CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND INSECURITY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The security of lives and properties is very essential to the socio-economic well-being of any society in the world. This study ascertains the effects of conflict management strategies on insecurity in Nigeria. Secondary information sourced from newspapers, books, journals, and internet materials were used and qualitative content analytical techniques were used in addressing conflict management or insecurity issues. The findings of this study showed that insecurity has manifested in terms of killings by terrorists, banditry, and kidnappings, which have resulted into the occurrences of different armed groups, loss of lives and loss of professionals to other countries. Conflicts were due to resource-induced conflicts, inter-gang violence, insurgency, politically motivated conflicts, ethno-religious conflicts, youth restiveness, violent agitations for self-determination and civil protest. The conflict management strategies include strategic withdrawal, third party decision making, confrontation or force, negotiation or dialogue, and mediation. The conflict management strategies adopted in Nigeria are not effective in mitigating conflicts in the country. Yet, the hope for bringing the conflicts to a minimum level in the country lies in promoting the logic

and principles of good governance enthroned and eradicating corruption. To strengthen the conflict strategies in present-day Nigeria, good governance must be put in place to repair the entire system or institutions in the country to ensure a high level of security in the country.

INTRODUCTION

The security of lives and properties is very essential to the socio-economic well-being of any society in the world (Charas, 2015). Every economy strives to protect and deepen its core values, aimed at enabling people to live in free and secure environments, according to their shared common beliefs by preserving their national interest, identity, and sovereignty, which result in a state of national security (Naziru, 2020). Concisely, security issue is a policy mantra for every country in the world. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2023), at the end of 2022, the number of people forcibly displaced by persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations, and events seriously disturbing public order grew by 21% (108.4 million), and over 90% of the populations of developing countries worldwide remained forcibly displaced.

Nigeria, as a developing country, has faced several security crises ever since independence, mostly by political, social, and religious factors, and these actually laid the foundation for the economic depression, which is further exacerbated by an incessant spate of insecurity such as banditry, terrorism, armed robbery, militancy, kidnapping, ethno-religious violence, farmer-herder's conflicts, *et cetera*, with an uncontrollable effect (Okoli and Orinya, 2013). Prior to this time, northern Nigeria was only affected by social conflicts and armed violence, but presently, the ordeal has advanced into violent Islamic insurgency, terrorism, armed banditry, kidnapping for ransom, cattle rustling, *et cetera*. Recently, the World Bank declared that Nigeria is ranked 150 out of 157 countries in the 2020 Human Capital Index, indicating that the country needs immediate resuscitation (The Punch, 2022a).

Moreover, some embassies gave security notices and instructed the immediate evacuation of their staff from Nigeria due largely to the heightened risk of terrorist attacks in Nigeria. All these are quite indicative of serious security problems. The failure of Nigerian government to elicit capacity and ability vis-à-vis its core task has become very glaring from all indications (Oliver and Agnes, 2021). Good governance, providing a safe and secure environment for human capital development and businesses, and improving access to social and economic services may not completely get rid of security problems in any society, but they

will reduce their likely effects on the economy by keeping the problems to a manageable level while reducing poverty, bringing in more money, and promoting long-term growth for everyone. All these will never materialize without exhibiting some level of significant political will required to deal with Nigeria's incessant security challenges in order to save the beleaguered nation from a continuous fall (The Punch, 2022a).

The rise of insecurity is on the verge of being Nigeria's heritage, as no single day goes by without acts of insecurity. Nigeria currently appears to be grappling with security problems, and these cuts through its six regional regions, but particularly in the North-East, North Central, and South-South regions. Residents in these regions now sleep with one eye open, while the government that is normally entrusted with the security of lives and properties appears confused and unable to do so (Emmanuel and Emily, 2019). The main focus of the ruling administration is to critically address the issues of security as quickly as possible, but with adequate assistance for the military and other departments of the security forces and the required political will, the tension, which has saturated the Nigerian socio-political and economic space for quite some time now, may gradually ease off, thereby setting the country up as an attractive hub for both local and foreign investors and ensuring it is adequately maintained within and beyond their borders (Oliver and Agnes, 2021).

