

CULTURAL ELEMENTS, PEACE PROMOTION AND SOCIAL STABILITY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Culture is the totality of the ways of life of a people. Sharing a common culture helps to determine the group to which one belongs to and helps to promote peace in the culture area while values control people's behaviour and serve as a criteria for evaluating the actions of others. The study found that since the introduction of western socio-political and economic power into African traditional society, anecdotal evidence gathered from qualitative and historical literature on the culture and traditions of over 250 linguistic groups in Nigeria was combined with a descriptive and analytical approach. Cultural elements which were critical in peace building in different cultural societies in Nigeria have been neglected or even denigrated. The weakening of the value system was as a result of the influence of other cultures, western education, Christianity, Islam, science and technology and English language as the official language of Nigeria. From the findings, the study recommended amongst others, Nigerians need to appreciate the reality of their indigenous cultural elements to ensure continued peace and stability in Nigerian society. Though the government have made efforts towards social integration and social stability by creating the following institution: National Youth Service Corps, National Orientation Agency, Federal Character Commission National Boundary Commission and Judiciary, the need to be effective and the issue of political corruption has not been properly addressed. Nigeria's quest for a progressive nation calls for a reorientation that will galvanize the corporate spirit of Nigeria to actualize the enormous potential in our diversity.

Keywords: cultural elements, peace promotion, social stability, norms and values, African shared value

1.0 Introduction

In African traditional societies man was his brother's keeper. Family members carry along one another in their daily social and economic activities. Life was communal in nature which was group affair and informal being guided by internalized cultural elements. Culture is the way of life of a people. It is a way they do their things from the time of their ancestors. It is the totality of the ways of the life of a people. Scheafer (2006) noted that; culture is the totality of learned, socially transmitted custom, knowledge, material objects, and behaviour of a people. It includes ideas,

value, customs and artifacts. Language is the vehicle that helps people to transmit their culture from one generation to the other.

The cultural elements that promote peace are folkways, mores, customary laws, customs, mortality, traditional religion and etiquette. While the mechanisms for conflict resolutions include: self-help, peer group assembly, village council of elders/privileged group, game solution, etc. These allow justice to prevail which is the bedrock of peace because without justice there will be no peace for the individual and society at large. The values of a people determine their behaviour and also serve as criteria for assessing the actions of others within the culture area, Ukegbu and Fastari 2013 noted that:

Values refer to precept, moral principle, ideas, beliefs we hold and cherish as important meaningful and worthwhile attributes of which must be neither abused nor deposed. These meaningful and worthwhile values have positive effects on our behavioral output such as decisions, actions, and reactions in our surroundings. Pattern of living, choice of activities we engage in and the satisfaction in our day-to-day life. This helps people to maintain peace of mind for self, family and society at large.

When members of a cultural group internalize the cultural elements they become self-policing because it is a form of social control and determinant of action in a particular social situation. These things are achieved through honesty, justice and selflessness. The ultimate aim of the cultural elements is to maintain peace which is the bedrock of peaceful co-existence in any cultural group. Culture of peace brings people together regardless of their nationality, religious and cultural backgrounds. The regard to norms and values were compulsory and community members were socialized into believing in the supremacy of the traditional norms and values. When norms and values are internalized through socialization they become part of the individuals. The individuals conform without the fear of being caught because the individuals have internalized the moral principles behind the observation of norms and values.

The cultural elements help to imbibe in the community members the need for the promotion of peaceful co-existence and one must place the community above himself or herself which is the essence of communal living. This helps the community members to be at peace with one another. Peace is desirable and the outcome of order within a given society. The peace of the individual and cultural group is achieved through justice because it is only when there is justice that peace will reign. Peace and justice are reinforced through the mechanisms of timely conflict resolutions which are part of the cultural elements. This has maintained peaceful co-existence in traditional cultures.

In addition to being a state of mind for each individual, peace is also the condition in which an ideal society functions in harmony, security, unity, and understanding. Adeniyi (2016) states that the United Nations was founded primarily to uphold international peace and security, and in doing so, it fosters a culture of peace. In order to do this, researchers, academics, and state and non-state actors were encouraged to investigate peaceful strategies of establishing peace and conflict resolution through peace education as an alternative to war or armed conflict.

The federal government created the following agents to aid social stability in Nigeria. National Youth Service (NYSC), National Orientation Agency (NOA), Federal Character Commission (FCC), The Nigeria Boundary Commission (NBC), Judiciary and Four National Conferences in Nigeria. All in attempt to achieve social stability among Nigerians.

