

## Communal Resource Conflict Dynamics and Socio-Economic Development in Cross River State, Nigeria

Kenneth, Beauty Usoroh.<sup>1\*</sup>, Uwem, Mathew Ekaette<sup>2</sup>, Egong Mathew Mike<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Calabar, Cross River

<sup>2</sup>Department of General Studies, Akwa Ibom State Polytechnic, Ikot Osurua, Ikot Ekpene, Akwa Ibom

Corresponding Author's Email:

[beautyusorohken@gmail.com](mailto:beautyusorohken@gmail.com)

Received: 23-05-24

Accepted: 11-07-24

Published: 26-08-24

### Abstract

A communal resource conflict dynamics is slowly taking over the conflict between states which appears to have dominated the international state since the end of the Second World War. The harmonious relationship and peaceful co-existence that characterized rural dwellers, especially in Cross River State seems to have been torn apart owing to the daily occurrence of crisis within the polity which has in no small measure undermined the development of the social and economic lives of the people. This crisis manifests in different forms, common among them include; civil wars, violence and conflicts, land disputes, gang violence and political wars, etc. The critical nature of this crisis and its devastating implications are obvious socio economic well-being of the affected communities. The study adopted a survey research design. Out of the eighteen (18) local governments in the state, the study purposively selected some local governments with incessant communal crises. This led to four (4) communities which made up the 4 clusters which were systematically selected for the study. Data for the study were collected using a questionnaire from three hundred and seventy ( 375) respondents who were randomly selected from four (4) communities within the study area. Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) was used as an analytical tool to test hypotheses. Data collected were analyzed at a 0.05 level of significance. Findings confirm that socio-economic underdevelopment could be a negative consequence of communal crisis. It is suggested that the government in collaboration with community members should rise to the challenge of maintaining peace and order to pave the way for development programmes.

**Keywords:** Communal Crisis, Communities, Socio economic, Development. Resource

## Introduction

Since Nigeria's independence in 1960, 'the country has consistently experienced crises of different dimensions with adverse consequences on the social, economic, political and emotional development of the society. Communal crises or communal conflicts/disputes are devastating challenges confronting transitional societies such as Nigeria' (Adams, 2000).. Conflicts as asserted by Adams (2000) 'are inevitable wherever scarce resources are unequally distributed among competitors and inequality is reflected in the cultural and political relationship between groups'. Robinson (1972) 'as observed in Nsolibe (2014), human society is characterized by differences in ideology, sociocultural activities, resource endowment and different ethnic affiliations. These differences often result in crisis due to poor management strategy'.

Abubakar (2013) 'identified communal tension in Nigeria as multidimensional comprising religious, economic, social and ethno-linguistic etc. A communal crisis is a divisive force in the sociopolitical environment. Globally, communal crises exist as a result of politics, ethnicity and religious factors. These various crises have resulted in rising nationalism and militancy of various movements seeking determination, local autonomy, separate identity and true federalism. The social and economic consequences of these communal stressors are devastating to the rural economy'. The 'poor state and performance of the rural sector especially in Central Cross River State is an indicator and a pointer to underdevelopment and this is further worsened by series of communal crisis' (Ekot, 2002). 'Rural communities in Central Cross River State are in a precarious and abysmal state. Communal crisis has been a significant source of disharmony in Central Cross River State where several people have been allegedly killed, wounded and kidnapped. These several provocative attacks, harassment, abduction and

killing have resulted in loss of manpower, destruction of properties, stagnation of economic activities like businesses including farming, increasing cannibalistic acts etc. Hundreds of people have been displaced from their original homes and rendered homeless as refugees in

