Peace and Conflict Resolution as Strategies for Family and Societal Well-Being

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Abstract
Peace is a condition of social harmony, creativity and preventing of war. Conflict resolution involves the ability of reconciling individuals or groups differences so as to achieve amicable coexistence. This means that peace and conflict resolution provide the structure for societal progress and well- being. Peace and conflict resolution play a vital role in our societal well- being. Since the end of second world war, rigorous approaches to study of peace and conflict resolution emerged across the globe. Thus, interest in question of peace and conflict resolution has continued to increase in our contemporary society. All the emphasize on peace and conflict resolution is geared towards individuals, groups and societal well-being. Thus, the need for this work on peace and conflict resolution as strategies for societal well-being cannot be over emphasized. Conflict is an inevitable reality of social existence while peace is one of the greatest and most cherished human values.
Key words: Peace, Conflict, Conflict Resolution, Family, Societal Well-being.

Introduction.
According to Njoku (2017) peace is said to be observed worldwide every 21st of September because of its vital value. Peace needs to be encouraged as it aids progress and improves societal well-being. However, the interaction between peace and conflict is inseparable. Thus, the notion of peace and conflict resolution as strategies for societal well-being. There is need to conceptualize peace and conflict on this paper for better focus and comprehension of the work.
Conceptualizing peace:

Peace is converse of war. Peace can be explained as freedom from disturbance or war, cessation of war, freedom from contention; case of mind or conscience, tranquility, quiet etc. Peace is one of the greatest cherished human values. A recent philosopher, Njoku (2017) argues that state of nature was rampant with conflict and violence. Observe, life was solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short under the state of nature. Under the state oSf nature, a great man could be murdered or overwhelmed by large number of people. Therefore, the emphasis on self-preservation while John Locke (1632-1704) postulated under the same state of nature that men are free and equal and each should live according to his liking.

Therefore, it is erroneous to define peace as only absence of war. Plato discussed justice as the most fundamental basis of ordered social life. He defined justice as giving each individual what is due to him or her. He argued that every society requires three basic functions to achieve peace, namely:

i. Production to be carried out by workers.

ii. Security to be performed by courageous men (soldiers) and

iii. Political rule to be performed by the knowledgeable people.

However, the limitation to the philosophical proposition is how to

systematically and without distortion determine the endorsement of each member of the society and ensures that they are placed in each of the functions. Consequently, peace can be described sociologically, psychologically, politically, economically and religiously. Peace as used in this context can be explained from many perspectives or viewpoints.

Sociologically, peace is viewed as condition of social harmony, creativity and prevention of war. Social harmony involves the ability of reconciling individual or groups differences so as to achieve amicable coexistence.

Psychologically, peace is a state of mind in harmony and balance of soul and spirit, the mindset of an individual or group of people. It includes the availability of infrastructure such as electricity, housing, road, water and other amenities.

Economically, peace has been observed as free acquisition of personal or group of individual desires. As is been known that man in his original state of nature had many desires, but the growth of human population and acquisition of private properties or group properties gave rise to misunderstanding, quarrels, deprivation and conflicts. Man's economic desires and greed was the greatest issues that mar peace. Man's desire and greed is the major reason for the depravity of man.

Politically, peace entails institutionalization of political structures. This means that government employ minimal coercive apparatus of the state (armed forces and police) in

handling human being/ people. This is the situation where the masses do not threat or question the interest of the ruling class. The citizens are participants to political issues and more rational in dealing with the ruling class. This enhances the mutual interest and respect between the privileged ruling class and the led.

Many philosophers conceive peace as God given stand point of humans, devoid of corruption, thus, the religious point of view. However, saint Augustine of Hippo differentiated what he called "two cities", in this work Civitas Dei, one is "the city of God and the other is the earthly city of man". He described the city of God to possess perfect heavenly peace while the city of man was impulses with corruption. The possessive impulses and desires of man resulted into greed that under minded peaceful co-existence.

Peace religiously therefore can be understood in this version as a spiritual serenity that creates a state of mind through which the message of God from peaceful city "heaven", can be heard and accepted in an under mind peaceful city earth of co-existence. Peace between a mortal man and his maker consists of ordered obedience guided by faith.