Every member of traditional African cultures was led in their behavior by a set of ideals. Values like hospitality, chastity prior to marriage, truth, respect for elderly people, covenant keeping, diligence, and good character should all be specifically mentioned. The indigenous religions of Africa also hold the notion that spirits, both good and malevolent, exist and are what allow humans to communicate with the Almighty. After all, it recognizes the presence of good and evil and upholds a moral sense of justice and truth. Umoh (2005).

Many African civilizations place a high priority on traditional education, which involves teaching oral literature through folktales, riddles, and proverbs with the goal of forming children's moral character and instilling virtues like courage, honesty, integrity, and solidarity.

There are strong forces in a diverse and pluralistic society like Nigeria that, if they are not effectively managed by implementing democratic principles in national affairs, have the potential to split and split the populace. These components include disparities in culture, religion, and ethnicity, as well as access to resources necessary for overall

growth. There will be "unity in diversity" if these desired elements are successfully contained (Anieke and Njokujr2013).

In order for individuals to remain together, there must be a system of shared values that are properly acknowledged by the law and safeguarded by it. This system must gradually solidify over time. An agreement that ensures justice, equity, and fairness for all parties involved should ideally be the primary factor in determining whether to remain together. (2013) Anieke and Njoku. There is no other method to establish societal stability than this.

"I have the knowledge of conflict to be a socially constructed cultural event," states Lederach. Individuals actively participate in the situations and behaviors they perceive as conflict; conflicts do not simply happen to people. The meaning and interpretation that individuals involved give to actions and events determine how social conflict begins and grows. From this foundation, conflict is linked to meaning, meaning to knowledge, and knowledge is ingrained in culture.

Given the significant influence of culture on the formation of our identities and lives, as well as the identification of conflicts, it stands to reason that it would also have an impact on conflict resolution. According to Tyler (1871), culture is the entirety of a person's knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws, customs, and any other abilities that a person acquires as a part of society and that are socially passed down from one generation to the next.

Material or immaterial, cultural value is significant to human society. According to Eken (1989), culture plays a fundamental role in society by:

- Directing the behavior of its members and serving as a social control agent;
- Providing appropriate meaning to the actions of others and interpreting human behavior in the community;
- Assisting in the reduction of conflict and encouraging peaceful coexistence among the populace;
- Aiding in the preservation of society from generation to generation; and serving as the foundation for social cooperation and solidarity among its members.

The state of peace is still precarious and fragile in many parts of the world. Thus, maintaining peace in all of its manifestations continues to be a constant problem for the global community. Building trust and understanding between other cultures and civilizations, as well as between nations, communities, and individuals, is necessary to achieve this, particularly during acute conflict and in the aftermath of conflict. Men and women who should be filled with optimism for the future, particularly for future generations, are the first to defend peace.

In light of the ongoing and newly escalating conflicts between and within states, as well as the newly emerging types of societal risks that are severely impacting civilian populations and making many societies more vulnerable, UNESCO's commitment to promoting a culture of peace in all of its fields of competence is more important than ever. (UNESCO, 2002–2007 Medium-Term Strategy)

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Importance of Peace Building:

Achui (2017) lists the following benefits of peace building:

- It keeps conflicts from getting worse;
- It gives communities security and stability;
- It brings people back to sanity and harmonious coexistence;

- It serves as a catalyst for long-term peace and development following a conflict;
- It aids in fostering peace in people's minds because conflict begins in the mind;
- It captures a program of the Rs, which are reconstruction, reformation, and reconciliation when effectively implemented and this goes a long way in healing the wound of the war.

The Nigerian society which was amalgamated in 1914 was made up of people from different cultural backgrounds. These were urban centres and trade routes expanded and increased. The Colonial Masters introduced Christianity and western education and started teaching Nigerians English Language. The implication was that Nigerians started learning the culture of the English people because language is the vehicle through which culture is transmitted. After the amalgamation people from different cultures started coming together through serving colonial masters, trade nationalist struggle. These resulted in pockets of sub-culture mostly in urban areas.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The divide and rule strategy was used by the British colonial authority in Nigeria to maintain the permanent division of the federating units (kingdoms). To put it another way, the colonial power purposefully discouraged any political or other kind of movement that would have sowed the seeds of national consciousness in colonial Nigerians. As a result, free Nigerians are still struggling to figure out the political foundation for their coexistence as a people, even as they ostentatiously acknowledge the pressing need to build their nation. (Njoku and Anieke, 2013).