neighbouring communities as a result of brutal and inhuman acts of communal crisis. This is evidenced in the crises between Inyima and Onyeada in Yakurr and Obubra Local Government Areas; Ukpe, Okpagada and Mgbageda in Ogoja Local Government Area; Usumotong and Ediba, Adadama and Amaegu Communities in Abi Local Government Area of Cross River State and Ebonyi State; Nko and Onyeada in Yakurr and Obubra Local Government Areas; Efraya and Ajasor Communities; and Iso Bendeghe and Boje Communities, etc. These communal conflicts may have been precipitated by scramble for resources, land, political power and chieftaincy tussle. For several years running, these communities have engaged in a fratricidal war over parcels of land despite the peace pact signed by most of the elders of these warring communities. None of these crises ever end without loss of lives, destruction of properties, destruction of lives-stocks and farm products, invasion and burning of schools, homes, markets, shops and even hospitals where the sick and injured are supposed to be taken care of; blocking of public roads making it difficult for people to travel outside their territories for productive ventures. These have cumulatively led to the distortion of social, cultural, economic and political activities within the area. The increasing insecurity has wreaked havoc on the environmental well-being and hospitality for which most rural communities exemplify. The endemic nature of communal crisis with its attendant consequences calls for attention. This study investigated the impact of environmental resource conflict dynamics on the social and economic development of communities in Central Cross River State. The major objective was to investigate the association between communal crisis and socio-economic development. Specifically, it examined the association between the struggle for land, political power, chieftaincy affairs and socio-economic development'.

## Literature Review

Communities in Central Cross River State like every other part of the world have witnessed persistent reoccurrence of several communal crises which have posed devastating consequences on their socio-economic development' (Pate, 2009). Traditionally, "conflict has been conceptualized as a struggle over values and claims to scarce status,

power and resources in which the opponent aims to neutralize, injure or eliminate the rivals. It exists in magnitude of range, rift, misunderstanding, family and market brawls, skirmishes and wars, public insurrections and assaults including chieftaincy and boundary disputes” (Albert, 2001). Conflict, ‘though an element of social interaction, exists when parties are engaged in serious disagreement and refuse to come to terms with each other. This could be family members, friends, individuals, communities, states and even nations’ (Albert, 2001).

Pate (2009) noted, “that when two or more parties perceive their interest as incompatible, they express hostile attitudes or pursue their interest through actions that damage the other parties”. To Kari (2004), “conflict arises when two actors are opposing each other in social interaction and reciprocal social power in an attempt to obtain scarce or incompatible goals by preventing each other from attaining and pursuing their goals”. Furthermore, Ajayi (2014) “acknowledged that conflict is inevitable wherever severe resources are unequally distributed among competitors and inequality is reflected in the cultural and political relationship between groups”.

The Global Coalition for Conflict Transformation (2016) “added that conflict is not solely an inherently negative, destructive occurrence but rather a potentially positive and productive force for change if harnessed constructively. Conflict is not an isolated event that can be resolved or managed, but an integral part of society’s ongoing evolution and development”. Ayayi (2013) “noted that the regularity of conflict has become one of the distinct characteristics of the continent. This, however, defines communal living in rural communities or Cross River State”. Otite (1991); Deutsch (1991); Zartman (1991) and Azar (1990) ‘reveal that conflict may be inubiquitous as long as people, nations and groups pursue conflicting interests, there will always be disagreements, disputes and conflict’.

According to Oboh and Hyande (2006), “it is that which involve two or more communities engaging themselves in disagreement or act of violence over issues such as claims for land ownership, religious and political differences leading to loss of lives and destruction of properties, Communal resources crisis has to do with disputes between two or more communities”. Eme and Nwoba (2015) ‘posited that

communal conflict is a state of incompatibility that emanates from a commonly shared or used property by a group or groups in a society’.

According to Sambon (2005), “the last two decades in Nigeria have witnessed no fewer than two hundred communal conflicts and casualty figures conservatively put over 500,000 were recorded in a quick succession across the country resulting to loss of lives and properties”. Ikurekong, Udo and Esin (2012) “reveals that the major consequences of these bloody communal clashes have been an outright reduction in the livelihoods and development potential of the natural resources base of the people”.

