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Abstract- In the current situation within the strategic location of the Kanuri people. The issue of conflict has brought a distressing stage to the masses and has rendered people invariant. I am thereby making it commendable to realize the importance of Conflict resolution in the setting and settling of peace within the localities. This necessitates the need for States and Governments too, as a matter of policy, enact laws to address the issue. On the other hand, where traditional values prevail, cultural mechanisms become the norms in conflict resolution mechanisms. In most African societies, culture takes precedence in every sphere of human life, including conflict resolution.

Keywords: *conflict, resolu tion, tradition, violence.*

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Impact of Conflict Resolution Measures to the Kanuri Community. A Study of Borno State

Yagana Bulama Mohammed [α] & Fiama Jasper Mshelia [σ]

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I. Introduction

The quest for Peace and Security include all activities, within the specific framework of conflict resolution mechanism, which consciously targets the attitudes and behavior of parties to a conflict as well as community peace and stability with the primary or secondary goal of increasing security, preventing violence or contributing to its resolution. Here, there are three types of activities: namely promoting dialogue, promoting security, and promoting communal harmony. The methods of performing conflict resolution mechanisms in the traditional African societies are principal; mediation, adjudication, reconciliation, arbitration, and negotiation (Olaoba, 2005).

According to SIDA (2006), the promotion of peace and security includes activities carried out at any stage of a conflict, that is, submerged tension, rising tension, violent conflict, or post-conflict. It includes conflict prevention, conflict resolution mechanism, and peace-building activities.

In the traditional societies, mediation was used as a tool for preserving cultural norms and values (Olaoba, 2005). It prevented disputes from festering, maintained peace, and preserved traditional values. The court system is introduced with the advent of colonialism and urbanization. Urbanization relegated mediation to the background though a customary dispute resolution mechanism is still recognized in the Nigerian Legal System.

While I acknowledge the inevitability of conflicts, it is, however, sad to note that they may escalate to full-fledged wars. These necessitate the need for States and Governments too, as a matter of policy, enact laws to address the issue. On the other hand, where traditional values prevail, cultural mechanisms become the norms in conflict resolution mechanisms. In most African societies, culture takes precedence in every sphere of human life, including conflict resolution.

Every society, especially in Africa, has its traditional conflict resolution mechanism. Nigeria, with its rich cultural heritage, has its traditional ways of resolving conflicts (examples Kanuri, Shuwa, Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, etc,). Nigeria has no doubt it has its share of conflict since the pre-colonial days, and in recent times, it is grappling with conflict from domestic to more sophisticated armed conflict. More pronounced is the insurgency in the Northeast. It is tenable that the locale, especially in Borno, constitutes a large number of the insurgents. There are also the obvious domestic conflicts that has led to broken homes, violence against spouses and children, which hurts society, especially in respect of peaceful coexistence but with that the Kanuri community is sustained. Major ethnic group in Borno that is not immune to the conflict in their various forms in the Northeast and Borno state is the Kanuri. Kanuri is endowed culturally and, in centuries has maintained the cultural practices transmitted from one generation to another.

Overtime, Africa and Africans have culturally developed diverse mechanisms of conflict resolution mechanism at local community levels. Such traditional elements of conflict prevention and resolution have been neglected or, in extreme cases, abandoned by the people. These largely own the advent of Western culture and values during and after colonial adventurism. Nigeria has had her share of the conflict in the last decade, this time violent extremism in the North East, among others, particularly in Borno State.

Given the above scenario, States, local councils, and smaller communities, in most cases, rely heavily on police action and direct military intervention and protection where and when there is violent conflict; other equally important traditional remedies are applied. This study therefore, sets to look at the efficiency of such mechanisms.

The study of conflict in Africa has not always been mindful of the need to consider the interaction of local and international factors in the evolution of conflicts between African Nations. African conflict is not susceptible to prediction, although it will be explained. Overt manifestations of conflict are seldom unremitting, even in relation to rival cultures (Robert, 1981, p. 3).

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Conflict is a particular relationship between states or rival factions which implies subjective hostilities or tension manifested in subversive economic or military hostilities (Quincy, 1971).

Conflict can be describe as a condition in which there an identifiable group of human beings whether tribal, ethnic, linguistic, religious, socio-political, economic, cultural or otherwise are in conscious opposition to one or more other identifiable groups because these groups are pursuing what to be incompatible goals (Ibid). More importantly, conflict arises from the interaction of individuals who have partly, incompatible ends in which the ability of one actor to gain his ends, depends on important degree on the choice or decisions that other parties will take. A conflict could be violent on uncontrollable dominant, or recessive, resolvable or insolvable under various sets or circumstances (Omotosho, p.2). A.A. Mohammed argues that Conflicts are inevitable wherever severe resources are unequally distribute among competitors and inequity is reflected in the cultural and political relationships between groups. With regards to various issues in dealing with conflict, it is important to bear in mind not just overt, physical violence, but also the sometimes subtly disguised forms of structural and cultural violence (Adam, 2000, p.13). Conflict management, in general and conflict resolution mechanism, in particular, are almost entirely determined by our understanding of the composition of a conflict and not only by symptoms (Kotze, 2000, pp.77-86).