The founding fathers of Nigeria adopted the regional government making the centre weak but the long years of the military rule centralized powers. The lack of equity, justice and fair play in the Nigerian state have manifested in agitation for secession and other violent attacks on the Nigerian state. The Northeast is being terrorized by Boko Haram and South East by Indigenous Peoples of Biafra (IPOB), in the South West by those agitating for Yoruba Nation. In the Northern Nigeria the Hausa people are fighting to get freedom from the Fulani people. In the Niger Delta region we have those agitating for control over their oil.

Conflicts between farmers and herdsmen, kidnapping, and criminal activity are also present. Bombings, inter communal conflicts, and various forms of terrorism have created front lines for broadcast and daily media across the nation (Esien & Adams 2019). Culture is the filter through which we view the world and determine whether or not a conflict is actually occurring. Lebaron (1993) describes an interesting story from an interview she conducted in Canada, during which an elderly Chinese guy claimed he had not had a fight in forty years. His Confucian background may have influenced him to view the world through lenses of peace rather than conflict, which is one of the probable explanations for his comment. It is likely that people from other cultural backgrounds would have viewed the same events differently and formed a different conclusion.

Even though it is now abundantly evident that culture and conflict are inextricably linked, conflict is not caused by culture alone. Culture is all about us, like a benign, unseen force. We become conscious of cultures—ours and theirs—and the distinctions between them when we encounter someone or a group that does not share our beliefs or worldview. One's sense of normalcy seems to be under jeopardy, and rather than challenging our own conceptions of normalcy, we frequently emphasize the other person's relative "abnormality." In Nigeria, religious fanaticism and ethnicity are two factors contributing to social instability.

Murithi (2016) claims that in the decades that followed colonialism, Africa saw an enormous number of wars of all kinds and sizes. In Africa, colonialism severely damaged or destroyed cultural sense of self. After all, the primary goal of the colonial master's governments was to make sure that indigenous people felt cut off from their own culture so that they could be subjugated more readily. The idea that European culture and lifestyles were better to African ones was fostered by colonialism. As a result, it has started to collapse the social solidarity that most pre-colonial regions enjoyed because African shared values encouraged people to put the good of the community before their own interests. Colonialism introduced concepts like individualism and selfishness.

Slavery and colonialism historically destroyed the foundation for African identity. It is not surprising that the question of identity became entangled with culture in Africa. Legacy, and economic resource control after colonialism collapsed, ultimately resulting in a boiling pot of political unrest and bloodshed. Like with the South African example, conflict resolution cannot be limited to ending poverty, even though it is unquestionably a crucial

issue to address because poverty spreads when people lack access to resources and education. Poverty exacerbates social tension, breeds mistrust, and encourages criminality, all of which erode society's social cohesion. Rebuilding ties and social solidarity is crucial to achieving peace, particularly in the case of ethnic conflicts. The only way to do this is to cultivate a cultural value system that prioritizes resource allocation and sharing. Comparable cultures prior to colonization, which was largely successful in its attempt to eradicate them. They are still there in certain cases.

Nigeria has been dealing with a number of issues, including political unrest, armed banditry, and religious prejudice and rioting, violence following elections, kidnapping, assassinations, etc. Since these crimes frequently include the loss of valuable lives, abuse, and disregard for other people, they have a tendency to dehumanize the victims. Nigerians suffer from a psychological impact that includes tension, chaos, and a lack of love for one another. Boundary issues, religious extremism, herdsman and fanners clashing, and ethnic grievances against each other all exist. But unlike other cultures, Nigerian cultures are characterized by peace and love for one another rather than violence or divisiveness as is the case today.

So, what is the current pattern of instability in Nigeria? The apparent response is that Nigeria must continue to bear the cost of its economic collapse and deteriorating infrastructure, which falls on the shoulders of the common people. Is Nigeria becoming a less turbulent place than it was? No, is the response. It is evident that as technology advances and other cultures and lifestyles are incorporated into Nigerian society, the country's instability is rising in direct proportion. As the creator, propagandist, and perpetrator of the catastrophic series of events that defined the precarious character of the contemporary Nigerian state, the researchers are not attempting to court martial civilization. Nonetheless, it is indisputable that modernity has damaged the life-tree of indigenous Nigerian cultural values and the connection that formerly connected modern Nigeria to the peace, stability, and contentment experienced by its forefathers (Okediji, 2015) in Esien and Adams 2019.

Political rivalry and various forms of ethno-religious conflict have rendered Nigeria destined to face severe peace and security issues. Peace has grown elusive as a result of the many ethnic groups' persistent use of one violent encounter over another against the federal authority. Starting with the Niger-Delta insurgency in the South-South and continuing with the latest Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast and the numerous conflicts between farmers and herdsman.