‘Conflict is a channel through which creative solutions to human problems are defined and collective solutions identified and developed. Hence, there is nothing wrong with the existence of this crisis as it forms part and parcel of society’ (Albert, 2001; Ayayi & Buhari, 2014). Omotayo (2005) “observed that there is the massive destruction of lives and properties as well as the disruption of the social, political and economic lives of the larger population. Communal crisis therefore constitutes a serious social problem that needs to be addressed with urgency”. To Ikenga (2006) “communal crisis has been a scourge on society from the earliest times, contemporary rural societies seem to be witnessing more of these crises”. Eme and Nwoda (2015) “commented that this havoc has turned the attention of people from creative production to creative destruction. Many people in the process are displaced, thus compounding the problem of increased refugees in neighbouring communities, while some are killed, others died as a result of shocks, and improper medical attention and lot more are injured or maimed”.

To Effiom (2001) “communal conflict has graduated from the use of bow and arrows, sticks, machetes, dain-guns to automatic rifles, grenades and bomb. There is greater insecurity of lives and properties in areas surrounded by conflict as a result of increased importation of sophisticated weapons used in engaging opposition parties.” According to Oji and Eme (2004) “the frequency of crisis has the capacity to severely constrain development endeavours by destroying infrastructures. One of the serious consequences has been the interruption of production progress and the diversion of resources away from productive use. Funds

budgeted for viable development programmes are often rechanneled to rebuilding critical infrastructures destroyed as a result of these crises". 'Communal crisis can be attributed to a number of factors among which include: political discrimination, poverty, inequality, cultural and religious differences' (Eminue, 2014). 'Personality clash, power tussles, crisis or division within a given party, disagreement on party's position on an issue, realization of one's personal political ambition, party leaders reneging on agreed issues of the political party probably on power sharing formula are factors for communal conflict' (Nkpoyen, Kenneth & Akpama, 2020). Eminue (2014) and Osaghae (1992) 'maintained that multi-ethnicity is the most frequent cause of conflict. Communal crisis especially in rural communities is more of war of interest as its purposes in most cases are well defined'. 'African societies have been going through difficult times of communal conflicts, antagonism and violence, as a result of the weak boundary structures, endemic poverty, winner takes all philosophy, insufficient land, among others' (Horowitz, 1985; Nsoli, 2014). 'The changing specter of communal crisis and crime; the grievous consequences it exudes, the non-identification of appropriate and most effective channel of managing the occurrence and weak legal institution for Nigeria nations, as further posing greater challenge to addressing, controlling and understanding communal conflict or crisis in Nigeria' (Ayuk, 2014).

Though Celestine and Osita (2010) 'admitted that conflict in the society is inevitable, and that not all conflict can be resolved but managed, the task of conflict resolution is however, weakened by poorly trained and corrupt control machineries of government and their inability to check, monitor and control people's activities that have the propensity to generate crisis in the society. More disturbing, is the increasing duration between flare-ups and the partiality of armed personnel and perceived stakeholders especially politicians in handling these crises'. 'Several factors affect economic (as well as) social development. These include; population, conflict and environment'. 'Conflict is complex, its presence in an area is terrible for economic development. Not only does it cost money but also instability in businesses. Although most times these crises are not remotely stable, their existence creates much risk and harm to

the socio-economic development of the society' (Wood, 2016). Ayuk (2014), 'rightfully observed during conflict periods, lives are negatively affected; occupations and businesses are disrupted; production of subsistence practices are halted, which consequently would lead to chronic shortage of food, famine, unemployment, destruction and refugee problems. The violent outbreak of communal crises has marred development gains of health education, infrastructural improvement and income-generating and distributing activities. These are necessary consequences of inter-communal conflicts. This situation nevertheless poses a great challenge to socio-economic development as no investor would be willing to undertake serious business commitment in such area'.

'In Cross River State over the past three decades there have been series of crises between Adadama Community in Cross River State and Ameagu Community in Ebonyi State; Ediba and Usumutong Communities in Abi Wakande and Obubra urban; Nko and Onyeada Communities, etc. The rising crises within these communities have greatly affected development projects and overall socio-economic wellbeing of the people. The consequences have been which has resulted in the destruction of buildings and infrastructures, distortion of business activities, increasing insecurities and even disruption of social peace and harmony in the area'.