Despite government counter-terrorism expenditures and efforts, insecurity proliferates in every part of the country. The prevalence of insecurity in Nigeria appears to be rising and fast evolving into an existential crisis that is shaking the foundation of its nationhood. Hence, the country suffers serious economic depression (The Punch, 2022a). Azad *et al.* (2018) also contributed that Nigeria is confronted today with a lot of insecurity issues such as disputes, conflicts, political crises, kidnapping, herdsmen/farmers clashes, insurgency, and militancy. This is a result of the current escalation of religious, ethnic, and cultural conflicts between and among different ethnic and religious groups in Nigeria, with a devastating impact and threat to the peace, unity, security, and co-existence of Nigeria. A nationwide trend towards sedentary lifestyles seems to be playing a part in such societal concerns as increased crime and juvenile delinquency. This, no doubt, contributes immensely to the state of insecurity and ethno-religious conflicts bedevilling the country.

The government has made concerted efforts to address conflict situations, especially those that are religious and ethnic in nature. However, Nigerians are still experiencing conflict-related problems, despite the fact that the government is making efforts at conflict management and resolution (Adewuyi *et al.,* 2021). This persisting insecurity calls for interventions in order to ensure the continued growth and development of the country and also prevent its possible disintegration. It is a known fact that protection of lives and properties against local and

international dangers is essential for functioning markets and the incentives to invest and innovate. Limited studies have been carried out on this issue; consequently, this study aimed at examining the burning issues of insecurity and the effects of conflict management strategies adopted in Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the conduct of this study:

i.   What are the manifestations of insecurity in Nigeria?
ii.   What factors influence conflicts in Nigeria?
iii. What conflict management strategies have been adopted in Nigeria?
iv.   Are the conflict management strategies for insecurity adopted in Nigeria effective?

Objectives of the study

The objective of this study is to ascertain the effects of conflict management strategies on insecurity in Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

i.   Identify the manifestations of insecurity in Nigeria
ii.   Explore the factors influencing conflicts in Nigeria
iii. Examine the conflict management strategies adopted in Nigeria
iv.   Ascertain the effectiveness of the conflict management strategies adopted in Nigeria

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical framework

The theoretical frameworks that are relevant and appropriate to this study are as follows:

Structural conflict theory

Karl Marx introduced structural conflict theory in the 19th century. The theory holds that it is inherent that different groups in a society are competing for scarce resources and power, which gives rise to the powerful perpetrating the vulnerable. The main argument of structural conflict theory is that conflict is built into the particular ways societies are structured and organized (Johnkennedy and Christopher, 2014). The structural basis of conflict is a theory that attempts to explain conflict as a problem that arises when groups must compete for scarce resources. The emphasis of this theory is based on how the competing interests of groups tie conflicts directly into social, economic, and political organizations (Adewuyi *et al.,* 2021). As a result, when a group (class) monopolizes social, political, and cultural processes, they create the circumstances that lead people to approach conflict in an adversarial manner. So, the

structural conflict theory is useful for explaining different kinds of conflict in Nigeria and for pointing out issues like poverty, corruption, ethno-religious upheavals, political instability, boundary disputes, and bad leadership, just to name a few (Charas, 2015). These are all issues that contribute to and cause conflicts.

The Social Control Model

Travis Hirschi developed the control model in 1969. The theory proposed that there are four elements of bonding within society that prevent people from violating the law and deviant actions. The bonding elements include; attachment, commitment, involvement, and beliefs. This theory emphasizes how these bonds within the society discourage involvement in criminal activities and behaviours that deviated from normal, but it does not consider inconsistencies and situations where people act in deviant ways despite the bonds.