However, the effects of these crises are especially harmful to civilian populations, displacing them within their own country, robbing them of peace and security, and impeding their capacity to realize their own potential. However, the more individuals are impacted by this raging instability, the more new forms and patterns of social crises emerge as a result. Due to the uncertainty and instability that emerge from these conditions—a lack of basic necessities, unforgiving settings, and authoritarian governments many turn to violence in Esien and Adam 2019 to defend their right to survive (Amamio, 2012).

Gap in literature

From the literature review it is necessary to indicate the gap in literature which the present search helps to fill. Review of available literature showed that no research has so far been conducted on cultural elements, peace promotion and social stability in Nigeria especially in the rural communities of Nigeria. The cultural elements which are internalized through socialization are more adhered to in the rural areas.

1.2 Objective of the study

The general objective of this study is to examine how disregard to cultural elements and timely mechanism for conflict resolution led to social instability in Nigeria. Specific objectives, to: _

- a. Determine the main obstacles to the advancement of social stability and peace.
- b. Find out if cultural values have a major impact on fostering societal stability and peace. Examine
- c. if it is possible to promote peaceful co-existence without justice.
- d. Assess how timely conflict resolutions promote peaceful co-existence.
- e. Evaluate how internalization of cultural elements promotes peaceful co-existence.

1.3 Research Questions

In order to fulfill the study's goals and objectives, the following research questions were posed:

1. What are the main elements that work against the advancement of social stability and peace?
2. How much do cultural values affect the advancement of societal stability and peace? To what extent is it possible to promote peaceful co-existence without justice?
3. To what extent could timely conflict resolution promote co-existence?
4. How will internalization of cultural elements promote peaceful co-existence?

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Study Design

With anecdotal data drawn from qualitative and historical literature on the customs and cultures of over 250 language groups in Nigeria from pre-colonial to present times, the study's design is primarily descriptive and analytical.

2.2 Data

Data for the study were gathered from textbooks, journals and internet materials. These were complemented by oral traditions (interviews, group discussions and folklores) in traditional Nigeria societies by traditional rules, historians and traditional religious adherents.

3.0 Findings/ Discussions

3.1 Findings/Results

The study underscored and underlined how culture is a potent tool for regulating and managing people's attitudes, behaviors, and interpersonal relationships in society. It was also found that a country's socioeconomic progress is significantly influenced by its culture.

It is indisputable that social stability and peace are vital for any nation. Furthermore, there is still a clear correlation between people's customs, traditions, and beliefs and how they view social solidarity, peace, and unity amidst variety (Esien and Adam 2019).

A people's judgment and cultural values, which are the foundation of their ethics, are shaped by their culture. The study found that reviving the cultural norms of pre-civic Nigerian society can improve societal stability and harmony.

Land disputes and communal clashes are better settled by conflict resolution because of the African shared value giving and taking than la\ courts with litigation where the winner takes all.

The study revealed that since the introduction of western socio-political and economic power into African traditional society, cultural elements which were critical in peace building in different cultural societies in Nigeria have been neglected or even denigrated.

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When members of a cultural group internalize the cultural elements they become self-policing because it is a form of social control and determinant of action in a particular social situation. These things are achieved through honesty, justice and selflessness. The ultimate aim of the cultural elements is to maintain peace which is the bedrock of peaceful co-existence in any cultural group. Culture of peace brings people together regardless of their nationality, religious and cultural backgrounds.

The cultural elements help to imbibe in the community members that for the promotion of peaceful co-existence one must place the community above himself or herself that is the essence of communal living. This helps the community members to be at peace with one another. Peace is desirable and the outcome of order within a holistic perspective. - '

The peace of the individual and cultural group is achieved through justice because it is only when there is _justice that peace will reign. This peace and justice are reinforced through the mechanisms for timely conflict resolutions which are part of the cultural elements. This has maintained peaceful co-existence in traditional cultures. The family is a reflection of the wider society. In the past families were united as their Brother's keeper but capitalism introduced individualism into family life which has disrupted original family life. Many families are under tension now for different reasons: Because of the absence of love and justice peace has eluded many Nigerian families.

Although social change agents have had an impact on African cultural elements, people can still recognize their shortcomings and acknowledge their limitations through the strength of humility and the African moral code, which is based on a set of unwavering principles and serves as a guide for behavior even when others are not looking. Reviving the value of African shards is possible.

