

**POLITICS AND CONFLICTS: A STUDY OF
EBIRALAND, NIGERIA (1977-2007)**

BY

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**POLITICS AND CONFLICTS: A STUDY OF
EBIRALAND, NIGERIA (1977-2007)**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
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POLITICAL SCIENCE**

JUNE, 2013

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this study titled “Politics and Conflicts: A study of Ebiraland, Nigeria (1999-2007)” was carried out by Joshua, Segun under our supervision and that the thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree in this or any other university.

Supervisor

Signature and Date

Co-Supervisor

Signature and Date

DECLARATION

It is hereby declared that this thesis titled “Politics and Conflicts: A Study of Ebiraland, Nigeria (1977-2007)” was undertaken by Joshua, Segun. The thesis is based on his original study in the Department of Political Science and International Relations, School of Social Sciences, College of Development Studies, Covenant University, Ota. The views of other researchers have been acknowledged. It is further restated that this work has not been submitted for the award of degree in this or any other institution.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the ALMIGHTY GOD the fountain of knowledge and embodiment of wisdom who inspired, strengthened, and encouraged me to embark and complete this programme. “But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding” (Job 32:8). To HIM be glory, honour and adoration forever amen.

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Abstract

One important area in conflict studies which has not been given adequate attention in the literature is intra or sub-ethnic conflict. Inadequate research in this area is further exacerbated by the paucity of literature on the relationship between politics and conflict especially at intra-ethnic level. The study prompted by these gaps, therefore, interrogated the impact of politics on clan identity and conflicts; examined the relationship between intra and inter-party clashes and communal unrest; and analyzed the relationship between economic and socio-cultural variables and conflicts in Ebiraland. The study adopted qualitative and quantitative techniques to capture the nature of conflicts in the area. The research method encapsulated the use of survey which involved questionnaire administration, and complemented with interview and focus group discussion. The study came up with the following findings among others: while colonialism laid the foundation of communal conflicts in Ebiraland, political competition and other economic and socio-cultural factors especially from 1979 intensified the conflicts. The Study also found that, an average Ebira is pugilistic and tends to display aggressive tendency at minor provocation. It further identified a relationship between the unequal and lopsided political structure of Kogi State and violence in Ebiraland. The politicization of the existing cultural homogeneity by some political elements using as canon fodders the large number of unemployed youths was also discovered as a major trigger of conflict. Accordingly, the study recommended the need for youth mass employment; government regulatory measure on cultural activities; rotation of key political offices and justiciable distribution of resources and amenities among the ethnic groups in Kogi State. The study concluded that adherence to the proffered suggestions would mitigate the occurrence of conflict in Ebiraland.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Politics is concerned with how policies and laws are formulated, executed and implemented. This view is shared by Duverger (1972 cited in Ajayi and Ogoma, 2012) as the author equates the study of politics to the study of state and exercise of power in governmental institutions. In addition, central to political activities is the allocation of values. Which is why Easton, (1965) contends that politics is basically concerned with the allocation of values. Resources are distributed to members of a society through politics.

It is important to note that conflict is an element of politics. This is because competition for political power among individuals and groups aimed at controlling and distributing scarce resources, most often, is violent-ridden (Easton 1965; Ball 1977; Harris 1979). The interplay of politics and conflict in Nigeria is worrisome. Little wonder that Obasanjo (2002:50-51) asserts that “we fight and sometimes shed blood to achieve and retain political power because for us in Nigeria, the political kingdom has for too long been the gateway to the economic kingdom”. In the same vein, Omoweh (2012) opines that politics in Nigeria is still zero-sum and brutish. This is because political leadership resorts to violence at all levels of political competition in order to remain in power. Political elites fight fiercely to penetrate the state, access its political power and retain it at all cost once it is captured because politics is a lucrative business and a dominant means of accumulation of wealth. Furthermore, Omoweh and Okanya (2005:303) note that “political competition for the control of the state and its political power is now a bloody warfare as the state holds the key to wealth. This explains why those who are in control of the state’s political power hold on to it by all means and at all cost. Herein lies the root causes of communal restiveness”.

The above lends credence to the assertion by Aristotle that “man is by nature a political animal” (cited in Rodee et al, 1983:2). The import of this is that the essence of social existence is politics and that two or more men interacting together are invariably involved in political relationship. To Aristotle, man can only find

fulfilment, access available resources, influence others to accept their views through political interaction with others in an institutionalized setting (the state). Hence, it can be argued that the path to state power that serves as a veritable platform for self-expression and fulfilment is often ridden with violence because of the nature of competition for political power.

It is important to note that Nigeria is not the only country suffused with conflict; in fact, conflict has been humanity's unending affliction, and this calls for great concern. Rupia (1991 cited in Workshop on Disarmament, 1999) puts it more bluntly that as long as people and nations pursue different and conflicting interests, there will always be disagreements, disputes and conflict. This is also political because politics denotes competition for political authority and the control of scarce resources which necessarily generates tension between interests. Hence, conflict may express itself violently when a political system(s) fails to manage conflicting interests (Easton 1965, Ball 1977, Harris, 1979).

Shaw and Wong (1989) (cited in Hund, 2001) estimate that peace comprised only eight percent of the entire recorded history of mankind. Over the last 5600 years, there have been 14500 wars. Only ten of one hundred and eighty-five generations have known uninterrupted peace. Mankind has managed to achieve only two hundred and sixty eight years without war in the past thirty four centuries (Hund, 2001). But these authors failed to explain how they came up with these figures.

Indeed, since the United Nations (UN) was formed in 1945, more than one hundred (100) major conflicts have occurred in the world, leaving more than twenty million (20,000,000) people dead, several millions wounded, with over seventeen million (17,000,000) refugees and twenty million (20,000,000) displaced persons (Ghali, 1992; Nwolise, 2004).

The continent of Africa appears to be the theater of conflict of the globe, going by the frequency of violent conflict in the area. No wonder Osaghae (2005) contends that Africa has been portrayed as having the reputation as the world's leading theater of conflict, war, poverty, disease and instability. Consequently, it is not out of place that

scholars of ethnicity and conflict management often regard Africa as a major laboratory for experimentation and theory building. Conflict triggers are multidimensional, ranging from historical animosities traceable to land tenure system, chieftaincy issues and other cultural practices cum colonial legacies, to factors rooted in complex post-colonial realities birthing poor socio-economic conditions. Unfortunately, West Africa is among the world's most unstable regions. Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, and others have been embroiled in web of conflicts in the last decade, which turned many people to refugees, rebels, and arms spill across porous borders of Africa. Nigeria, Mali and Niger also have been plagued by internal conflicts that have vitiated their capability to see to the security of their citizenry (Adekeye, 2004).

It is necessary to understand the fact that although conflict in Africa and in other places may be attributed to lots of factors which include colonial legacies, identity politics, cultural differences and resource struggle, to mention just a few. However, the fact still remains that politics is a major source of conflict. Clausewitz (1976 cited in Dunning, 2011) asserts that the only source of war is politics because war is simply a continuation of political intercourse with the addition of other means. Before there can be war it is a matter of necessity there must be conflict(s) because conflict prepares the ground for war.

Barron et al (2004) note that many developing countries are afflicted by high level of communal and inter-communal conflicts that do not take the form of civil war, but may yet be the source of significant destruction of livelihood and material property. Ikelegbe (2003) opines that Nigeria is today suffused with communal, ethnic, ethno-religious and political conflicts that often manifest in ferocious and very destructive violence. In the same vein, Imobighe (2003) avers that the frequency of inter-communal violence in Nigeria has brought it to the front burner of political discuss.

The situation has assumed a dangerous dimension since the beginning of Nigeria's Fourth Republic on May 29, 1999. Within the first three years of democratic rule in Nigeria, the country has witnessed not less than forty violent communal or ethnic conflicts, while some old ones had gained additional potency. These include: Zango-

Kataf in Kaduna State; Tiv-Jukun in Wukari, Taraba State; Ogoni-Adoni in Rivers State; Chamber-Ketub in Taraba State; Itshekiri-Ijaw/Urhobo in Delta State; Ife-Modakeke in Osun State; Aguleri-Umuleri in Anambra; Yoruba-Hausa community in Shagamu, Ogun State; Ijaw-Ilaje conflict in Ondo State; the intermittent clashes in Kano, Kano State; Bassa-Egbura in Nassarawa State; Eleme-Okrika in River State; Hausa Fulani-Sawaya in Bauchi State; Fulani-Irigwe and Yelwa-Shendam, both in Plateau State; and the Hausa-Yoruba clashes in Idi-Araba in Lagos State. Ethnic and inter-communal conflicts have permeated the country in such a way that there is hardly any part of the country that has not been affected (Imobighe, 2003).

The Federal Government has increased security in some of these communities, but government authorities have failed to break the cycle of killings by not prosecuting those responsible for these crimes. In all, only few cases of perpetrators have been brought to book (Human Right Watch, 2011). Over the years, various committees and commissions of inquiry have been set up by the Federal Government to examine the issues generating conflict, but their reports and occasional government white papers, have mostly been shelved.

It is pertinent to state that the so called ethnic, religious, communal, inter-communal clashes and so on most often have political colouration. This is because politicians frequently are in the habit of exploiting ethnic, religious and other social divides to canvas for support during elections or protest their defeat which may results in intra or inter group conflicts. That is why elections which are an important feature of politics are always ridden with conflicts and violence. A reflection on past elections in Nigeria brings to the fore the indisputable fact that, violence has become the political culture of Nigeria since independence (Inokoba and Maliki, 2011).

Nigeria has conducted eight general elections since independence in 1960; 1964, 1979, 1983, 1993, 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011 and they were all virtually marred with conflicts and violence because of fierce competition for political power among the politicians. Dunning (2011) observes that political actors are faced with strategic subtitudes either to submit to the ballot box or wriggle their way to power through violence. Quite often, a good number of politicians do adopt violence means which

Carlos and Tommasi, (cited in Dunning, 2011) christen “alternative political technologies”. Similarly, International Crisis Group (ICG) (2011) notes that elections traditionally offer Nigerians politicians a choice to either respect the rules and risk losing to an opponent or avoid the political wilderness by rigging or violence, knowing fully well that to do so is easy, and perpetrators are unlikely to be punished. That is why electoral contest usually involves intra and inter-party conflict that exacerbates existing communal unrest (Onwudiwe and Berwind-Dart, 2010).

In order to come to terms with Nigeria’s present situation, it will be necessary to take a historical excursion into the origin of the country. The amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorates of Nigeria by the British colonial administration in 1914, without taking into cognizance the variegated nature of ethnic configuration of the polity marked the beginning of the country’s political turmoil. Throughout the colonial period, the Great Britain never encouraged maximum interactions among the various groups; rather they exploited their differences to create distrust, suspicion and cleavages among them, which resulted in violent confrontations among them before independence (Okafor, 1997). The situation was further complicated by a tri-regional federalism put in place (Ezera, 1964). The north was dominated by the Hausa-Fulani, the West by the Yoruba and the East by the Igbo.

The structure also encouraged the emergence of regional political parties. The nationalists during anti-colonial struggle tried but to no avail to evolve a nation with an organic unity. Indeed, the adoption of a federal constitution originated from Nigeria’s search for a common unity of its diverse ethnic groups. When it appeared slow in achieving the result, the military under Aguyi Ironsi legislated against divisive tendencies in the country, which turned out to be counter-productive as negative intents were read into Ironsi’s patriotic action. However, subsequent efforts made by the military to tone down on divisive politics led to overarching federal arrangement in which resources were concentrated at the centre, resulting in intense inter-ethnic rivalry for the control of the centre, and the attendant natural resources at its disposal (Imobighe, 2003).

In order to bring about ethnic equity, reciprocity, constructive and creative governance, the country was reorganised into six geopolitical zones. Unfortunately, these measures at creating a more ethnically balanced federal structure have not only culminated into stiff competition among the main ethnic groups in the country, it has equally torn apart different communities within the same ethnic group in the desperate struggle for power and to corner amenities to their respective sides. In fact, the situation has reached a ridiculous level whereby, local communities and villages within the same ethnic group are now claiming separate identities. Politicians have now capitalized on this by evolving mini-ethnic identities around which they now mobilize their villages and clans for selfish political gains (Imobighe 2003). This accounts for violence between groups over access to power and resources (Collier, and Hoeffler, 2004; Cohen, 1974) engineered by political entrepreneurs.

The Ebira Tao people of Kogi State is said to be a homogenous group with the same language, a similar culture and same mythological origin (Tenuche, 2002). However, repeated violent conflict within the Ebira groups has snowballed into a dangerous dimension. The intermittent mayhem has culminated in loss of lives and property, social tension, disruption of family and communal life and mistrust, with the use of dangerous, sophisticated and light weapons, gun running and access to drugs and poisonous substances like cocaine (Tenuche, 2002).

This study analyses the relationship between politics and conflicts, while also focusing attention on other factors like economic and socio-cultural variables in explaining conflicts in Ebiraland. Albeit, Nigeria is the main focus of the study, similar developments in other parts of the world (especially in Africa) were highlighted. The aim is to draw lessons useful for mitigating divisive politics.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The prevalence of conflicts has pervasive dislocation effect on society; it undermines development structures, aggravates poverty, and brings states and civil societies under pressure (WHO, 2002; UNDP, 2006; Institute for Economic and Peace, 2010). It is estimated that lost of economic growth due to societal violence amounts to 10-30 percent of GDP. For example, the Global Peace Index (2010) estimated the total cost

of violence for 2006-2009 at \$28 trillion worldwide. A reduction of the cost of violence by 25 percent would yield a gain of more than \$7 trillion that could be spent for other purposes. Violence, therefore, is a heavy structural and economic burden on societies as it diverts investment resources from development.

However, violent conflicts seem to permeate the Nigeria's socio-political landscape. The 1967-1970 civil war appears to be the worst of all the conflicts since independence. The real threat to security in Nigeria today may not be a full blown national conflagration but pockets of communal conflicts erupting all over the country. Omoweh and Okanya (2005) argued that one grim reality that Nigeria is grappling with today is the resurgence of communal unrest and its threat to national security. Unfortunately, there are no indications at the moment that policy-makers are decisively committed to dealing with the root causes of community skirmishes and attendant threat to national security. Rather, various security committees set up are more focused on dealing with manifestations of community unrest as against the root causes, leading to administration of wrong remedies. It is not a surprise, therefore, that as soon as a cease fire is secured among the warring communities; they resume hostilities in greater intensity as evident in the protracted Tiv-Jukun and Urhobo-Ijaw-Itshekiri crises among others.

It is important to note that as localized as some of these conflicts are, their effects have been felt in other parts of the country because of the multiplicity of factors that usually come to play (Sanda, 2003). For instance, the clash in Sagamu in July 1999 resulted in the death of about 50 people, while a reprisal attack in Kano on 22 July claimed over 100 lives (The News, January, 2000), the Tiv-Jukun communal conflict and the subsequent killing of some soldiers resulted in military counter-attack of genocidal proportion (Bakoji, 2005).

Economically, these conflicts have been burdensome. In fact, a total of N150 billion oil revenue has been deferred and property worth billions of naira destroyed in the carnage arising from communal clashes nationwide (Yahaya, 2005). The government of Delta State in 2003 spent N200 million on soldiers stationed in Warri to maintain peace (Adebanwi 2004). Indeed, conflicts have led to loss of assets both by victims

and the diversion of public funds from developments to pay compensation to victims. In terms of national economic loss the roll is quite revealing of the depth of loss involved in communal clashes nationwide. For example it is estimated that assets worth N59, 672,000 were lost to the Jos crisis in 2001, while government compensation to victims was about N13, 938,000; assets lost to the Kaduna crisis of 2001 ran to about N50,625,000 with government compensation being N32,716,000. The Kano crisis of 2001 resulted in the loss of assets worth N59, 756,000, with compensation totaling about N22,658,000; assets lost to Jos crisis of 2004 was estimated at about N102,932,000 while N85,121,000 was paid as compensation to victims (to mention just a few) (Yahaya, 2005).

In short, the violence in Ebiraland can be considered a microcosm of a wide range of conflicts typical of the Nigerian social system. It is akin to what Bassey (2002) christened a dramatic and extreme manifestation of “Manifest Conflict Process” (MCP). Actors or their representatives pursue their perceptions of mutual incompatible goals by undermining one another or otherwise, the goal seeking capability of another (Sanda, 1986; Bassey, 2002).

Conflicts in Ebiraland, however, have additional dimension of importance in terms of its recurring nature and implication for national security. The strategic location of Ebiraland as gateway to North-South-East parts of the country and its nearness to the capital city makes conflict in this region a problem of national concern. In fact, conflicts in the area have been quite destructive and disruptive to movement and social life.

Specifically, frequent crises in the area have led to worrisome killings making some Ebiras to take refuge in neighbouring states like Lampese (Edo State), Akoko (in Ondo State) among others, political recrimination and loss of property with attendant implication of impoverishing the land. Looking at the trend of conflicts in Ebiraland, it appears that conflict is more prevalent and severe during election times. From the foregoing, it is necessary to probe whether the level of conflicts in Ebiraland could be explained within the context of competition for political power as Jega (2002) argued that contest for political power among the elite in their bid to capture the state is often

characterized by cut-throat competition, resulting in the mobilization of sentiment and negative message and manipulation of ethno-religious and communal identities for their selfish end (with attendant violence). This is the issue that constitutes the problematic of this study. Therefore, it becomes clear that discourse on nature of politics in the land needs to be re-examined, so that illuminating ideas on how to promote peace can be addressed, hence, the need for this inquiry. Further more, most studies on Ebiraland have not given adequate attention to the relationship between politics and conflict nor viewed conflict in Ebiraland and in other places from different perspectives.

1.3. Research Questions

The following research questions serve as guides to the study:

- i. How has identity politics mitigated or aggravated conflicts in Ebiraland?
- ii. Of what impact are deep-seated struggles among warring groups to acquire, use and retain power to conflicts in Ebiraland?
- iii. To what extent are intra and inter-party clashes a contributory factor to communal unrest in Ebiraland?
- iv. What are the contributory roles of economic and socio-cultural variables to conflicts in Ebiraland?

1.4. Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to find out the impact of politics on clan identity and conflicts in Ebiraland. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- i. interrogate the relationship between deep-seated struggles among warring groups to acquire, use and retain power and conflicts in Ebiraland.
- ii. examine the relationship between intra and inter-party clashes and communal unrest.
- iii. analyse the relationship between economic and socio-cultural variables and conflicts in Ebiraland.

1.5 Research Propositions

- i. There is a significant relationship between identity politics and violent conflicts.
- ii. There is a significant relationship between deep seated struggles among warring groups to acquire, use and retain power and conflicts.
- iii. There is a significant relationship between intra and inter-party clashes and communal unrest.
- iv. There is a significant relationship between economic and socio-cultural factors and violent conflicts.

1.6. Significance of the Study

The world over, societies experience various forms of civil unrest irrespective of their level of development. Granted that the severity and casual factors may differ, it is not to be accepted that conflicts which happen in human collectivities, are normal and should be condoned, especially when they occur too frequently (Omogbe and Omohan, 2005). Conflict has dysfunctional and disruptive impact on society such as anarchy, loss of lives and wanton destruction of properties, dislocation or dismemberment of family ties and the diversion of scarce resource from developmental to less notable ends (Imobighe, 2002; Garuba, 1998; Bouma and Singleton, 2004).

In many developing countries, violent conflict constitutes a central political, social and economic problem. Unfortunately, violence research is nearly non-existent in many developing countries. Where such research exists, researchers themselves have to deal with serious challenges. It is often undertaken on an ad-hoc basis with rigid financial budgets but without adequate institutionalized structures. In many countries, there is a complete lack of empirical research. In others, it is dangerous to study violence because powerful groups in society or the state fear discovery of their involvement. For example, it is not unusual for journalists who investigate violence to suffer attack precisely because they shed light on forms of violence in a way that constitutes a threat to strongmen or formal political authorities (Imbusch and Veit, 2011). It has also been argued by Smyth (2001) that some governments in divided societies perceive research on division and conflict as undesirable activity and oppose

it. The above results in paucity of literature on violent conflicts in developing countries.

Looking at the contemporary world, it is not an overstatement to say that research on violence and conflicts and their outcomes are more advanced in and on Western Europe and North America, which are regions where organized political violence has been largely contained since the Second World War (Beaumont, 1995; Gantzel and Schwinghammer, 2000; Fearon and Laitin 2003; Wilki, Hippler and Zakar 2011). In countries affected most by political violence, academic research tends to be poor, whereas it is strong in countries less affected by political violence (Wilki, Hippler and Zakar, 2011).

In essence, given the comparatively high rate, scope and problem of conflict in Africa continent, violent phenomena are understudied (Veit, Barolsky and Pillay, 2011). Despite the pervasiveness of violent ethnic and other conflicts and the commonplace presumption that political conflicts in Africa are generally ethnic-laden, conflict studies remain an underdeveloped field of study. Research in the area faces a number of serious problems. These range from the hostile terrain of research to paucity of funds and local expertise. This demonstrably has a direct implication for the protracted character of conflicts, and the inability to deal with them (Osaghae, 2001). That is why this study is a contribution to filling some of the gaps in the literature on conflict in Africa.

In addition, most research on violent conflicts in Africa are undertaken in institutions in Europe, North America, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain and Sweden (Veit, Barolsky and Pillay 2011; Skidmore and Lawrence, 2007; Hinnells and King 2007; Gayer and Jaffrelot, 2009). This has serious negative consequences, because scientific findings from abroad are much less suited for stimulating public or political debates within a country. Violence research is likely to gain more attention and legitimacy when it comes from within the society rather than from abroad (Imbusch and Veit, 2011). Finlay cited in Smyth (2001) in his contribution, raises the issue of identity of the researcher and its impact on analysis, a theme elaborated on by Hermann cited in Smyth (2001). The issue of who conducts the research has

implications for the way the research is conceptualized, carried out, analyzed and subsequently used.

Taking African as an example, most of the researches on conflicts in Africa are done by non-Africans. The limited or non-existent involvement of African researchers in such research severely restricts its local relevance or applicability and as a result, much of the research conducted has little policy impact. This research is conducted by an African, within Africa context in an African institution. Political and socio-economic developments leading to civil strife remained unnoticed, sometimes for decades. On-going attempts to install “conflict early-warning systems” are doomed to failure if the quantity of scientific research is not increased (Veit and Pillay, 2011).

Most researches on conflicts in Africa are mostly qualitative based (Veit and Pillay, 2011). This is in line of argument of Osahgae (2001) that the state of conflict research in African divided societies leaves much to be desired. For example, more scientifically oriented scholars could lament the fact that the prevalent methodology is more often qualitative rather than quantitative. Thus, there is need to add quantitative method which is why this research endeavour is worthwhile because it is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis.

Many studies on violence in Africa are often undertaken by journalists (Rana, 2004) or by civil society and political activists (Haqqani, 2005; Roy, 2009) although such studies are crucial in providing basic information on events, perpetrators and victims but they often lack theoretical underpinnings. This study utilizes eclectic theory as an explanatory tool. Worst still, research are mostly supported by funding institutions when such conflicts have security implications on their countries (Smyth, 2001). It is not surprising, therefore, that research on local conflicts of this nature that has no security implications on donors countries hardly enjoy their support, hence the dearth of literature on local conflicts in developing countries which is why analysis of available literature on conflicts points to the fact that, sub-ethnic or intra-ethnic conflicts have not received adequate attention in research studies on conflict (Ibeanu, 2003; Tenuche, 2009; Onwuzuruigbo, 2010).

In the same vein, Murshed (2011) emphasizes the uniqueness of local conflicts and argues for more studies on the drivers and consequences of conflict at a more local level within nation-states of the world. This is because cross-sectional approach to conflict studies disguise what is salient to an individual conflict in a region within a country. It is also often misleading, resulting in one size fits all type of policy prescriptions that can backfire. Cross-sectional conflict studies diminish the relevance of local conflicts. Internal conflicts in many developing countries are highly localized and confined to a few small geographical regions. These do not necessarily seriously undermine the central authority of the state, but continue to retard human development in various quarters even though the state as a whole is making progress.

This study focuses on politics and conflict using Ebiraland as a case study. Although quite a lot of works have been conducted on Ebiraland as far as the researcher knows there is no significant work on the relationship between communal politics and communal violence and its implication on communal and national politics which is within the scope of this study. This study shall contribute in closing up some of the gaps existing in the current literature in the area of study. Some researchers and historians have carried out studies on Ebiraland; however, only very few of these works gave little consideration in relating politics with conflicts in the area. As far as the researcher is concerned there is no study on Ebiraland that combine the qualitative and quantitative data gathering techniques in analyzing issues in the area. In addition, the region is a microcosm of Nigeria thus, solutions proffer to politics and conflicts in Ebiraland can be applied in resolving conflicts at national level. The significance of this study therefore, lies in the fact that it intends to be significant contribution to the literature on violent conflicts in Africa, Nigeria and Ebiraland in particular.

1.7 Research Methodology

This section details the methods applied to carry out this study. Essentially, it focuses on the selection and the mix of methodology deemed suitable for the study including, among others, the design of the research, population, sample size determination, types and sources of data and the procedures for data gathering and analysis.

The study adopts a triangulation approach often referred to as methodological pluralism. Triangulation connotes mixing of data or methods such that a researcher uses different techniques to get access to different facets of the same social phenomenon (Danermark, 2002; Sayer, 2002). The mixing of methodologies, like survey data with interviews is a profound form of triangulation. Bouchard (1976:268) argues that the convergence or agreement between two methods “enhances our belief that the results are valid and not a methodological artifact”. Triangulation can be labeled as the “between or across methods” if they serve as a vehicle for cross validation when two or more distinct methods are found to be congruent and yield comparable data. There is “within-method” triangulation which uses multiple methods within a given method. In short, “within-method” triangulation essentially involves cross-checking for internal consistency or reliability. While “between-method” triangulation tests the degree of external validity (Todd, 1979). In a nutshell, triangulation is a combination of appropriate qualitative and quantitative research methods.

Qualitative research methods simply denotes a process of investigating a phenomenon involving large-scale survey using in-depth interview, focus group discussion which can facilitate the scooping of necessary information from the living witnesses of the phenomenon under study. Qualitative methods make possible the building of a whole mass of information rich in description and explanation, as well as critical evaluation of informants’ words and opinions.