Albert's position on conflict was that there is nothing wrong with conflict, it is a critical mechanism by which goals and aspirations of individuals and groups are articulated; it is a channel for a definition of creative solutions to human problems, and a means creative solutions to problems and a means to the development of a collective identity (Albert, 2001, p.3).

II. Importance of Traditional Conflict Resolution Mechanism

Conflict resolution mechanism provides an opportunity to interact with the parties concerned, with the hope of at least reducing the scope, intensity, and effects of conflicts. During formal and informal meetings, conflict resolution mechanism exercises permit a reassessment of views and claims as a basis for finding options to crisis and divergent points of view. Those who organize conflict resolution mechanism exercises or meetings usually constitute the third party in a triangular arrangement and consist of traditional rulers (Shehu, etc,).

Conflict resolution mechanisms in plural societies can be quite complex, principally because of the determinant effects of culture and language symbolism. According to Airuch and Black (Onigun & Albert, 2001, p.16), —it is quite dangerous to relegate culture to the background in conflict resolution mechanism. Although culture is a marker of social differences, it should be regarded as an obstacle to conflict resolution mechanisms in multi-ethnic/multi-cultural societies.

The conflict resolution mechanism performs a healing function in African societies. It provides the opportunity for the examinations of an alternative decision to resolve differences. Failure to resolve conflict over access to commonly valued scarce resources, and over divergent perceptions of socio-political situations, has the high potential of degenerating into genocide or fratricide as it occurred among Kanuri-Shuwa-Arab Rabi in Kanuri land and Boko Haram in Northern part of Nigeria and Tiv-Jukun of Nigeria, and the Hutu-Tutsi of Burundi and Rwanda (Punier, 1995).

Conflict resolution mechanism promotes consensus-building, social bridge reconstructions, and the re-enactment of order in society. Conflicts hardly break up societies (Otite, 2001, p. 9). For conflict resolution mechanism, the obvious implication is to view conflicts as non-isolated events in their social context. Such a perspective is not narrowly focus on conflict and its resolution. It takes into account the cultural setting and the social context. It looks at the history of preceding events, which have led to the conflict concerned. And while concentrating on the conflict itself and the process of resolving it, it takes possible implications for the future seriously. A wide look is taken not into one which includes the disputing parties; possible consequences for others in their families and social network are also put into consideration. Potential effects on relationships and interests are envisage.

Cross-examination was a mechanism employed in the process of conflict resolution mechanism in traditional African society. It was a means of weighting evidence through cross-checking and corroborating of the facts of the conflict (Olaoba, 2000, pp. 6-8). In the Kanuri maxim, a good sense of justice is associated with the cross-examination which is expressed as follows:

Agbejoenikan da, agbaosika -wicked and evil is he whose judgment is base on the evidence of one party to a case)

Consequently, in traditional African societies, particularly, Kanuri land, in conflict resolution mechanism undue favor to the disputants was discouraged.

In traditional African Society, extra-judicial methods are employed in the conflict resolution mechanisms. These took the form of ordeals and the invocation of supernatural forces to expose all sides to the conflict. Olaoba has shown quite clearly that oath-taking, which was one of the extra-judicial methods, usually assisted the judge or adjudicators in locating areas of weaknesses in the conflict.

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In the traditional judiciary system in Kanuri land, fines of damages are not usually awarded by the mediators in civil cases. The utmost aim is to restore peace by settling disputes amicably. In other words, restoration of harmony is what is paramount in the traditional judicial system. Sometimes, however, mediator's award simple fines as an intervention butit failed. The autonomous traditional ruler (Shehu) and his cabinet also intervened. The land conflict, before the disastrous war had passed through the court's strategy, political, bureaucratic, and the military without solution and peace in sight before the traditional strategy was applied (Nwolise, 2005, pp.159-161).

III. Conclusion

The Kanuri experience different dimensions of conflict in their interactions with their communities. The practice of having peace has remained a source of conflict between them and their neighbours. Interestingly, too, they appreciate their circumstances and have evolved numerous traditional mechanisms to manage and resolve the various conflicts that occur in their community.

Nongu, a unique characteristic of the Kanuri, is a very important and effective instrument of managing and resolving conflicts at the intra-group and inter-group levels. Other methods include avoidance/withdrawal, mediation, sanctioning, oath-taking, and, in extreme cases, violent raids. These methods have not remained static. Dynamic modern political, social, and economic developments have transformed them to withstand the changes experienced within the Kanuri society. The procedures have undoubtedly remained useful to them.

It is at this moment I will suggested that further researches be undertaken into the nature of conflicts and their resolution patterns in the Kanuri community not only in Borno but wherever they are. A clear understanding of the concept of Nongu will assist leaders and mediators in resolving conflicts that involve the Kanuri.

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