3.2 Discussions

a. Overview of culture of Peace in Nigeria

African shared values are based on the principles of eat and let others eat and treat others the same way you will like others to treat you. The ultimate aim is to make individuals place the community above themselves is desired, peace loving, advocating for peace, and inculcating the spirit of selflessness among community members. This shared values help to make peaceful co-existence possible among community members before the advent of colonialism and the subsequent partitioning of Africa in 1885. The white men according to (Achebe) had struck the things that held us together and we have fallen apart. Many parents can no longer transmit to their children the African shared values and other cultural elements because of the agents of social change; some parents are even cultural deviants with no cultural elements internalized to transmit to their children.

The idea of a culture of peace originated in Africa and was first introduced to the world stage by UNESCO in 1989 during the worldwide congress on "peace in the minds of men," which was held in Yamoussoukro, Cote d'Ivoire.

The United Nations General Assembly believes that a culture of peace consists of: A set of values, attributes, traditional and customs, modes of behavior and ways of life that reflect and are directed towards respect for life, rejection of violence in all its forms, recognition of the equal rights of men and women, the rights of everyone to freedom of expression, attachment to the principle of democracy, freedom justice, etc. Peace building is the action taken to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avert a relapse into conflict.

Cultural Elements and Peace Promotion/'Social integration according to Agune (1998) is achieved because social members carry in their heads during the process of socialization what they ought to do and what they ought not to do under certain situation. Each person judges himself and his fellows according to these subtle and ubiquitous rules, and any violation no matter how minor is not encouraged but rather attracts punishment though it could be slight or great depending on the gravity of the violation.

Folkways: A child is surrounded by folkways therefore, behaviour is accepted, repeated and then passed on to succeeding generation and becomes one of the ways of the folk. Folkways are therefore relatively durable standardized practice regarded as a must for every societal member for proper conduct under different situations. Conformity is done by informal social control mechanisms like gossip, ridicule and ostracism, etc. (Agune 2022).

Mores: Similar folkways and mores, informal and communal sanctions based on group sentiments are the norm. The education they receive from their parents' homes, from other households, and most importantly, from the high-level instruction provided at boys' puberty ceremonies, educate them in tribal lore and traditions, incubating social origins without conscious or intentional thought but through customary practices of a people.

Customary Law: Customary laws serve to reinforce the mores. Those who do not conform are punished and the fear of being punished is enough to make some people conform. Under customary law, the law is not coded but there is special organization for the enforcement of the social rules according to (Aguene 2022). After being apprehended, he was securely detained until the council met, which always happened as soon as possible. The accused was positioned in the center of the councilors' circle, where he could hear everything said about him and himself by everyone else. The accuser then made his case and presented all of the witness-supported evidence he had. In exchange, the prisoner offered to use every tool at his disposal to defend the case, presenting any opposing evidence, and his response was given careful consideration. Following a comprehensive discussion, the councilors reached a decision based on the decision of the majority. This timely conflict resolution promotes peace in a given cultural group by preventing people from joining sides to escalate the conflict. (Shapera 1930) I Aguene (2022)

Custom: Custom refers to practices that have taken place and handed down from generation to generation as part of social heritage of a people. People respond because it has been the practice from the time of their ancestors. It therefore connotes long established usage and contrasted with what is new, anything contrary to this is regarded as abomination and sanctions like gossip, ridicule, or even ostracism is applied.

Morality: Morality implies real sentiment behind the observation of the rule not because of punishment awaiting offenders but because of certain amount of principle and firmness of character in one's conduct. The norm is not being observed because others are doing the same but because it conforms to an abstract principle of justice, purity, fairness and truth internalized by the individual (Aguene 2022)

In many rural societies, the elders who hold Ofo (a piece of wood cut from tree), which is not a spirit but the symbols of authority, which descends from the ancestors, serve as a guarantee of truth. In traditional societies, it is believed that any immoral person holding the Ofo will die a bad death. These titled men help in settling disputes in their areas. This gives room for timely and unbiased judgment that promote peaceful co-existence.

Religion: Those who are suspected of doing something wrong without seen are made to swear oath. Those who are suspected of killing somebody are made to swear oath and if they do not die within a space of time they are exonerated from the offences. Enemies do not eat sacrificial meal together.

Etiquette: It is concerned with the proper form for doing something. It serves as an external manifestation of good intentions towards others like greetings, well wishing. Those who frown their faces always are accused of bewitching others in many traditional societies gossip and ridicule are used to check this abnormal behaviour:

c. Mechanisms for timely conflict resolutions

The Ubuntu movement, which originated in Eastern, Central, and Southern Africa, is a fascinating example. Ubuntu is a way of life rather than just a method for resolving disputes. Ubuntu makes an effort to define what it is to be human. Someone who embodies Ubuntu is regarded as being giving, welcoming, amiable, kind, and sympathetic. "A person is a person through other people" is the underlying tenet of the Ubuntu worldview. Because we are social beings who participate, belong, and exist through others, we are inherently human. (Munishi, 2016).