Conversely, quantitative research refers to step-by-step investigation of phenomena with the aid of survey design in data gathering and statistical techniques in analysis of data (Cresswell, 2003; Andrade, 2009). The two methods explicated above are complementary, and both may be seen in a research design. Ragin (1994:92) has explained one way the style complements each other:

the key feature common to all qualitative methods can be seen when they are contrasted with quantitative methods. Most quantitative data techniques are data condensers. They condense data in order to see the big picture. Qualitative methods, by contrast, are best understood as data enhancers. When data are enhanced, it is possible to see key aspects of cases more clearly.

Thus, the study to a large extent combined these two research methods namely; a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods.

1.7.1 Research Design

A research design is a plan that guides an investigator as he or she collects, analyzes, and interprets observations. It is a logical model of proof that allows a researcher to draw inferences concerning causal relationships among the variables under investigation. A research design also defines the domain of generalizability, that is, whether the obtained interpretations can be generalized to a larger population or to different situations (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992). The research design adopted for this study is the survey type of research. A survey research design is one in which a researcher observes the object of study as they are without manipulating them with the aim of collecting firsthand information (Ojo, 2003). Collection of large and standardized data from the field-specified groups or population using well structured in-depth interviews and questionnaire can be facilitated through research design (Fawole et al., 2006). Quantitative data was generated through questionnaire while qualitative data was generated through in-depth interview and focus group discussion. In a nutshell, research design enables researcher to exploit the factors that can not be observed directly.

1.7.2 Research Population

Ebira people live in Nassarawa, Edo and Kogi States. However, the largest concentration of Ebira popularly referred to as Ebira Tao reside in Kogi state. (there are dialectical differences among the different Ebira groups). In other words the population of the study is the entire Ebira people.

1.7.3 Sample Size Determination

The objective of research work is to draw inference from a population in order to make generalization on the target population. However, because of the large population involved, in most studies researchers hardly study the entire population. Therefore, sample is often drawn from the population. As stated earlier, Ebira people are found in Nassarawa, Edo and Kogi State. In view of the large population in this study, the Ebira Tao in Kogi State, Nigeria which is the largest Ebira group

constitutes the sample for this study. The group presently occupies four local governments of the state, namely; Okene, Okehi Adavi and Ajaokuta. The choice of Ebira Tao is based on the fact that it is the largest concentration of Ebira people. From which the sample was drawn based on Yamane and Cochran formulae.

Yamani (1964) and Cochran (1967) formula

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}. \text{ Where}$$

n = the sample size,

N = population of study,

1 = a Constant

e = marginal error.

Okene = 320, 260

$$\text{Therefore } \frac{320,260}{1+320,260(0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{320,260}{1+320,260(0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{320,260}{1+320,260(0.0025)}$$

$$= \frac{320,260}{1+800.65}$$

$$n = 400$$

Adavi = 202, 194

$$\text{Therefore } \frac{202,194}{1+202,194(0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{202,194}{1+505.485}$$

$$n = 400$$

Ajaokuta & Okehi = 322, 320

$$\text{Therefore } \frac{322,320}{1+322,320(0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{322,320}{1+322,320(0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{322,320}{1+322,320(0.0025)}$$

$$= \frac{322,320}{1+805.8}$$

$$n = 400$$

Total Sample size = 400+400+400 =1200

$$= 399.9 = 400$$

To this end therefore, 400 respondents constituted the sample size for Okene, 400 for Adavi, and 400 for Ajaokuta and Okehi combined in this research work resulting in 1200 respondents all together.

1.7.4 Sampling Techniques

Given the nature of the subject and the inherent advantages of non-probability sampling procedures, the non-probability sampling procedures were adopted. This is sequel to the position that:

Although accurate estimates of the populations' parameters can be made only with probability samples, social scientists do employ non-probability samples. The major reasons for this practice are convenience and economy, which under certain circumstances (e.g. exploratory research), may outweigh the advantages of using probability sampling (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias 1992:175).

In a nutshell, non-probability sampling technique was adopted because of its advantage to reach a target sample quickly. As such, simple random sampling (of non-probability method) was adopted for the survey, while purposive sampling was used to reach our respondents. Purposive sampling technique was also adopted to select participants for interview and focus group discussion. The choice of the purposive sampling technique in this study is premised on the fact that, the primary data required for this study especially interview can only be provided by traditional rulers, researchers that have conducted studies on Ebiraland and politicians that are well informed and possess adequate knowledge on the causes and management of violence in Ebiraland. This necessitates a conscious approach in identifying such individuals with such uncommon characteristics for the study.

1.7.5 Research Instrument for Data Collection

The survey data on the causes, nature and consequences of conflict in Ebiraland were gathered using a well structured questionnaire, in-depth interview and focus group discussion. The questionnaire contains both closed and open-ended questions divided into four sections, with each of the sections focusing on a specific segment of the study. The first section of the questionnaire addresses issues bordering on clan identity politics and conflict. The second section solicits information on competition

to acquire, retain and the use of political power and conflict. The third section, however, dwells extensively on the implications of intra and inter-party conflicts and communal unrest. The fourth section solicits information on economic and socio-cultural variables exacerbating conflict in Ebiraland. The in-depth interview as well as focus group discussion, in like manner cover similar questions as contained in the research objectives.

1.7.6 Sampling

In this study, 1200 copies of the research questionnaires were administered to Ebira community. This is also called structured interview which involved asking a set of questions, using the questionnaire schedule, to determine respondents' perception on a wide range of issues of interest to the study. The questionnaire administration captured Ebira indigenes mainly although some non indigenes were equally captured so as to get balance information. The questionnaire addressed issues such as impact of clan politics on communal conflict in Ebiraland, struggle for political power, inter-party conflict, socio-economic variables intervening between politics and conflicts in Ebiraland among others. The administration of questionnaire was targeted on places where there have been violent conflicts in Ebiraland like Ihima, Adavi, Obehirra, Okene, Ogaminana, to mention just a few.

Of the 1200 respondents, only 850 were returned. The shortfall was attributed to the fact that the respondent developed a lot of suspicion with regards to the intentions of the researcher in spite of repeated appeals and explanations. The data were used like that in view of the submission that: "A survey research project may include as few as 100 participants or as many as 250 million" (Dane 1990:120). In addition, Cramer and Franses (1999) argue that: "Direct mail campaigns often provide sample with a small number of positive responses. In analyzing such samples it is often expedient to omit the larger part of the abundant null observation" <http://www.tinbergen.nl/>

The effect of non-response was however reduced through the complementary use of unstructured interviews of community leaders and politicians. Thus, the researcher supplemented and reinforced the questionnaire administration with unstructured interviews and focused group discussion. Basically, the purposive sampling technique

was used. The interview form used was the one –off type which was unstructured as stated before in order to be more in-dept and also allow the interviewees room to fully express themselves. The unstructured interview lets the interviewee tell his/her story which helps to some extent, the flow of the dialogue. The interview, revolved around the key issues as expressed in the research questions. The target interviewees were the leaders of Ebira community. They include the Ohinoyi of Ebiraland (paramount ruler of Ebiraland) Alhaji Ado Ibrahim, some traditional rulers especially where most of the terrible violence took place, politicians, the Chairman Ebira peoples' Association - Alhaji Obeitor, victims of violent conflicts in Ebiraland, scholars that have researched into Ebira as a community among others. In addition, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was equally used. The Focus Group Discussion captures both adult and youth which were further divided along sex. Thus, in all there were four groups and none of the groups was less than seven participants or more than twelve participants.

In addition, several secondary sources such as books, reports of dailies and periodicals describing politics and conflict in Ebiraland were reviewed and analyzed. Data from these sources were obtained mainly to support the views and provide insights into the data derived from the primary sources. We also used materials from secondary sources to address some of the questions that have to do with conceptual and thematic issues that also provide the solid bases for qualitative analysis of empirical outcome.

1.7.7 Validity and Reliability of Survey Instrument

The concern of any researcher is to ensure that the instruments designed for the collection of data are dependable. This process is important in any research endeavour so as to measure accurately and obtain the right responses intended. First, the instrument was given to experts at the Departments of Economics, Demography and Business Studies who studied the instrument vis- a -vis the research questions and propositions. Through this, some corrections were made before submitting the instrument to both supervisors for final corrections. The field questionnaire was geared to cut across the social classes in the area as a way of obtaining first hand information on the issue.

1.7.8 Data Presentation and Analysis

The study employed the descriptive statistical technique to analyse the data sourced from the administration of questionnaire. As stated earlier part of the research design necessitated a fieldwork. The fieldwork was in three parts. First, a questionnaire was designed and administered in selected areas of Ebiraland where there had been conflicts. Apart from the questionnaire instrument, oral interview was also conducted. The oral interview focused on some community leaders, elite, politicians and some indigenes the researcher believed could give information necessary for the study. The interviews offered useful insights far beyond the scope of the questionnaires and facilitated the gathering of first hand information on conflicts in Ebiraland. In order to avoid gaps, the questionnaire and interview tools were complemented with focused group discussion (FGD). Respondents for focused group discussion were drawn from adult and the youth of Ebira extraction. The groups were further stratified according to sex- male and female apart. The various groups were made to respond to a set of questions that range from the causes and nature of the conflict, the role of politicians and other economic and socio-cultural factors and attempts to resolve the conflicts. The data were presented in simple percentages using tables and chart as illustration. The result of the study were therefore, presented, processed and analyzed using the content analysis method supplemented with appropriate simple descriptive statistical tools such as percentage and frequency distribution. No further in-depth statistical analyses are involved given the fact that the study itself is, to a large extent, essentially historical although its major import is seen from contemporary perspective.

1.8 Scope of the Research

Ebira people occupy the areas North and East of the confluence of the Rivers Niger and Benue in Northern Nigeria. To the South of the Ebira are the Bassange, Bassa Kwomo and Igala; to the North and East is Nassarawa Emirate, to the West various groups speaking Kakanda, Eggan and Nupe of Bida Emirate and to the South-west are the Bini and the Yoruba Speaking people. Politically, Ebiraland is located in the Central Senatorial District made up of four local governments namely; Okene, Okehi, Adavi and Ajaokuta. It is important to note that during the state creation in 1967, the Ebira area fell under the administration of Kwara State and by 1991, the area was

carved into the present Kogi State. The population of the entire Ebiraland in Kogi State, according to 2006 National Population, is estimated at 844,774, though there are Ebiras in other parts of the country.

This study examines 30 years of communal conflicts in Ebiraland 1977-2007. The period has been chosen for convenience. The year 1977 marked the country's preparations towards the birth of the Second Republic. The period was significant in Ebiraland given the turbulence of that political era and its negative impact on inter-group relations in that society. It was also the period Ebira people closed up ranks in their efforts to produce the governor of the state. This culminated in the emergence of Adamu Attah as the first Executive Governor of the old Kwara State when Ebira Tao was still with Kwara State as stated before. Year 2007 was another election year, and Ebiraland was not left out of communal conflicts the period engendered. In fact, the period was significant in the sense that it birthed the idea of "Ebira Agenda" that is it was the turn of Ebira group to produce the governor of the state now Kogi State, which was not successful. This was partly because of the political structure of the state and also because some Ebiras were apologetic to the Igala in government for personal benefits. This plunged the people into war with themselves. Hence, both dates are very significant to our present study. The choice of Ebiraland as a case study is informed as by regularity of conflict in the area and strategic location of the place as it serves as gate way to the Northern, Southern and Eastern parts of the country. Our analysis made reference to the origin of the conflicts, particularly from colonial to the immediate post-colonial era, and their impact on the nature of the current conflicts and the attempts at resolving them.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

One of the limiting factors encountered in this research exercise was language barrier. This was addressed by hiring some research assistants of Ebira extraction that assisted in interpreting the responses of non-literate respondents during interviews and in the administration of questionnaires to non-educated respondents. Another limitation was that the researcher could not adopt participant observation (participating in masquerade festival being a non- indigene). The researcher, therefore, relied on the works of others, documentaries, interviews and questionnaire to address this area.

Further studies can adopt participant observation on issue of culture (masquerade festival). Another problem encountered was the scanty information on conflict in Ebiraland. This made literature review on Ebira conflict very difficult and made works of Audu and Tenuche prominent in our study.

Apart from the challenges mentioned above which posed some limitations to the study, another main limitation that was identified which needed to be stated so that findings can be interpreted correctly within the context of the study so that future studies can improve on it has to do with periodization. The present study covers politics and conflicts in Ebiraland from 1977-2007, further studies can focus on the issues discussed beyond the period covered.

1.10 Operational Definition of Terms

Central to this study are certain concepts that need clarifications in order to provide a focus for the senses in which they are to be understood in this study as perhaps against other usage or their general usage in the literature of the genre. These concepts are:

Politicization: In the context of this study, politicization means parochial or sentimental view and interpretation of issues for personal or group benefit.

Community: refers to a group of people having the same culture.

Communal Conflict: is construed in the study as a conflict within a homogeneous group.

1.11 Chapter Outlines

This study is organized into six chapters. Chapter one is the introduction. Chapter two dwells on literature review and theoretical framework and, while chapter three focuses on the geography of conflicts in Africa. The fourth chapter examines communal conflicts in Nigeria and the geography of Ebira, and the fifth is the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data. Chapter six is the summary, conclusion and recommendations.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Quite a number of studies have been undertaken by researchers on conflict, focusing on its different dimensions. This chapter reviews previous and related studies, observation, opinions, ideas and comments mostly on causes and management of conflicts. This becomes imperative so as to situate this study in a proper context, and also to establish a link between the existing or previous studies and this research work with a view to identifying knowledge gaps in the literature with respect to the focus of this study. The essence of this is to shed light on where to intervene by providing the missing link and by updating and contributing to the existing body of knowledge in the field. Thematic method is adopted in the effort to review literature on the concept of politics, conflict, good and bad sides of conflict, identity politics and conflict, relationship between democratization, economic, religion, culture and conflict among others. Attempt is also made to examine conflict resolution mechanism and also to situate the study within theoretical framework relevant to the study.

2.1 Conceptual Discourse

2.1.1 On Politics

Political conflict is an endemic feature of most political systems in the world. This is particularly true of developing countries including Nigeria where conflicts, crises and violence have become essential characteristics of its political process, especially after independence (Anifowose, 2006). Before going into the review of literature, it is essential to consider some definitions of the key concepts- politics and conflict. It must be noted that the word politics does not seem to lend itself to any universally accepted definition. This is because of the ideological, cultural and historical contextualizations that underpin its several meanings. According to Appadorai (1974), the term politics is derived from the Greek word polis, a city-state. This definition sees politics from the angle of political organization and the relationships between individuals and the state. Apadorai's definition of politics is shared by Ayam (2004) who argues that the term "politics" originated from the Greek word "polis" which hinges on the political communities and the debates on matters of public interest. In

their own contributions, Kaplan and Lasswell (1950: xiv) define politics as “the shaping, distribution and exercise of power”. Lasswell (1936) sees politics as who gets what, when and how. To Dahl (1976) politics encapsulates any form of human interactions that involves, to a great extent, power, rule or authority. Easton (1971:129) aptly captures the concept as authoritative allocation of values for society. In this context, politics is viewed as an activity in society through which values are delivered and people having higher authority for the distribution of those same values among people who may have different interests and objectives. In other words, political power is necessary to qualify in the distribution of values.

Onyekpe (2003) is of the view that politics is directed towards and anchored on the achievement of power. It is not a surprise therefore, that Max Weber cited in Bentham (1974) defines politics as striving to share power, or influence its distribution either among states or among groups within a state. Weber’s definition validates the fact that politics involves power struggle which has intra-national, national and international dimensions. The intimate relationship that exists between politics and power has been illustrated by Nnoli. He argues that:

Power exists in practically all institutions. It follows the same dynamics. But when we talk about power in politics we talk about state power. Politics is an attempt to be in the highest position possible so as to wield state power. All other forms of power yield to it and are, or can be controlled by it. This explains its attractiveness. Those who are very wealthy and thus expected to be contented must still strive for control of state power because without this control, their wealth may not be secured as state power could be used to take their wealth away (Nnoli, 1986:81).

It can be deduced from the above that state power is a very useful instrument to have and control as access to state power guarantees access to almost every thing in life. The volatility usually generated by political activities in comparison with economic, social and cultural activities is an eloquent testimony to the fact that, the usefulness of state power to groups and individuals is widely recognized. According to Nnoli (1986), people scheme, jostle and sometimes kill in a manner that is not seen in the other spheres of life in order to gain political power. This trend of thought is quite different to the position of Plato (1968) who insisted that individuals interested in moderating the affairs of men must be endowed with certain cardinal virtues. These

are temperance, fortitude, sense of justice and prudence. Tocqueville the American political scientist had a similar understanding of power. Power to him must seek:

To bring glory and well being to humanity, power without glory is hollow and without meaning. The glorious nature of power is in the sense that the exercise connotes the positive traits which power must seek to acquire. Power in all its manifestation should be exercised with restraints; power without restraints lead to chaos and disorder (Tocqueville, 1955).

This negative dimension of power destroys the very essence of humanity by returning man to the state of nature. Whereas when power exhibits a positive trait it brings glory by uplifting humanity to its highest point. This further promotes a communitarian form of living and social interaction among the distinct nationalities that constitute a given state (Ekeocha, 2003).

Hague and Harrup (1992) see politics as the process by which groups make collective decision which affects and commits those who belong to the group. This definition is in line with that of Sodaro (2001:27) who sees politics as “the process by which communities pursue collective goals and deal with their conflicts authoritatively by means of government”. Process in this sense means a continuous sequence of events among actors, such as individuals, organizations, and government. It also by implication means the political interaction that takes place generally within the structure of rules, procedures, and institutions rather than haphazardly. A community can be any collective interactions of individuals, from the tiniest village to the world as a whole.

This definition also sheds light on the manner in which resources are allocated “authoritatively” as it places central importance on government in political life. Politics from this perspective is looked at as conflict management. Society is made up of different micro and macro nationalities, religions and interests (professional or otherwise), bringing to the fore conflicts in the course of competing for the scarce resources in the society (Puke, 2007). The resolutions of such conflicts constitute the central theme of politics. Hence, Harris (1976:100) argues that politics is: “concerned with the management of conflict, the toning down of quarrelsome activities and noise in a regulated order that allows for the continued existence of human beings capable

of reaching decisions collectively”. In their own contributions, Kaplan and Lasswell (1950: xiv) define politics as “the shaping, distribution and exercise of power”. Lasswell (1936) sees politics as who gets what, when and how. To Dahl (1976) politics encapsulates any form of human interactions that involves, to a great extent, power, rule or authority. Easton (1971:129) aptly captures the concept as authoritative allocation of values for society. In this context, politics is viewed as an activity in society through which values are delivered and people having higher authority for the distribution of those same values among people who may have different interests and objectives.

William (1965) looks at politics as a social process characterized by activity involving rivalry and cooperation in the exercise of power and culminating in the making of decisions for a group”. Grazia (1965) sees politics from institutional perspective. “Politics or the political” includes the events that happen around the decision-making centers of government”. However, the way and manner politics is practiced in Nigeria lends credence to the definition of politics credited to Alexandria Beirce cited in Richard Pius (1986) as strife of interests masquerading as a contest of principles, the conduct of public affairs for private advantage. Little wonder that Ujo (2003) argues that, if questions are posed to people on their views on politics, their answers is likely to be a negative one. That is they are not interested in politics.

He continues:

Thus, it is commonplace to hear people making the following statements: “don’t play politics with this issue keep politics out of the matter. “He is above politics”, “politics has destroyed him”. Politics is therefore seen as a bad thing whose stock-in-trade is blackmails, manipulation, double-dealing, violence and assassination (Ujo, 2003:1).

The various definitions above presuppose that politics to some extent involves conflict and it revolves around the concept of power, influence and authority which are often used interchangeably. The reason why politics is associated with conflict is not far-fetched; members of a group often disagree at least initially before they agree. This disagreement is premised on scarcity of resources and natural differences in likes and dislikes of men. Limited resources imply prioritization of goals which invariably are to the advantage of some groups and disadvantage to the other groups.

The second aspect of politics revolves around the concept of power, influence and authority which are the central currencies of politics. In a nutshell, politics by its nature often brings to the fore an unequal power relationship between or among people or groups and the person or group(s) that control greater resources ipso facto control others.

2.1.2 On Conflict

The word conflict is taken from the Latin word “conflictus” meaning “struck together”. Conflict means clash, contention, confrontation, a battle or struggle, controversy or quarrel (Nwolise, 1997:28). Conflict as an element of social interaction has evoked a lot of arguments. Suffice to say that there are as many definitions of conflict. Coser (1956) defines conflict as a struggle over values and claims over status, power and resources, in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals. To Donohue and Kolt (1992), conflict has to do with the expression of differences by interdependent people in the course of achieving their needs and goals. To Deutsch (1973:10), conflict exists “whenever incompatible activities occur: an action that is incompatible with another action prevents, obstructs, interferes, injures or in some ways makes the latter less likely to be effective”. Bernard (1953 cited in Bassey, 2002) has contended that conflict arises as a result of incompatible or mutually exclusive goals or aims or values espoused by human beings. This definition sees conflict from goal perspective.

However, Pruitt and Rubin (1986) see conflict from perceptual point of view (cited in Bassey, 2002). To them conflict denotes the perceived divergence of interest(s), or aspirations that cannot be achieved simultaneously. Ross (1993:14) notes that conflict “occurs when parties disagree about the distribution of material or symbolic resources and act because of the incompatibility of goals or a perceived divergence of interest”. Some other scholars see conflict as a natural occurrence in man, not necessarily in contest for resources, but still a deference of interest. Abel (1941), Bernard (1957) and Hobbs (1974) identify with this group. McCrery (1985) sees conflict as the overt coercive interactions of contending collectivities. Sills (1965) submits that conflict could arise in an atmosphere in which each party is likely to seek a maximum

advantage that cannot be achieved without reducing the advantage of the other part. This materialist idea of conflict has been dominant among some scholars (See Post and Vicker, 1973; Nnoli, 1978; Sharma, 1982; Barongo, 1987; and Anugwom, 1997). It has also been noted that conflict arises as a consequence of the striving of a man, the social being who in the course of promoting some of his objectives, either intentionally or unintentionally upsets or direct to negative uses, instead of strengthening along beneficial line, some of the arrangement that ought to be for the benefit of man. Hence, conflicts come up as a result of negative contradiction and are such irresolvable by peaceful means (Igwe, 1997; Nwanegbo, 2005).

Omosho (2004) avers that it is widely believed by scholars that a conflict situation crops up when two or more parties could not agree on an issue. The parties involved may not necessarily be governments or nations. Ekanola (2004: 34) posits that “the term conflict embodies notion of strife, struggle, differences, and disagreement”. It is indeed the struggle for mutually exclusive rewards or the use of incompatible means to achieve a goal. Horowitz (1985:101) sees conflict as a “struggle in which the aim is to get objective and simultaneously neutralize, injure or eliminate rivals”. Daugharty and Falzgrart cited in Omosho (2004), view conflict as a situation in which one identifiable group of human beings which could be tribal, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious, socio-economic, political or otherwise is in a state of conscious opposition to one or more other identifiable human groups. This could be because those groups are pursuing what appears to be incompatible goals.

Though there exist avalanche of perspectives of the concept, but an examination of the various definitions and views shows that conflict is a fact of life. It is indeed an integral aspect of social existence brought about by contradictions arising from difference in ideas, perceptions, goals and competition for acquisition of scarce resources. This lends credence to the statement credited to the Marxists in extant literature that to understand society is to understand social conflict. Thus, an ideal society is not noted for absence of conflict but rather its ability to manage conflicting interests constructively so that it will not snowball to violence that will threaten the continued existence of such a society. Opinions are divided among scholars as regard

whether conflict only has negative aspect or there are some positive benefits derivable from conflict?

2.1.3 Values of Conflict

Although conflict is found in almost every realm of human interaction and can be said to be newsworthy events of human life, it would be a mistake to assume that interaction necessarily involves conflict or that conflict usually takes a heavily escalated form. More often than not people manage to get along remarkably well with other individuals, groups, and organization. This is often done with little evidence of conflict along the way. When conflict does arise it is settled, even resolved with little acrimony and to the mutual satisfaction of the parties involved (Pruitt, 2004).

In terms of its positive values, it is ironical that just as conflict is detested and feared by some people, there are others that desire and enjoy it. This is predicated on the fact that they see conflict as serving occasionally as propeller of positive change, growth and development in human, state and international affairs. It is not surprising that Pruitt and Kim (2004) see conflict as the seedbed through which social change is nourished. They assert that people who regard their situation as unjust or uncomfortable with some policies must confront them for a change; otherwise, old policies that may advance only a few people's interests will prevail. This is in agreement with Coser (1956:197) that "conflict prevents the ossification of the social system by exerting pressure for innovation and creativity". At the state level, there are examples of conflicts that easily come to mind this include the ethnic cleansing policy embarked upon by President Milosevic's government in Yugoslavia against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo in 1998-1999. The Yugoslavia war was characterized by mass killing, burning and burying of hundreds of Albanians; and the burning of their homes which were quickly occupied by the ethnic group members of the invading forces. NATO's violent and continuous bombardment of Yugoslavia for eleven weeks (April-June 1999) brought the wanton destruction of lives and property to an abrupt end (Nwolise, 2004).

Furthermore, apartheid would have lasted than it did in South Africa if it was not violently challenged by the people and the international community (Nwolise, 2004).

Evidence at international level also shows that conflict does have good side. For instance, the racist theory of Aryan race supremacy would have been imposed on the world by Hitler's Nazis army and their supporters- Italy and Japan if it had not been violently challenged by the allied forces led by the United States of America in the Second World War (1939-1945) (Nwolise, 2004).

Thus, from the above, one can see why some people or groups take to violent conflict and recommend it as something desirable and enjoyable. Little wonder, that Burton (1987:137-138), advocated that (violent) conflict is creative and should, like sex, be enjoyed:

Conflict like sex is an essential creative element in human relationship. It is the means to change, the means by which our social values of welfare, security, justice and opportunities for personal development can be achieved. Indeed conflict like sex is to be enjoyed.