The Shared Homeland Model

This model by Mohamed Rabie was developed to deal with the Arab-Israeli conflict. A significant point is that it acknowledges the impact of nationalism and ethnicity in politics. Therefore, it advocates for the disassociation of groups that cannot or will not peacefully exist side-by-side under one political system. Once again, this model could not be applied to Nigeria, as over 200 ethnic groups have been sharing the Nigerian territory for centuries. Therefore, there are no distinct boundaries to be drawn between them. Attempts to separate them can lead to devastating consequences not only in Nigeria but also in Africa at large. Furthermore, it will be against the explicit international understanding of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) that colonial borders be honoured, an understanding aimed at keeping Pandora's Box closed.

The Consociational Model

The consociational model was developed based on the Netherlands' political experience by Arend Lijphart in the 17th century. It sees ethnic groups as partners who are interested in overcoming their differences to make the system work. As it is a power-sharing model, it views cultural groups as willing to negotiate and make compromises. This model is the only one that can be applied to Nigeria, as it encourages grand coalition, mutual veto, proportionality, and segmental autonomy (Lijphart and Crepaz, 1991). The model presupposes not only the existence of legitimate leadership to represent each group but also that these leaders engage in intergroup negotiations because they are skilled at averting the risk of intergroup conflict through negotiation (Rabie, 1994).

Conceptual Framework

This study examined the relationship between conflicts, conflict management strategies, and insecurity in Nigeria. Inter-gang violence, insurgency, ethno-religious factors, and other factors frequently cause conflicts, which over time lead to insecurity. Effective conflict management strategies such as strategic withdrawal, confrontation, third-party decision-making, negotiation, and mediation are expected to reduce the incidence of conflicts and curb insecurity, but some hindrances, such as porous borders, weak security systems, bad leadership, and corruption, to mention but a few, make the expectations unfeasible.

The concept of conflict

Conflicts can be defined as any form of disagreement between two or more individuals, groups, or organizations due to differences in interests, values, goals, and understanding (Mohd *et al.,* 2021). According to Malak *et al.* (2020), conflict is of three types; the traditional view, the human relations view, and the internationalist view. Traditionally, conflicts are harmful and avoidable, as they are viewed as negative and associated with agitation, destruction, irrationality, and violence. Based on the human relations view, conflict is unavoidable, not always harmful, and could result in a more innovative solution to a certain problem. Lastly, internationalists believe that conflict is inevitable and essential because the absence of conflicts for a long time may result in non-productivity. Hence, a minimum level of conflict is required to enhance competency and creativity. Conflict may be intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, or inter-organizational.

The concept of conflict management

According to Osisioma (2014), conflict management involves a process of reducing the negative aspects of conflict while increasing the positive aspects of conflict. Conflict management aims at limiting and avoiding violence between two parties. It has three different stage; the pre-conflict stage, conflict stage, and post-conflict stage (Ogunbayo, 2019).

Pre-conflict stage: This is a proactive conflict management stage where peacemakers make an effort to resolve any kind of disagreement before it escalates into physical combat. This stage is very crucial, as it eradicates the cost of violent conflicts (Malak *et al.*, 2020).

Conflict stage: This is the time when third parties make an effort to mediate and end hostilities between actors involved in ongoing conflicts (Ogunbayo, 2019). The management of conflict at this stage is an indication that efforts were either not made to

settle the dispute at the pre-conflict stage or that such efforts were unsuccessful (Malak *et al.,* 2020).

Post-conflict stage: At this stage, efforts are made by a third party to ensure sustainable peace after the initial conflict has ended in order to avoid a reoccurrence of conflict in the future (Ogunbayo, 2019). This normally takes the form of post-conflict economic reconstruction and peace building. The main causes of the initial conflict are thoroughly interrogated, victims of such conflicts compensated, and perpetrators brought to justice to ensure lasting peace (Malak *et al.,* 2020).