According to Murithi (2006), Understanding that all people are interconnected can serve as the foundation for developing partnerships across groups when the principles of Ubuntu are applied to the fields of conflict resolution and peace building. This indicates that everyone in the community feels a part of the process. The community as a whole will be harmed if there is dispute with one member of the group, and they will all work to promote harmony and conflict resolution. To right historical wrongs, uphold social harmony, and promote peace, ubuntu societies created methods for settling conflicts, fostering reconciliation, and establishing peace. At different levels, every segment of society was engaged in attempting to resolve an issue that was perceived as endangering the community's social cohesiveness. It would be encouraged for offenders to accept accountability, express regret, beg for pardon, and make a suitable payment. In exchange, the sufferers would be inspired to extend mercy. It's a

comparable method to "restorative justice" in the West. Ubuntu and African shared values are similar in that people prioritize the interests of the collective before their own.

As one might expect, this process is not always simple because of the ease with which offenders might refuse to acknowledge their wrongdoing and victims' ability to forgive. It's fascinating to note, though, that this model is not wholly victim-centered. Remarkably uncommon in the West is the equal attention paid to providing help to both the abusers and the victims. Instead of punishment, the focus is on empathy and healing. This makes sure that a culture of vengeance or retaliation doesn't grow and intensify.

African traditional societies lack a uniform conflict resolution strategy. The variety of tactics can be categorized into five areas, according to Nwanunbi (2001): (a) Self-help; (b) Peer group assembly; (c) Village council; and (d) Council of elders/privilege groups.

Self-help: This includes all the sanction mechanisms where by society allows and indeed, expects an injured person to take action on his own to redress the wrong done to him. Thus everybody is left entirely on his own to take to secure justice in any situation in which his person, property, or interest has been violated. In doing this he may of course call for help from his kinsmen. This strategy is most pronounced in uncentralized societies. The point is that the matter is resolved amicably instead of escalating the conflict.

Peer Group Assembly: This method of conflict resolution is mostly associated with societies based on age grades. In some other uncentralized societies such as among some Igbo groups certain offences involving women are reviewed by women's groups in the first instance. It is only when such peer groups admit inability to resolve the issue that the wider society steps in. The timely intervention leads to peaceful co-existence.

Village Council; this strategy provides for the whole community to listen into the issues of contention and make suggestions for the resolution of the conflict. Though a few influential persons may sway the divisions, village councils allow chance for intervention by contestants, their kinsmen and other allies. The settlement is arrived at in a public setting although it is time consuming strategy for conflict resolution. It does not allow conflict to escalate.

Council of Elder/Privileged Groups: Societies in which authority follow the gerontocracy principles repose a lot of confidence on the council of elders in both governmental and legal sphere of activity. The rationale is that in environment where experience and wisdom tend to be correlated with age, decisions by the elderly are the best to be expected. African societies resolve thorny issues through these exclusive and privileged organizations, This timely intervention results in peaceful co-existence.

d. National integration attempt

For the purpose of national integration there must be justice, equality, fairness and the observation of the principles of rule of law. Some of the social stability efforts of the Nigeria federal government include:

A collective consciousness, or a shared knowledge and manner of acting in the world, is comprised of people's conventions, beliefs, and values, according to Durkheim. People are brought together and social integration is created by the collective awareness. One advantage of integration is that it fosters a sense of oneness within a society by enabling members to respect the cultures of others. People who participate in many societies also broaden their horizons and acquire resources from various cultures.

Four conferences in post-independence Nigeria.

i. National Youth Service Corps (NYSC)

The National Youth Service Corps Scheme was established in 1973 as a deliberate public policy to ensure the realization of the Reconciliation, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction introduced by the Federal Government under General Yakubu Gowon after the Nigeria Civil War 1967-1970. It aimed to raise a new crop of disciplined and detribalized Nigerians by allowing the youths to undergo national service in states other than their own for the purpose of national development and integration. The scheme was established with the view to promoting peace and encouraging mutual understanding of the common ties among Nigerian Youths, thereby fostering national unity.

With the adoption of the 1999 constitution, which ushered in democratic rule, the enabling law establishing the NYSC is now referred to as "The NYSC Act CAP N84, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004".