Peace as converse of war proffer that the tendency in peace and conflict are two sides the same coin. In other words, peace is defined as the absence of war and by logical existence absence of peace. This way of conceptualizing peace though attractive, is inadequate for understanding the nature of peace. In the first place, it is tautological and

circular in logic-there is peace because there is no war and there is no war because there is peace.

Second, it really tells us nothing about the meaning of peace, which, going by this definition war however, even common sense will suggest that peace does exist independent of war. Thus, there can be peace even when there is war, as in situations when there are peaceful interactions between countries that are in active war. For instance, the Palestinians and Israelis have been able to establish peaceful use of water resources, even as the war between them has raged.

Third, this definition is inapplicable in situation of structural violence as Johan Galtung calls it. War is only one form of violence; which is physical, open and direct. But there is another form of violence that is not immediately perceived as such. This has to do with social conditions such as poverty, exclusion in time of psychological pressure. Finally, it would be wrong to classify a country experiencing pervasive structural violence as peaceful. In other words, although war may not be going on in a country where there is no pervasive poverty, oppression of women, or monopolization of resources and power by some section of the society as it is in Nigeria today. It will still be wrong to say that there is quite possible not to have peace even when there is no war.

Conceptualizing Conflict.

Conflict is an incompatible reality of social existence. It is a universal and permanent attribute of nature, life and society. Conflict occurs even among lower animals that cause them to quarrel and/or fight. Conflict, also occurs even among the 'best' of relations, friends and societies (Shehu 2002). Conflicts involves two or more parties that have or perceive incompatibility in either interests, goals and values or in the strategy of achieving their desires. Conflict is inevitable because it originates between individuals or group of individuals or persons in response to scarce resources, as well as in elevation of people to valued positions, roles, statuses and powers.

Conflict is expressed as hostile behavior, struggle, disharmony, clash, strife, war etc. conflict can occur on the level of individual, group, community, state, nation or at international level, conflict has generally been seen as a situation in which two or more parties strive to acquire the same time. Conflict is barely recognized due to lack of knowledge or suppressed information, it is said to be latent. However, when it becomes consciously expressed and voiced it is said to be manifest (Onu 2009).

According to Galtung (1996) conflict can be defined as the pursuit of incompatible interests and goals by individuals or groups. Armed conflict is the use of force and violence in the pursuit of incompatible interest and goals. The main root of conflict is denial. Conflict is frustration or protest based on lack of opportunity for development, recognition and/or

identity. Conflict goes with emotion and the higher the emotion the higher the intensity of the conflict may become.

There are usually danger signals, attitudes, decisions, and actions that precede conflict which are referred to as conflict indicators. Conflict therefore, is not a sudden occurrence (it is not automatic). In civil setting indicators can manifest in form of provocative utterance, communication gap, demonstration, protest, influx of small or light arms, meeting at odd hours and strange movements between parties, (Akpuru, 2007). It graduates in phase from early conflict indicator, conflict resistance, explosive or exhaustive conflict to terrorism-most deadly spiral and the highest level of conflict, (Akpuru, 2007). Deep, unresolved or untransformed conflict may enter a violent phase. The violent phase may occur when parties are insensitive and unresponsive to early conflict indicators. Hence, conflict even though a part of human nature and existence can be prevented when conflict indicators are detected earlier in a relationship.

Conflict often hinders or delays achievement of set goals and can also result in disintegration but this is not always the case as it can lead to positive developments of the individual, groups and the society. Conflict therefore can be destructive or constructive. Constructive conflict may contribute immeasurably to the maintenance of human groups and harmonious interpersonal relationships; hence, it can be a corrective signal or warning. It can be a positive powerful factor for

change and improvement. Ngo (2013) enumerated advantages that conflict could have:

- Create an opportunity for balancing the power within a relationship or the wider society, and the reconciliation of people's legitimate interests.
- Lead to a greater self-awareness and understanding, and awareness of diversity and differences between people, organization and societies.
- Lead to personal, organizational and even systematic growth and development.
- Acts as a useful medium for airing and solving problems.
- Allow for different interests to be reconciled.
- Foster unity within groups.