The Concept of Insecurity

As opined by Ugo *et al.* (2019), the concept of insecurity is best understood by first presenting the concept of security. Insecurity is the opposite of security. Security can therefore be referred to as the existence of conditions within which people in a society can go about their normal daily activities without any threat to their lives or properties (Achumba *et al.,* 2013). Security is the protection of the lives and properties of members of the political community, and it is the fundamental reason for the existence of a state (Ikyase and Namo, 2018). Security can be further described as stability and continuity of livelihood, predictability of daily life, protection from crime, and freedom from psychological harm (safety or protection from emotional stress), which results from the assurance of knowing that one is wanted, accepted, loved, and protected in one's community or neighbourhood, and by people around. It focuses on the emotional and psychological sense of belonging to a social group that can offer protection (Nwanegbo *et al.,* 2017). Traditionally, there are three main approaches to security:

Realist approaches to security: According to the realist, the referent object of security is the state, and security means national security. Other goals are secondary. National security is synonymous with national interest, which emphasizes that the security policy subordinates any other interests to those of the nation (Wolfers, 1952).

Liberal approaches: It is believed here that a state's behaviour is determined primarily by domestic actors' power, preferences, decisions, and the nature of the state's domestic political system, not by the international system. Therefore, foreign policy is domestic preferences projected outward (Morgan, 2013).

Constructivist approaches: From a constructivist perspective, security is expected to be achieved only once the perception and fears of security threats, challenges, vulnerabilities, and risks are allayed and overcome (Brauch, 2011).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Study Area

The study area is Nigeria. It is located on the western coast of Africa, with a diverse geography and climate ranging from humid to arid equatorial. The Gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic Ocean borders Nigeria to the south, Benin to the west, Niger to the north, and Chad and Cameroon to the east. Nigeria is blessed with both human and natural resources, with a current live population of 225,093,271 as of Thursday, September 28, 2023, based on the Worldometer elaboration of the latest United Nations data (Worldometer, 2023). The population density in Nigeria is 246 per km^2 (636 people per mi^2). The total land area is 910,770 km^2 (351,650 sq mi). 53.9% of the population is urban (120,696,717 people in 2023) and the median age is 17.2 years (Worldometer, 2023). The topography of Nigeria is primarily plain in the north and interrupted by plateaus and hills in the south. Nigeria is an insecure nation with a persisting incidence of different forms of conflict in over 10 of the 36 states, including Borno, Yobe, Adamawa, Gombe, Kaduna, Katsina, Zamfara, Delta, Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Benue, Taraba, and Cross River states (The Punch, 2022b). The Nigeria Security Tracker (NST) and the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) data indicated that 21,641 deaths were recorded between 2021 and 2022 in the North eastern region, accounting for 28 percent of the fatalities. The Northwest accounted for 34 percent, the North Central accounted for 24 percent, and the Southeast accounted for 7 percent. Currently, in 2023, over 1,000 people have been abducted.

Source of Data

Secondary information sourced from newspapers, books, journals, and internet materials were used to discuss conflict management and insecurity issues in the study. Literature on the subject matter was also reviewed. This paper adopts the conflict trap theory, conflict resolution theory, and ethnic competition and ethnic trap structural conflict theory to explain the nature of conflicts and their management in contemporary Nigeria. The models were adopted as the theoretical framework due to their importance in the subject matter.

Methods of Data Analysis

The paper adopted qualitative content analytical techniques as adopted by Adewuyi *et al.* (2021), Alexandra *et al.* (2021), Francis (2021), and Naziru (2020) in addressing conflict management or insecurity issues. The techniques are considered suitable for this study as are very essential to analyze the relationship between concepts, provide a detailed and in-depth description of the content (Nayeem and Huma, 2017), validate existing theories, and provide robust descriptions of particular settings or phenomena (Joliffe and Cadima, 2016).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Insecurity in Nigeria

Different criminal organizations with strong allegiances are currently reshaping the security environment of the country, especially the northern part of the country, in order to keep terrorizing the locals, who are obviously defenceless and exposed because there is no apparent protection from the authorities (Iferenta and Akujuru, 2023). From the Northeast to the Northwest and to the Northcentral, different armed groups have demonstrated strong resistance to the intervention of the military and their operations. For instance, in 2021, the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect highlighted the fact that armed bandits killed over 2,600 civilians in Nigeria. Additionally, terrorists killed over 200 people in Zamfara State in early January 2022. Needless to say, many lives have been claimed due to the activities of violent non-state actors between January and now. Therefore, increased attacks by armed bandit groups, as well as continued attacks by Boko Haram and the Islamic State of West Africa, leave civilians at risk of mass atrocity crimes (The Punch, 2022a).