The objective of NYSC according to National Youth Service Corps Yearbook 2018 includes the following:

- a. To instill in Nigerian youth a culture of hard labor at the workplace and patriotic, obedient service to the country in any circumstance that may arise.
- b. To strengthen the moral standards of Nigerian youth by providing them with knowledge about national accomplishments, higher values, and social and cultural advancement.
- c. To instill in Nigerian youth the mentalities that, when combined with appropriate training and shared experiences, will enable them to be more readily mobilized for the good of the country.
- d. To encourage the development of self-development abilities in Nigerian youth, so enabling them to acquire the spirit of self reliance, to support the nation's economy's quicker growth.
- e. To foster national cohesion and unity by creating shared bonds among Nigerian youth.
- f. To eradicate biases and ignorance;
- g. To establish a sense of collective existence and shared destiny among Nigerians; and
- h. To verify firsthand the numerous commonalities among all ethnic groups in the country.

ii. National Orientation agency (NOA)

The National Orientation Agency (NOA) is a Nigerian government agency that was founded in 2005. The primary reason for its establishment is to promote and instill a sense of national consciousness, unity, and patriotism among Nigerians. The agency is tasked with the responsibility of educating citizens about their civic responsibilities, values, and the need to work together for the development and progress of Nigeria. `

Key objectives of the National Orientation Agency include:

- ❖ Promoting national unity and cohesion by fostering a sense of belonging among Nigeria's diverse ethnic and religious groups.
- ❖ Encouraging civic participation and responsible citizenship.
- ❖ Disseminating information on government policies, programs, and initiatives to the public.
- ❖ Promoting ethical values, integrity, and good governance,
- ❖ Combating social vices, such as corruption, drug abuse, and insecurity.
- ❖ Promoting gender equality and respect for human rights.

The NOA uses various communication channels, including radio, television, social media, Workshops, and community engagement programs, to reach out to Nigerians and achieve its objectives. It plays a crucial role in nation-building and ensuring that citizens are well-informed about their rights and responsibilities in a democratic society.

Approaches to Conflict Resolution

Lederach (1996), cited by Vassalo (2016), makes a distinction between two methods of approaching you need" is the prescriptive model's unstated motto. Lederach claims that the majority of training programs created in the prescriptive model tradition are essentially designed to produce a certain conflict resolution, specifically prescriptive and elicitive models, which are specifically related to training individuals who would be involved in conflict resolution. "We just have what end result. There is a clear hierarchy: a trainer who is recognized as an authority in the field is at the top of the ladder, and the audience has to be schooled in conflict resolution strategies. The training session is structured around his or her area of expertise. This knowledge is frequently assembled and given to participants in the form of a prepared, fixed model. Said model consists of strategies, such as a concise set of "how to's" that explain how conflicts are resolved and provide methods for putting the strategic approach into practice. "The main objective of the event is to learn and master the model."

Moreover, it is openly presumed that the trainer possesses more reliable, valuable, and pertinent knowledge and experience than the participants, who are viewed more as viewers than as active learners. "Therefore, the prescriptive modality tends to reduce conflict resolution to technology - to technique and skill." "The experts'

knowledge is central, and the participants' knowledge is peripheral." The principles of universality and transferability form the foundation of the prescriptive method. The fact that this model gives participants strong abilities in terms of general conflict resolution theories is undoubtedly its strongest feature. It does not, however, take into account the local cultural environment, or the local cultural perspective on conflict and its resolution.

The elective approach, on the other hand, takes a different tack and contends that training should be used only to "discover, create, and solidify models that emerge from the resources present in a particular setting and respond to needs in that context." This new method is reflected in the way the roles are structured inside the training, with the trainer viewing themselves more as facilitators than as subject matter experts. A highly participatory educational process allows for the discovery and creation of new conflict resolution models. The trainer's primary role is to facilitate this process, rather than to impart knowledge to participants. As one participant put it, "The attitude of the trainer is essentially, 'I do not have answer, but I can work together' with others on a process that may help us find it." Since the participants are the major characters in this scenario and their knowledge is viewed as the training's key resource, the method is firmly anchored in the cultural setting.

Each strategy has definite advantages and disadvantages. In its purest form, neither of them would be totally effective. Instead, a combination of the two would likely be the most successful approach: a solid theoretical and technical foundation of abilities combined with an understanding of the customs, values, and way of life of the area.

RELATIVE DEPRIVATION THEORY AS THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

According to Longlev's (2021) definition, the relative deprivation theory postulates that individuals who perceive themselves as being denied access to resources deemed necessary by their community (such as political voice, money, rights, or status) will either form or join social movements aimed at regaining these perceived necessities.

Relative deprivation has occasionally been identified as a contributing cause to instances of social disorder, including terrorism, civil wars, looting, and riots. Hence, social movements and the disruptive behavior they are linked to are frequently the result of complaints from individuals who believe they are not receiving resources to which they are legally entitled.