Conflict energy therefore can be channeled into non-violent, constructive and transforming directions, (Madu, 2015). Harris (2003) suggests three common ways of channeling energy into constructive rather than destructive directions and they are: Use of power (physical, military or economic) which usually results in victory for the most powerful. Second, use of rights-in a legal sense – also most often result in victory for the most economically powerful who can afford the best legal resources. The third, which is attempting to reconcile the interests of the parties, is based on the hope that, by uncovering their underlying needs and interests, parties to a conflict can achieve a mutually satisfying outcome. The first two result in winner

and normally leave the underlying cause of conflict unchanged, (Harris 2003).

Conflict can be prevented through effective communications and intelligence coordination in order to control and manage a strained relationship before it materializer as a conflict situation.

Common Causes of Conflict

As stated earlier, conflict is inherent in every human interaction, and it should not appear strange that it exists in social, economic cultural and political organization and institutions. However, conflicts are not only destructive because it can serve as a catalyst which x-rays the view, interests and positions of different parties. From those standpoints, the parties would negotiate and reach a common compromise that will benefit greater number of people or states. When co-operation fails, individuals or states resort to conflict to pursue their interests which may result to dialogue that would try to satisfy the interests of both parties.

According to Miller (1984) conflict are caused by so many variables, but the common ones include:

- Breakdown of values and traditions
- Completion by peers and groups
- Scarcity of resources (maternal values and control of resource
- Poverty
- Religious beliefs
- Environmental degradation
- Ethnicity
- Politics and political positions etc.

A process View of Peace

One thing that extant conceptions of peace have in common is that there is a state of affairs or condition in thought, nature and society is a state that is characterized as peace. This condition is pristine, perfect, ordered and tranquil. It is condition in which, according to Rouseau, "all men are born free" and exist as "gentle savage" but subsequently social conditions put them "everywhere in chains".

While extant conceptions of peace are not necessarily wrong. They are inadequate in understanding the entire reality of peace. One problem many of them share, for instance, is that there is no recorded human society corresponding to such a stylised state of tranquil existence. Even including dangers posed by wild animals. Another problem is that these conceptions of peace create the impression that, we can find peace as an absolute, once-and- for- all condition. Although many have come to see conflict as inherent in society, meaning that conflict is always present in different gradations.

In this conceptualizing peace, we see it not as a condition, but as a process. In other words, it is a dynamic socio-economic process, rather than a condition.

What is peace?

Peace is a process involving activities that are directly and indirectly linked to increasing development and reducing conflict, both within specific societies and in the wider international community. we shall focus only on elaborating the concept of development as it relates to our definition of peace. Suffice it however is to say that as a social concept, conflict express a direct or indirect relation between two or more actors in which they attempt to

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undermine the interests of one another, often through instrumentality of violence. Violence is usually of two types, as Galtung (1996) has noted. The first is direct violence, which is usually expressed in physical, psychological and counter value violence against an opponent on the other hand, there is structural violence. It arises from particular forms of social organization and processes. It is expressed in such conditions as exclusion, deprivation and poverty.

Simply put, development is a process of improving the conditions and precisely well-being of human existence. According to Rodney, this involves first, improving man's understanding of the laws of improve nature (science); second, applying this understanding to creation of tools and other implementations that improve man's working conditions and living environment (Technology) and third, equitable organization of work and rewards (social relations of production). Put differently, development is a process of progressively eliminating conditions that alienate labour in society. These conditions emanate from a complex interplay of the natural or biophysical environment (environmental scarcity, ecosystem failures etc) and the social or inter- human environment (organization) of work, assess to productive resources and distribution of rewards, for example, workers' wages)

Forms of the Peace Process

We can identify four forms of the peace process, namely, peace keeping, peace enforcement, peacemaking and peace building. Each of them expresses a specific articulation of conflict and development. A situation in which conflict processes are low and the conditions for development are limited, the peace process takes the form of peacekeeping. This entails the use of peacekeepers to keep conflict parties apart and keep conflict at currently low levels. However, when conflict is high and conditions for peace remain limited, peace enforcement is needed to create the space for increasing development and reducing conflict. Peace making arises in situations where conflict is high but there are viable conditions pursuing development, when peace building applies to a situation of low conflict, high prospect for development will be attain and well- being of the people would assure.