### **Theoretical framework**

According to Ekot (2002), 'the conflict school sees society as made up of people or groups with conflicting and unequal access to social, political and economic resources. Therefore, society is more or less a battleground where those who consider themselves as exploited rise against those who exploit them'. 'Conflict is commonly regarded as a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources. This is also the stance of Ralf Dahrendorf who posited that conflict is the resultant effect of competition. The opponents aim to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals' (Coser, 1956; Aule, 2015).

Shapiro (2006), 'viewed conflict as a process of social interactions, which involves claims to resources, power, status, beliefs, preferences and desires. Given these assertions, therefore, the social conflict theory of Karl Marx is considered relevant

to this study. Karl Marx, a major proponent of the conflict school believes that reality lies only in nature and material things. The foundation of human society is based on human adaptation to nature. That is the organization of activity to provide for material needs and wants. Economic factors (e.g. land, economic trees and products etc) are the fundamental determinants of the structure and development of society. Marx was concerned with the economic factor which exists between the opposing classes in the society. Those who have the means of production and those who are exploited by the owners of the means of production'. 'Social relations in human society from the beginning of history has been marked by series of struggles and disagreements between opposing classes. That every society in history has been marked by some gradation or differentiation between the haves and the have-nots, the superior and the inferior, the super-ordinates and the sub-ordinates, the high and the low classes' (Charles, 2014).

Given this view, economic resources such as land is scarce in Cross River State compared to the demand of the people. The scramble for these scarce resources by individuals and groups often lead to serious conflict, therefore the prevalence of communal resource crisis in Cross River State.

### Method

The 'study adopted a survey research design. Out of the 18 local government areas in Cross River State, the ones with incessant communal crises were

purposely studied. These constituted the strata of the study. From these strata, 4 communities were purposively selected based on the intensity and persistency of communal conflicts. These were the clusters of the study. From these 4 clusters, respondents were systematically selected. The actual selection adopted the Taro Yamene's (1967) sample determinant formula. Thus, from a population of 1,556,200 that make up the Central Cross River State (National Population of Nigeria Projection, 2022) 400 respondents constituted the sample of the study. From each cluster, 100 people participated'.

The 'major instrument adopted for data collection was the questionnaire with community members and Key Informant Interview (KII) with community heads in these affected areas. Data were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The mean rating was used in dividing the total estimate by total frequency rating below 3.5 means the respondents did not agree, whereas rating from 3.5 and above means, the respondents agreed. Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) statistical technique was used to test the hypothesis earlier stated to guide the study. This is tested using 0.05 level of significance. The study also made use of secondary data gathered from textbooks and journals to complement the primary sources of data. The analysis of the study was based on the three hundred and seventy five (375) questionnaire that were properly filled and returned by respondents'.

**Table 1: Socio demographic data of respondents**

| S/N | Items    | Variables    | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|-----|----------|--------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1   | Sex      | Male         | 213                | 56.8           |
|     |          | Female       | 162                | 42.2           |
| 2   | Age      | 20-25        | 34                 | 9.1            |
|     |          | 26-31        | 56                 | 14.9           |
|     |          | 32-37        | 103                | 27.5           |
|     |          | 38-43        | 132                | 35.2           |
|     |          | 44 and above | 50                 | 13.3           |
|     |          | <b>Total</b> | <b>375</b>         | <b>100</b>     |
| 3   | Religion | Christianity | 319                | 85             |
|     |          | Islam        | 2                  | 0.53           |
|     |          | Traditional  | 52                 | 13.8           |

|          |                   |                  |            |            |
|----------|-------------------|------------------|------------|------------|
|          |                   | Others (specify) | 2          | 0.53       |
|          |                   | <b>Total</b>     | <b>375</b> | <b>100</b> |
| <b>4</b> | Marital status    | Single           | 21         | 5.6        |
|          |                   | Married          | 320        | 85.33      |
|          |                   | Divorced         | 7          | 1.86       |
|          |                   | Widow            | 11         | 2.93       |
|          |                   | Others (specify) | 6          | 1.6        |
|          |                   | <b>Total</b>     | <b>375</b> | <b>100</b> |
| <b>5</b> | Educational level | Primary          | 75         | 20         |
|          |                   | Secondary        | 283        | 75.4       |
|          |                   | Tertiary         | 17         | 4.53       |
|          |                   | <b>Total</b>     | <b>375</b> | <b>100</b> |