Generally, Nigeria's security situation has not been well managed, as almost every sector of its economy has suffered noticeable setbacks, especially in recent times. The agricultural sector perhaps has the largest share of the problems because many farmers have been forced to abandon their farmlands due to fear of being kidnapped (Onuoha and Oklie-Oseme, 2019). Moreover, the highways through which farm produce is conveyed or distributed to the various parts of the country are no longer considered safe due to several reported cases of kidnapped commuters. Also, cattle raiding is a great problem in most communities across many northern states, which has greatly affected the rise of food insecurity in the country (Adewuyi *et al.,* 2021).

More so, Nwagwu (2014) contributed that Nigeria continues to lose a good number of its professionals (especially in the health and academic professions) to foreign countries; highly skilled professionals are migrating to developed economies. According to the Nigerian Medical Association, no fewer than 10,000 doctors left Nigeria for the United Kingdom for greener pastures in the last seven years. Moreover, the upsurge in the number of visa applicants generally at the various embassies in the country calls for concern.

Factors influencing Conflicts in Nigeria

The diverse religions, ethnicities, and tribes have made conflict inevitable in Nigeria ever since independence, which has negatively impacted the country's population across the six geopolitical zones, as contributed by Abraham (2020). These conflicts, no doubt, portend harmful consequences for the country's cultural and social values, ethnic cohesion, social

integration, stability, and sustainable development (Abraham, 2020). Certain factors and conditions give rise to conflicts in Nigeria, some of which are:

i.   **Resource-induced conflicts**: Environmental resource scarcity-induced movements are the main culprits in these disputes. This has occurred in the form of farmer-herder clashes and the clamour for resource control by the oil-rich states. Causes of conflicts between the herders and the farmers are the blockage of water points leading to freshwater scarcity, burning of rangelands, cattle theft, inadequate animal health care and disease control, overgrazing of fallow lands, defecation on roads and streams by cattle, and ethnic stereotyping (Azad *et al.,* 2018).

ii. **Inter-gang violence**: Its impact on personal and communal security stares all in the face. The non-provision of alternative sources of livelihood could lead to gangsters among young men and women. This is because, over time, joblessness might serve as a push factor, pushing the dispossessed to join such criminal gangs, thereby worsening public peace and security circumstances (Abraham, 2020).

iii. **Insurgency**: This has created an atmosphere of fear, despair, and material lack for the displaced and those still in the states in Nigeria. The impact of insurgency on all aspects of human security, that is, economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, social, and political security, is apparent in Nigeria (Segun *et al.,* 2020).

iv. **Politically motivated conflicts**: These are generally explainable within the context of the enduring wider social structure, the historical trajectory, and the political economy of Nigeria (Segun *et al.,* 2020). Politically motivated conflicts are most often propagated by politicians, political thugs, and hired spokespersons. The fight for supremacy, perceived marginalization, and social exclusion of some groups and sections of the populace within a given ethnic group are factors that come into play (Segun *et al.,* 2020).

v.   **Ethno-religious conflicts**: This is initiated in Nigeria by the fight for supremacy by religious leaders and the bane of provocative preaching, fanaticism, and the perpetration of hate speeches on radio stations and social media, inter- and intra-sect leadership tussles, and *et cetera* (Abraham, 2020).

vi. **Youth Restiveness**: This results from unemployment, frustration, and exclusion, which manifest through various anti-social acts such as electoral violence, land and boundary disputes, chieftaincy and leadership tussles, farmer-herder conflict, and involvement in other acts of criminality (Abraham, 2020).

vii. **Violent agitations for self-determination and civil protest**: This is an outcome of unfavourable perceptions and feelings of resentment against unpopular government policies and practices. Oftentimes, the objective circumstances of segments of the

Nigerian population, including feelings of alienation, marginalization, and general development neglect, are active triggers of self-determination agitations and endemic civil protests (Oliver and Agnes, 2021).