Stages of the Conflict

Closely related to the conflict background are the conflicts. Each conflict has its dynamics, characterized by different stages and phases of change and transformation. This is because, as Lederach (1997) points out, conflict is not a statics phenomenon, but is expressive, dynamic and dialectical (lederach, 1997:65). Fisher (2000) identify five stages of conflict, as follows:

i) The first is the **pre-conflict** stage, a period when goals between parties are incompatible, which could lead to open conflict. At this stage, the conflict is not well known because parties try to hide it from public view, but communication is undermined between them.

ii) The second stage is the stage of **confrontation**, at which point the conflict becomes open or manifest. This is characterized by occasional fighting, low levels of violence, search for allies by parties,

mobilization of resources, strained relations and polarization.

iii) The third stage is the stage of **crisis**, which represents the peak of the conflict. In violent conflict, this is the stage of war and intense fighting, leading to killings, injuries, large scale population displacements, and the use of small arms and light weapons, etc.

iv) The fourth is believed to be the **outcome** stage. There is an assumption that all conflicts will pass through this stage, one way or the other. Either one side wins and another loses, or a ceasefire may be declared; one may surrender, or the government or other third-party intervening forces stronger than the warring parties intervene to impose a solution and stop the fighting. The critical issue at this stage is that the violence is decreased, which allows room for some discussion to commence, or alternative means of settling the conflict.

v) The fifth, is the **post-conflict** stage. At this stage, violence has either ended or significantly reduced, and parties has gone past the crisis stage. This is the stage to address the underlying causes of conflict, -those incompatible goals which created the conflict in the first instance, such as needs and fears of the parties. If they are not tackled at this stage, the conflict cycle may be re-enacted and return to the pre-conflict stage, with consequent re-

eruption of violence, is a possibility. These conflict stages are also referred to by other names, such as "conflict processes" or "conflict progression". All of them constitutes useful points of conflict analysis.

The stages of conflict can be used along with Timelines to analysis conflict. A timeline is a simple tool that presents a chronology of a conflict situation, tracing events back to their most distant significant point situation, tracing events back to their most distant significant point of history, and including major events along the time continuum that affect the conflict. These include efforts put in to transform the conflict, which might not have succeeded. Thus, in analyzing conflict, the background to the conflict, the stage of the conflict and timelines relate very closely, and greatly enhance an understanding of the conflict within appropriate historical and social contexts.

Parties to a Conflict

Conflicts have people (individuals, groups, entities, states or nation) that contend the issues in the conflict. Those individuals, groups, entities, state or nations in the dispute are said to be the parties to the conflict, the conflict analysis try to identify the parties to a conflict.

The parties believe or conceive that their interests, positions and desire are being threatened either directly or indirectly. There are two categories of parties to conflict, namely: primary and secondary parties.

Primary parties: these are those that are directly concerned in a conflict situation and they are very 'visible' in the conflict. Example of primary parties in Warri crisis are the Ijaw, Itsekiri and the Urhobo clans or ethnic group.

The second group of parties to a conflict situation are called **Secondary parties** because they are not visible or directly involved in the conflict. They are said to be '**Shadows**' to the conflict and they are act by proxy. However, secondary parties to conflict situation are important in conflict analysis because they tend to complicate conflict situation. In conflict analysis, it is important to identify both primary and secondary parties so as to identify those parties (both primary and secondary) so as to recognize their interest (values) which each group anticipates in the immediate and future periods. Interests which parties enjoy or intend to enjoy in conflict situation may not accrue to every member of the party, but to individuals or to a section of the group. The interests in conflict situation may appear 'latent' (not openly discussed). The parties usually state their positions which they call their stands and issues threats, conditions and ultimatums. In Niger Delta crisis, the parties' talk of resources controls (control of oil wealth).

Furthermore, parties are kept restless and anxious because of the fears they anticipate from the opposition group. They express the fears they anticipate from the opposition group. They express the fears due to the advantages and privileges they may lose to their opponent.

Positions, Interest, Needs and Fears

In most conflicts, the different parties will be pursuing either one or a combination of the above factors, whether consciously or unconsciously. It is helpful for conflict analysis to identify and highlight the positions, interests, needs and fear of the parties, especially if there is a desire to go beyond an analysis, to seek any form of intervention aimed at the transformation of the conflict hurts the most.

