways to resolve conflicts such as surrendering, running away, overpowering the opponent with violent acts, filing a lawsuit, etc. Beyond ones explained above, the current movement toward Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), sometimes referred to simply as conflict resolution, grew out of the belief that there are better options to resolve conflict than using violence or going to court. Over the years, the terms ADR and conflict resolution are used somewhat interchangeably and refer to a wide range of processes that encourage nonviolent dispute resolution outside of the traditional court system.

The idea is about the search for an application of "non- conventional" peaceful methods of settling the dispute and solving conflict situation using the least expensive methods and that satisfies both parties as well as ways to preserve and protect the relationship after settlement have been reached. In most societies, this approach

usually promotes peaceful coexistence after solving the conflict. Beyond the ATDR, WADR, ADR as earlier explained, there are other forms or approaches to conflict resolution the world over. This may include negotiation which is a discussion among two or more people with the goal of reaching an agreement.

It may also involve mediation seen as a voluntary and confidential process in which a neutral third-party facilitator helps people discuss difficult issues and negotiate an agreement. Basic steps in this process include gathering information, framing the issues, developing options, negotiating, and formalizing agreements. The parties in mediation create their own solutions and the mediator does not have any decision-making power over the outcome (Nwala, 2013).

Arbitration is also another option which is a process in which a third-party neutral, after reviewing evidence and listening to arguments from both sides, issues a decision to settle the case. Arbitration is often used in commercial and labor/management disputes.

A hybrid that combines as explained earlier is Mediation-Arbitration. In this case, prior to the session, the disputing parties agree to try mediation first, but give the neutral third party the authority to make a decision if mediation is not successful (Tikhon, 2011).. Also of relevance is Early Neutral Evaluation which involves using a court-appointed attorney to review a case before it goes to trial. The attorney reviews the merits of the case and encourages the parties involved in the case to attempt resolution. If there is no final resolution, the attorney then informs the disputants about how to proceed with litigation and gives an opinion on the likely outcome if the case goes to trial. Another approach is the Community Conferencing which is a form of structured conversation involving members of a community (offenders, victims, family, friends, etc) affected by a dispute or a crime. Using a script, the facilitator invites people to express how they were affected and how they wish to address the harm inflicted. Another one is the Collaborative Law which is a process for solving disputes in which the attorneys commit to reaching a settlement without using litigation (Yakohene, 2015). Also important is Negotiated Rulemaking considered as a collaborative process in which government agencies seek input from a variety of stakeholders before issuing a new rule. Finally, Peer Mediation involves young people act as mediators to help resolve disputes among their peers. In most cases, the student mediators are trained and supervised by a teacher or other adult.

Effective Conflict Management in the attainment of socio-economic development in the North East

According to Egbue, Ngozi, et al. (2015) conflict management entail the process of reducing the destructive capacity of conflict through a number of measures and approaches by engaging with the parties involved in that conflict. In most cases, conflict management is often used synonymously with “conflict regulation” which covers issues of handling conflicts at different stages. This also includes efforts made to prevent conflict through proactive measures thereby limiting, containing and litigating conflict. The usage of the term “conflict management” indicates the reality that conflict is inevitable. As it remains so, what practitioners needs do is to therefore regulate and manage it. In either case, management of conflict uses peaceful or non-violent methods which are available at individual, family, group, community and even international levels divided in to two broad categories: proactive or reactive methods. The proactive methods are aimed at preventing the occurrence of conflict in the first place by taking proactive measures such as: instilling trust between or among people/communities, bridging communication gap, good governance by government delivering its responsibilities

of making life more meaningful; inter party collaborations as well as promoting internal democracy within party structures (Collier, 1994).

The reactive method becomes necessary when the conflict cannot be managed locally because it has already turned violent. Many scholars have argued that to address an already violent situation, it requires third party interventions like mediation, conciliation, arbitration and litigation. However, there is agreement among scholars and practitioners that there are five basic steps in managing conflicts (Ball, 2005).

First, conflict analysis involves the initial examination of the nature of the conflict, its causes and its consequences. Second, the conflict management strategy should be determined through the identification and selection of the appropriate approach, method and strategy for the conflict management. Third, pre-negotiation that may involve the actions taken or activities carried out prior to negotiation by identifying the victims of the conflict, inviting the conflicting parties for negotiation. Fourth, a negotiation that involves actions taken for the implementation of the chosen conflict management strategy. This includes setting up a committee comprising of the delegates of the conflicting parties and other stakeholders to negotiate on how to resolve such conflict to make reasonable conclusions and recommendations and then give a report. Fifth, post-negotiation which has to do with the actions or activities carried out after the negotiation. This includes the presentation of reports of the negotiation and the implementation of the recommendations made in the reports (Adamu, 2004).

Conclusion

For over a decade of a fierce battle between the Nigerian army and the Boko Haram sect, it has been difficult for the Nigerian military to defeat the Boko Haram insurgency even with the logistical support coming from the neighbouring countries (Mbombo, 2015) and the physical support of the Chadian Soldiers. The effectiveness of the military campaign against the Boko Haram sect between 2015-2017 has improved drastically and the Nigerian Government managed to retake territories from Boko Haram that were captured by the sect, forcing the group to retreat to more marginal areas, though; the Nigerian Military has been able to struggle to effectively maintain and hold unto the retaken (recaptured) territories. The continued attacks by the sect have proven against the words of the former chief of Army staff “LT. Gen. Yusuf Buratai” that the sect had been tactically defeated. The Boko Haram sect has been the deadliest in the history of Nigeria and particularly the north. The way of its operations and attack, the highly sophisticated nature of the group and the doggedness of the group members to champion the activities of the group explains the group's resilience and ruthlessness.

In conclusion therefore, this paper has provided statistical evidence, though not exhaustive with regards to peace-building efforts in the North East as pragmatic solution in post-conflict situations. In addition, the paper appreciate the fact that there were certain measures undertaken by both the government in synergy with the international community through support funding to squarely address the socio-economic and humanitarian challenges of the worst affected areas. This is as obtained from the international humanitarian appealed and funded between 2014 and 2017.

Similarly, it is also observed that, the government has both long-term and short-term plan in addressing the menace of insecurity in the North East and this is demonstrated by the drafting and subsequent passage of the North East Development Commission

(NEDC), though the paper has not interrogate the nitty-gritty of the commission in terms of its content.

Recommendations

From the above, the paper recommends that;

- a. There is need for increase budgeting and tracking its spending so as to ensure efficient fund utilization in addressing human security and the plight of the vulnerable in NE Nigeria
- b. There should be effective and proper engagement of Community Based Organisations, traditional and religious leaders as critical stakeholders in the peace-building process
- c. Government should facilitate post-conflict trauma rehabilitation of the survivors and subsequent reintegration
- d. Government should expedite action on reconstruction and rehabilitations of critical infrastructure like schools and health facilities

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