Conflict management strategies in Nigeria

Experts use a variety of tactics to resolve conflicts, including avoiding, defeating, compromising, accommodating, and collaborating (Smriti, 2023). Also, there exists a wide range of methods and procedures for addressing conflict, including negotiation, mediation, mediation-arbitration, diplomacy, and creative peace building (Allansson, 2019). According to Adewuyi *et al.* (2021), some of the mechanisms that have been adopted for managing conflicts in Nigeria are as follows:

i.   **Strategic Withdrawal:** This response mechanism has to do with not taking any immediate action on the problem or taking a mild action but seizing the opportunity to buy quality time and space to plan and take a more decisive action (Abraham, 2020). This mechanism has previously been used in Nigeria to address insecurity, but the administrations failed to take prompt and decisive action in addressing the insecurity problems in the country, thus making it ineffective

ii. **Third Party Decision Making:** This entails referring the conflict to a higher body with decision-making power for settlement. In most cases, this approach involves judicial settlement, known as a legal mode of pacific dispute termination (Abraham, 2020). This type of conflict mechanism is mostly slow to dispense justice and manage the conflict.

iii. **Confrontation or Force:** This is the use of the police or military to reverse a conflicting situation, as recently experienced in Maiduguri during the Boko Haram crisis, in Benue, in the South East, and in Jos (Segun, et al., 2020). This could have been the best way of managing violent conflicts in the country if practiced in any violent areas of the country, but it is ineffective in the country due largely to corruption and sentiment.

iv. **Negotiation or Dialogue:** This is a conflict management technique where there is conversation between the settler of the conflict and the parties involved (Smriti, 2023). The whole task of negotiation is generally to reach an agreement through a joint decision between the conflicting parties. The government has tried to resolve the Boko Haram conflict using this strategy, but it has not been successful. Killings are still the order of the day in Nigeria, especially in the Northeast.

v.   **Mediation**: This is a dynamic, structured, interactive process where a neutral third party assists disputing parties in resolving conflicts through the use of specialized

communication and negotiation techniques (Smriti, 2023). Attempts have been made to solve crises like that of Jos and Boko Haram in Nigeria, yet little has been achieved.

The Effectiveness of Conflict Management Strategies in Nigeria

The conflict management strategies discussed above have been applied in Nigeria at one time or another but have largely proven to be ineffective due to the following reasons, as contributed by Adewuyi *et al.* (2021), Francis (2021), Naziru (2020) and Nwagwu (2014).

i. **Unemployment and Poverty:** Unemployment causes poverty, and extreme poverty results in a crime that gives rise to insecurity. Many unemployed graduates become frustrated in an effort to keep mind and body together, and engage in violent and criminal acts such as lucrative kidnapping, militancy, and armed robbery (Naziru, 2020). Others have been terrorists' victims and are quickly radicalized. Nwagbosa (2012) said that past governments have failed to put in place actions that will reduce unemployment and poverty rates, which have been the major causes of insecurity in Nigeria.

ii. **Bad leadership and poor governance:** Bad leadership entails poor performance by the people at the helm of affairs by not being transparent enough; marginalizing a set of people or groups in the scheme of governance; disrespecting public opinion; underperformance; poor protection of fundamental human rights; and the poor avoidance of conflict, corruption, poor flexibility, and accountability. Apparently, bad leadership constitutes a huge obstacle against the effectiveness of conflict management mechanisms in Nigeria, to the extent that the lack of confidence in the leaders by the citizens and the limited leadership skills of the country's leaders often manifest during conflict management.

iii. **Corruption:** Corruption means the manipulation of public office for personal interest. Corruption, no doubt, is among the key hindrances to the effectiveness of conflict management mechanisms in Nigeria. Efforts at managing different conflicts in the country had been stymied by corruption. For instance, the case of managing insurgency in the North eastern part of Nigeria quickly comes to mind, where military corruption has undermined the efforts of conflict management mechanisms to address a conflict that has consumed over 20,000 lives and displaced millions. There was stealing from public purse through fraudulent arms procurement deals, resulting in the military being poorly equipped, poorly trained in the act of conflict management, low morale, and under-resourced, which has crippled the same in fighting an aggressive ideologically inspired enemy such as Boko Haram.