The positions of parties are seen as tough and uncompromising stands that parties to a conflict take and assume. These sharply differ from want, and these are of other parties. Positions are what parties say that they want, and these are wants indeed, and not needs. A position is based on the fears of party, its understanding of the conflict, and on how best parties believe they are protecting they are protecting their interests. It is a protective and defensive stand. Positions are resorted to most easily because parties usually do not want to expose themselves by sharing their fears and interests, especially with strangers and "enemies". It is common to hear parties- talking about their "resolution", "positions", "stand", and maintaining that they will never compromise. Sometimes, parties may issue threats, conditions or ultimatums to authorities to meet their demands or face an uprising. More often than not, these are positional stands that do not, as such, reflect what they need.

Beyond positions, there are **interests**. These are values pursued by individuals and groups in conflict, which may

represent immediate and distant benefits or gains accruable to such parties. Interest, unlike positions, are what parties may really want, but again, not what they really need. Interests may come in the forms of favours, concessions, material gain, etc. in conflict situations, parties seldom make known their interests. Often, the interests may not accrue to the entire group, but to individuals within the group.

In the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, for instance, there is a conflict between the local ethnic communities inhibiting the area, and the Federal Government of Nigeria over the ownership of proceeds from the sale of the oil. The communities argue that the oil found in the land belongs to them, and they should own the proceeds and pay tax and royalties to the government. This is tagged "resource control". While this may be seen as a position of the communities, interests are also prevalent in that argument. Individuals, groups and communities foresee the opportunity to make huge incomes from "resource control" and may actually be seeking for increased revenues from oil, to which they may benefit either personally, or as communities. Indeed, the crux of the matter is that the communities are complaining about the neglect of their people by the oil corporations and the Nigerian government amidst wealth that is carted away from the area.

Beyond the **interests,** are what may be termed, the needs and fears of the parties. Needs and fears are often go closely together**. Needs** are what parties must have, but needs also happen to be the least visible, and the least discussed and talked about by conflict parties. They are usually discovered and identified through careful analysis of conflict and sessions of dialogue between the parties, usually in a facilitated problem-solving environment. Sometimes, parties may identify their needs, but are unwilling to talk about them, and would rather talk about their positions. However, the conflict can only be resolved, or transformed, when the analysis reaches the point where the needs and fears are identified and addressed. Using the examples of the Niger Delta communities above, their real needs may be sustainable development, environmental protection and security, jobs, recognition, and other things which have not been provided by different and successive governments in Nigeria. The argument for resources controls therefore, becomes a means of highlighting and reaching those needs.

Fears are the situation and condition which make parties restless and anxious, and which creates uncertainty and threat perceptions in them. Individuals and groups become defensive against the things that threaten their values, identity, security and any privileges and advantages they may enjoy. In most communal conflicts in Africa, the fear of the unknown, or the fear of one community by another, have heightened tension, suspicion and violence. For instance, among the Itsekiri, Ijaw and Urhobo ethnic communities in Warri of the Niger Delta, the protracted communal violence in the area has been deepened by mutual fear of domination and eventual "take-over" of Warri by each

of the three groups. The Itsekiri fear the possibility of losing this ancient oil city to the Ijaw and Urhobo ethnic group.

Peace and Conflict Resolution: Means to Family and Societal Well-being

Every minute that we breathe makes clear that our peace of mind and sense of rightness play vital role in our longevity and better living. We are meant to believe that the possibility of the attaining the necessary positive transformation is within our grasp as well as our well-being. Therefore, one can achieve this by setting aside every prejudice and focus on peace. Furthermore, you have to join in the construction of a lasting structure that will stand the test of time, ''peace''. However, this will enable us to attain progress and development which will improve our well-being. Hence, creating and sustaining the building blocks of peace by adopting lifestyles that support a progressive and unified humanity. It is very crucial we become peace builders as we smell and experience peace in our existence. It is pertinent we understand the importance of using both top-down strategies for instance, setting of policies and national security measures and bottom-up approaches that begin with individual at the early childhood development strategies (Madu 2015).

Early childhood development refers to multifaceted concepts that involves child and the context from prenatal to age 8 or 9. Development spans physical, motor, cognitive, socio-emotional functioning, languages and literacy, ethical and spiritual development,

values orientation, sense of group membership and identity at the family, community, culture, state and national levels. The context refers to the family and community factors. Onu (2009) posited that violence and peace are multifaceted involving factors at the individual, family and community levels. For example, being impulsive (individual factor) maladaptive parenting practice (family factors) and poverty (community factor) interact to produce violence in people. Being calm (individual factor), parenting practices that build parent-child bonding and trust (0family factor) and availability of adequate basic amenities (community factor) are associated with peacemaking individuals. The interaction between the individuals and the context suggests that promoting peace from early childhood may contribute to emergence of peaceful society.