**Field survey, 2024**

Table 1 'indicates the socio demographic data of respondents who participated in the study. From the table, 9.1 percent (N= 34) belonged to the lowest age bracket of 20-25 years of age. The highest number of respondents were from the age bracket of 38-43 years of age. In terms of sex, 56.8 percent (N = 213) were male while 42.2 percent (N= 162) were female. This implied that more males than females were involved in the study. Religiously, these are Christian communities as portrayed by 85 percent (N=319) of total respondents. Traditional worshipers are also found and a few Muslims. In terms of marital

status, majority of respondents 85.33 percent (N=320) were married. Educationally, majority of respondents, 75.4 percent (N= 283) had acquired secondary school education while 4.53 percent (N=17) of total respondents had acquired a certain type of tertiary education'.

**Analyses**

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant association between scramble for land ownership/community resources and socio economic development.

**Table 2: Responses on the association between scramble for land ownership/community resources and socio economic development**

| Responses  | Male       | Female     | Total      |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <b>S/A</b> | <b>80</b>  | <b>65</b>  | <b>145</b> |
| <b>A</b>   | <b>38</b>  | <b>25</b>  | <b>63</b>  |
| <b>D</b>   | <b>30</b>  | <b>40</b>  | <b>70</b>  |
| <b>S/D</b> | <b>65</b>  | <b>32</b>  | <b>97</b>  |
|            | <b>213</b> | <b>162</b> | <b>375</b> |

Source: Field survey, 2024

Chi-square computation of expected frequency

$$E_1 = 145 \times 213$$

$$\frac{375}{375} = 82.36$$

$$E_2 = 145 \times 162$$

$$\frac{375}{375} = 62.64$$

$$E_3 = 63 \times 213$$

$$\frac{375}{375} = 35.78$$

$$E_4 = \frac{63 \times 162}{375}$$

$$\frac{375}{375} = 27.22$$

$$E_5 = \frac{70 \times 213}{375}$$

$$\frac{375}{375} = 39.76$$

$$E_6 = \frac{70 \times 162}{375}$$

$$\frac{375}{375} = 30.24$$

$$E_7 = \frac{97 \times 213}{375}$$

$$\frac{375}{375} = 55.1$$

$$E_8 = \frac{97 \times 162}{375} = 41.9$$

**Table 2: Computation of Chi-square**

| Cell | O  | E     | O-E   | (O-E) <sup>2</sup> | $\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$ |
|------|----|-------|-------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1    | 80 | 82.36 | -2.36 | 5.57               | 0.07                |
| 2    | 65 | 62.64 | 2.36  | 5.57               | 0.09                |
| 3    | 38 | 35.78 | -2.22 | 4.93               | 0.14                |
| 4    | 25 | 27.22 | 2.22  | 4.93               | 0.18                |
| 5    | 30 | 39.76 | -9.76 | 95.26              | 2.4                 |
| 6    | 40 | 30.24 | 9.76  | 95.26              | 3.15                |
| 7    | 65 | 55.1  | 9.9   | 98.01              | 1.78                |
| 8    | 32 | 41.9  | -9.9  | 98.01              | 2.34                |
|      |    |       |       |                    | <b>10.15</b>        |

Source: Field survey, 2018

df= (R-I) (C-I)

= (4-1) (2-1)

= 3X1

= 1

Based on the degree of freedom, the critical chi-square value at 0.05 level of significance is 7.82 while the calculated  $X^2$  is 10.15. Given the above computation, the calculated  $X^2$  is greater than the critical value. Therefore there is a significant association between scramble for land ownership/community resources and socio economic development.