iv. **Ethno-Religious Factors:** Nigeria is a country with secular religious status that is enmeshed in a confusion of secularism status such that the constitution gives it a not-clear enough theoretical status as a secular state, but practically, religion influences feature prominently in the activities of the economy and its citizens (Udo, 2015). Also, ethnicity is an important factor in most conflict management mechanisms in Nigeria. More disturbing is the propensity of such ethno-religious realities to hinder the progress of conflict management mechanisms in the country. The Shiite vs. Nigerian State case and the governor of Kaduna State, Mallam Nasir Ahmed El-Rufai, accusing the people of the southern part of the state of being biased, are good examples of how ethno-religious factors or biases have caused distrust and made it harder for conflict resolution mechanisms to work in modern Nigeria (Udo, 2015).

v. **Inequalities and Undemocratic Practice:** Conflict management mechanisms can achieve the set goal of conflict management effectively only in democratic settings where the tenets of democracy are highly adhered to. Respect for human rights and the rule of law are the key tenets of democracy. In Nigeria, cases abound where the violation of certain democratic practices has led to conflict and/or hindered the effectiveness of conflict management mechanisms. When the atmosphere is not democratic enough, conflict management mechanisms will not be effective in pursuing conflict management.

vi. **Weak Security System**: The poor relationship and coordination between and among the various components and sub-components of the Nigerian security system is a challenge to conflict management in Nigeria. The poor skills in intelligence gathering, forensic investigation and analysis, preservation and the use of information, as well as the weak relationship with communities, hindered the smooth success of conflict management mechanisms in Nigeria. However, with a security system that is characterized by the aforementioned weaknesses, reliable facts would certainly be difficult to uncover, thereby hindering the effectiveness of conflict management mechanisms.

vii. **Porous Border:** The unregulated inflow of small arms and light weapons into the country as a result of the porous borders enabled militancy and crime in Nigeria. Edeko (2011) reported that Nigeria hosts over 70% of the about 8 million illegal weapons that have been used to create a security crisis. The porous condition of Nigerian borders also contributed to the uncontrollable influx of migrants, especially youths from nearby countries, who accounted for insecurities and promoted criminal activities in Nigeria (Adeola and Olayemi, 2012).

CONCLUSION

This study used content analysis to find out how conflict management strategies affect insecurity in Nigeria. The findings of this study showed that conflict management strategies adopted in Nigeria are not effective in mitigating conflicts in the country. Yet, the hope for bringing the conflicts to a minimum level in the country lies in promoting the logic and principles of good governance enthroned and eradicating corruption. To strengthen the conflict strategies in present-day Nigeria, good governance must be put in place to repair the entire system or institutions in the country to ensure a high level of security in the country.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To solve the problem of insecurity in Nigeria, the following recommendations are suggested:

i. Good governance, openness, and accountability should be promoted, especially through the digital media, conferences, seminars, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

ii. Community policing should be established within each divisional police headquarters for effective management of insecurity.

iii. The security apparatus should ultimately improve the training of security officers, ensure sufficient training in modern security methodologies, the provision of state-of-the-art equipment and appropriate remuneration, good service conditions, and convenient after-service arrangements.

iv. The government should boost people's living standards by establishing more centres of entrepreneurship across the nation, especially in the affected region.

v. There should be more job opportunities for the youth, as this will stop them from violent acts.

vi. Politicians who use thugs should be barred from politics forever.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

This paper examined the various manifestations of insecurity, the various conflict management strategies adopted to address insecurity and the effectiveness of these strategies in Nigeria. It can be narrowed to the each of the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria, as the findings can aid in determining the particular zone where the strategies are not effective and help to work on zone-compliant conflict management strategies. Also, a related study of insecurity and agricultural commercialization in Nigeria is suggested to shed more light on the impact of insecurity on agricultural commercialization and the gross domestic product of the Nigerian economy.

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