Contrarily, conflict is seen as a negative outcome. If conflict is actually productive and creative, inspires innovation and competitive spirit, serves as instrument for the protection of human rights, and securing justice, why do human beings fear and abhor it? Why the elaborate arrangement for its management? The answer is predicated on the fact that people caught in conflict often suffer from a wide range of psychological and physical health problems including a weakened immune system (Kiecolt – Glaser et al., 1997), depression (Christian Herman et al., 2001), and eating disorders (Van Den Broucke et al., 1997).

Heavily escalated conflict, such as warfare, leaves a far-reaching residue on society in general (Pruitt and Kim (2004). During wartime, violent acts become socially acceptable, legitimate, or even heralded as heroic. Conflict can snowball to war, and war destroys life and property, principles and values, and wakes up beastly elements in man. Nwolise (2004) opines that war can lead to environmental pollution and degradation. It kills human beings in their millions depending on the magnitude, and forces people to become refugees either in their own country or outside their country. Conflict and war divert the developmental resources of a state to defence and war. It retards the rate of development of a people and a state, at least in the short run. It spreads pestilences, destitution, hunger and starvation. In fact, it can create the

atmosphere of insecurity. It is indeed a very costly venture. At a point, the coalition forces spent about \$3 million per hour during the Vietnam War, and the coalition forces spent about \$100 billion in the 1991 Gulf War (Momah, 1993). Conflict often may result into war if it is not well-managed.

War in its totality is evil it destroys, ruins, maims, changes boundaries, topples governments, humanities, peoples, brutalizes the human psyche, wrecks the precious family togetherness, and most regrettably, often sows the seed of other wars (Momah, 1993:34).

The prevalence of violent conflict and its numerous negative consequences made it inevitable for man to always make frantic efforts to seek the quickest and best way to manage conflict around the world. The ability to monitor and prevent conflict is very essential to prevent it from escalating to violent proportion. Where conflict, invariably breaks out, and becomes violent, then steps should be taken immediately to keep the peace (Nwolise, 2004).

From the analysis above, the paradox of conflict appears visible- that is conflict has both beneficial and harmful effects. What often happens is that the negative consequences of conflict always overshadow the seemingly beneficial aspects of it. It is pretty difficult to see any positive functions in the throes of conflict leaving in its wake heavy casualties, wanton destruction of properties, inexpressible post-traumatic stress disorder and attendant famine.

2.2 Conflict in Africa

However, in recent time, Africa seems to be the worst hit as far as conflict is concerned. Suffice to say that the case of Africa is that of a war-ridden continent that is fast becoming the bedlam of the globe. Violence, social disorder and ethnic internecine feuds have emerged as dominant features of political life of Africa. Among the layers of the horrific cases that have drawn international attention and concern were the genocide in Liberia, Somalia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda and Burundi and all states that have come to be tagged “collapsed” or “failed” states. Another layer consists of those that have wriggled out of the conundrum and convulsion of failed states to newly reconstructed states which include Chad, Uganda, Ethiopia, Mozambique, South Africa and Mali (Adekeye, 1999). He noted that the nature of

conflict a society faces is determined by its location along the homogeneity – heterogeneity continuum.

Since conflict is ubiquitous, one may ask: what are the sources of conflict? To put it differently, what are the causes of conflict? Quite a number of scholars have viewed the source of conflict emphasizing different aspects.

2.3 Causes of Conflict

2.3.1 Identity- Based Politics and Conflict

Although the destruction of human groups on the basis of their religious affiliation, national identity or other group membership has a long history, it seems that “identity-based” conflicts have occurred more frequently in recent decades. Violence is increasingly perpetrated against individuals on the basis of their belonging to a particular group (e.g. ethnic, religious, national, clan, caste), often by individuals apparently acting on behalf of another group. Perhaps most disquieting is the increasing number of “ordinary” civilians who are involved in this violence as both victims and perpetrators. In some cases, people who have lived side-by-side in peace for many years, engaging in friendships and even matrimonial relations, suddenly turn against each other with astonishing brutality (Hilker, 2008).

Following the end of the Cold War, Africa became a theatre of violent conflicts from Burundi to Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo to Sierra Leone, Somalia to Rwanda and Guinea to Sudan. The indelible mark of the new wars is that they are linked to identity, particularly ethnic identity. While there are many identity markers such as race, nationhood, kinship, class, religion, language, gender, age, geographic location, cultural preferences, and occupation-such as military function or herders and tillers- by and large ethnicity is identified as the dominant axis about which conflicts have revolved (Hagg and Kagwanja, 2007). In analyzing what she called the “new war”, Kaldor (1999) argues that the new conflicts are not wars in the modernist sense between states or organized political groups for political ends. Rather they are connected with the resurgence of identity politics after the collapse of the Berlin wall. In this regard, primordial identities have pursued claims to power within the arena of the modern nation-state. The ubiquity of identity wars is based on the fact that, ethnic identity is indeed particularly strong in traditional societies- embodying the deeply-

embedded sense of belonging to a group with unique identity markers, such as myths of common ancestry, shared memories, cultural values, traditions and symbols, and ownership of territory (Endalew, 2002).

There are numerous studies on ethnicity and religion in Africa, but they are not theoretically grounded in current research on identity. For example the works of Rasmussen (1993) and Adekanye (1995) while both of these studies are useful, neither of them is conceptualized in terms of identity. A notable exception to this claim is Lemarchand's case study of identity construction among the Hutus and the Tutsis in Burundi (Lamarchand, 1994). Much of the literature on the relationship between identities, violence and (in) security has tended to polarize the two perspectives. The first variously sees "identity-based" conflicts as a product of "primordial" cultural differences (Geertz, 1963); pre-existing kinship or religious ties (Smith, 1986); longstanding antipathy between different "ethnic" or other groups (Kaplan, 1993); or insurmountable differences between civilizations such as "Islam" and "the West" (Huntington 1996). To varying degrees, these authors see "ethnic" and other identities as culturally determined, immutable or essential aspects of human societies.

The second perspective comprises those who argue that such violence is not really about identity but competition between groups over access to power and resources (e.g. Cohen, 1974; Collier and Hoeffler, 2004;). Proponents of this perspective argue that ethnic, nationalist or other identities come into being and endure for a purpose and are only relevant as far as they can be exploited for political or economic advantage in interaction with other groups. Some authors highlight the role of ethnic entrepreneurs—political leaders that strategically instrumentalise cultural values, ethnic and religious symbols to mobilize support for their claims (Brass, 1985, Turton, 1997).

Both perspectives might lead to the conclusion that it is not necessary to pay much attention to the politics of identity. The first, because conflict on the basis of identity differences is seen as inevitable, thus the focus should be on intervening to prevent the use of violence. The second, because identity differences *per se* do not matter,

thus the focus should be tackling underlying grievances and mediating competing interests between groups in ways that do not result in violence. In relation to the first perspective, however, there are now numerous studies of violent contexts, which have shown that there is nothing inevitable either about the nature of the identity differences purported or their articulation through violence (e.g. Bringa, 1995, Mamdani, 2001, Valentine, 1996). Equally, the absence of violence in many contexts with sharp cultural, religious or other group differences suggests that this perspective is flawed. In relation to the second perspective, although there is little doubt that collective violence is largely rooted in competition over power, resources, territory and livelihoods, these instrumentalist arguments often fail to question where specific “ethnic”, “religious” or other identities originate or why “ethnic” or “religious” symbols have such appeal to the wider population (Turton 1997). Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that struggles over ideas, beliefs and values are important in their own right – not just in an instrumental sense (e.g. Bartov and Mack, 2001).

Furthermore, the accent on ethnicity as a cause of conflict is problematic in at least two ways. First, ethnic identity does not sufficiently explain communal war. Some homogenous nations like Somalia have been engulfed in civil war while many heterogeneous societies live in peace as argued by (Osman, 2007). In addition, the so-called African traditional identities are often recent constructions, either by colonial powers or by their post-colonial successors, resulting in mythologies of Africanist cultures (Bayert, 2005; Banega, 2006). Why then has the ethnic identity become so combustive?

In an attempt to account for the explosion of ethnic-based violence, Apadurai (1998) links the preponderance of identity conflict to the force of globalization, noting that ethnic violence is deeply rooted in the uncertainties, anxieties, disillusionments and chaotic environments created by economic globalization. Hagg and Kagwanja (2007) argues that many analysts understood ethnic identity as a new trend by the leaders of one-party, vintage to resort to recruiting surrogates and clients to organize violence against rebellious citizens. Salih (1989) unveils how the Sudanese state recruited tribal militias to terrorize civilian populations in a move that contributed to the “re-tribalisation” of politics. The use of tribal authorities as agents of political violence

has become widespread in countries as diverse as Nigeria, Cameroon, Kenya, Malawi and South Africa. Our argument in this work is that without politicizing identity, it will be difficult to generate conflict. In view of the above position, it will be pertinent to take a quick look at politics and identity-based conflict in pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial.

Historical analyses of conflict enchant the pre-colonial period as the golden era of identity relations, pointing to the low politicization of ethnic or other identities in society. Mixing of identity groups often occurred during trade, wealth and provision of skills (Bayert, 2005). But the distinct mark of pre-colonial African societies was not the absence of multiple identities or conditions that could ignite conflict. Rather, it was the absence of the elevation of a single identity- ethnicity, clan, gender or age gap (Hagg and Kagwanja, 2005).

Political “tribalism” as opposed to “moral ethnicity” which can form the basis of a civic order is rooted in colonial politics. Part of Africa’s problem is what Eke (1975) identifies as the dichotomy between civic public and the primordial public. The former is perceived as amoral zone of rights and the latter as moral and governed by customs. Africa is still struggling to bridge the gap created by these bifurcated spheres inherited from the colonial society, which has produced two patterns of rights and obligations.

Drawing from Eke’s position, Mamdani, (2002) argues that the ethnicisation of politics started with the construction of ethnicity as a legal entity that was elevated over otherwise fluid and loose characteristics of populations. This process turned race and tribe into fixed denominators in the colonial legal project. Ethnicity became axial to the colonial divide- and-rule device used for the purpose of political control, enforcement of taxes and the extraction of wealth (Broch-Due, 2005; Rubin, 2006). The colonial state drove a wedge between ethnic groups by giving preferential treatment to some identity groups through appointments of local authorities or administrative staff in the colonial offices. For example, the Belgian and French ascribed the Hamitic “race” identity to the Tutsis in Rwanda as against the “Bantu tribal” identity of the Hutus. This flawed classification laid the foundation for ethnic

rivalry and conflict which would culminate in the 1994 genocide (Prunier, 1997). The colonial manipulation of ethnicity bequeathed Africa's post-colonial societies with the polarities of settler (migrant) and the native (indigenous) categories. These have become the axis about which ethnic violence in Rwanda or more recently in Kenya rotates (Mamdani, 1996). The violent conflicts between Ife-Modakeke; Tiv-Jukun; Hausa- Berom in Jos among others also fall into this category.

Africa's post-colonial states inherited these ethnic stereotypes and divisive patterns of power between and within specific ethnic identities, thus sowing the seed of competition and conflict along fault-lines. It did not help the matter that many post-colonial patrimonial elites continued this legacy of divide- and-rule to protect their power.

The argument that ethnic differences often breed conflict has been contradicted by some authors. Moe's (2009) analyses of works of Paul and Collier (1998, 1999) contends that though strife often occurs along ethnic lines, evidence indicates that ethnicity itself is seldom the "root" cause of civil wars. That fractionalization influences the likelihood of civil war cannot be fully substantiated. This is because societies fractionalized into many ethnic groups or heterogonous societies are likely to have less civil war. Heterogeneous societies contain many ethnic groups with no single group dominating. The analysis of their works according to Moe (2009) shows that, ethnic diversity actually helps to deter civil war in Africa. This is premised on the fact that as heterogeneity increases; the variety of competing interests hampers rebel efforts to organize. However, Nnoli (1978); Osaghae (2001) and Suberu (2001) do not agree that ethnic differences do not result in conflict and that rather identity has been at the heart of conflict in Africa. Despite the link between ethnic identities and violent conflict, some believe according to Hagg and Kagwanja (2007) that identities have a role to play in conflict resolution. Organization like UNESCO (2005) and the Africa Union (2005) have embraced cultural diversity and expression of different identities as important assets in peacemaking and nation building.

Indeed, authors like Tan (2006) celebrate the diversity of identities as an asset in the re-engineering of the civic order. It is necessary to state that ethnic or sub-ethnic

identity may not necessarily lead to conflict if such differences are not politicized. Onuoha (2011) postulates that although conflict may seem to be ethnic or religious in nature, yet they are often staged at the parameter of the political. Suffice to say that exploitation of ethnic or sub-ethnic differences by political actors is responsible for violent conflict. This is in tandem with the findings of Human Right Watch (1995) that communal tensions are not the immediate cause of many violent and persistent communal conflicts. While communal tensions are obviously a necessary ingredient of an explosive mix, they alone are not sufficient to unleash widespread violence. Rather, time after time the proximate cause of communal violence is governmental exploitation of communal differences.

Scholars do not agree as regards the causes of conflict. While some emphasize economic benefits as the major source of conflict some situate it within the context of colonialism. Still others heap it on structural conditions, injustice, religion, marginalization, democratization, ethnicity, culture, electoral competition and so on. The contention of this work is that while the aforementioned factors are very important in explaining causes of conflict, they are often determined and influenced by politics. Political power according to Stewart (1998) is both an end and a means to an end. Political power is an important instrument of economic power. At this juncture, the controversy as regard the causes of conflict will be analyzed further.

To Nwolise (2004), conflicts emanate generally from socio-economic and political injustices in society either at the inter-personal level, inter-group or state interaction. These injustices may hinge on sharing of resources including leadership positions, the way human rights and freedoms are handled, or on the handling of demands, and jointly owned assets. These can bring about clash of interests, opinion and values. This argument is in line with that of Stedman who asserts that “conflict arises from problems basic to all populations, the tugs and pulls of different identities, the differential distribution of resources and access to power, and competing definitions of what is right, fair, and just” (Nwolise, 2004:5).

It can be gleaned from the above that perpetration of injustices or violation of human rights pave way for conflict because justice and human rights are more valued by

human beings than peace. This validates the veracity of words of wisdom credited to Julius Nyerere, former President of Tanzania, that: “Injustice and Peace are in the long run incompatible. Stability in a changing world must mean ordered change towards justice not mechanical respect for the status quo” (Nyerere, 1973:215). Agree that injustice can bring about conflict, but the point must be made that selfishness, greed, avarice, unbridled quest for power in an illegitimate way can generate conflict. However, the benefit of Nwoli’s analysis to this study is seen in the fact that, sharing of resources like political leadership in an unacceptable way to a group or groups in a community or state can bring about conflict. More so, it is also our contention in this work that although identity politics does matter, we argue that if we are to combat violent conflict at the local, national and global level, we need to take identity politics seriously, to look deeply into the processes that lead to the perpetration of violence in the name of identity in specific contexts, and to explore possible measures to prevent and respond to this violence. In particular, we need to understand under what circumstances identity politics is exercised in ways that are exclusionary or violent rather than inclusive and empowering. The point must be stressed that identity politics is not the only factor that gives fillip to violence, colonialism has also been implicated.

2.3.2 Colonial Induced Conflict

Some scholars have heaped the blame of conflict especially in Africa on colonialism. That is to say, colonialism bequeathed on its victim debilitating legacies and destructive post-colonial disruptions. Zela (2008) notes that, there is hardly any zone of conflict in contemporary Africa, which cannot trace its sordid violence to colonial history and even the late nineteenth century. For instance Kastfelt (2005) maintains that the region, from the Sudan and formerly Northern Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Congo, was scene of brutal civil wars and genocide. It is interesting to note that this region has a long history of colonial violence in the form of slave trade, slave labour, plantain labour, plantation terror and a violent gun culture, which have to be taken into account when explaining the contemporary situation.

It is noteworthy that colonialism and its brutality orchestrated the stage for liberation struggles. In addition, Africa massive contributions to the two World Wars created the

conditions and contradictions that galvanized anti-colonial nationalism (Page, 1974; Miller, 1974; Osuntokun, 1979; Sainsbury 1979; Kerslake, 1997; Kilingray and UNESCO, 1985; Rathbone, 1986; Oberst 1991; Page, 2000; Akurang-Parry, 2002a, 2002b). Although colonial experience may be responsible for conflict in some regions in the sense that the imprecision of the delimitation and the inordinate apportionment of territory principally along the lines of mere convenience of colonial rule, have produced untold confusion, conflict, tension and wars among African peoples (Oduntan, 2011).

Colonialism according to Nnoli (1978) heightened ethnic consciousness. In the search for the crumbs from colonial production, competition among Africans reinforced common consciousness among the various competing ethnic groups. At times the historical and and competitive aspects of this consciousness were linked. Nnoli argued further that although historical competition among groups may have reinforced their varied identity, however, contemporary competition according to him may have also reinforced inherited historical identification. Ethnicity is expressed through inter-ethnic discrimination in jobs, housing, and admissions into educational institutions, marriages, business transaction, and distribution of social services. In a nutshell, tribalism or ethnicity in Nigeria is a creature of the colonial and post-colonial order.

While this perspective deals with a very important aspect of African political history, it does not completely explain the causes of conflict because some countries like Liberia and Ethiopia were never colonized but were at different times embroiled in violent conflicts. Agreed that colonialism through aggregating people of different ethnic backgrounds into a monolithic whole and disaggregating monolithic entity among disparate entities exacerbated conflicts in Africa but the fact still remains that pluralism is a universal phenomenon. Analysis on conflict should therefore, be situated within the context of political and socio-economic factors that often give impetus to violent conflict.

Another source of conflict was the Cold War in which Africa was enmeshed directly and indirectly, ideologically and militarily, politically and economically (Zela, 2008). Africa desperately trying to forge nation-states out of the cartographic contraptions of colonialism and to rid itself of the last vestiges of colonialism found itself divided

between the two polar powers. Scholars noted that from the Congo to the Horn of Africa to Southern Africa, the cold war fomented or facilitated destructive wars and conflicts (Kalb 1982; Noer, 1985; Borstelmann 1993; Harbeson and Rothchild, 1995; Munene et al 1995; Oyebade and Alao 1998; Gordon et al. 1998; Akinrade and Sesay 1999; Issa-Salwe 2000; Percox 2004). This position did not so much explicate the manipulation of ethnic and sub-ethnic differences by cynical and bankrupt political class as a major cause of conflict.

Armed inter-communal insurrections are often episodic eruptions of violence sparked by specific incidents that stoke long simmering, antagonisms, anxieties and aggressions. These could result into loss of life and if unchecked, it can mutate into prolonged warfare between ethnic and regional militias, which can in turn develop into guerilla armies that could threaten the viability of the nation-state. The periodic explosions of genocidal violence in Rwanda and Burundi demonstrated most horrifically in the Rwanda 1994 genocide, depicted the potential destructiveness inherent in inter-communal conflict abetted by the state and reinforced by the devastations of economic stagnation, politicized and manipulated by the political class (Zela, 2008).

In order to have a full grasp of the phenomenon of conflict it is necessary to look beyond colonialism. Countries of Africa seem to have witnessed more conflicts in post-colonial era. In fact, democratization that occasioned decolonization with attendant stiff competition for political power appears to have been characterised with surge of violence.

2.3.3 Democratization, Political Competition and Conflict

It is very important to note that scholars do not agree as regard the role of democracy in peace and conflict. While some argued that democracy fosters peace, some argued exactly the opposite that democracy precipitates violent conflict. Some scholars have tapped into the relationship between democracy, democratization and armed conflict. A prevailing assumption both within theory and practice has been that peace and democracy are mutually reinforcing. While more democracy is probably the answer to political violence in the long run, an expanding body of scholarly work has contended that democratization processes- in particular post-conflict societies-are highly

conflictual. In deed under certain conditions democratization will make a return to war more likely (Snyder, 2000; Mansfield and Snyder, 2001; Paris, 2004). Let us look at the argument in detail.

We are led to believe that democracy and peace are inexorably linked; that democracy leads to and causes peace; and that peace cannot be achieved in the absence of democracy. Woodrow Wilson was one of the earliest and strongest proponents of this view. He said in his “war message” on April 2, 1917:

A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations. No autocratic government could be trusted to keep faith within it or observe its covenants. It must be a league of honour, a partnership of opinion. Intrigue would eat its vitals away; the plotting of inner circles who could plan what they would and render account to no one would be a corruption seated at its very heart. Only free peoples can hold their purpose and their honour steady to a common end and prefer the interests of mankind to any narrow interests of their own (Cited in Ostrowski <http://docs.google.com>).

Thus, scholars and statesmen draw inferences and expectations from democratic peace theory to make predictions about the global system (Hermann and Kegley, 1996; Starr, 1992). It has been established that the probability of two democratic states engaging one another in militarized conflict has been repeatedly proven to be extremely low (Russett, 1993; Kadera, Crescenzi and Shannon, 2000). Increasing the number of democratic regimes in the international system (and the number of democratic dyads, assuming a constant system size) should result in a more peaceful international system. Therefore, one possible path to global peace is democratization. Quite a number of studies show that militarized interstate disputes (MIDs) rarely occur between democratic states after the Second World War (Bremer, 1993; Moaz and Russett, 1993; Rousseau et al., 1996; Oneal and Russett 1997; Huth and Allee 2002, 2003). These authors typically attribute this to domestic norms and institutions that exist in democratic polities and that constrain their recourse to force when conflict arises between them.

Democratic-peace theory, as Russett (2007:2) observes is “a statement about pairs of democratic countries”. Its claims apply to interactions between democratic polities. Its premise is that the democratic norms and institutions of democratic states interact

in such a way that neither state will resort to violence to settle any conflict of interests that arises between them (Moaz and Russett, 1993; Morgan, 1993; Dixon, 1994; Remmer, 1998). No such constraints operate, however, when a dispute engages other states.

Cross-national variation in norms governing domestic conflict resolution plays a prominent role in democratic-peace theory. In democratic states, the prevailing norm requires citizens to settle disputes between themselves/among themselves without using force. In other states however, force is more often the weapon of choice (Maoz and Russett, 1999:388). Because each national leader “externalizes” domestic norms, the latter also affect international conflict resolution: voters and their leaders recognize “that it is unnecessary and therefore unwise to get into violent conflict with another country whose government and people are accustomed to the non-violent resolution of conflicts in their country and have the ability to extend that capacity to resolving international conflict” (Russett, 2007:2-3). It is therefore not surprising when Stewart and O’Sullivan (1998) argue that the sudden espousal of democracy by so many disparate countries was because it was proclaimed to provide a foundation for the resolution of both domestic and international problems to mutual advantages.

The above position especially transferring expectations from dyadic democratic peace to system-level behavior has been criticized by Ray (1997, 2001) as an exercise in ecological fallacy. In the same vein, Ellingsten (2000); Sambanis (2001), Hegre et al (2001), and Reyal-Querol (2002) find out that partly democratic countries are more prone to civil war than full democracies and full autocracies. Therefore, it seems the likelihood of preventing or reducing violence in the context of potentially conflict-ridden societies does not hinge on the democratic status of a country alone rather it is necessary to explore the links between social conflict and inclusiveness of the political systems. Reyal-Querol (2005) opines that inclusiveness is the ability of a system to avoid political exclusion and democracy is just one dimension of this concept. Democratic governments with multiple decision makers are more inclusive than democratic governments with just one decision maker. It must be understood that although democracies may not be fighting one another but the fact that they do fight other non- democratic countries cannot be disputed. Hence, the U.S war against

Afghanistan, Iraq, Korea among others. In that circumstance democracy cannot be said to promote peace.

Some of the questions that beg for answers at this juncture are: Is there any basis to assume that democracy will bring domestic peace and stability to countries who embrace it? Are democracies really less likely to suffer internal strife? Scholars have come to understand that democratization in a militarized ethnically divided society has been seen as another cause of conflict. Militarized ethnicity as evident in many countries currently undergoing democratization, often give rise to tensions and twists arising from the competitive politics of democracy which often find articulation in the entrenched identities, idioms and institutions of ethnic solidarity. In Nigeria, for instance, democratization has led to the resurgence of ethnic identities and the proliferation of regional and local struggles over the entitlements of citizenship expressed in the language of “Indigenes” and “settlers”. These struggles have increasingly spilled into the formation of ethnic militias that have wrought havoc on Nigeria’s civil society, unleashing periodic convulsions of inter-communal violence (Osaghae, 1996; Vickers, 2000; Agbu, 2004).

Competitive elections are integral features of democracy and a way of dealing with the issues of governance. Ideally, they allow for the peaceful transfer of power and make it possible to assign accountability to those who govern. Alternative ways of providing for a succession of governance are either through heredity or through violence (Rapoport and Weinberg, 2001). Elections facilitate communication between politicians and citizens, and also have symbolic purpose by giving vote to the public. In fact, the right to vote has been enshrined in international law (Hoglund, 2006). In democratic societies, violence in connection to elections “attract attention precisely because they seem extraordinary and scandalous in a system that is supposed to be by definition nonviolent” (Reif, 2005:1). However, the increased importance of election in conflict societies has given electoral violence new and intriguing dimensions. It is interesting to note that election has become part of the strategy for international peace-building, which strongly links peace to democratic development (Paris, 2004). This means that most internationally sponsored peace agreements today often stipulate the conduct of free and fair elections.

Ideally, democratization opens up new channels for groups with political demands to be accommodated by peaceful means. However, Gurr (200:85) says that “the process of transition creates threatening uncertainties for some groups and opens up a range of transitory political opportunities for ethnic entrepreneurs”. Some scholars (Dahl 1971; Paris 2004:168) note that societies coming out of violent conflict usually do not fulfill the conditions that are considered conducive for democratization and that would help alleviate the uncertainty of the process such as a strong economy and stable institutions.