Hypothesis 2: Struggle for political power/ chieftaincy position has no significant association with socio economic development

**Chi-square computation of expected frequency**

$$E_1 = \frac{160 \times 213}{375} = 90.88$$

$$E_2 = \frac{160 \times 162}{375} = 69.12$$

$$E_3 = \frac{68 \times 213}{375} = 38.62$$

$$E_4 = \frac{68 \times 162}{375} = 29.38$$

$$E_5 = \frac{65 \times 213}{375} = 36.92$$

$$E_6 = \frac{65 \times 162}{375} = 28.08$$

$$E_7 = \frac{82 \times 213}{375} = 46.58$$

$$E_8 = \frac{82 \times 162}{375} = 35.42$$

**Table 3: Computation of Chi-square**

| CELL | O  | E     | O-E    | (O-E) <sup>2</sup> | $\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$ |
|------|----|-------|--------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1    | 90 | 90.88 | -0.88  | 0.77               | 0.01                |
| 2    | 70 | 69.12 | 0.88   | 0.77               | 0.01                |
| 3    | 48 | 38.62 | 9.38   | 87.98              | 2.28                |
| 4    | 20 | 29.38 | -9.38  | 87.98              | 2.99                |
| 5    | 40 | 36.92 | 3.08   | 9.49               | 0.26                |
| 6    | 25 | 28.08 | -3.08  | 9.49               | 0.34                |
| 7    | 35 | 46.58 | -11.58 | 134.1              | 2.88                |
| 8    | 47 | 35.42 | 11.58  | 134.1              | 3.79                |
|      |    |       |        |                    | <b>12.56</b>        |

Source: Field survey, 2024

Given ‘the degree of freedom of 3 and a significance level of 0.05, the critical table value of 7.82 is less than the calculated chi-square ( $X^2$ ) value of 12.56. Thus, the alternate hypothesis is accepted indicating that there is a significant association between the struggle for political power/chieftaincy position and socio-economic development’.

### Findings

The ‘struggle for ownership of land and its related resources is found to be a factor in the communal crisis. This is also as a result of the importance attached to the land as the source of existence especially in the rural communities where life is completely dependent on this land’. This finding supports Shapiro (2006) that conflict involves claims to resources, power, and status. Findings also follow Eminue (2014) ‘that communal crisis can be attributed to claims over land ownership etc. some land areas have enormous economic resources, people also farm on it, hence it becomes highly valuable that if tempered with unjustly can generate a crisis’.

The findings also ‘indicate that communal crisis has often resulted in full-blown wars in Central Cross River State leading to the destruction of lives and properties’. This finding to some extent contradicts the view of Global Coalition (2016) “that conflict is not solely an inherently negative destructive occurrence but rather a potentially positive and productive force for change if constructively harnessed. Giving the havoc created by the communal crisis as it greatly destroys rather than building the area”.

The findings confirmed the conclusion of Oji, Eme and Nwoda (2015) “that conflict has turned people’s attention from creative production to creative destruction. This is seen in the displacement of people from their original homes thus compounding the problem of increased refugees and also the destruction of infrastructures including human lives”. The findings also support the view of Ajo et al (2014) ‘that political stalemate and periodic eruption of violence have resulted in significant cumulative declines in Gross Domestic Product (GDP). As it is rightly assumed that 90% of the nation’s GDP, apart from oil, comes from rural productivity’.

The ‘persistent crisis in rural communities has greatly contributed to the failure to raise investment rates leading to the low growth rate of GDP. This has greatly increased the level of poverty in the area, state and nations at large’. This is confirmed by Ayuk (2014) “that during conflict periods, lives are negatively affected, occupants and businesses are disrupted, production of subsistence practices halted, which consequently would lead to chronic shortage of food, famine, unemployment, destruction and refugee problems”.

The ‘qualitative data obtained during the KII indicated that struggle for political power and chieftaincy position, destruction of lives and properties, increasing criminal tendency among many and disruption of economic activities are exacerbating communal conflict and contributing in no small measure to the underdevelopment of the socio-economic life of the people. This was nevertheless blamed on the inability of the ‘culture elders’ to mediate by putting in place a better strategy to allocate community resources. Also, the



national and state boundary commissions failed to carry out a deep ethnographic study on the disputed area. This according to many is a result of politics and threats from influential members of the area’.