American sociologist Robert K. Merton is frequently credited with developing the idea of relative deprivation. According to Merton's research, American troops in the Military Police during World War II were significantly less satisfied with their prospects for advancement than regular GIs.

Author and political science professor Ted Robert Gurr, an American, established an alternative perspective on relative deprivation. Gurr provides an explanation of the connection between relative impoverishment and political violence in his 1970 book *Why Men Rebel*. Gurr investigates the possibility that the main cause of people's propensity for violence is the frustration-aggression mechanism, which is set off by emotions of relative lack. Gurr argues that while this kind of frustration does not always translate into violence, it is more likely to do so the longer people or groups experience relative scarcity. This frustration can then turn into rage, which can then turn into violence.

Relative deprivation theory detractors contend that it is unable to explain why certain individuals, while being denied resources or rights, choose not to participate in social movements that aim to achieve such goals. Relative deprivation theory proponents reply that many of these individuals are just joining the movement to avoid potential disputes and troubles in life, with no assurance that their lives will improve as a result.

4.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusion

Despite possible differences in tribe and tongue, our people's oneness cannot be compromised. Let our shared motivation be a feeling of purpose and community, just as we show during football games. Promoting tolerance, comprehension, and respect for our people's many cultural and religious backgrounds is crucial.

Vassallo (2016) argues that culture influences our moral principles, worldview, and, most importantly, how we handle conflict. For this reason, culture needs to be considered while resolving conflicts. Since culture is always a component in conflict resolution, there is no one-size-fits-all method; nevertheless, we must keep in mind that culture is not the sole element. In order to protect human dignity and the inclusion of all members of society, we should instead strive to create a framework that is a hybrid between our Western principles of conflict resolution and some indigenous traditions. This is the only practical way to bring about positive peace.

A lot of the social conflicts experienced in most societies of Sub-Saharan Africa today, have arisen from the dislocation or the deliberate distortion of cultural elements, whose time-tested structure had sustained the socio-economic and peaceful needs of the population before colonialism (Okonjo1998). For instance, immorality is now being promoted in the entertainment industry at times resulting in conflict like husband snatching.

Though the government have made efforts towards social integration and social stability by creating the following institution: National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), National Orientation Agency (NOA), Federal Character Commission (FCC) National Boundary Commission (NBC) and Judiciary, the need to be made more effective and the issue of political corruption has not been properly addressed.

Nigeria after amalgamation of 1914 became a multi-ethnic society with a value system that derives from the diversity of its people and then different behaviour, religious and cultures. The African shared value internalized through socialization which subjects the individual to group supremacy has been a binding factor for peace and stability

The element of value system included respect for elders, honesty and accountability, cooperation, in duty, discipline, self-confidence and moral courage. Over the years, however, the cherished value system has weakened (vision 2010).The weakening of the value system was as a result of the influence of other cultures, western education, Christianity, Islam, science and technology and English language as the official language of Nigeria.

4.2 Recommendations

Political progress and national cohesion are guaranteed to all under a democratic system of governance, according to Anyim (2018). However, the apparent national dilemma that confronts Nigeria's quest for a progressive nation calls for a reorientation that will galvanize the corporate spirit of Nigeria to truly actualize the enormous potential inherent in our diversity. And Nigerians would then start to develop the required national consciousness, strengthening the foundations of our shared identity as a people.

According to Adetunji and Adeleke (2020) thus, the following ideas are proposed as recommendations for this research:

- Public awareness programs regarding the necessity of fostering a culture that fosters peace in Nigeria are imperative. Theatrical skits and well-packaged musical jingles can do this.
- The three levels of government should support informal education in the home since families play a crucial role in helping children develop the values that society expects of them.
- The diverse ethnic groups that comprise Nigeria as a nation must be treated equally and with justice.
- The government ought to support people living in harmony with one another. Nigeria should, at last, cultivate visionary leadership. These leaders will aid in bringing the opposing ethnic and religious groups together and aid in dispelling the general mistrust that exists between them.

Selflessness helps to remove greed, selfishness, bitterness and rancor in the minds of the people and society. Parents should give their children a good orientation at home. This is because a child who disobeys norms and values at home will not obey school rules and regulations. Parents should as much as possible show good examples to their children. They should play their parental roles very well. These will include providing conducive atmosphere for their children to internalize the cultural elements and the timely mechanisms for conflict resolutions. People should have faith in God as our Protector, Provider, Deliverer and Healer even for those who have converted to Christianity

from traditional religion. English language should be taught alongside local dialects and should not be given any preference especially in primary and secondary schools curriculums.

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