Indeed the opening up of political competition, which is a basic prerequisite for democratic elections, brings in its wake new dimensions to organized violence. Competitive elections- to actually be deemed free and fair of necessity must be accompanied with fundamental human rights such as freedom of movement and freedom of speech. These rights can be abused as they can serve as a vehicle for militant political organizations. In particular, the competitive nature of elections may aggravate existing conflicts and societal cleavages. In countries that have experienced protracted conflict, political mobilization is likely to be along the conflict lines (Paris, 2004). Differences rather than similarities are brought to the fore to win votes. Moreover, in electoral processes the use of military metaphors is common: “the parties wage “campaigns”, employing “strategies and tactics”. Party member are called “cadre”, and areas with many supporters are called “stronghold” or “citadel” (Rapoport and Weinberg 2001:31). During election campaign, party candidates must appear in public, which also increased the possibility of being attacked or killed (Rapoport and Weinberg, 2001).

In a nutshell, electoral competition has been identified by some scholars as one of the causes for conflict. Bates (1983:161) for instance argued two decades ago that in Africa, “electoral competition arouses ethnic conflict”. The Human Rights Watch (1995) concluded on the basis of a worldwide survey of ethnic violence in the 1990s, that ethnic riots and pogrom are usually caused by political elites who play on existing communal tension to entrench their own power or advance a political agenda.

Election-related conflict or violence can be explained as:

Acts or threats of coercion, intimidation, or physical harm perpetrated to affect an electoral process or that arise in the context of electoral competition. When perpetrated to affect an electoral process, violence may be employed to influence the process of elections, such as efforts to delay, disrupt, or derail a poll – and to influence the outcomes: the determining of winners in competitive races for political office or to secure approval or disapproval of referendum questions (Fischer, 2004:4).

The question to ask at this juncture is why are conflict and violence always associated with the conduct of elections in some countries? The reason is not far-fetched. Election processes are contests through which political power is retained or pursued, and social differences are highlighted by candidates and parties in campaigns for popular support. These differences often degenerate into violence. Tension may rise in the run-up to election processes as some candidates mobilize along extremist lines to win support, as rival factions vie for votes and parties or factions seek to weaken or even eliminate opponents in efforts to seek or retain political power (UNDP, 2009).

A clear finding from recent experience is that electoral processes can stimulate conflict; Burundi, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Guyana, Haiti, Kenya, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe are just a few examples of countries where electoral processes have been persistently violence-ridden. In most destructive instance such as the 1992 presidential elections in Angola or parliamentary polls in Algeria the same year and their outcome can often be a strong stimulant for violence that escalate to the level of civil war (UNDP, 2009).

Another important factor in the evaluation of the conditions under which elections stimulate violent conflict is the strong impact specific types of electoral systems have on conflict management (Reilly and Reynolds, 2000; Reynolds, Reilly and Ellis, 2005). The relationship between the rules of electoral competition and the likelihood that they will either ameliorate or generate conflict has been the subject of considerable scholarly analysis (Reilly and Reynolds, 2000; Reilly, 2001; Lijphart, 2004; Norris, 2004; Reilly, 2006). It has also been observed by Hoglund (2004) that when parties are quite certain of loss or exclusion in an electoral contest, especially when they expect to be “permanent minorities” (to lose not just once, but again and

again due to patterns of identity voting), the post- election violence stemming from the controversial 2005 elections in Iraq seems to fit this pattern. When a party or faction expects to be systematically excluded from political power they may well turn to violence to either prevent their exclusion or to prevent the election success.

In addition, how election process and administration is designed, managed and implemented has strong bearing on electoral violence. Those elections considered to be free, fair and transparent are less likely to experience electoral violence than those where allegations of mismanagement or deliberate cheating are prevalent (Lehang, 2003; Sisk and Timothy, 2006). Expectations about winning and losing elections and the incentives that the electoral process creates, or how the rules of the electoral game may provide reward or return for certain behaviour or action is very important. When winning a state office is the key to livelihood, not just for an individual, but for his or her entire clan, faction, or even ethnic group, parties and candidate often refuse to contemplate the consequences of failure (UNDP, 2009).

Sisk (2008) in analysis of election-related violence in the Philippines notes that observers attribute a pattern of election-related violence in the country to several factors such as history of intense rivalry among political clans, stark competition for government posts that carry the potential for power and access to resources and state largess, and a broader culture of violence in which small arms are plentiful and often in use. According to the police, powerful politicians often have their own private armies and some members of the security forces were also acting to protect or serve political bosses. Additionally, armed insurgencies in parts of the country also stepped up attacks during the election process in the Philippines and many other countries in early 2007. Such as Nigeria's much watched elections that also unfolded during this time, political violence is an endemic feature of electoral processes.

Although there is no common database on election-related violence, or overall on "political violence," evidence from these and many other cases suggests that election-related violence is widespread and, according to at least one study that sought to quantify the extent of the problem in cross-national research, at least half of the

electoral processes observed in 2001 featured significant election-related violence before, during or after the pivotal days of the election (Fisher, 2002).

Election-related violence is more prominent in fragile states. The focus on this form of violence stems from an appreciation that electoral processes are inherently conflict-inducing; Ethiopia, Burundi, Guyana, Haiti, Kenya, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe are good examples of countries where electoral processes have been chronically violence-ridden. Many observers argue that such processes introduce new uncertainties and that they make countries in transition or war-torn, fragile societies deeply vulnerable to new tensions and ultimately in the worst- case scenario to the escalation of civil war (Snyder, 2000; Mansfield and Snyder, 2005). Snyder and Mansfield contend, for example that the expansion of political participation in democratization process, especially where the state institutions is weak, give opportunities for elites to appeal to exclusionary nationalism and the concomitant identification of internal or external enemies in order to gain or retain power. It is necessary to state that conflict associated with political competition is not limited to competing politicians; it can gravitate to fractionalization, intra-party and inter-party conflict.

Some scholars like Elkit and Svensson (1997) do not agree with the idea that election induces conflict rather they see election as a mechanism for peaceful management of social conflicts. They argue that election processes offer safe, predictable, rule-bound method for arbitrating social conflict through the selections of representatives or the definitive resolution of questions before the community (as in referenda). When elections are putatively free and fair, they imbue the government with legitimacy garnered by the consent of the people, improving the capacity of the state to ensure human security through legitimate authority under the rule of law, and to improve levels of human development through effective service delivery. Procedurally, fair elections create legitimate governments that enjoy popular support for programmes and policies. In their conclusion, they seem to agree that although there are also cases in which the electoral process can be procedurally fair and yet still violence-inducing as a function of the stakes of electoral competition. This depict the situation in Nigeria in which elections of 1993 and 2011 that were acclaimed to be free and fair still generated conflict and violence.

.When citizens are provided a direct “voice” in political life; society’s trust and willingness to cooperate with the state in achieving development is strengthened. As such, electoral processes are very much about the peaceful management of social conflict through public dialogue, vigorous debate, and, and authoritative selection of leaders through electoral rules. This is, a good electoral process will allow society on its own to determine the nature of its similarities and differences (Ellis, 2006); representation may be geographic, ideological, identity based (religion, ethnicity, or gender) or along other lines. In some situations, it is true that ethnicity or religion may be a salient basis of representation, whereas in other situations issues such as the alleviation of poverty, gender equality, geographic representation, or economic/class interests may be more important.

Whether any given electoral process fulfils the functions of voice and decision is a consequence of its overall quality often described in terms of an election being either free or fair or not. As Reynold and Elkit (2005:3) argue, “the greatest failing of election assessment to date has been the tendency to see election quality in bimodal terms. The election is either good or it is bad, or when fudge (qualification) is require, it is “substantially free and fair.” But there is no doubt that the quality of elections across cases and across time can be seen as existing on a continuum. In essence, one needs to look at the process and outcome to gauge a full picture of election quality”. Clearly those elections that are substantially free and fair, and serve as a pedestal for new coalitions with legitimacy and a mandate to act, democracy takes a step closer toward consolidation (Sisk, 2008). At this point it is necessary to give a purview of election in Nigeria.

In Nigerian context, election is always characterized by violent conflict among parties as well as contending candidates. The genesis of electoral crisis in Nigeria is traceable to the 1964 general elections. According to *The Guardian* (2007:53), an estimated 2,000 people died in violence that erupted in the Western Region. The crises were as a result of unbridled ambitions of politicians wanting to go beyond their electoral capacity, to claim victory in areas where there was pathological intolerance to the opposition. It was these that plunged the First Republic of 1963 into chaos. The

violent engagement was mainly characterized by arson, looting and the lynching of perceived opposition supporters or sympathizers. The uproar worsened the bad reputation of the Western Region as the “Wild Wild West” and the hub of electoral violence in the country. What informed this derogatory remark is not far-fetched. The major theatre of the post 1964 election disturbances was in the region where official election results contrasted sharply with the expectations of majority of the people. Due to reluctance of the then prime minister, Abubakar Tafawa Belewa’s government to arrest the situation despite a state of emergency declared in the area; the military capitalized on this, among other reasons, to remove the government in January 1966.

In addition, according to Gurdian (2007:5), the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) victory in 1983 polls was violently protested in different parts of the country especially in the West where vicious protest rocked Ondo, Oyo and other states in the region. The case in Ondo was so violent that angry mobs set ablaze the buildings of perceived opponents. In the result released for Ondo State in 1983, Akin Omoboriowo was returned as the winner of the gubernatorial elections, which put Michael Adegunle Ajasin in the second position. The people saw this as a daylight robbery and hence, took to violence which eventually led to military intervention and the collapsed of the Second Republic.

Human Rights Watch observed that the national and state wide polls, in 1999 and 2003 were marred by wide spread fraud and violence (*The Guardian*, 2007:67). The 2007 elections also tow the same line (Ajanaku, 2007). The 2011 general elections were worse than the previous experiences. Commenting on 2011 Nigeria post-electoral violence, Alemika (2011:5) observes that:

Electoral violence in the country is primarily due to the perception of politics and political office as investment and as an avenue for the acquisition of extraordinary wealth through corruption, which is otherwise not possible through any form of legitimate vocation and enterprise. As a result of this perception and reality, Nigerian politicians turn electioneering and elections into warfare in which violence and ethnic, religious and other forms of primordial sentiments and prejudices are employed. It is against this background that the former President Olusegun Obasanjo counselled his party members to see the 2007 election as a do or die affairs

Agbaje (2007) attributes electoral violence to thuggery sponsored by desperate politicians. It can be gleaned from the discussion above that violent conflict associated with electoral contest can be located within the context of electoral competition; frustrating identity voting that put a certain party(ies) and candidates from a particular region in a disadvantage position; election management (whether free, fair, or not); gains of winning and the incalculable loss associated with losing. When the fate of an entire clan, faction, or ethnic group, parties and candidates, are inexorably tied to this, it provide incentives for violent conflict before, during and after elections. The problem with the arguments above is that it sees democracy and competition for political offices (politics) as the major source(s) of conflict while looking away from political organization or structural conditions of the society.

2.3.4 Structural Condition and Conflict

Structural conditions are those in which the social, economic and political organization of society, specifically the existence of structural inequalities and victimization among groups are seen as the causes of conflicts. It is necessary to state that while objective realities or interests do indeed generate conflict, some scholars argue that material conditions and inequalities are not enough reasons to explain the intensity, ferocity and duration of conflicts. They often provide “proximate causes”, and psycho-cultural dispositions, or subjective factors, most especially the psychology of victimhood and persecution, constitute the indispensable fuel. Thus, conflict can erupt or persist when the memories of humiliation, oppression and marginalization both real and mythologized are triggered by new threats (Azar and Moon, 1986; Deutsch, 1991; Ross, 1993; Brown, 1993; Namwambah, 2004). In other words, conflicts arise out of the combustible interplay of objective and subjective factors brought about by combination of material, socio-cultural conditions, political and psychological dispositions.

The role of structural and subjective factors, history and mythology in generating protracted conflict is evident in the Sudanese conflict. Analyses of the Sudanese conflict seem to be tailored towards dichotomy. It is often presented as a conflict between the North and the South, Muslims and Christians, Arabs and Africans, and

oppressors and oppressed (Zela, 2008). However, Ahmed (2008 cited in Zela, 2008) notes that, although there may be elements of all of these dichotomies, none of them explains the conflict. He observes that analysts often ignore the rural urban divide, and more essentially, the role of the country's opportunistic elite in fomenting ethnic and regional division that are at the root of the Sudanese conundrum. Ahmed agrees on the multiple complexities of the Sudanese conflict and also emphasized the historical legacies of colonialism, which left behind underdevelopment and uneven development and acute socio-economic and political marginalization for groups in peripheral regions who have been fighting for inclusion since independence. He however, places primary responsibility on the elite, tracing the development of this class from the colonial period and the role it has played during various phases of violent conflict in postcolonial Sudan (Zela, 2008). The defect of structural explanations of conflict as seen above is that it ignores economic and other factors as conflict propellers.

2.3.5 Economic Factor and Conflict

Economic and social factors play an important role in setting the scene for potentially violent ethnic conflict. These consist of economic problems, discriminatory economic systems such as; a system of cultural division of labour with job opportunities determined by ethnic background, and uneven or preferential economic development and modernization, which can contribute to the mobilization of ethnic groups and their formation into conflict groups ready to fight for equality of economic opportunity, redistribution of resources, or the preservation of a privileged status quo (Wolff, 2006).

Collier and Hoeffler (1998), in their own view, argue that ethnic conflict occurs if the incentive for rebellion is sufficiently large vis-à-vis the costs. In their study they investigated the relevance of a range of other opportunities such as the availability and cheapness of military equipment, military skills among the population at large, weak governments, and a terrain favourable to rebels (such as forests and mountains). Their findings again emphasize the importance of economic factors: the presence of natural resources that can be used in financing rebels' movements, diaspora support and low costs in terms of foreign earnings and the availability of conflict – specific

capital (equipment and skills). In a nutshell, the only significant non-economic factor that they found was ethnic dominance, where one ethnic group has monopolized the state and its resources whilst others remain excluded from meaningful political, economic, and social participation.

Collier (1999, 2000); Collier and Hoeffler (1998, 1999) posit that economic agendas are at the heart of violent conflicts in Africa. They argued that the bulk of Africa's major conflicts since the mid- 1960s are driven by economic greed rather than political grievances, which may be related to economic inequalities, ethnic and religious cleavages, or political repression. Before emphasis was on economic scarcity and inequality as the cause of war, but recent studies stress the role played by resource abundance, the rise of self-financing rebel movements, and the emergence of civil war economies that are parasitic, illicit, predatory, and independent of external criminal financial and commodity networks (Seck, 2004).

While few would dispute the fact that economic problems, struggles and inequalities constitute "root causes" of many violent conflicts across the continent of Africa, economic explanation like those proposed by Collier and his associates have been vigorously contested on methodological, theoretical and policy grounds (Zela, 2008). The concept of civil war in their analysis among others has generated definitional disputation. Nafziger and Auvinen (2002) and Pugh and Cooper (2004) punctuated the argument among others that neo-liberalism provides the context that creates conditions for both conflict and predation through increased poverty and inequality and by weakening state capacity and strengthening regional and global markets and networks that rebel movement can access. Others have questioned the applicability of the economic thesis to many of Africa's wars and conflicts. Mlambo (2004) avers that the war of liberation primarily motivated by the desire for emancipation rather than the looting of resources, and land struggles in Southern Africa that seek the redistribution of scarce resources is rooted in inequalities of settlers colonialism. He argues that there is more to conflicts in Africa than simply economic greed and that the sharp contrast drawn between economic and political motivation is unproductive analytically in terms of devising effective conflict resolution policies.

Many scholars have pointed out that even economic agenda of wars in Sierra Leone, Angola, Mozambique, the Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo negate the economic analysis of war and conflict because the aforementioned crises were driven by struggle for political power than resources control. Ballentine and Sherman (2003) have equally criticized economic factor of conflict. They stressed the inseparability of political and economic factors, contextual specificities and fluidity of conflict, the role played by the process of regionalization, privatization and globalization among others. Ballentine (2003, 259-260) in his analysis put it this way:

Very few contemporary conflicts can be adequately captured as pure instances of 'resource wars' or conflict caused by 'loot seeking'. Economic incentives and opportunities have not been the only or even the primary cause of these armed conflicts; rather, to varying degrees, they interacted with socioeconomic and political grievances, interethnic disputes, and security dilemmas in triggering the outbreak of warfare. However, combatant access to economic resources has been a salient factor shaping a permissive opportunity structure for sustaining hostilities and has had important effects on the duration, intensity and character of conflict".

Omoweh (2010:4), in analyzing the crisis in the Niger-Delta, argues that, "it is not simply an economic crisis; rather, it is fundamentally a crisis of the Nigerian state, indeed, a political crisis. It is a crisis heightened by the resource rights struggle that is rooted in the state's policy towards the governance of natural resources"

It is necessary to stress that although some conflicts may not be linked to economic factors, yet the role of the economy in conflict cannot be denied. For instance, very few people will dispute the fact that violent conflict in the Niger-Delta in Nigeria has economic undertone. Toyo (2000: 6) offers a perspective that helps in understanding the crisis in Niger Delta. According to him:

why the crisis in the oil producing areas? The answer is this: foreign capitalist firms came to that part of Nigeria, discovered oil and started exploration. Then two things happened; one, there was environmental degradation. Two, the local people began to protest and the Nigerian government in the name of peace and order and in the name of oil revenue sent a force against them in an attempt to silent them. The last aspect of the crisis is the local communities themselves, because of their misunderstanding and because of the various agents using them for divide and rule tactics and the oil greed of the bourgeoisie amongst them, started fighting and killing themselves over land.

It is in the same vein that Alemika (2008) avers that in many parts of the world, places endowed with mineral resources experience prolonged conflicts and civil wars generated as a result of conflicting local, national and international interests in the exploration of the resources, management of the impact as well as distribution of the benefits of mineral exploration. It is necessary to stress that without political entrepreneurs driving such war for their political objectives, the so-called economic war may not even emanate. Analysis based on economic models like that of Collier and Hoeffler (1998, 1999) and some others that see economic as the only major cause of conflict neglect political, social and cultural variables impacting on conflict unjustifiably.

2.3.6 Socio-Economic Factors of conflict

Murshed (2002) and Senghaas (2002) focus on socio-economic bias and exclusion as the primary cause of conflict and even situate culture within the prism of socio-economic framework. Murshed is of the view that economic factors are the basis of conflict, and that poverty and socio economic conditions facilitate conflict. To them, most conflicts that look like ethnic and cultural are economic in nature as ethnic and culture most often only serve as rallying point to fight socio-economic injustice. Another observation made by Murshed and Gates (2003) hinges on inequality (horizontal inequality among groups as conflict precipitant). Some of the salient aspects of horizontal inequality noted are briefly described below:

- (1) *Asset Inequality*: Land inequality, the dispossession of peasant communities, and the limited poverty reduction associated with economic growth in highly unequal societies provide fertile ground for insurrection particularly when the dispossessed belong to separate and distinct groups drawn along caste, ethnic or religious lines.
- (2) *Unequal Access to Public Employment*: Discrimination in the allocation of public employment is particularly resented in societies in which it represents the principal avenue for personal advance.
- (3) *Unequal Access to Public Services and Over-taxation*: The over taxation of smallholders encourages insurrection, and indigenous peoples often face discrimination in access to schooling, health care, and public-sector jobs. Where there are inter-group fiscal transfers, which may take the form of spending on education and

health for disadvantaged groups or including them in government employment, commitment to the transfer by those in power may be imperfect.

(4) *Economic Mismanagement*: The risk of civil war is greater in low-income developing countries where poverty and poor human development indicators abound. Societies characterised by poor governance and widespread corruption, especially amongst the elite, are also more prone to conflict. The absence of economic opportunities, associated with low growth rates, landlessness, unequal access to education and skills can contribute to the risk of war. In fact, the lack of normal economic occupation amongst young males has been found to significantly contribute to the risk of city.

To Senghaas (2002), conflict always revolves around distribution of income, education, upward mobility and political participation. Denial of access to material needs leads to frustration, which may give fillip to conflict. This approach is problematic in the sense that it failed to take into consideration the identity and human agency dimension of conflict. These theorists discussed above ignored the complex relationship among culture, economic, political and social factors that influence construction of identity which may result in violent conflict.

Stewart (2000:248) recognizes the interconnection between political, cultural and economic elements in conflict but jettisons the complexity of identity formation. The author argues that “socio-economic inequality and disparities of political power create relative economic, political and social hierarchical and exclusionary positions that underlie conflict”. However, differentiation in identity leads to formation of distinct groups, which serve as mobilizing force to challenge the perceived inequalities (Stewart, 2000). Political power is a veritable instrument of economic power as it set the rules and determines allocation of employment, social investments and incentives for private investment. That is why prospect of possible loss of political power often acts as motivation for state-sponsored violence because conflict is used for maintaining power and suppressing opposition (Stewart 1999). The author, however, glosses over the complexity of identity formation.

Imobighe (2003) observes that conflict in Nigeria is brought about by some factors. The first factor has to do with neglect of the principle of broad public participation in the management of public affairs in the country and the fact that the control of the country's resources is over-concentrated at the centre. This results into incessant cry of marginalization by the various ethnic groups in the country and a bitter contest to control the centre.

Imobighe (1998) analysis appears very relevant to Nigerian situation. One can add that publications in the news dailies on the looting of political office holders cannot but set on edge the fray nerves of the jobless youths. It will be difficult for youth in abject poverty to co-exist with monumental wealth of public officers gotten through fraud, without crisis. Conflict can also persist or erupt when the memories of humiliation, oppression and marginalization, both real and mythologized, are triggered through new threats (Azar and Moon 1986; Deutsch 1991; Ross, 1993; Brown, 1993; Namwambah, 2004). Shils (1981) and Schwartz (1991) have debated the relationship between the present and the past specifically whether the present is predominantly shaped by the past or vice versa. If a group of people has been subjected to humiliation and oppression for a long period of time, an attempt to bring them under subjection again can trigger memories of what they had suffered before, thereby galvanizing them into action that can be violent in order to prevent it. According to Smith (1993), what make a group of people to be called an ethnic community among other things are shared memories. In fact, memory may not only play an important role in creating or recreating conflict, it can also reactivate it from the form in which it may have lain dormant, perhaps for several generations (Montville, 1993). This is because such groups are left with a sense of "victimhood" that stems from unacknowledged and unreconciled historic losses. These in turn present a powerful barrier to traditional methods of peacemaking and diplomacy and create new senses of wrong and injustice; thus, creating the potentials for future conflict.

The potential for conflict is present because ethnic conflict often leads to violence that in turn invites collective revenge (Chirot, 2001). This revenge does not necessarily have to be based on a quarrel (although it may be); it can just as easily be based on a

quarrel that is only one generation old. However long the time-scale, ethnic conflicts are always grounded in the past. The problem is that when one community takes revenge on another, this in turn sows the seed for continued violence. For these reason, if ethnic conflict is to be brought under control, it is necessary to understand the role of the collective past in the collective present. The next section focuses on land and conflict.

2.3.7 Land and Conflict

Land conflict was a significant driver of social political and environmental change throughout the 20th century. During this period, monumental political transformations including the Chinese and Russian revolutions were sparked in part by inequitable distribution of land. The struggle for land has also been identified as a source of internal strife in countries, such as Bangladesh, the Philippines, South Africa, and Israel and the precipitate factor of war between Senegal and Mauritania and El Salvador and Honduras (Homer-Dixen, 1999). Land is increasingly becoming a source of conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa, where land access had traditionally been characterized as relatively egalitarian. It has been shown that local land conflicts can erupt into large scale civil strife and political movement (Andre and Platteau, 1988; Dandelin, 2003).

Komey (2009) in his analysis on conflicts in Sudan, the Nuba question argued that the root causes of many state-community conflicts worldwide are complex. However, at the center of these multifaceted root causes is the question of communal land rights, particularly in Africa and the Middle East. The centrality of land in conflicts stems from the fact that, rights to land are intimately tied to membership in specific communities, ranging from a nuclear or extended family, clan, or ethnic group to the nation-state (Shipton 1988; Lentz, 2007).

At the various levels of social identities and organizations, people seek land as collective rights and not just as material satisfaction. It is also a source of power, wealth, and identity (Komey, 2009). To Komey nothing evokes deeper passions or gives rise to more bloodshed than disagreement over territory, boundaries or access to land resources. At national level, land is a symbol of a nation's political sovereignty and power and a base for the national economic wealth. At the local level,

land is also a symbol of collective socio-cultural and political identities, and a basis for their survival and economic livelihood.

The management of land and natural resources is one of the most critical challenges facing developing countries today. This is because of increasing competitions over diminishing renewable resources such as land are on the rise. Land conflicts tend to be dynamic: the relationship between land and conflicts often changes over time. In period of insecurity, land-related dispute can turn increasingly violent and may result in some population displacement. The conflicts between the Itsekiri and Urhobo; Tiv and Jukun attested to the fact that economic importance of land can be a causative factor of conflict.

Allied to the issue of land is that indigeneship and settlers; citizenship and tenants. Citizenship/indigeneship controversy is common in all multi-ethnic states and should be accorded recognition given its potential as a conflict inducing factor (Nwosu, 2008). In Nigeria for example, an ethnography survey has assigned as many as 80 nationalities to Adamawa State, Bauchi 50, Plateau 52, Taraba 39, Kaduna 32, Cross River 30, Bornu 25, Kebbi 19, Kwara 4, Gombe 17, (and Kogi 8). Multiplicity of ethnic nationalities within a formation is no problem by itself. Problem arises when symbols associated with them are used to compete for resources (Nwosu, 2008).

This aligns with the position of Egwu (2005) that pre-colonial Africa has flexible history of identity formation, which enabled the absorption of migrants into their host communities and ensured their participation in social, civic and political life. Relations within such formations were harmonious because the spaces of competition were minimal. Identity crisis as regards the citizenship issue is the competition for resources connected with the benefits of modernization.

In the context of scarcity and competition, and the readiness of “ethnic” entrepreneurs” to resort to ethnic mobilization as well as the context offered by democratization and political liberalization, the consequences are communal conflicts (Egwu, 2005).

2.3.8 Religion and Conflict

The role of religion as a source of conflict, in objective and subjective terms, institutionally and ideological, and at local and transnational levels and the many point, in between, cannot be overemphasized (Panitch and Leys 2002). Throughout

history religion has provided a powerful vehicle for instigating war, and also giving meaning and legitimation to war. Kastfelt (2005:1) argues forcefully and convincingly, “many African civil wars have religious dimensions which are sufficiently important to deserve to be studied in their own right without, of course, thereby ignoring their social, economic and political context”. Avalos (2005), contends that all religions are inherently prone to violence. In other words, religion causes violence. In the same vein, McTernan (2003), stresses that, religion needs to be acknowledged as an actor in its own right. For instance, Algeria is afflicted by arguably the worst conflict in Arab Africa. The conflict is between Islamists and the military secularists. Religion is also at the root of the conflict in Egypt (Ansari, 1984).