Aremu (2010) “further noted that many young people in countries coming out from conflict not only lack employment opportunities but have also been denied education and economic empowerment because of war. It is observed that unemployed youth who are former combatants will no doubt develop criminal behaviour if they are not given some form of economic support. The weapons are already in their possession and have affected not only the area's security and peace but also the area's socio-economic development”.

### **Conclusion and recommendation**

For several years now, ‘rural communities of Cross River State like any other state have witnessed severe communal crises. This has in several ways affected socioeconomic development in these areas. This manifestation is seen in the loss of lives and properties leading to disintegration and cohesion within the rural areas. Criminal activities such as robbery considered to be an off-shot of poverty and unemployment resulting from communal crisis have now become part and parcel of the area. This trend should not be allowed to continue if the rural area must witness socio-economic development. Necessary efforts must be put in place by all and sundry to stop this negative trend. This will promote the security of both lives and properties alongside investment which will also enhance adequate exploration of their numerous natural resources for even development.

A poor individual who has nothing to lose can easily be convinced to join in conflict. Hence, poverty may be seen as one of the causes of conflict. Eradication of poverty is therefore a major step through which communal crisis can be reduced. This can be done in a number of ways; through provision of gainful employment for the teeming unemployed youths, creation of equal avenue and access to qualitative education through which the minds of the youths can be enlightened to know the danger and evil of conflict, provision of adequate remuneration for public and civil servants and promotion on the basis of competence.

There is also need for regular boundary checks by the boundary commission to ensure strict adherence

to boundary demarcations by neighbouring communities. This will enable them horridly step in, in the effect of arising conflict between communities with regards to land dispute which is considered to have been the greatest reason for communal crisis. The rural communities need to be properly developed through revival and implementation of viable rural development policies, which will stimulate the development of social infrastructures, establishment of industries and adequate exploration of the rural resources to enhance development purpose. This will contribute maximally to the reduction of unemployment, poverty, crime, and even conflict in rural society. The rural people on their part need to revive cultural values such as dance competitions, football competitions, wrestling etc. among communities. This will go a long way toward instituting peace and harmonious co-existence within the territory. The educated elite/ and National Orientation Agency should be more involved in the proper enlightenment and education of rural people on the dangers and effects of communal war and the need for peace to enhance the development process in the rural areas. There is a need for committed and sincere leadership who will ensure the even distribution of resources, promotion, and protection of cultural norms and values and the rule of law, as well as the protection of the rights of individuals, groups, and communities. This will help in alienating feelings of inferiority by the minority and promote a sense of belonging and oneness’.