According to Augustine (1948) the conceptual ecological framework of peace developed, proposes five components that should be explored for a peaceful family, society and societal well-being. They are as follows:

a. Neurobiology of peace.
b. Affiliative bonding.
c. Parenting and peacemaking.
d. Early learning and peacemaking.
e. Peacemaking to peace building.

We need to respect the mother earth avoiding ''nso ala''. We need credible elections, good governance and resource control, equitable resources, sharing, security and the provision of basic amenities for public utility. We need transparent accounting for peace and economic growth that will facilitate the

provision of these basic amenities (Kalu et al, 2014). We also need good policies for the care of children and maternal health care. We need good polices for the care of our environment for peace co- existence. We are obliged as our duties and responsibilities for taking care of these needs.

Good governance, government, doing the right thing by the leaders and the led, discouraging all forms of corruption among the public officers and unnecessary waste of resources by public office holders would promote peace and enhance societal well-being. In this context there is clarion call for peace; peace in our hearts, peace in our homes, peace in all nations of the world and peace in the nook and crannies of the earth, doing these will give birth to progress, development and better living everywhere these can be achievable, working as a team. The team work may result to form establishing peace club among groups be they adults, (literates or less educated) especially in the institutions (formal and informal sectors) name it with explored aims and goals which must be beneficial to all members and societies at large.

Institutions and Methods of Peace and Conflict Resolution

1. Traditional Igbo Cultural Group of Conflict Resolution: Ultimate goal of conflict resolution in many Nigeria cultural groups is to restore peace between contending parties. In Igbo society, elders, age group, classificatory sisters (Umuada), classificatory co-wives (Umu-nwunye-di), Kindred (Umunna), title groups (Nze na Ozo's, ndi Ichie), spirit manifest (Mmanwu, Mmuo)

etc. are among the mechanism/ institutions through which conflict is resolved. For instance, when there is conflict, the elders are expected and enjoined by tradition to tell whole truth no matter whose ox is ignored. Hence, their decisions or action must be based on truth. The council of elders takes decision together but the oldest person pronounces judgement in the presence of the elders, contending parties and their relatives. Thus, the pronouncement is usually binding and can never be alternate. Therefore, peace is believing to be achieved. Thus, life is ongoing and joyful.

2. Multi-door Settlement/ Human Mediation Center: This is another resolution/settlement arena. Hence, their decision takes balance. They hardly side one party rather the issue will be looked into and mediation will be made and decision always sits on the fence. The contending parties after contemplation always agrees because they neither side here nor there. Thus, the pronouncement is normally binding even when alternates at the end the party that alternated must later prefer to resort to because that is only mediation that can favour them. Thus, reduces time constrain, financial imbalance and must be favourable in utmost sense of peace. It is always speak-up peace (Onyelawa-Onyelawa), that is, let there be peace and human

freedom from war or conflict as to better living.

3. Human Right/Welfare Centers: This is an institution of its own. An overview of the definitions, conceptions and debates in peace and conflict resolution will be incomplete without an overview of the link between human right and peace. Human rights are inalienable rights to which all human beings are entitled, irrespective of race, nationality or membership to any particular social group. Their judgements are always based on the infringe rights and specify basically on minimum conditions for human dignity and outline conditions for human existence which enhances peaceful co-existence and improvers societal well-being. The promotion of human rights brings about peace and societal wellbeing.

Conclusion.
Peace and conflict resolution in achieving societal wellbeing cannot be over emphasized. Conflict is inherent in every human interaction and society. It is only when there is peace and conflict is resolved effective that development and societal wellbeing can be achieved 0and attained. Conflict is part of social life and occur between individuals, groups and nations. It is a situation that is avoidable but occurs when two or more parties find their interest incompatible, express hostile attitude or take action which hinders or delay the

other parties' ability to purse their interest. It can be destructive and need to be resolved through various mechanisms. It can equally be constructive, that is important social relationship especially if resolved amicably and effectively.

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