Since the creation of 12 states in 1967, the northern part of Nigeria has witnessed quite a number of violent clashes between Muslims and Christians. At the Northern peace conference held in Kaduna in 2004, Isawa Elaigwu, President of the Jos-based Institute of Social Research, put the number of crises between 1980 and 2004 at 50. The region has recorded many other cases since then (Abimboye, 2004). The Kano/Kaduna axis is notorious for the worst inter-religious crises in the country. The bloodiest of such confirmations took place in Kano in 1976, 1977, 1980-1981 and 1990. Kaduna witnessed three major riots between 1987 and 2000. The worst is the February 21 to 25, 2000 riot which was triggered by the plan to introduce Sharia, the Islamic code, by the state government. In the mayhem between Christians and Muslims, more than 2,000 lost their lives, even though the police tried to downplay the casualty figure to 609. Four policemen died in the crisis, about 1,944 houses and 746 vehicles were burnt. The police nabbed 559 suspects and recovered two grenades, two medium-sized bombs and two military rocket launchers. These series of conflicts has led to population dislocation. The living pattern was drastically altered. Adherents of the two religions began to live in separate areas out of fear of outbreak of another crisis (Abimboye, 2009).

The incessant crisis in Jos has added to the list of religious violence in the country. The crisis started in Jos the capital of Plateau State in 1994. One erupted in 2001, 2008, January 2010, May 2010 and 2011 and has continued since then. Some of the reasons advanced for religious crises are reminiscence of the Kaduna Sharia saga

which include: lack of trust between various ethnic and religious groups as a result of deep-rooted misconception and stereotyping, lack of tolerance, poverty and fear of socio-cultural domination, media reporting, government failure to take action in previous happenings, lack of infrastructure, excruciating poverty and manipulation of the people by retired military officers to achieve their ambition (Fwa, 2003). Other factors identified by Imobighe (2002, 2003); Bassey (2002); Otite (1990) include Religious differences; demographic explosion and expansionist tendencies to sustain ethnic-bond occupation; social fragmentation and decay; commercialization of political practices; unguarded utterances or inflammatory statements and provocative speeches; land ownership and control (resources control); kingship/chieftaincy disputes and proliferation of small arms.

A good number of works exist on ethno-religious crises in Nigeria (Ihonvbere and Falola, 1985; Otite, 1990; Otite and Albert, 1999); for specific crisis situation by case studies (Fwa, 2003; Egwavoan, 2003; Babajimi, 2003; Akpotor, 2002; and Ibeanu, 2003) and seriousness of incessant outbreak of ethno-religious disturbances in Nigeria (Enwerem, 1995; Bassey, 2002; Imobighe, 2002).

Jega (2002) sounded a word of caution when he said there were many causes of ethno-religious tension and conflicts in Nigeria and quite a number of them are actually interrelated. He also observed that the pervasive nature or spread of ethno-religious conflicts gained unprecedented momentum since the emergence of democratic government on May 29, 1999. Jega (2002:35) notes:

It seems as if decades of bottled up anger under military rule has suddenly exploded and found expression in violent, ethnic, religious and communal conflicts, in the context of the little democratic space which has opened up since May 29, 1999, furthermore, Nigerians now spend much energies trying to redefine their national identities, as a consequence of the emotive feelings and perceptions which these clashes have engendered. Where conflicts have not occurred, or have some how abated, associated tensions have remained high with all the attendant negative consequences on the socio-economic and political development in the country.

From the ideas expressed above, one can make the following deductions: first, that the long years of military rule in the country was characterized by excessive repression

and dehumanization; that democratic dispensation created the latitude for all and sundry to rediscover themselves and make excessive demands on the system. And lastly, the failure of the Nigerian state to meet the excessive demands of the teeming population basking in the euphoria of emancipation found expression in violent conflict with devastating consequences.

Agreed that harping on religious differences and other associated factors can result into ethno-religious conflict that are mostly violent, yet one cannot gloss over the fact that most ethno-religious conflicts have political undertone. Onuoha (2011) avers that most of the conflicts in Africa, even when they seem religious are staged within the parameters of the political: most times because, directly or indirectly most of the conflicts are responses to the struggle for access, control and management of political power. A deep reflection on Sharia issue in Nigeria portends the fact that what are often regarded as ethnic and religious conflicts are indeed political.

Fayemi (2000:17) argues that beyond all the arguments about ethnic and religious crisis, the bane about Sharia lies at the heart of politics in Nigeria and the centrality that “identity” politics has assumed. Fayemi put it more pungently:

There can be no doubt that the Sharia issue is clearly a reaction to perceived or real loss of power by an elite stratum that is predominantly “northern” and also “muslim”. What is happening is a contest over raw political power. Who lost power, who won power, and who wants power back. The processes that threw up General Obasanjo as the candidate of this elite stratum were intimately bound up with the political crisis that has gripped the northern political class.

He continues:

Obasanjo, who they had supported, refused to play their game, prompting some northern political leaders Datti Ahmed, himself a former presidential candidate to allegedly claim the president had allowed himself to be hijacked by South West politicians. Since General Obasanjo as a politician does not have a political base, not in the army, nor in his ethnic group, nor anywhere else, it would seem understandable that the forces in retreat dusted up the dormant Sharia issue, confident of its populist value, to challenge him, to intimidate him, to force him to back down and play things their way.

The *Boko Haram* insurgency, though religious in nature, has political undertone. The group official name is Jamalatu Ahllis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal Jihad, meaning people committed to the propagation of the Prophet's teaching and Jihad. It earned the nickname from the teachings of its founder, Mohammed Yussuf in the early 2000s, in the restive northeastern city of Maiduguri, the capital of Bornu State. Yusuf argued that Western education, or "boko" had brought nothing but poverty and suffering to the region and was therefore forbidden, or "haram" in Islam. He began peacefully mostly preaching and quickly gained a followership among disaffected youths in the northeast. In 2009, the police clamped down on the sect members and killed its leader. Since then, the sect has been a major security challenge to Nigeria. The group has killed several people and had burnt down several religious buildings and government properties among others through improvised explosive devices (IEDs) (Okpaga, et. al 2013). "Boko Haram" according to Quadri (2013) is not an agent of Islam, but the handiwork of the destructive Nigerian politicians, and added that if Nigeria must know peace, the Nigerian politicians must resolve to achieve it not through manipulation of religion but by becoming nation-builders. For northern politicians who have always been in power, it is quite strange for them to cope with the huge challenge powerlessness poses. From the position of Fayemi as expressed above, although religion is an instrument of violence in Nigeria, but the invisible hand of politics in the so called religious violence is evident.

In addition, Lipschutz and Crawford (1996) argue that ethnic and sectarian conflicts are fundamentally conflicts about power. What we have come to call "ethnic and sectarian conflict" is neither Ethnic nor sectarian per se. Rather it is about struggles over the levers of power and wealth within societies and countries in which ethnicity and religion provide the cultural and historical resources for mobilizing support for particular elites. These countries almost always are caught in the throes of economic and political transformations, brought by external factors and forces.

The question to ask at this juncture is that why political power is so important that people would have to incite ethnic and religious conflict or violence to express loss of power or as a means to pave way for their electoral victory? The reason for this is not far-fetched. Political power brings with it many opportunities for attaining wealth

especially in an African context noted for extreme scarcity and poverty as well as private accumulation. Tangri (1999) notes that to be in key administrative and political position is to have access to the major means of acquiring coveted material resources. Thus, through the state, top office holders controlled an extensive array of resources and could influence their distribution and accumulation often with an eye to political advantage as well as personal gain.

Puniyani (2005) an Indian economist, argues that the majority of violence today is really politics clothed in language of religion. Pointing to his own country, Puniyani says that religious ideologies are being exploited on a grand scale by the elite of Indian society. The Hindutva movement, which insists that India must be governed by Hindu religious teachings, makes use of ancient ideologies not to glorify Hinduism but rather to re-establish the political and social power of the upper caste and justify demonization of all non-Hindus. Puniyani (2005) opines that on the world stage, the government of the United States also uses religion to mask its true agenda. The scholar perceives that, the U.S. government war on terror is nothing but a façade for globalization and economic domination. According to Harvard Sociologist, Tambiah (2005), civilian riots are a mode of conducting politics by other means. Tambiah added that ethno-religious violence in India shows evidence of careful planning and tends to be carried out by people from a wide range of the population with direction from politicians and members of the professional classes.

In a similar vein Pape (2005), a University of Chicago political scientist, argues that religion is not the motivating factor behind most suicide bombings and that more than half of all suicide terrorist attacks, all over the world since 1980, are not associated with Islamic fundamentalism. The author concluded that what over 95 percent of all suicide terrorist attacks has in common is not religion but a specific strategic goal which is to compel a modern democracy to withdraw combat forces. Jonathan (2004), avers that, religion can be used to intensify ethnic conflicts and is increasingly being employed in this way. Burn (2008) argues that a number of recent publications examine the question of religious violence in relation to politics and conclude that religion itself does not cause violence. Like Jonathan Fox's cited in Burn (2008) argues that religion is a secondary factor in the generation of bloodshed. The theorists

argue that sometimes religious ideals are co-opted as a consequence of the need to rally support for political goals and that sometimes religious rhetoric is deliberately used in order to mask political agendas.

Having looked at some of the factors responsible for violent conflict it is necessary to beam a searchlight on the nexus between culture and conflict.

2.3.9 The Interface between Culture and Conflict

Culture is the learnt, socially acquired traditions and lifestyles peculiar to members of a society, which is reflected in their patterned, repetitive ways of thinking, feeling and acting (Harris, 1993). In his analysis of culture, Baron (2004) opines that culture limits as well as liberates us; it differentiates as well as unites us. It defines our realities and shapes the way we think, feel and act. In the same vein, LeBaron and Pillay (2006) observe that culture is a series of lenses that shapes what we see and don't see. It determines how issues are perceived and interpreted and where we draw boundaries. It shapes our opinions of what is important, impact on our attitudes and values and also animates our behaviour. From the work of LeBaron and Pillay one can also deduced that there exist an inexorable link between culture and conflict. To them conflict cannot be defined without a reference to cultural context. This is because culture is embedded in every conflict. In fact, culture is inextricable from conflict, though it does not cause it. They argue that culture permeates conflict; at times it pushes forth with intensity making it to be noticed; at other times it quietly sneaks along without its presence being noticed until people accidentally stumble on it. Culture shapes and reshapes conflict by framing the outer boundaries of our minds vision in such a way that culture of outsiders that lies beyond our horizon is difficult to recognize. Culture makes us unfamiliar with people outside our cultural milieu. We tend to equate this unfamiliarity with strangeness, polarizing relationship between "us" and "them". Thus, culture frames the universe of our conflict behaviour.

Galtung has listed six cultural domains which legitimize structural and direct violence as religion, ideology, language, art, and empirical and formal science. He stated that some religions, particularly the Judaeo-Christian religions have a strong concept of "chosen people" which is the source of racism and negation of other culture and

religions (Rupesinghe and Rubio, 1994). Similarly, Aurel and Christoph (2009) see cultural conflict from language, religion and from historicity perspectives. To them culture revolves around identity, not interest based conflict item.

Soeter (2005) sees the rise in violence and conflict as a result of differences between national cultures, which indeed have a presumably large influence on the rise of conflict and violence in the world. This is in line with the position of Huntington (1993) who states that the world was going to see a “clash of civilizations”. To him the dominating source of conflict in this new world will not be ideological or economic but cultural. Conflict between civilizations will be the last phase in the evolution of conflict in the modern world. He argued further that differences among civilizations are real and basic. Civilizations are differentiated on the lines of history, language, culture, tradition and most importantly religion. People of different civilizations have different views. Although differences may not necessarily lead to conflict and conflict may not be synonymous with violence, however, over the centuries differences among civilizations have generated the most prolonged and violent conflicts.

In fact he put it pungently in this way:

Cultural characteristics and differences are less mutable and hence less easily compromised and resolved than political and economic ones. In former Soviet Union, communists can become democrats, the rich can become poor and the poor can become rich, but Russians cannot become Estonians and Azeris cannot become Armenians. In class and ideological conflicts, the key question was “Which side are you on?” and people could and did choose sides and change sides. In conflicts between civilizations, the question is “What are you?” That is a given that cannot be changed. And as we know, from Bosnia to the Caucasus to the Sudan, the wrong answer can be a bullet in the head (Huntington, 1993:27).

It is essential to know that differences as highlighted by Huntington either within a state or among states may not necessarily lead to conflicts if there are no political or economic undertones. Thus Cohen (1974:94) argues that:

Men may do certainly joke about or ridicule the strange and bizarre customs of men from other ethnic groups, because these customs are different from their own. But they do not fight over such differences alone. When men do, on the other hand, fight across ethnic lines it is nearly always the case that they fight over some

fundamental issues concerning the distribution and exercise of power, whether economic, political or both.

It is clear from the above that Huntington's thesis glosses over the reality that economic and political injustices could instigate violent conflict. His analysis failed to provide explication on specific linguistic, cultural, or religious characteristics of the civilizations that have tendency to cause violent conflict. Aylward (2007) also criticized Huntington's thesis for relying on fixed and static notions of culture and identity that do not take cognizance of the fact that, identities are socially constructed and change over time.

Back to Soeter's analysis, one can glean that apart from differences in culture that can bring about conflict; some national cultures promote conflict and violence. In Scandinavian countries, the law forbids professional boxing and in other Western European countries they are also contemplating doing same, while in the United State the same sport is a big business. In one country defence expenditure is several times the amount of money other countries are willing to spend for this purpose (Soeter, 2005).

In order to understand how national culture lies at the root of violence and conflict, it may be helpful to gain an insight into the work of Dutch social scientist (Hofsted, 1991). He has been able to establish the difference between national cultures by using the so-called value standards of more than 100,000 respondents in over 50 countries. The underlying idea was that culture- "collective mental programming"- can be represented by the opinions of people about the fundamental aspects of life and work. People have acquired these values and opinions in their formative years, which are the years between the sociological birth" and the beginning of the maturity roughly at the age of 20. After this age, these fundamental opinions hardly change anymore. This is why stable differences arise between groups of people in the way in which they look at the various questions of life. These different "orientations of life", the crux of understanding culture, can be recognized in the way people behave in various kinds of circumstances.

Hostfed (1991, 2001), avers that culture can be divided into masculinity and femininity, or tough and soft. Masculinity cultures aspire to a tough achievement oriented society, in which “going for gold” and “the winner takes it all” are popular expressions. Feminine cultures on the other hand, stress the importance of prosperity for all, the quality of life, the environment and mutual solidarity. In feminine countries the roles of men and women overlap, both genders are relatively modest and aimed at cooperation.

In masculine countries, there are important differences between how men and women function in society- men are expected to be dominant, ambitious and tough, whereas women are expected to be modest and focused on a relationship. Examples of masculine countries are Japan, Austria, Italy, Ireland, Great Britain, Germany, the United States, and Mexico. Countries under feminist culture are the Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands. In countries with a masculine culture, there is more political violence. This effect is unrelated to other factors such as population size and economic development (Van de Vliert, et al, 1999 cited in Soeter, 2005). The more masculine the culture, the larger the part of national budget that goes to defence and the armed forces. Masculine countries are more inclined to solve conflict by fighting and military actions (the UK in Northern Ireland, the USA and the UK in Iraq, whereas feminine countries will try to do so by negotiating and making compromises. Another aspect considered by Hotsfed (1991) is what he called uncertainty avoidance, collectivism and power distance. Uncertainty cultures are inclined to reject others in general and strangers in particular. Hatred of strangers and racism are more widespread in uncertainty-avoidance countries than elsewhere. Uncertainty avoidance is tersely described in the expression what is different and strange, is dangerous.

Although Africa’s domestic conflicts are often assumed to be largely ethnic in nature, there are competing findings on the relationship between cultural factors and conflict in African region. For example, Barrows (1976) found that neither linguistic nor ethnic fractionalization had a consistent significance impact on domestic violence in Sub-Saharan Africa. Later, Collier (1998) and Collier and Hoeffler (1998) suggest exactly the opposite between ethno-linguistic homogeneity and civil war in Sub-Saharan Africa. The most likely candidates for civil war in Africa are those that are

ethnically polarized with two relatively equal but distinct cultural groups accounting for the most of the state's population. Their basic contention is that coordinating insurgency is facilitated where rebels are bound by common identity distinct from that of their adversaries, and common culture- especially common language- is assumed to provide a basis for such self-identification.

The above position focuses on the fact that conflict often erupt when people of different culture coexist in a political enclave or contact between different national cultures. In addition, the masculinity or femininity of a culture determines whether it will result into violent conflict or otherwise. However, the emphasis is on its implications on the different gender. Thus, the above analysis lacks explanatory power to explain culture within a small community. It has nothing to do with ceremonies, festivals etc peculiar to a particular group of people be it male or female and how this can bring about conflict or cooperation.

Galtung (2002) contends that people who know little about culture often believe that a shared culture will tie them together. By extrapolation Galtung avers that the fact that a group of people shared similar culture which ordinarily should have united them together does not serve as immunity to conflict among such. It is the contention of this research work that some cultural practices may foment violent conflict. This is in line with orientation of some scholars. For example Bond (undated) argues that:

We are taught to love; we are taught to hate. We build we destroy. We give life we kill. These human activities are the consequences of culture, our birth culture and the individual translation of that cultural heritage we all absorb and carrying into our future, further socializing those who associate with us. Culture is profoundly implicated in all we do, and is responsible for legitimizing the violence we perpetrate against another.

Berger and Lukmann (1967) postulate that culture provides essential support to collective violence people wreck on one another. Although culture is not the agent of carnage; it is human beings acting in concert and providing the daily, proximal supports for orchestration of collective violence. Culture proposes; man (usually) disposes. To them without culture there is no collective violence. Collective violence is a group orchestration, relying for its expression and unfolding on how each cultural

group has socialized its members to meet the basic concerns addressed by all cultures everywhere, anytime.

In line with our study, culture and conflict can also be linked with competition for political power. LeBaron and Pillay (2006) argue that when people are jostling for power or influence, they often use cultural differences to manipulate and polarize relationships, shaping and reshaping their sense of who “we” are and who “they” are. In addition, awareness of cultural differences, reinforced by stereotype, further polarization which deepens the cleavage between “us” and “them”. Since culture sets the standards of what is good and evil, just and unjust, moral and immoral, manipulation of cultural differences facilitates the psychological process where people come to believe that “we” are good and “they” are bad. Thus, one can add that politicians use cultural differences to polarise groups for political support.

Having considered the various causes of conflict, it is necessary to take a look at conflict resolution.

2.4 Conflict Resolution, Management and Transformation

Conflict management by peaceful means has been very much in vogue for a long time. In almost all African societies there is preference for peaceful settlement of dispute along the lines prescribed by the institutions and values of the community. In a few instances where it may be tolerated, the community and not individual has to be the sanctioning authority. In fact, there exists a wide range of non-violent methods of managing conflict either at individual, family, group, community and international levels.

There are quite a number of approaches to conflict resolution and management which covers both personal as well as public dimensions as experienced in the developing and industrialized worlds. Fundamentally, two main approaches to conflict resolution are discernable they are peaceful negotiation or arbitration and use of force. The use of force may include war, genocide, forced mass population transfer, partition and/ or secession (self determination), integration or assimilation. On the other hand, peaceful conflict resolution implies approaching the conflict in a problem-solving, constructive and non-violent way, taking the value of the identify of all parties in the relationship,

their human needs and interest, rather than a violent, destructive” solution” or a mere settlement that “ freezes” the current power distribution between opponents (Oyeshola, 2005).

2.4.1 Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution encapsulates activities geared towards maintaining and promoting peace and security. It is the process that involves bridge building between hostile communities, clarifying issues which represent point of confrontation between them and creating new opportunities for developing renewed relationships, based upon a process of peaceful change and grassroots reconciliation (Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, 2004). Miller (2003:8) sees it as “a variety of approaches aimed at terminating conflicts through the constructive solving of problems, distinct from management or transformation of conflict”. Miall et. al (1999) argue that by conflict resolution, the deep rooted sources of conflict are expected to be addressed and resolved in such a way that behavior is no longer violent, nor are attitudes hostile any longer, while the structure of the conflict has been changed

According to Mitchel and Banks (1996) cited in Best (2006: 94), conflict resolution denotes first, an outcome in which the issues in an existing conflict are satisfactorily resolved in such a way that is mutually acceptable to the parties, self-sustaining in the long run and productive of a new, positive relationship between parties that were previously hostile adversaries; and second, any process or procedure by which such an outcome is achieved.

Conflict resolution denotes the idea in which the parties to a conflict are mutually satisfied with the outcome of a settlement and in true sense the conflict is resolved.

However, it is necessary to stress that not all conflicts can be resolved to mutual satisfaction of the warring factions. Best (2006) notes that, from the point of view of needs, it is possible to resolve conflict when the basic needs of parties have been met with necessary satisfiers, and their fears have been allayed. But others like over values, may not be resolved and can best be transformed, regulated or managed. The crisis in Sudan is a good example of the fact that not all conflicts can be resolved; some can at best be managed or transformed.

2.4.2 Conflict Management

Every society manages her conflicts through a framework of laid-down conventions or rules. Either traditional or modern, each has a body of rules that defines and qualifies people's relationship with each other and the state. These rules and regulations constitute the law of the land (constitution). In societies where there are no written constitutions, the basic set of standards in which individual member has been socialized from youth to conform to and from which other standards in the culture derive become the framework of conflict management (Oyeshola, 2005).

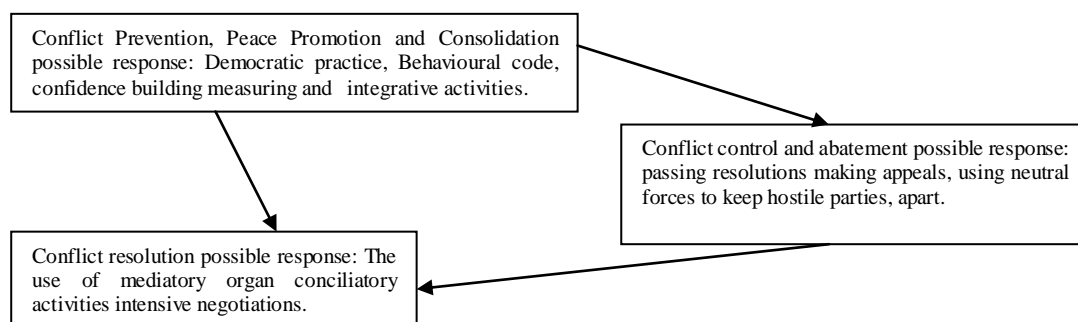
Conflict management is the process of reducing the negative and destructive capacity of conflict through a number of measures and by working with and through the parties involved in that conflict (Best 2006). The concept of conflict management comes to the fore as a result of the fact that conflict is inevitable and not all conflicts can be resolved, hence the need to manage or regulate them.

Africa's societies have different means of managing conflict. In Chad for instance, the traditional chiefs/ ruler are vested with power to intervene and effect conciliation between the parties in conflict residing within their own area of jurisdiction. In conflicts between nomads, cattle rearers and settled farmers, there exists a structure whereby traditional rulers quite frequently participate in the management of such conflicts. Through that platform, the traditional rulers do not limit themselves to conciliatory efforts; they equally carry out enlightenment campaigns and undertake measures to prevent future conflicts. Other traditional mechanisms for resolving conflict in Chad include Peace Dialogue Committees.

Associations/Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the Role of Assemblies (Cofono) are well recognised. The "Cofono" is a fully representative gathering, which brings together not only the traditional rulers, but also customary council members from the surroundings, all interested men-young and old, as well as women groups of all ages (Zamtato, 2003). In Cameroun, the traditional method of conflict management involve three stages Before then, it is necessary to state that there is what is called "African Palaver" which is widely used in quite a number of communities to settle conflict "Palaver" simply mean talking things over, or the settlement of conflict

through dialogue. The first stage is to persuade disputants to bring their case to the “Palaver” the second stage is hearing phase and the final stage is the point at which the elders, after taking evidence from witnesses and listening to all the contributions from the floor, retire to a secluded place to take a decision on the conflict. As soon as they are ready with their decision, they return to give it and conclude the “palaver”. The palaver system is also used in Mali as a popular conflict management technique (Zamtato, 2003).

Imobighe (1997) has evolved a model of integrated conflict management system in which all the vital modes by which conflict can be responded to can be comprehensively depicted as a process in an integrated conflict management cycle (cited in Obiehiagbon, 2005). The figure is shown below:



Source: Obiehiagbon (2005)

2.4.3 Conflict Transformation

Conflict transformation, according to Best (2006), is traceable to John Lederach of the Eastern Mennonite School of Peace Building. The assumption is that it goes beyond conflict resolution as it aims at building longer standing relation through a process of change in perception and attitudes of parties. In essence, the aim of conflict transformation is to change the parties and relationship and the very condition that created the conflict. In a sense, conflict transformation entails the coming into being of new situations involving conflict issues, perception relationship and communication patterns (Jeong, 2000).

Lederach put it more pungently that constructive transformation of conflict is:

comprehensive set of lenses for describing how conflict emerges from, evolves within and brings about changes in the personal, relational, structural and cultural dimensions and for developing creative response that promote peaceful change within those dimensions through non-violent mechanism (Lederach, 1987; Bassey, 2002).

According to Academic Associates Peace Work (AAPW), 2008:8 (cited in Bassey, 2002:2) conflict transformation involves three stages. The first stage has to do with attitudinal transformation “by change and redirecting negative perceptions, a commitment to see the other with goodwill, to define the conflict in terms of mutual respect, and to maintain attitudes of collaborative and co-operative intent” . Thus, the quotation continues:

by limiting all action to collaborative behavior, and interrupting negative cycles. This requires a commitment to seek non-coercive process of communication, negotiation, and dispute resolution even when there has been intense provocation. The commitment on both sides to act with restraint and mutual respect changes the dynamics of negotiation from mistrust to trust” (AAPW2000:9 cited in (Bassey 2002:2).