## REFERENCES

- Abubakar, J. (2013). Rising deaths from communal clashes in Nigeria. [www.arabianjbm.com/pdfs/om.vol4\(6\)/1.pdf](http://www.arabianjbm.com/pdfs/om.vol4(6)/1.pdf). Retrieved March, 20th 2024.
- Adam, A. M. (2000). Intergroup conflicts and customary mediation: Experiences from Sudan. *African Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 2(2), 13.
- Albert, I. O. (2001). Introduction to third-party intervention in community conflict. Ibadan: John Archers Publishers Ltd.
- Aremu, J. O. (2010). Conflicts in Africa: meaning, causes, impact and solution. Africa Research Review: *An International Multidisciplinary Journal*. Ethiopia 4(4)17.
- Aule, O. (2015). Causes and effects of communal and ethnic conflicts in the land. *Developing Country Studies Journal*, 5(9)22.
- Ayayi, A. T. & Buhari, L. O. (2014). Method of conflict resolution in African traditional society. *An International Multidisciplinary Journal*. Ethiopia 8(2)12.
- Ayuk, A. A. (2014). Incidence of communal conflict and crime in Nko and Onyeadama communities in Cross River State: An unpublished Ph.D Thesis, University of Calabar, Calabar.
- Azar, E.(1990). The management of protracted social conflict: Theory and cases. Brookfield Vermont, USA: Gower Publications.
- Charles, J. O. (2004). (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.) Sociological Theory: A historic-analytical Approach on Man and Society, University of Calabar Press, Calabar.
- Deutsch, M. (1991). Subjective features of conflict resolutions psychological, social and cultural influences. New directions in conflict theory, London: Raimo Varynsnes and Sage Publications.
- Effiom, E. (2001). Political thuggery and corruption: News commentary on the Cross River Broadcasting Corporation. April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2001.
- Ekot, E. M. (2002). Rural development in Nigeria, in Ikeji, C. C. & Ekot, E. M. (2002) (eds). Lagos, Aba & Calabar: Comsons & Texmon Inc.
- Eminue, O. (2004). Conflict resolution and management in Africa: A panorama of conceptual and theoretical issues. *African Journal of International Affairs and Development*, 9(2)1-2.
- Global coalition for conflict transformation(2016). The principles and approaches to conflict transformation globally. <http://www.transconflict.com/2016/06/sict-eenth.gect.newsletter>. Retrieved march 22<sup>nd</sup> 2024.
- Horowitz, D. (1985). Ethnic group in conflicts. Berkely: University of California Press.
- Ikurekong, E. E.; Udo, A. S. & Esin, J. O. (2012). Communal conflict in resource development in Ini Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Peace and Development Studies*.
- Kari, E. (2004). Community Organization. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Kimenyi, M.; Alpha K.; [Temesgen T.](#); [Pugliese, J.](#); [Adibe, J.](#); [Djiré, M.](#); [Jirgi A.](#) & [Westbury, A.](#)(2014). The impact of conflict and political instability on agricultural investment in Mali and Nigeria. African Growth Initiative.
- Nkpoyen, F.; Kenneth, B. U. & Akpama, F. (2020). Political Party Defection and Governance in Yakurr/Abi Federal Constituency, Cross River State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Geographical Information Science (GIS-Business)*, 15(4) 493-511.
- Nsolibe, O. T. (2014). Communal conflict: A threat to National security. As exemplified in two of Onyeka Owelu's Dramatic Works Nwatarie awq and xwa ntqqq. *Journal of Modern European Languages and Literature* 3(3)5.
- Oboh, V. U. & Hyande, A. (2006). Impact of communal crisis on Agricultural production in Oye community of Oju Local Government Area in Benue State. In Gyuse, T. T. and Ajene, O. (eds). Conflict in Benue Valley, Makurdi: Benue State University Press.
- Oji, R. O.; Eme, O. I. & Nwoba, H. A. (2015). Human cost of communal conflict in Nigeria: A case of Ezillo and Ezza-Ezillo conflict of Ebonyi State (2008-2010).

- Arabian Journal of Business and Management*, 2(2)75.
- Ojo, P.; Aworawo, F. & Ifedayo, T. E. (2014). Governance and the challenge of socio-economic development in Nigeria. *Afe Babalola University Journal of Sustainable Development Law and Policy*, 3.
- Osaghe, E. E. (1992). "Managing ethnic conflict under democratic transition in Africa: The Promise and the Failure" In Canon, B. et al (eds) proceedings of the symposium on democratic transition in Africa. Ibadan, June 16, 19.
- Otite, D. (1999). On conflicts, their resolutions, transition and management, in: Otite, O. & Albert, I. O. (eds), community conflicts in Nigeria: Management Resolution and Transformation. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Ltd.
- Pate, U. & Daudu, G. K. (2009). Indigenous conflict resolution method amongst the Fibe of Adamawa State. <http://www.indegenous/conflictresolution.method>. Retrieved March 24<sup>th</sup> 2024.
- Sambon, A. G. (2005). Nigeria's economic growth and development.
- Shapiro, D. L. (2006). Do fairness perceptions influence the style of handling conflict with supervisory. *International Journal of Conflict Management*, 1(1) 19.
- Wood, D. (2016). Factors that affect economic development, population, conflict, geography. [http://www.study.com/academy/lesson/factors-that-affects-economic-development-population-conflict\(geography\\_the\\_environment.html\)](http://www.study.com/academy/lesson/factors-that-affects-economic-development-population-conflict(geography_the_environment.html)) ). Retrieved March 15<sup>th</sup> 2024.
- Zartman, W. (1991) (ed). "Resolving Regional Conflict". International Perspectives: The Annals, No. 518.