The third stage as explicated by (Bassey, 2002) involves seeking to discover, define and remove incompatibilities by creative design to facilitate mutual gain. Bassey (2002:20) and Otite (1999:10) argue that in destructive conflicts negative attitudes and “behaviour” sustained by goal becomes divisive and alienating, a product of individual’s socialization and acculturation that is present in “most person’s behavioural repertoire from childhood”. Thus, conflict transformation in this context is geared towards peace building through a shared vision of new patterns of sustainable relationship which go beyond “resolving or “ending particular conflict.

From the above it can be deduced that conflict resolution, management and transformation is not an ad hoc arrangement, neither is it a punitive measure that satisfies a short term emotional demand (Uji, 2005) in the management of conflict there are certain procedures of ideas that can be of vital use as postulated by Wilmot and Hocker (1998:48-49 cited in Otite, 1999:11-12):

These include clarification of communication and checking of perceptions which in turn involve the following: speaking out what

is on one's mind or heart, listening carefully, expressing strong feelings appropriately, remaining rational, asking questions, maintaining spirit of give and take, avoiding harmful statement, asking directly what is going on, telling others one's opinion, looking for flexible "shades of grey" solution, recognizing the process of initiating co-operative move, identifying conflict pattern and engaging in negotiations of agreements and settlements.

In the case of Nigerian governments, the approach of conflict handling is not different from that of colonial state which deals essentially with the use of coercive force in suppressing crisis and violence. Thus Albert (1999:38-39) stated that:

Once a community becomes violent in Nigeria, the first thing government does in line with its constitutional duty of maintaining law and order is to deploy some policemen to keep the peace in the area. Once the violence dies out, the Police is withdrawn from the area based on the assumption that the conflict is over. In many cases, the violence escalates few days, weeks or months after the departure of the police. In some desperate situations, the government permanently stations a contingent of "peace keeping" policemen and even soldiers in the conflict-prone area. Cessation of physical violence in the feuding communities in Nigeria is usually followed by setting up commissions of inquiry to look into the civil disturbance. Such a commission would take evidence from all parties to the conflict.

He continues:

The report of the commission is presented to government at a widely publicized occasion and the people never hear anything after that until another round of violence breaks out in the area. As members of the public wait endlessly for the report of the panel to be released, those who want to keep the conflict alive would go to town once again with an analysis of "insider knowledge" of the content of the report. The party that considered itself to have been disadvantaged by the report will therefore start once again to mobilize towards redressing the "injustice" done to them. This popular way of responding to conflict shows that not much attention is given to problem-solving procedures by the Nigerian government. For example to experience sustainable peace, it has to change its attitude to conflict.

The handling of Tiv-Jukun crisis (1992-2002) and the ethno-religious crisis in Jos Plateau among others buttress this fact. This is why resolving conflict has been a continuous challenge in Nigeria.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

Theoretical frameworks/theories are very important in any research work as they provide context for research. As posited by Hauss (2001), theories help to organize research as it point researchers toward some information or issues and away from others, thereby giving scholars intellectual cubbyholes into which to put the information gathered and an order in which to analyse it. In other words, situating a study within a theoretical construct provides a linkage among the range of facts to be investigated. It is essential to state that behavioural revolution brought about the development and adoption of theories in political studies. Thus, quite a number of theories have been evolved by scholars in analyzing political phenomena. However, conflict studies cut across various disciplines, which have made scholars of different persuasions to come up with various theories to explain conflict phenomena based on their orientations.

It is necessary to state that the essence of conflict theory or theories is to scientifically explicate the general contours of conflict in society: how conflict starts, its varieties and the effects. However, the central concerns of conflict theory are the unequal distribution of scarce resources and power. What these resources are might be different from each theorist, but conflict theorists quite frequently do follow the line of Weber's three systems of stratification: class, status and power. Thus, conflict theorists generally see power as the central feature of society rather than seeing society been held together by collective agreement via a cohesive set of cultural standards, as argued by the functionalists. Where power is located and who uses it (and who doesn't) are very fundamental to conflict theory (<http://www.pineforge.com/upm-data/13636-chapter7.pdf>). Nevertheless, other factors like economic and socio-cultural can not be jettisoned in order to grapple with the various complex dimensions of conflicts.

From this premise we are going to look at some of the theories relevant to our studies, highlighting their strengths and weaknesses and then come up with a model that will serve as explanatory tool for our analysis.

2.5.1 Psychological Theories of Conflict

According to Anifowose (2006), psychological theories dominate explanations on political violence among the social scientists. While there are differences in interpretations, definitions, concepts and conceptualization, however, the general consensus is that frustration leads to aggressive behavior. Dollard John and his research associates initially developed this theory in 1939 cited in (Faleti, 2006). It was later expanded and modified by scholars like Berkowitz (1962) and Yate (1962) there are many strands of these theories. For example while Feierabend et al (1969) emphasizes “want-get-ratio that is the distance between expectation and achievement Davies (1962) focuses on the gap between “expected need satisfaction” and “actual need satisfaction.” Gurr (1969) is concerned with relative deprivation hinges on the gap between expectations and capabilities. In other words, the gap between men’s value expectations and the actual value capabilities orchestrate violent conflict.

For Gurr, relative deprivation as explained by Anifowose (2006) is perceived within the context of thwarting circumstances. He argues that when one’s effort(s) to get something is thwarted, one is likely to get angry and when this is so, the most satisfying inherent response is to strike out at the source of such frustration. In this circumstance, frustration is no longer seen as the blockage of present goal-directed activity, but rather anticipated frustration brought to the fore by discrepancies between what is realistic in terms of attainment, given the social context, and what is sought. This notion that distance between current status and aspiration form the basis of argument of Feierabend et al and Davies earlier mentioned. The kernel of expectational theory is that hope, not despair instigates violent political behavior. Feierabend et al (1969) in their study use systematic frustration hypothesis. They argued that collective violent political behavior is caused by systematic frustration. To them systematic frustration is a collective frustration experience within a society. In a nutshell, irrespective of whatever angles frustration arises, either from failure to empower or from the process of disempowering could lead to conflict. Also unequal power relationship for instance can generate frustration which in turn breeds conflict at various levels. The above position forms the fulcrum of Galtung analysis of general patterns of conflict.

Conclusively, Alkanji (2005) opines that most works on economically related explications of conflict hinges on the premise that asymmetric relations in power, income, and wealth among others inevitably provide a fertile ground for manifestation of conflict.

An analytical dissection of the validity of psychological models brings to the fore quite a number of shortcomings. For one, this approach is a celebration of the sanctity of human nature- biological, physiological and psychological aspects as the major determinant of violent conflict at all levels. The models are also accused of extrapolating from the individual and applying it to an aggregate analysis of the political enclave (political system). Akanji (2005) and Anifowose (2006) postulate that this has been the point of contention of Lupsha (1971) who admit that although generalizing from micro concept to macro analysis is possible, however, he stated that it is difficult, requiring a number of intervening steps and operationalization.

Khan 1978 (cited in Akanji, 2005) avers that the models are more applicable to individuals, compact groups and sub segments or disparate groups but less applicable to collectivity of a society. Lastly, the models may equally be faulted for neglecting the dynamism of human behavior as well as conflict itself. These flaws notwithstanding, we cannot just discard these models since human beings are the parties to conflict and it is a matter of necessity to understand their behaviours which is the basis of these models.

2.5.2 Group Conflict Theory

Another model put forward to explain violent conflict especially within a political system is the group conflict models. Theorists that subscribe to this theoretical construct view conflict as a product of a struggle for power among various groups within a society. Scholars like Esses and Jackson (2008) argue that group conflict theory apart, from dealing with the origins and functions of inter-group conflict, tends to place particular emphasis on the role of either socially prevalent ideologies or situational factors which work together to create and exacerbate perceptions of inter-group competition and tension. The assumption of this model is that political violence for instance, is as a result of conflict between different actors within a given political

enclave. In that circumstance, all politics is inherent in conflict between political actors premised on the authoritative allocation of values. For example, the power approach or theory focuses on the role of competition in fomenting inter-group hostility. Hewstone et al (2008) contend that groups in proximity are often groups in conflict. Neighboring groups often pose potential threats, to social identity, to numerical superiority, to locally held power, even to the existence of one's own group. Even in conflicts that appear on the face to be ethnic clashes (such as Hutus-Tutsi conflict in Rwanda and Burundi) competition for power and resources may be as important as ethnic differences.

Similarly, there is another strand of group theory which is sub-cultural division. The main argument of this strand is that political instability is a function of cultural pluralism of heterogeneous nations in which the focal point of political identification and socialization is based on sub-national communities with different cultures and history as against the nation (Powel 1992). This position has been corroborated by Morrison and Stephenson (1972) that cultural pluralism increases the possibility of conflict between members of communal groups as well as elite instability. This is similar to power approach position that "racial and ethnic groups compete for power, prestige and privileges, hostilities will arise and increase with intensity of competition" (Giles and Evans, 1986:471).

According to the instrumentalist perspective, elite in the course of contending for power often manipulate social divisions and blowing them out of proportion with threat, fear, hate discourse, propaganda and with no-compromise, aggressive, crisis politics. Thus, elite create opportunities with issues and crises to advance their interests and goals. Conciliation is difficult when rival leaders demonize their adversaries as opponents who can never be trusted and must therefore be defeated, dominated or ethnically cleansed (Obserschall, 2010). Elite competition for scarce resources is hinged on three assumptions. These are: (1) the initiative for ethnic mobilization originates with the elite, (2) ethnic nationalist movements are led by the elite, and (3) ethnic mobilization is primarily, if not totally, for the benefits of the elites (Isumonah, 1997).

However, Isumonah disagrees with the last assumption on the ground that although some ethnic nationalists movement were led by individuals of high social backgrounds, but the motive along this effort was not material gains. He cited the case of Basque nationalism in Spain. Huntington (1996) in the same vein sees preservation of ethnic, culture and traditions ties among others as a major factor in inter-group conflict. The group conflict theory has been punctured by some critics. Looking at the theory critically, one can infer that ethnic diversity in itself does not result in conflict. It is its manipulation by the political elite that causes conflict. This is evident in many plural states of the world that are not conflict-prone (e.g the United States of American). Rotchild (1970) even argues that fractionalization reduces the possibility of violent conflict, as this can lead to divergent groups learning skills to live together in spite of their recognized diversity. Akanji (2005) posits that it is possible the failure of this learning process exacerbate conflict and increase the possibility of serious hostility precisely because it provides convenient platform for political mobilization as it was in the case of Yugoslavia in the 1990 before disintegration. Anifowose (2006) equally raises the issue of inability of the group theories to explain some forms of intra-ethnic or (inter-group) conflict. Lastly, the group conflict theory may not singly and sufficiently explain the incidence of ethnic conflicts and armed conflict without recourse to power inequalities and asymmetric view which contribute to ethnic mobilization (Akanji, 2005). Having looked at the strength and weakness of the aforementioned theories we now look at eclectic approach.

2.5.3 Eclectic Model

In view of the disparate theories explaining the causes of conflict, the study here identifies and discusses some relevant ones, suitable to explain the interplay of forces underlying the complex and cynical nature politics and violent conflicts in Ebiraland have assumed. It is essential to note that it is now generally accepted in conflict literature that conflict “grand theory” is illusive (Akanji, 2005). Consequently, the position taken in this study is that a mono-factor based explanation is inadequate for understanding politics and communal conflicts in Ebiraland and also any incidence of conflict at whatever level.

Oberschall (2010) argues that no single theoretical framework can be expected to encompass conflicts. The non-acceptance of a monocausal explanation of conflict is further buttressed by the view of Richmond (1987:12) that “there is a growing dissatisfaction with sweeping generalizations, but an increasing recognition of the dependent variable and of the factors correlated with it”. He opined that multivariate causal models are replacing the search for universal explanations in which particular processes are seen as contingent outcomes formulated as statements of probability. He concludes that such paradigms only provide a more realistic basis for understanding the complex nature of social phenomena.

As a result, **eclectic model** of conflict is adopted in this study. The central tenet of the eclectic model is that civil conflicts are the products of confluence of factors- cultural, economic, historical, political, and social among others which necessitate combining multiple theoretical approaches in order to arrive at acceptable explanations. This simply means they are used mechanically without any real effort at integrating them or assessing the logical implications of adhering to one view while simultaneously endorsing another (Sanderson, 1987). Eclecticism holds that any particular problem must be explained from different angles so as to bring to bear diversity of approaches.

This is essential because each approach only provides partial insight into the nature of the problem, whereas the combination of approaches gives a complete picture of the problem (Sanderson, 1987). That is, given the complexity of civil conflicts, a single variable or factor is insufficient to explain the causes of these phenomena (Kieh, 2002). Miner (1990 cited in Kieh (2002:12) argues that “at the heart of the (Sudanese) conflict has been an amalgam of religious and racial, political and economic tensions defying easy description.” He contends further that it is the synergy of these factors that occasioned the outbreak of the Sudanese civil war in 1956. Copson (1991) attributes civil wars in Africa to a combination of factors. Accordingly to him, poverty based on individual and regional disparities, for example, manifest in the degradation of unemployment and underemployment, works as an inducement in persuading people to engage in violence. Politically, Copson cites repression, the abuse of human rights, and the concentration of power at the political center as conflict precipitants. Stedman (1997) cited in Nwolise (1997:39)

asserts that “conflicts in Africa arise from problems basic to all populations: the tugs and pulls of different identities, the distribution of resources and access to power, and competing definitions of what is right, fair and just.” In other words, he posits that there is a broad universe of ethnic, economic, political, and moral factors that occasion conflicts in Africa.

Garuba (1998) identifies an array of factors that contribute to civil conflicts in Africa. The paucity of resources brings even the most equitable sharing arrangements under acute stress. Also, the level of ignorance among the masses makes them highly susceptible to both internal exploitation and external manipulation. Moreover, the African peoples are more economically vulnerable. Treading a similar path, Imobighe (1998) describes a host of factors that precipitate civil conflicts in Africa. He cites inequalities in access to power and resources. In conclusion, the precipitants of civil conflicts can be divided into two major categories which are: the contingent and proximate (Kieh, 2002). The former consists of those long-term deeply rooted conditions that date back to the very formation of the society; however, they are not sufficient to precipitate a civil conflict. The latter serves as “trigger mechanism” for the outbreak of civil conflict. As “lighting rods,” they are dependent on the contingent factors.

The above arguments authenticate the necessity of eclectic approach to conflict studies. Researchers in the field of sociology and anthropology appear to have produced scholarly works that advocate eclecticism. These include (Dahrendorf 1959; Stinchcombe 1968; Goody 1973, 1976; Harris, 1979; Klass, 1980). In fact, Merton (1981) advocates a type of eclectic approach christened theoretical pluralism. Unfortunately, there seems not to be a significant studies adopting eclectic approach in conflict analyses.

Some critics are of the opinion that eclectic approach suffers from several crucial defects. Sander (1987) avers that acceptance of diverse theoretical perspectives which the theory connotes, eclecticism obviously leads to hopelessly self-contradictory argument that generate far more confusion than insight. It is antithetical to the widely accepted scientific aim of simplicity as its arguments increase rather

than decrease the number of explanatory concepts and principles that must be relied on in analysis. The theory frustrates efforts at seeing the world as fundamentally unified and coherent but rather as complex and disjointed (Maxwell, 1974). Eclecticism often leads to adoption of theories which are not linked together or interpenetrate each other as they are often mutually exclusive (Harris, 1979). Finally, eclectic theory runs counter to the basic mechanism of rationality and progress in science. This is because the idea of testing and evaluating theories before coming up with the best one to adopt is made impossible and as such undermines that which makes science uniquely successful (Sander, 1987).

Merton (1981) argues exactly the opposite that although theoretical orientations of eclecticism necessitate different perspectives to a problem but it always engendered complementarity rather than contradiction.

Despite the criticisms against eclecticism, the approach provides a framework for the analysis of politics and conflict in this study. The superiority of this model to other theories examined above is seen in its comprehensiveness and inclusiveness, providing the basis for the analysis of multifactors etiology of conflict. Suffice to say that eclecticism is the only framework that can produce thorough explanations of the confluence of factors precipitating conflict. An individual theory can only give a partial understanding of reality, hence the need for joining together several theories to have a true complete understanding of the phenomenon under study.

2.6 Gaps in the Literature

In summary, the chapter has shown some of the factors responsible for conflicts which cut across political, economic, cultural, and social among others, although political competition cum economic appear more visible. It is clear from the chapter that conflict is more or less part of human beings as it manifests in the different aspects of people. Similarly, it has shown that no singular variable can account for the incidence of conflict at whatever level, rather but a multiplicity of factors. The Nigerian state has been fingered not to be doing too well in conflict resolution in the country. Furthermore, it is obvious in the literature that the various precipitant factors of conflict are often treated singly without adopting a holistic approach. Thus, Aylward

(2007) observes that in the past decade, scholarship about the causes of civil wars or (conflicts) has not greatly explored the complex mix between economic, political, social, ethnic and cultural dimensions of identity construction and how they relate to violent conflict. Many studies focus on these variables in isolation, though few studies do acknowledge an existing relationship between two or more of the variables mentioned above. For example, Collier and Hoeffler (1998, 2004) focus exclusively on economic elements to analyse causal factors, probability and duration of civil wars or (conflicts). They use quantitative economic modeling to show “empirically” that a handful of economic factors are responsible for conflict. These authors dismiss political, cultural and social factors in their analysis of civil wars and conflicts because they use economic models (logit regressions) that do not incorporate these variables in the first place. Analyses based solely on economic models as stated before unjustifiably neglect, political, social and cultural variables that influence causes of violent conflict.

Other theorists such as Huntington (1992:25, 27) avoid political and economic factors and focus exclusively on cultural features that cause violent conflict and civil war. According to Huntington, violent conflict and civil war can be attributed to “basic” linguistic, cultural and religious differences among actors. For Huntington, “cultural characteristics and differences are less mutable and hence less easily compromised and resolved than political or economic ones” and therefore lead to conflict. Huntington’s thesis ignores the reality that competition for political power and economic benefits inherent in political power acquisition can be a driver or mobilization factor in violent conflict. In addition, this author does not provide any explanation of specific linguistic, cultural, or religious characteristics of the civilizations that will inherently cause conflict and violence. Furthermore, his theory is also flawed because it relies on fixed and static notions of culture and identity that do not take into account that identities are socially constructed and change over time. Lastly, his analysis cannot explain conflicts among people of the same cultural and historical background.

Other authors such as Murshed (2002) and Senghaas (2002) disagree with Huntington and focus on socio-economic discrimination and exclusion as the primary cause of conflict and situate culture primarily within a socio-economic framework. However,

Senghaas' and Murshed's arguments are problematic because they gloss over the complexity of identity and human agency as well as culture as causative agents of conflict while focusing on socio-economic factors. Stewart (2000:246) argues "it is rarely possible to disentangle political, cultural and economic elements, as each is embedded in the other." His analysis is also incomplete because it does not address the complexity of identity formation. In summary, the various scholars examined do not take into account the complicated relationship between political, economic, social and cultural factors that influence conflict and the construction of identities that perpetuate violence. Oshita (2007) accentuates that any engagement with conflict phenomenon in present day Nigeria must as a matter of necessity grapple with the multiple impacts of the complex nexus among historical, economic, political, cultural, religious and psychosocial dimensions of conflict. This is why this study is very relevant because it tries to bridge the existing gap(s) in the literature as it provides an integrated approach to conflict analysis by combining the entire aforementioned factors as holistic whole rather than treating them in isolation.

Another knowledge gap noticed in the literature which this research intends to fill to some extent is the fact that most analyses on conflict are qualitative. Thus, there is need to combine both qualitative and quantitative methods in conflict analysis. Lastly, most analysis of literature on conflict either lack theoretical foundation or adopts single theory and it has been demonstrated in our study that mono-theory approach hardly captures the various dimensions of conflict which underscore the need for this study.

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CHAPTER THREE

GEOGRAPHY OF CONFLICTS IN AFRICA

Since the dawn of the era of “flag independence,” Africa has experienced and continues to experience civil conflicts. Virtually every region of the continent has been affected by the “civil conflict epidemic” (Kieh, 2002). In this section, some selected cases of conflict in various regions of Africa were examined. The discussions focus on the history, trend and implications of such conflicts. This is to enable the researcher provide a background for the character of conflicts in Nigeria and Epiraland in particular.

3.1 The Horn of Africa (Sudan)

Sudan has been described as a bridge between the Arab world and sub-Saharan Africa, denoting peaceful trade and cultural meddling. It has equally been described as the advance guard for Islamic conquest of Africa (Peterson, 2002). Sudan is enmeshed in a series of division manifesting in the form of Christian-Muslim; Africa-Arab and the North-South. The north is made up of Arabs who are Muslims, while the south is predominantly composed of Africa, with a mixture of Christian and Muslim population. The Sudanese conflict is indeed Africa longest civil war. The sources of the conflict are deeper and more complex than most political leaders and observers claim. Sudan has fluctuated between military regime and democratic rule (UN Report, 2005). It is essential to note that from independence till date all heads of state civilian or military have always been from the Northern Sudan (UN Report, 2005).

One thing that characterized the reign of various leaders from Northern Sudan is that they always gave robust support to the spread of Arabic language and Islam in the entire Sudan. Southern resistance to this has often been met with repression by successive governments. (UN Report, 2005). The intermittent civil war between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People Liberation Movement (Army) (SPLM) was brought to an end by the Nimeri regime in 1972, by granting the South autonomy in the Addis Ababa Peace Agreement (Peterson, 2002). Deng called this Southern autonomy, Southern province, Regional Self Government Act of 1972 (Deng, 1995).

However, the conflict cropped up again in 1983 as a result of the abrogation of the 1972 Addis Ababa agreement (Dagne, 2006). In addition, the discovery of oil in the South propelled Nimeri to implement some measures to ensure the incorporation of the oil-rich areas in the south to the north leading to the cancellation of southern autonomy. The matter was exacerbated with the introduction of sharia rule in the country by the government. Nimeri appointed a provincial governor for Darfur who was not of the local population. This appointment sparked riots across Darfur in which three students were killed (Prunier, 2005).

In essence, the combination of these factors led to another war with the south in 1983. The present president of Sudan (Omar Hassan al-Bashir) came into power via a military coup supported by the Muslims brotherhood. His government has also been influenced by the political Islamic ideology. In 1994, Darfur was balkanized into three federal states within Sudan: Northern (Shamal), Southern (Janus), and Western (Gharb) Darfur. Ali al Haj, Minister of federal Affairs was the brain behind this division. The goal was to make sure that, the Fur by this division will not be able to form a majority in any state which will also orchestrate the stage for Islamic candidates to be elected (Flint and Waal, 2006).

A Clandestine group made up mostly of Darfuris published the Black Book in 2000. The manuscript is a detailed chronology of domination by the north and the impoverishment of the other regions. Many of the writers came together to form rebel groups christened Justice and Equity Movement (JEM) (Cobham, 2005).

3.1.1 The Darfur Conflicts

Political leaders in the Southern Sudan argued that, under successive civilian and military governments have made only spurious efforts to address the grievances of the south without compromising the northern domination in economic, political and social spheres (Dagne, 2006). Based on the aforementioned reasons, in February 2003, two rebel groups, the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) made up of 2,500 troops, together with the Sudan Justice and Equality Movement (SJEM), a force numbering several hundred men organized rebellion against the government of Sudan in a bid to end political oppression and economic neglect in the Darfur region of

Western Sudan (Ofcansky, 2005). The government of Sudan in Khartoum responded by organizing a militia group known as Janjaweed to confront the rebel groups. This action culminated into “spiral of state sponsored violence and indiscriminate spread of weaponry” (Mandami, 2004:38).

Some observers are of the view that the National Islamic Front (NIF) government is pursuing systematically and deliberately a policy of marginalization and discrimination of the African communities in Darfur by giving support to Arab militias to suppress non Arabs whom it saw as a threat to its hold on power (Dagne, 2006). According to the United Nation (UN) estimates, the war in Sudan had affected some 3.3 million people: 1.8 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs); 200,000 refugees in Chad; and 300,000 persons had died in the war (Iyob and Khadiagala, 2006).

Quite a number of agreements have been reached to bring about resolution without total success.

3.1.2 Peace Initiatives

Quite a number of peace initiatives have been employed to broker peace in Darfur, Sudan. The earliest among these were the Juba Conference of 1947, the round table conference in 1965, the Addis Ababa Talks of 1972, (Deng, 1995). Others include the Koka Dam Declaration of March 24, 1986; the Sadiq-Garang talks of July 31, 1986; the Harare (Zimbabwe) meeting of March 20-22, 1988, under the leadership of the Global Inter-Action Council of the former heads of state and government; the Mirghani-Garang Agreement of November 16, 1988. Two meetings were held between the SPLM-SPLA and Al-Bashir’s Revolution for National Salvation, the first in Addis Ababa on August 19-20, 1989 and the second in Nairobi (Kenya) on December 1-5, 1989 under the auspices of the former U.S President Jimmy Carter, (Deng, 1995), and several meetings mediated by Chad and Nigeria (Dagne, 2006; Ofcansky, 2005).

3.1.3 Peace Agreements

The aforementioned peace initiatives and many others have orchestrated the stage for peace agreements reached in an effort to bring about lasting peace in Sudan. Some of the peace agreements namely are: the Machakos Protocol dated July 20th, 2002; the

Agreement of security arrangement, dated September 25th, 2003; the agreement on wealth sharing, dated January 7th, 2004; the protocol on power sharing dated May 26th, and the protocol on the resolution of conflict in the Abyei Area, dated May 26th, 2004 (<http://www.unip.org>; www.unmis.org).

The parties in dispute had met in Nairobi and Naivasha, Kenya, between November 26th, 2004 and December 31st, 2004 under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority and Development (IGAD). There they agreed that the aforementioned peace agreement, together with the agreement on permanent cease fire and modalities for implementing the above mentioned protocols shall form part of the comprehensive peace agreement which shall be binding on the parties, (<http://www.usip.org>). In this resolution, Mr. Sayed Elkhatib represented the government of Sudan, while Dr. Samson Lukare Kwaje stood for the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army and Lt. General Sumbeiywo (rtd) ambassador and Kenya special envoy for the Sudan peace process served as a witness (<http://www.usip.org>).

3.1.4 Sudan Comprehensive Peace Agreement

It has been mentioned before that it was the U.S sustained pressure on the Sudanese government that helped to secure the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. While maintaining U.S bilateral sanctions on Sudan, the Bush administration also engaged the Sudanese government in critical dialogue and thereby gave the resolution of Darfur crisis and settlement of the North-South conflict as a condition for the normalization of the bilateral relations between the U.S and Sudan, (Dagne, 2006).

Apart from disarming the Janjaweed other provisions were made to bring an end to Darfur and north-south crisis:

Armed Forces: the North and South were to maintain separate armed forces. The Sudanese government is to withdraw 91,000 of its troops from the South within two and a half years, while the SPLM was given eight months to withdraw its forces from the North. The Naivasha Protocol which forms part of the CPA contains provision for integrated units of 21,000 soldiers (of which government will have half and the other half from SPLM) is to be formed during the six years interim period the troops are to be deployed to sensitive areas such as the disputed areas. These units are to be

commonly stationed albeit under separate command and control structures. However, if the south decides not to secede after the interim period, both sides will unify into a 39,000 strong force.

Autonomy: the South is to have autonomy for six years which will be followed by referendum in 2011 as regards secession from Sudan.

Oil wealth: the oil wealth is to be shared on a 50:50 basis between the Sudanese government in Khatoum and the SPLM.

Economic issues: two separate currencies are to be used in the context of dual banking system. The North is to retain the Sudanese pound, while opportunity is given to the south to opt for the Sudanese Dinar. The essence of the dual banking system is to give room for two different windows of service.

Administration: the central and transitional government positions are to be shared on a 70:30 in favour of the Sudanese government, and 55:45 also in government favour in the contentious areas of the Blue Nile state, Abyei and the Numba Mountains. While Bashir's position as the Head of State is maintained, Garang is to serve as the Vice President. A government of national unity is to be formed.

Islamic Law: the application of Sharia Law is to remain in force in the north, parts of the Sudanese constitution is to be rewritten so as to forestall application of Sharia Law on non-Muslims in the entire Sudan. In addition, an elected Assembly is to decide the status of Sharia in Khatoum.

Other: each territory is to use its own flag: while the North will continue to use the current Sudanese flag, the south is to introduce its own flag. ([http:// www.iss.co.za](http://www.iss.co.za))

3.1.5 Implementation and Constraints on Comprehensive Peace Agreement

The Drafting Commission finished its work in June, 2005, and presented the draft constitution to the Sudanese government and the SPLM. It was ratified by the National Assembly in Khartoum and the council of SPLM leadership and was signed as the Interim National Constitution (INC) on July 9, 2005. The same day after signing INC, the presidency which consists of the president, first vice president, and a vice president was inaugurated (Dagne, 2006).

The Abyei Commission Boundary established with the responsibility of demarcating the area of the nine Dinka chiefdoms finished and submitted its report to Al-Bashir.

As regard power sharing Agreement, the parties accepted to a 28% SPLM and 52% National Congress Party (NCP) this arrangement cut across all sectors of government, with the legislature, executive and the judiciary inclusive. The SPLA deployed an estimated troop of 1500 to be part of the Joint Integrated Units. Further more, the SPLA equally deployed an estimated 1000 troops to Juba as requested for in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), (Deng, 2006). The first Vice President and Chairman of the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLA/M) John Garang died in a plane crash, and was subsequently replaced by the SPLA/M leadership council with Salva Kirr.

The formation of cabinet in September, 2005 was contentious as dispute centered on distribution of key economic ministerial portfolios. The NCP was bent on keeping the energy and finance ministries, while the SPLM contended that it should be shared between them. In the long run the SPLM secured eight ministries, including Foreign Affairs, Cabinet Affairs, Labour, Transportation, Health, Education, Humanitarians Affairs and Trade, with two advisers. This development has been greeted with negative attitude by the southern Sudan. The argument is that in exception of the Foreign Affairs Minister, other key positions went to the NCP.

Apart from the dotted successes that are noticeable, it is essential to state that the implementation process has been an uphill task, with the NCP exploiting the lapses within the CPA coupled with the weaknesses of the SPLM its junior partner to delay and frustrate the process, (International Crisis Group 2006). On October, 2007, the SPLM said it would suspend participation in the government of national unity because the NCP was not implementing the key aspects of the 2005 CPA, (International Crisis Group 2008).

The inglorious role of the Sudanese government has made it to assume the status of a spoiler. In February 2008, the Sudanese government launched major aerial bombardments and ground attacks on West Darfur. In response to this assault, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), one of the rebel groups in mid- May 2008, retaliated by attacking Khartoum leaving at least 200 persons dead. The NCP led by Al-Bashir continued to pursue destructive policies in Darfur, while at the same time

resisting key provisions in the CPA (International Crisis Group 2008). The idea is that the NPC wants Darfur in chaos so as to gag the room for emergence of opposition; thus, defying security council resolution by integrating its Janjaweed militias into official security structures instead of disarming them, (Human Right Watch, 2006; International Crisis Group, 2008).

The Sudanese government also made things difficult for the Africa Union (AU) and the United Nations Organization (UNO) in resolving the conflict. It was observed that the Sudanese government at a time painted its vehicles in the colour of Africa Mission in Sudan (AMIS) vehicles, culminating in restrictions on AMIS patrols by the opposing rebel movements (International Crisis Group, 2006). The government of Sudan even after signing the CPA, 2005 still used helicopter gunship at the time of several janjaweed attacks in October 2005 with the dead toll well above thirty, (Tadesse, 2005). The AU equally attested to the fact that Sudanese government partook in an attack against AU compound in Tawika in October 2005. The government is also accused of assigning a regular army officer, christened a technical expert to monitor each AMIS sector headquarters; this was to provide insight for Sudanese government into AMIS sector operations and also to interfere with its operational activities, (Human Right Watch, 2006). President Al-Bashir was also resisting UN peace keeping force in Sudan. Thus, on June 19, 2006, he had said: “I swear that there will not be any international military intervention in Darfur as long as I am in power. Sudan, which was the first country south of Sahara to gain independence, cannot now be the first country to be recolonised” (<http://www.thesar.co.za> 2006).

Concerning the implementation of CPA the Al-Bashir government feared that full implementation of the CPA, and comprehensive political solutions to Sudan, Darfur conflict could lead to change of power locale with the NCP being ousted via free and fair elections, or its control of the structures of government may whittle down to a minority stake (International Crisis Group, 2006). In a bid to ensure its political survival amidst these challenges apart from keeping the international community at bay, it has equally led to increase in chaos on ground and has also promoted divisions within the rebels. In addition, it has been implementing selectively elements of the

CPA without reducing its grip on power or fundamental change in the way the country is governed to be weakened.

In an attempt to perpetuate chaos in Sudan, the NCP at a time appeared to have bought over SPLA/M faction of Minni Minawi. Thus, the leaders were given government jobs and land, and as an astute supporter of the status quo have been responsible for numerous attacks on civilian, the Humanitarians, the AMIS and some of the violence in internally displaced person (IDP) camps, (International Crisis Group 2008).

Aside the fact that the NCP was not comfortable with the 2009 national elections and the 2011 southern independence referendum, there were numerous problems that dogged the CPA implementation in this regard. The NCP in an effort to protect its control over the state and the economy delayed the national elections. It needed a partnership for democratic victory, yet in favour of the one that will neutralize the SPLM as a national challenger and still be defined as a purely southern based junior partner (International Crisis Group 2008). Furthermore, the SPLM were internally divided on priorities. While some favour the 2011 referendum, others were inclined with Garang's new Sudan vision, that is, a role in national politics, confronting the NPC so as to change the country's governance and thereby address the grievances of the regions that are marginalized. This infighting has weakened the CPA and SPLM positions vis-vis NCP. In addition, the dangerous disengagement of the international guarantors on the CPA partly as a result of lack of consensus on the way forward and/or due to preoccupation with Darfur does not help matters. The fact that the international community is satisfied with heavy monitoring, but weak on follow-through, as the key countries involved in the negotiation of the CPA have not yet played their role as a guarantor of the CPA, made it lack coordinated approach in dealing with the parties majorly the NCP let alone enjoining them to keep to their commitment. Having come to conclusion that it may be unwise to rely on the guarantors, the SPLM started building up its military capacity as a leverage over the NPC as well as forming alliances with other rebel factions within Darfur that are marginalized, (International Crisis Group 2008).

Another factor that constituted impediment to the success of CPA is the fact that other rebel groups were neglected in the signatory of the CPA like the Justice and Equality Party (JEM), the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), Union Sudan African Parties (USAP), United Democratic Salvation Front (UDSF), Popular National Congress (PNC), and so on. They argued that the CPA was negotiated by two parties and therefore were not ready to participate in the national Assembly which is part of the CPA (Dagne, 2006).

The fact that the Sudanese government has been tagged a spoiler does not mean that the rebel groups like SPLM, JEM among others are innocent. They were also involved in violence most especially the SPLM. For example, the SPLM has been found to be involved in a range of abuses like ambush, assault and abduction of health workers; extortion of commercial goods; recruitment and arming of child soldiers, and unlawful collection of taxes, (Human Right Watch, 2006; AU Report of the Chairperson of Commission on the situation in Darfur, 2004). But the abuse is a far cry to that of Sudanese government, whose spoiler posture has led to a warrant of arrest on President Omar Bashir for genocide, crime against humanity and war crime, by the International Criminal Court (ICC) (International Crisis Group, 2008).

In spite of the aforesaid obstacles, the CPA achieved the objectives of ending civil war in Darfur, Sudan through the conduct of elections in April 2010 and a referendum in January 2011 (Soderlund, 2011). The referendum culminated in the emergence of the Southern Sudan as an independent state on 9th July, 2011, the 193rd country to be admitted to the United Nations (UN) with Salva Kiir as elected president (<http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de>).

The Sudan and South Sudan are two of the poorest and most indebted countries in the world. In many parts of both countries, especially in Southern Sudan the problem of food scarcity is quite worrisome. Many people depend on humanitarian aid from the International community. Water shortages and desertification are widespread and hampered development of the two countries although both countries are rich in mineral resources like oil, Ore, precious metals like gold, water from the Nile and potentially fertile arable land. The distribution of oil resources between the Southern

and Northern Sudan remains unresolved following the independence of the South and the precise positioning of the borders most especially that of the region of Abyei to which both sides lay claim.

It can be inferred from Sudan's crisis that central to the conflict is the politics of power sharing between the North and the South. Thus, marginalization and discriminatory policies of successive governments in Khartoum led by the NCP especially in power sharing against the South Sudan culminated in perennial arm struggle between the North and the South. Attempts to crush perceived Southern rebellion by the NCP who saw the rebellion as a threat to its hold on power, exacerbated and externalized the conflicts. It is also interesting to note that although the independence of the Southern Sudan supposed to bring an end to hostilities as that would have permanently resolved the issue of power sharing, economic interests of both countries tie to the presence of oil in the South perpetuates the conflicts. The next country that will be examined is Liberia.

3.2 Conflict in West Africa (Liberia)

The Americo-Liberians established the Republic of Liberia purposefully for themselves and ostensibly to enjoy the benefits and privileges which have been used in time past by the colonization societies to lure many of them from the USA (Osaghae, 1998).

Freed American Slaves founded Liberia in 1822 (Adeyemo, 2000). The Americo-Liberians is made up of a small group described by Liebenow (1969, 1987) and Clower et al. (1966) as an interlocking family and coastal regional network made up of just 5 per cent of the population. It was due to this small size that made them unwilling to admit many African-Liberians into their ranks, nor give room to expansion of the political arena.

Their overriding goal for about 200 years was to retain political control among a small group of families "...and to share in the material benefits of economic growth among its own members (Osaghae 1998:134). To this extent, until, 1980, they constituted a hegemonic ruling class, satisfying Gramsci's (1971) two hegemonic indices, control

over coercive instruments of state (class domination) and moral and intellectual leadership, through which the class imposes its will on society without having to use force (Ihonvbere and Falola 1984; Agbaje, 1992).

The class treatment of the Americo- Liberian group posed the danger of glossing over the fact of history that it was never a homogenous group. Although quite a lot of the differences that separated them have melted away over the years; however, their historical significance lies in the fact that they help to show that the seeds of the overthrow of hegemonic rule did not lie only in the African- Liberians, they also lay within the Americo- Liberians themselves. The overthrow in the 1980 of the Americo- Liberian dynasty was feasible, partly, because of the coming together of elements from both groups while, in the nineteenth century, two segments of the America- Liberians alone teamed up to unseat the dominant mulatto segment.

The mulattoes who were freeborn American citizens dominated power between 1847 and 1970 when the first black America-Liberian, Edward James Roye, was elected. The mulatto dynasty did not last long because of the extremely small number of mulattoes whom generations of intermarriage completely wiped out in later years (Osaghae, 1998).

The next set of America-Liberians comprised black freed slaves, many of whom were free only on the grounds of accepting to return to Africa. It is essentially to note that not all of them, however, came from the United States of America (U.S.A.), some though a few were from West Indies and Sierra-Leone. This segment of settlers capitalized on their numerical strength to take over America-Liberia leadership from mulattoes and rule the country from 1884-1980 through the de facto single party, the True Whig Party (TWP) (Osaghae 1998). Down the rung of the America-Liberian hierarchy were the recaptured slaves who were rescued by the U.S. navy on the West African Coasts and settled in Liberia. The recaptured slaves were called “Congoes” a name which has now assumed generalization as Americo-Liberians. Through intermarriage with the Americo-Liberian and by emulating them, the Congoes came to share the prerogatives, if not the status of the ruling group (Lowenkof, 1976:13).

The Americo- Liberians emphasized the differences between them and the African Liberians. In their pursuit of collective security, they did not only monopolize power, but they also cling to their superior class markers: big luxurious cars, western dressing, education, Christianity, Masonic fraternities and Anglo-saxon names. Where they had the means then segregated themselves from the natives in churches, urban neighborhoods and meetings. Through intermarriage and inter-elite cooption, few of African-Liberians were admitted into the privileged ranks (Osaghae, 1998).

The African-Liberians are like other ethnic groups found in other parts of Africa, whose relationships with one another has been transformed in the process of colonial rule of American-Liberians. Osaghae (1998) notes that the African-Liberian relationships and conflicts have been understudied as only those involving America-Liberians were considered worthy of attention by the colonialist. The number of African-Liberian ethnic groups have been put variously, some said 16 (Schulze, 1973); 20 (Marrinelli, 1964) 28 (Lowenkopf, 1976); and 30 (Anderson, 1962). However, 16 is always taken as the number of ethnic groups of the African-Liberians (Osaghae, 1998). Many of the groups, especially the Vai, Gola, Mano, Kru, khrahn and Mandingo have kith and kin in neighboring Guinea, Cote d'ivoire and Sierra Leone.

Another issue worthy of note is that many of the groups migrated to the country from elsewhere. The Gola and Kissi who were often seen as the earliest migrants moved between 1,300 and 1,700, consequent with the collapse of the Sudanese empires. While others like Grebo, Kru, Gio and Mano came in between the 17th and 20th Century (Kup, 1960). However one unique case is that of the Madingoes itinerant Liberians who did not settle until Doe's years. One observable thing among these groups of African-Liberia is the cross-cutting linkages which evolved in the sense that many Africa-Liberians are multilingual, with Vai, Kpelle and Khrahn being the most widely spoken language (Osagha, 1998; D'Azevedo, 1962).

3.2.1 The African-Liberian Challenge to American-Liberian Hegemony

African-Liberians challenged America-Liberian hegemony through democratic and violent means. Some African-Liberians tried to contest or even contested in

presidential elections and also tried to organize opposition parties to challenge the TWP. For instance, Momulu Massaguoi via assimilado was the first non-settler to nurse a presidential ambition in 1931. He was subsequently dismissed from the government service (Smyke, 1983). Didwhe Twe floated a party with the name United Peoples Party in 1951 which was Kru-based to contest the presidency with the Tubman. The party was not registered. He later ran on the platform of another party-Reformation Party, an indigenous (coastal) party. He eventually lost out in the election. Twe and his collaborators were charged with sedition and he fled the country (Sundiata, 1981).

The inability of African-Liberians to wrest power from Americo-Liberians through democratic means led to the adaptation of violent method via coup d'état (Clapham, 1976). Suffice to say that Americo-Liberian stronghold on power which prevented change of power through democratic means made violent overthrow inevitable (Osaghae, 1998).

3.2.2 The 1980 Coup and the Doe Years

Liberia's political instability dates back to the 1980 overthrow of late President William Tolbert who was a descendant of the dominant Americo-Liberians who ruled from 1947 to late 1980s. Liberia's Khran coup leader master Sergeant Samuel Doe killed Tolbert in spite of personal appeal of Houphouet Boigny for clemency. In a nutshell, peace eluded Liberia between December 1989 and early in 1997 due to power struggle and control of the government by various Liberian factions notably the Armed forces of Liberia dominated by President Samuel Doe's Khran ethnic group, the United Liberian Movement (ULIMO) led by Prince Yomie Johnson and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) led by Charles Taylor who chased late President Samuel Doe out of the Liberian Presidential Mansion in December 24, 1989 (Adeyemo, 2000).

Thus, Doe coup saw the overthrow of Americo-Liberian hegemonic rule as the establishment of an African-Liberian dominated ruling class which was initially built around a military junta of non-commissioned officers. Given (1986), pointed out that several points can be raised to prove that the coup was a matter of African-Liberian

independent struggle. First, all the revolutionaries who executed the coup and formed the People's Redemption Council (PRC) were African-Liberian. Allied to this is the fact that only one out of the people officially executed was an African –Liberian. Tubman (1986) argued that the African- Liberian saw the take-over as the birth of a new country owned by them rather than by the Americo- Liberian. In fact, they demanded change in the country's name, flag, emblem and other symbols. Hence the slogan which formed the hallmark of the “revolution” also bore this perception. Indeed, the people were no longer comfortable with the idea of monkey work for baboon to eat “our eyes are now opened” (Osaghae, 1998:148).

The period between the coup and the civil war was marked by Doe entrenching himself in power by eliminating or repressing opponents. To start with, he eliminated all the sixteen other “revolutionaries” on the grounds of plotting to overthrow him. Having got to power, Doe increased the number of Krahn in important government positions. His personal body guards, executives' mansion guards, security service, immigration and police were headed and predominantly composed of the Krahn. Doe also systematically built a Krahn-based army: the elite first infantry battalions as the special anti-terrorist unit were almost completely Krahn. In fact, by the time Liberia was embroiled in civil war it was difficult to describe the Liberia Armed Forces as anything but a Krahn army (Osaghae, 1998).

Doe's reign was characterized by repression of opposition as many journalists were arrested, jailed or killed. Many thought the reign of terror would end with the return of Doe as a civilian president to no avail. The outline of the elections was rejected. Yet, Doe clearly adopted repressive and co-operative strategies to suppress opposition (Osaghae, 1998).

3.2.3 The Civil War

Adeyemo (2000) observed that the political situation in Liberia was quite horrible during the reign of Doe as president. Majority of Liberians were alienated while Doe's regime set up very bad repressive machinery which enabled his administration to kill several people in Liberia. This made majority of Liberians and Doe's main rival - Charles Taylor not wanting Doe to remain in power.

However, overthrowing Doe became impossible except through violent means. Taylor and his America-Liberian collaborator aligned with some African-Liberians like Gio and Mano of Nimba, who were victims of genocidal attack by Doe and his fellow Krahn's rose up against Doe. It should be noted that the army that invaded Liberia to conquer Doe was not made up of Gio and Mano and even other Liberians; it was 90 percent an army of mercenaries from Burkina-Faso, Sierra-Leone, Ghana, Gambia, and Nigeria. Doe's Krahn soldiers killed hundreds of Gios and Mano in Moronvia and ransacked their villages in Nimba County this forced them to join forces with Taylor. From that point, the combatants were divided along Gio / Mano / America- Liberians on the one hand, and Krahn and Madingo (on Doe's side) on the other hand (Osaghae, 1998).

The war raged and Doe was captured by forces led by Taylor. Since the U.S government refused to intervene in the Liberia crisis the ECOWAS took up the responsibility. An election was conducted and Taylor emerged the winner (Berman and Sons, 2000) and Charles Taylor emerged as President of Liberia following the election of July 1997. Deliberately he chose to govern in the same manner which created the schism between the America-Liberian "settlers class" and the "indigenous" Liberian population. By June 2003, Taylor found himself encircled by the two main rebel groups of Liberians United for Reconstruction and Democracy in Liberia (LURD) and Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL). The international community could no longer countenance the mounting level of casualties (civilian and military) and therefore demanded Taylor's resignation from office. The warrant of arrest put out by the international court in Freetown on June 4, 2003 further increased the pressure on Taylor, in that it demanded his arrest and extradition to Freetown to face trial on charges of complicity in human rights offences and crimes against humanity (Iroha, 2005). There was a transitional government put in place to oversee Liberia affairs through the collective effort of EU, U.S, A.U, and ECOWAS.

Critical to the understanding of Liberia crises is the role of power struggle and control of government by various factions. At inception, it was Americo-Liberian that schemed out the Africa-Liberian from the political mainstream. The African-Liberian

reacted violently to this via a coup led by Samuel Doe which ipso facto resulted in the establishment of African- Liberians rule. Attempts by Charles Taylor, a descendant of Americo-Liberia to overthrow Doe and return power to Americo-Liberia culminated into a bloody civil war. Hence, politics can be seen as a precursor of conflicts in Liberia. The next country on the list is Rwanda.

3.3 Central Africa (Rwanda)

The gory state of conflict of genocidal proportion in Rwanda has been succinctly captured by Gourevitch (1998:3):

Decimation means the killing of every tenth person in a population, and in the spring and early summer of 1994; a program of massacres decimated the Republic of Rwanda. Although the killing was low-tech – performed largely by machete – it was carried out at dazzling speed: of an original population of about seven and a half million, at least eight hundred thousand people were killed in just a hundred days. Rwandans often speak of a million deaths, and they may be right. The dead of Rwanda accumulated at nearly three times the rate of Jewish dead during the holocaust. It was the most efficient mass killing since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Rwanda is a small country made up of two major ethnic groups namely: the Ba-Hutus and the Ba-Tutsis (Adeyemo 2000). The discussion of Rwanda's violent conflict of genocidal proportion has been scaled down into the following: The Hutsi-Tutsi origin, the pre-colonial relations, the colonial period and the introduction of strict ethnic divisions, the post-colonial relations and ethnic violence, post-cold war period, pressures from the international community as it regards introducing democracy in Rwanda via the Arusha Accord. Finally, the indifferent posture maintained by the international community on genocide in Rwanda.

In order to unravel the mystery behind genocide in Rwanda, it is pertinent to see how the ethnic differences evolved with the arrival of the colonialists, and also the tagging of violent conflict in Rwanda as tribal violence.

3.3.1 Pre-Colonial Rwandan Society

Pre-colonial Rwandan society has been portrayed as a linguistically and culturally homogenous enclave divided into three groups – the Hutus, Tutsis and the Twa. They

lived together, shared the same language, and engaged in intermarriages. The Hutus formed majority of the population who were mainly peasants. The Tutsis constituted roughly 15percent of the population and were mainly aristocrats. The Twa were the smallest group, not more than 1percent of the entire population (Prunier, 1995).

Heleta (2006) stated that opinions are divided even till today on the origin of the Rwandan people. While some argue that the Hutus and the Tutsi are people of different biological origin who settled in Rwanda from different parts of the world, others see socio-economic divisions as the only difference between them. The Hutus who constitute 84 percent are agriculturalists, while the Tutsis are pastoralists (Adeyemo, 2000). Des Forges (1999:247) a historian who has written much on Rwanda averred that the terms Tutsi and Hutu were based on people's wealth. The word "Tutsi" described the status of an individual – a person rich in cattle and referred to the elite group as a whole, and the word "Hutu" meaning originally meant a subordinate or follower of a mere powerful person came to be referred to the mass of the ordinary people. John Hanning Speke a European first explorer of the Nile claimed that the Tutsis were a Caucasoid tribe of the Ethiopian origin that descended from King David in the Bible. While later explorers postulated that the Tutsi came from the Ancient Egypt or Asia Minor (Prunner, 1995).

Hintjens (1999) concluded that the difference between the Hutus and the Tutsis are not easily differentiated as the most historical and anthropological accounts suggest. As a result of mixed marriages prevalent in the centuries gone by which culminates in tracing the ethnic identity only through the male line. Gourevitch (1999) due to centuries of marriages and clientage mixing, many ethnographers and historians agree that the Hutus and the Tutsis cannot be called distinct ethnic groups. Thus, it is difficult to differentiate a Tutsi from a Hutu (Hintjens, 1999).

From the above, one can glean the fact that there exists conflicting opinions about the origins of the groups that live in Rwanda. Uvin (1997) claimed that with the passage of time, the issue that borders on the origins of the Tutsis and the Hutus had acquired political stakes. Nevertheless, the official Hutu position after the 1950s was that foreigners (Tutsis) invaded Rwanda and consequently installed systems of oppression

in Rwanda. At the same time, the position of the Tutsis and the moderate Hutus was that the differences only manifested in the socio-economic status.

Before Rwanda became a colony of Belgium, it was part of German East Africa from 1890 to 1916. During the same period, the German presence led to the introduction of a colonial policy of indirect rule in which Rwandan Kings and officials were used to rule their people indirectly. However, during the First World War, the Belgians fought Germans over Rwanda and succeeded in acquiring the territory thereby declaring Rwanda as a Belgian colony in 1916 (Prunier, 1995). One of the legacies of the Belgian colonial policies that eventually shaped the future of Rwanda was a rigid interpretation of ethnic groups. They saw the Hutus as distinct from the Tutsis and skewed policies separating them, thereby creating two different ethnicities. Identity cards that listed the ethnic group of individuals were introduced by Belgians in 1933. In addition, the Hutus and the Tutsis were seen by Belgians as distinct races. They saw the Tutsis as “almost white”, while the Hutus were classified as “another African tribe” Prunier (1995) argued that the race division was a fall out of the Europeans insistence on the “superior race of aristocratic invaders (Prunner 1995:46).

Treading the path of their predecessors, the white explorers and missionaries who “discovered” Rwanda, the Belgians were fascinated by the Tutsis “nobleness”. Thus, the Tutsis were given limited authority by the Belgians to rule Rwanda in spite of the fact that they were in the minority. They were indeed charged with the responsibilities of the “divide and rule” policies of the Belgians. By giving the Tutsis certain powers, the Belgians stayed at the background thereby exposed the Tutsis to the criminalization of the Hutus majority who saw them as the first-hand oppressors. The colonial Administration under the auspices of Belgium used the local Tutsis chiefs for requisition of forced labour from the Hutu masses. Corporal punishment and routine beatings were meted out to the Hutus on behalf of the colonial masters by the Tutsis (Melvern, 2000). The matter was made worst with the Catholic Church, education, administration and the army organizing around the presumed racial superiority of the Tutsis (Hintjens, 1999; Heleta, 2006). Catholic schools openly discriminated against the Hutus, favouring only the Tutsis (Gourevitch, 1998).

Most of the Hutus chiefs in the 1920s were replaced by the Tutsis. This culminated in the total dominance of the Tutsis minority in all important positions. Towards the tail end of Belgian formal presence in Rwanda in 1962, 43 chiefs out of 45 were Tutsis as well as 549 sub-chiefs out of 559 (Prunier, 1995). Indeed, “ Belgians played a decisive role by imposing European racial stereotypes, supporting the Tutsis to the detriment of the Hutus, and then shifting the blame for colonial oppression to the Tutsis and leaving them to their fate” (Berry and Berry, 1996:6).

The wave of nationalist movement that swept through the continent of Africa in the 1950s and 60s did not go unnoticed in Rwanda. This precipitated African rebellion against colonial rule which resulted in the independence of many African countries. In the case of Rwanda, it was the Belgians that mooted the idea of Rwandan independence. Starting in 1960, the Belgians came to the realization of the fact that, if elections should be conducted in the country, looking at the numerical strengths of the Hutus, they would emerge as winners. Armed with this knowledge, the Belgian colonial masters started replacing the Tutsi chiefs and sub-chiefs with the Hutus (Heleta, 2006).

In attempt to cover up, the Belgians hereafter accused the Tutsis of exploiting the Hutus, whereas it was the Belgian colonial policies that orchestrated the stage for the emergence of oppressive Tutsi aristocracy in the first place. The first municipal elections were conducted in the 1960 in which Parmehutu; an ethnic party for the Hutu emancipation won an overwhelming victory (Heleta, 2006). Since conflicts, wars, and violence are endemic, pre-colonial Rwanda had its fair share of it; however, not as portrayed by the Western media as tribal violence between the Hutus and the Tutsis. Prunier (1995:39) argues that:

Although Rwanda was not a land of peace and harmony before the arrival of the Europeans, there is no trace in its pre-colonial history of systematic violence between the Tutsis and Hutus. There were plenty of wars, but they were either fought against foreign kingdoms or between local groups trying to gain power.

Mandani (2001:34) establishes the fact that: “The origin of violence is connected to how the Hutus and Tutsis were constructed as political identities by the colonial state, the Hutus as indigenous and the Tutsis as alien”.

No sooner had the Hutu politicians taken over power than they organized the vengeful persecution of the Tutsis. The Hutus viewed the Tutsis as their main oppressors and not the colonialists. The violence that ensued left thousands of Tutsis dead, which resulted in many of them taking refuge in neighbouring countries. By late 1963, no fewer than 130,000 Rwandan Tutsis took refuge in Burundi and Uganda (Prunier, 1995). The first two years after independence witnessed constant attacks by the Hutu government on the Tutsi minority. As a way of bringing about parity between power and population, the Hutu government introduced ethnic quotas in every sphere of life. This permeated the public service employment in which the Tutsis were allocated 9 per cent of jobs (Berkeley, 2002). This was equally applied to the education sector. When the Belgian colonial masters were in charge of Rwandan government, the population of the Tutsi was put at about 15 per cent after hundreds of thousands of Tutsis had fled, taking refuge in the neighbouring countries, the Hutu government cut down the number to 9 per cent (Heleta, 2006). The economic decline in the 1980s put additional pressure on the Hutu government to put in place more stringent ethnic quotas and intensify oppression of the Tutsi minority (Heleta, 2006).

3.3.2 The Build-Up to the Genocide

After Rwanda's independence in 1962, the idea peddled by the Hutu extremists that the Tutsi did not belong to Rwanda became nurtured. The Western world became involved in a negotiation process to solve the conflict between the Hutus and the Tutsi after the Cold war. These efforts later boomeranged. Rwanda was one of the countries that received large amounts of financial aid from the Western world during the Cold War. The goal was to keep Rwanda, together with many other African countries, away from the communists. Even when the Hutu government killed thousands of Tutsis and Hutu moderates and forced hundreds of thousands into exile, the western powers kept sending funds without questioning how such money was spent (Berry and Berry, 1999).

The end of the Cold War, led to a resurfacing of democratic crusade. This led to pressure being mounted on the regime in Rwanda to democratize, negotiate power sharing with the Tutsi in exile and organize free elections (Unwin, 1997). The majority

of the Rwandan Tutsis, who fled to neighboring countries like Uganda and Burundi, were not given equal treatment like the nationals of such countries. Indeed, they were subjected to various forms of discrimination on a daily basis. The frustration generated from this experience especially among the Tutsi (youths) refugees made many of them to join the guerilla army. Not less than 3,000 Tutsis got military training with some becoming top army officers (Malvern 2000). Majority of the Tutsis left Museveni's army when he emerged victorious to form the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) with the aim of launching attacks on the Rwandan government (Heleta, 2006).

After three years of sporadic fighting in Northern Rwanda, the Rwandan Patriotic Front was finally perceived by the international community and Rwandan Government as a legitimate participant in the political process (Malvern, 2000). At the same time, the Rwanda government expanded the army to ward off Rwandan Patriotic Front incessant attacks. Thus, the Rwandan army grew from 5000 to 30,000. The Hutu extremists complemented the efforts of the Rwandan government by establishing their own militias. Between 1990 and 1994, no fewer than 50,000 unemployed Hutu youth were recruited and given military training and weapons by the militia (Mamdani, 2001; Heleta, 2006).

As fighting escalated with thousands of dead civilians and many more fleeing the conflict areas, the international community pressure led to negotiations between the government Rwandan Patriotic Front and the newly formed opposition parties about the future of the country. The talks began in August 1992 in Arusha, Tanzania (Heleta, 2006). Observers opined that the signing of the Arusha Accord was the last hay that broke camel's back as it prepared the ground for genocide on April 7th 1994. Kuperman (1996) noted that even though the mediation at the Arusha Accord was virtual textbook case of modern conflict management it could not prevent the genocide. Rather it is possible that the pressures applied by the international community on the Rwandan president to sign the Accord led to the 1994 genocide.

Kuperman (1996: 230) argues that the Western mediators contributed to the Rwandan tragedy:

There is little doubt that the proximate cause of the genocide in Rwanda was that President Habyarimana signed and began to implement an agreement that threatened the privileged position of powerful extremists in his county. It was not until the Arusha Accord of August 1993 that extremists took the final steps necessary to implement the genocide...it was continuing international pressure that ultimately drove Habyarimana to agree to implement the Accord.

In fact, Herman Cohen (former American under-secretary of state for African Affairs) claimed that the Arusha Accord was too favourable to the Rwandan Patriotic Front. The international community's obsession with getting a peace agreement led to a lack of analysis and a failure to consider whether or not the Accord could be implemented (Heleta, 2006:7). In the same vein Des Forges (1999) observed that the full implementation of the Arusha Accord would lead to many Rwandans losing privileges and positions. In the army, many Hutus would lose their power and relatively decent salaries after the planned demobilization and integration with the Rwandan Patriotic Front.

3.3.3 The Role of the UN in Rwanda

Indeed, the world body did little or nothing to prevent the 1994 Rwanda genocide (Adeyemo, 2000). Between 1990 and 1994 there were ominous signs that the extermination of the Tutsis in Rwanda would take place. Dalwaire who was the UN officer in charge of peace-keeping in Rwanda requested for 4,500 troops but got only 2,548. The major obstacle was American Diplomats at the UN, requesting a low-cost operation. Dalwaire requested 8 helicopters and 22 armed personnel carriers (APCs), but received no helicopters and only 8 APCs (Heleta 2006). On January 11, 1994, a top-level Hutu militia man approached General Dalwaire and briefed him about the plans for extermination of the Tutsis. He specifically stated that he trained 1,700 men who, in groups of 40, could kill 1,000 persons in 20 minutes. He revealed the list of the moderate Hutus, and Belgian peacekeepers to be killed as well as the extermination of the Tutsis. General Dalwaire sent an urgent letter to the UN in New York, informing them about the plan to be hatched to no avail (Des forges, 1999).

Furthermore, the CIA predicted that in the worst case scenario, more than a half-million Rwandans could die in a war between the government and the RPF (Kuperman, 1996). It also sent a report to the state department that the Arusha Accord would fail, resulting in massive violence (Malvern, 2000). The world body turned a deaf ear to all the many signs but busy at this time in the former Yugoslavia, instead of applying additional pressure that would have prevented the conflict from snowballing to uncontrollable conflagration.

On April 6, 1994, Juvenal Habyarimana, the president of Rwanda flew back from a meeting in Tanzania to implement the Arusha Accord as he had been told not to delay in order to forestall Rwanda crisis from engulfing the entire region. As his plane approached Kigali Airport someone fired missiles and shot down the plane, killing the president and other people on board. In less than an hour after killing the president, the Hutu army and the militia put road blocks on every major road and began mass killings of the Hutu opposition and the Tutsi minority. Their first targets were the Hutu opposition politicians, who were likely to oppose the genocide if they were left alone (Heleta, 2006).

On the Kigali streets and around the country, the Rwandan army, Hutu militia, and the ordinary Hutu citizens began brutal killing of the Tutsis and all those who resembled Tutsis. Ethnic identity cards introduced by the Belgian colonial government and the physical features that supposedly distinguished between the Tutsis and Hutus were used as sufficient basis for a death sentence. At roadblocks, persons whose identity cards read Tutsi got killed on the spot. Many Hutus who were unfortunate to look like Tutsi were killed on the basis of the appearance alone and many Tutsis who resembled Hutus had forged identity cards and managed to escape death. Mistaking the Hutus for Tutsis and vice versa prove the falsehood of colonial impression and policies that created divisions and hatred in Rwanda (Heleta, 2006).

During the Rwanda genocide in 1994, the UN and humanitarian agencies estimated that the Hutu extremists slaughtered over 500,000 Rwandans mostly the Tutsis while the Rwanda or Kigali government estimated that 800,000 people were killed within 100 days or between April and June 1994 (Adeyemo, 2000). The various panels of

investigations set up at the level of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) (now African Union (AU)) People's Panel, Belgium and French governments did little or nothing to bring the perpetrators to book.

In March 1999, the then UN Secretary General Kofi Annan commissioned an independent investigation with a view to finding out the role which the UN played in Rwanda genocide. The Commission indicted the world body of being timid, disorganized and misguided before and during the Rwanda genocide. It was said the world body ignored all signs and warnings that the Hutu government wanted to exterminate people of Tutsi origin. The UN later accepted responsibility for its failure in Rwanda and also accepted the responsibility of Rwanda reconstruction as requested by the Rwanda government (Adeyemo, 2000). Schrawl (2010) noted that in order to overcome ethnic division and promote national unity Rwanda implemented majority, liberal democracy.

A quick look at the Rwanda crises may deceive any analyst into thinking that it was a colonial inspired conflicts perpetuated by colonial style of governance. However, a critical analysis of the conflicts brought to the fore the underlining factor which is politics orchestrated by inequality in power relations between the Hutus and the Tutsis. Although the seed of conflicts was sown by the Belgian colonialists; however, the kernel of war was the power relations which was skewed in favour of the the Tutsis during colonial rule and the Hutus after independence. The civil war left in its wake a decimation of over 800,000 people with heavy casualties on the side of the Tutsis who constituted minority group in clan ratio.

3.4 East Africa (Burundi)

It is necessary to state from the on set that the trend of conflicts in Rwanda and Burundi is quite similar. However, some differences can still be noticed. The analysis of Burundi conflicts will be situated within a historical context before highlighting the differences between Rwanda and Burundi conflicts. Burundi came to the limelight essentially because of the conflict that rocked the country. Some commentators have erroneously described the conflict in Burundi as “tribal war” between the Hutus and Tutsis. The bloody conflict of the 1970s occurred at a time when the regime in power

was noted for clientelism, nepotism, and divisive policies. Rutake and Gahama (1998) argued that the Hutus/Tutsi problem was neither a social nor an economic but essentially a political problem of how this or that ethnic group comes to and stays in power. Burundi conflict is traceable to “ethnic” manipulation during the period of Belgian colonization ditto the management of post-colonial Burundi by the local authorities.

Specifically, there was a surge of conflict in Burundi between 1965-1993. However, the formation of several organizations of the Hutus in diasporas, especially the Palipehutu or Party for the Liberation of the Hutu people, formed in 1980 gave further impetus to the conflicts. The scenario is as follows: some Hutus, aware of their numerical superiority attack and kill Tutsis; the army composed of a majority of Tutsis since 1972 intervened and repressed them the assassination of a democratically elected Hutu president on 21 October 1993, by a small group of Tutsis soldiers worsen the conflicts in Burundi as it triggered new killings which further complicated Hutu-Tutsi coexistence and relations (Rutake and Gahama, 1998). In Burundi as in Rwanda, the Hutus, Tutsis and Twas, have been living together in the same territory for centuries (Adekanye, 1996, Nestor, 2005). In pre-colonial Burundi, mixed marriages between the Hutus and Tutsis were commonplace and specific cultural characteristics were trivialized by a strong national identity (Nestor, 2005).

Before colonization, the wars in Burundi were caused by rivalries between princes who were poised to enlarge their regions and through the initiatives of kings who wanted to defend or expand national borders. During those conflicts the code of honour for the fighters generally helped spare civilians who were not the specific target of the conflicts. Moral uprightness and soundness of judgment were prerequisites for appointment to the position of leadership. Such people appointed to the position of leadership were trained in law, ethics of justice and truth. Leaders could only be enthroned with the consent of the local assembly where even the youngest people had to give their opinion. In other words, there was relative democracy at the grassroots (Nestor, 2005).

Clan organization was very prominent in pre-colonial Burundi. In fact, the entire Burundi population is structured around about 220 clans dispersed throughout the country and even outside. The names of certain clans are reminiscent of their well-known places of origin such as the Banuyarwunda (Rwanda), the Banyabugfi (Bugufi), the Banyagisaka (Gisaka), the Buyugoma (Buyugoma), the (Buha), others are directly attached to a famous, historical personality. The Bakundo, Bavuna and Bavubikiro identify with Ntare Rushatsi, founder of the Burundi monarchy. It is not easy to come to terms with Burundi clan structures, as a result of complex combinations between ethnic groups (Amoko) and lineages/clans (imiriyango) (Rutake and Gahama, 1998).

In view of the Above, Mworoha observes that the Bahanza and the Bashbusi are exclusively Hutu, the Bategwa are particular to the Tutsis; the Bonyoni particularly to the Twa; the Barango and Banyagisaka are common to the Hutus and Tutsis, whereas the Barimas are to be found in the three aforementioned categories (Mworoha, 1977 cited in Rutake and Gahama, 1998).

Pre-colonial political organization was distinct by the existence of a territorial space over which the king exercised power and the extension of royal power was through authorities delegated to chiefs that head of administrative sub-division. The king was at the echelon of hierarchy and he reigned over the entire country. The chiefs under him were appointed and dismissed at his will. The administrative sub-division over which the chief exercise power was in turn sub-divided into sub-chieftaincies. The latter were administered by sub-chiefs appointed and dismissed by the chief. There were both Hutu and Tutsi ethnicity just as it was in Rwanda. There was variation in the size of the chieftaincies administered by chiefs of royal lineage who may also very well come from more humble Hutu or Tutsis families that have demonstrated absolute loyalty to the monarch and the national cause (Rutake and Gahama, 1998).

The classification of Burundi population into “races” and castes” were the handiwork of the Belgian colonialists. The distinction between the Tutsis and Hutus in Burundi was made on the basis of some criteria that include: measurement of the forehead, the length of the nose and the number of cows a citizen had. Physical attributes were used

to determine whether a Burundian was of “nilotic” (considered to be closed to the hamates”) or “Bantu” race. Being a “Hamites” means being close to the allegedly superior race of the colonizers. Being of “Bantu” race raised some doubts as to a man’s mental or even biological ability to be a full-fledged human being in history (Nestor, 2005).

Thus, Father Menard wrote:

The Batutsi race is undoubtedly one of the most handsome and interesting race of equatorial Africa. Physically, the Mututsi are perfectly built. Their physique is more like that of white, than that of Negroes, to the extent that one could say without exaggeration that they are Europeans in black skin cited in (Ruttake and Gahama, 1998:84).

Rychmans described the Tutsis as reminiscent of the physique of the mummy of Ramses ii (Mayer, 1985). Conversely, the Hutus were considered as stocky people with wooly hair and flat noses. The Twa were described as dwarfs and grotesque little creatures (Louis cited in (Rutake and Gahama, 1998).

It appears the physical built up of the Tutsis endeared them to the colonial over lords. In fact, the way Belgians introduced indirect system of rule in which the Tutsis were selected to occupy position of authorities so it was in Burundi. The local system of governance was truncated and was subsequently replaced with colonial method of administration. Obviously, the source of what has become the differentiation between the Hutus and the Tutsis was precipitated and sustained by the colonialists. Colonialism did this by not just creating the categories, “Hutu” and “Tutsi”, and endowing them with new ethnic identities, including the introduction of identity cards bearing the mention of ethnic membership, but also (an) perhaps this is the most critical consideration here) by planting the seeds about two radically different and exclusive” myths of origin (Adekanye,1996).

The effects of colonial role in the restratification of society were more pronounced in Burundi than in Rwanda. The restratification of Burundian society under colonial rule did away with many of the existing cross-ethnic linkages and networks and ended up introducing in Burundi, as in Rwanda, a big cleavage between the Tutsis as a class of rulers and the Hutus as a class that was ruled (Adekanye, 1996). It is interesting to

note that just as was the case in Rwanda in terms of population distribution so it is in Burundi. The country is made up of an 85 per cent Hutu majority, the Tutsi minority of around 15 per cent enjoyed disproportionate levels of power following the country's independence in 1962 (Rodt, 2011).

The Burundi Armed Forces (FAB), for example, were Tutsi dominated, as was the government. The uneven power distribution, often exploited by the Tutsis leadership caused a series of Hutu uprisings. The Hutu insurgents in 1972 crossed into Southern Burundi from neighboring Tanzania and systematically persecuted the Tutsis. The insurrection resulted in the death of between 2,000 and 3,000 Tutsi people. The incursion was met by a brutal retaliation from the Burundi army, which did not discriminate between Hutu rebels and civilians between 100,000 and 200,000 Hutus were killed. An estimated 150,000 fled the country and many to neighbouring Rwanda and Tanzania. The violence and oppression has since been described as reaching genocide levels (Swenson, 2008).

Another wave of violence was triggered this time in the North of the country as a result of President Buyoya's seizure of power in 1987 and the continued repression of the Hutus population. This led to retaliation on the side of the Hutu in which a number of Tutsis were killed. The military response (dominated by the Tutsis) cost approximately 20,000 Hutus their lives. Once again many people fled the country. The refugees' camps provided a convenient platform for the Hutu radicalism and future uprisings (Swenson 2008; Boshoff, Very and Rantenbach, 2010; Rodt, 2011).

The most recent violent conflict occurred shortly after the introduction of a multi-party system in Burundi in 1992. The new system orchestrated the ground for the election of the first democratic Hutu president Ndadaye Melchior and a parliament dominated by the Hutu Front for Democracy in Burundi (FRODEBU). In October 1993, President Melchior was assassinated. This culminated in the reprisal attacks on the Tutsis across the country, which in turn sparked retaliation against the Hutus by the Tutsi-dominated armed forces. Soon after Melchior's successor Hutu President Cyprian Ntaryamira and Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana were killed when their plane was shut down in Kigali, the circumstances that led to their death are still

being disputed. Another Hutu, Sylvester Ntibantunganya, became president of Burundi in October 1994. However, in a matter of months, the mainly Tutsi Union for National Progress (UPRONA) withdrew from parliament, leading to a spark of new wave of violence. An estimated 300,000 people most of them civilians were killed (Boshoff, Very and Rantenbach, 2010; Rodt, 2011).

Various attempts to restore peace to the region have been unsuccessful. The current political situation in Burundi cannot be said to be stable. The country's democratic transition is under threat as a result of the opposition's withdrawal from political dialogue after its defeat in the 2010 elections. There have been recent clashes between the security forces and unidentified around groups in the west of the country (International Crisis Group (ICG), 2011).

From the analysis of Burundi conflicts, it is necessary to stress the fact that while it is similar to that of Rwanda, there are noticeable differences. In the case of Rwanda, the Hutus that constituted majority in the country used their numerical strength to wrestle power from the Tutsis minority through democratic means before embarking on mass killing of the Tutsis. In the case of Burundi, the Tutsis minority dominated the military and they used their military advantage to repress and take over government. The reaction of the Hutus that constituted majority to Tutsis repression led to the massacre of some Tutsis. The Tutsis with their military might in tow retaliated and this resulted in large scale killings of the Hutus by the military dominated Tutsis.

From the discussion of Burundi conflictst as well as in Sudan, Liberia and Rwanda it can be posited that central to the various conflicts is the question of control of state power and the role played by competing elites in power game.

3.5 Angola Crisis

Angola armed conflict is traceable to the legacies of colonialism which started with the arrival of Portuguese in 1550. Deep-rooted and institutionalized animosities based on class, race and politicized ethnicity remain at the heart of this conflict. The Ovimbundu making up more than 45 per cent of the Angola population together with other peoples in the central highlands are pitted against the assimilated Kimbundu (i.e

assimilados) and the mixed race (i.e mestico) peoples, who reside in the coastal areas of the county around Luanda, the Angola capital (Nasher, 2000).

In 1956 Mestico and Assimilado intellectuals from the coastal cities founded the Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MFLA) in order to secure the release of their colleagues at that time imprisoned by Portuguese colonialists. Originally the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) was formally known as the Union of the People of Angola (UPA), the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) was founded in 1961. At the time it launched a violent armed uprising in order to expel the Portuguese, Mestico and Assimilado people from the northern areas of Angola. The Ovimbundu and other central highland peoples, on other hand, formed the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) in 1966. UNITA was, among other things, also formed as an alternative to the dominance of MPLA by Mestico and Assimilado intellectuals and the FNLA by Kikongo-speaking Northerners (Nasher, 2000).

Angola's civil war began three months after independence from Portuguese rule in 1975, and lasted until the death of the rebel leader Jonas Savimbi in 2002 (Aleisha and David, 2005). Angola got its independence from Portuguse colonialists on November 11, 1975 when the ex-colonial power terminated her colonial rule abruptly in the country. The military coup d'etat against the Mercello Caetano government in Portugal on April 26, 1974 aided the demise of Portuguese colonial rule in Angola. Regrettably, Portugal failed to hand over power smoothly to any of the three Angola Liberation Movements – MPLA, UNITA / FLNA. Portuguese objective was probably to cause confusion among the Angola Liberation Movement after its departure. Portuguese sudden exit and proclamation of independence in Angola was followed by power struggle, tense rivalry and competition among Angola's Liberation Movements (Adeyemo, 2000).

The later agreed upon transitional government that was to incorporate the three parties quickly crumbled due to widely different political ideologies, leaving the MPLA in central of the capital and regulating the FNLA and UNITA to the status of rebel insurgents in the hinterlands. This practical structure was maintained throughout the

period of the civil war, with the MPLA and UNITA acting as key opposition groups (Aleisha and David, 2005).

It is necessary to state that each of the liberalization movements aligned itself with one or two major powers. For instance, the MPLA led by Augustino Neto was aided principally by Cuba and the former Soviet Union, while the FLNA led by Holden Roberto received assistance from Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo) and the USA through the CIA; and the UNITA led by Jonas Savimbi received America and South Africa support because of their aversion to communism or Marxism. The MPLA government in Angola was not recognised by the America government until Clinton administration, on 19 May 1993 by the Clinton administration when it announced Angola led by Jonas Savimbi (Adeyemo, 2000).

UNITA had earlier rejected the results of the September 1991 elections which the Clinton administration strongly believed reflected the views of the majority of Angola people (Adeyemo, 2000).

Malaquias (undated) had linked the Angola war to “Resource War”. The elite of the two warring parties MPLA and UNITA – have used the country’s vast oil and diamond resources to advance their political and economic interests while majority of the people live in miserable conditions. This view however accurate failed to take into consideration the important underlying causes of the conflict. Angola’s conflict was also the result of the reluctance of the dominant political-military force to share power and wealth within an inclusive multi-ethnic and multi-racial political system. One cannot also ignore the colonial factor in the conflict. This is because by forcibly binding different ethnic groups into one centrally administered territory, colonial rule inevitably led to the politicization of ethnicity as different ethnic groups resorted to primordial construct for cultural, if not political and self preservation.

The stance above authenticates the facts that, Angola conflicts is smacked of political inter play among the various movements in the country in their struggle for power. Thus, inability to share power and wealth within an inclusive multi-ethnic racial political system culminated in the recourse to ethnic politics as a tool for self preservation.

From the analyses of the various conflicts above, it can be deduced that although conflicts in Africa can be said to be a combustible interplay of political, colonial and at times socio-economic factors, politics seems to be the prime factor in almost all the conflicts. Analyses of the the various conflicts reveal the primacy of political power as the neuclus of the various conflicts as almost all of them centered on power-sharing. At the background of the various violent conflicts are the elite manipulating and mobilizing various groups to attain their selfish political ends. It is necessary to add that democratization which was part of the decolonization process has been a great burden to Africa. This is because the zero-sum character of politics no doubt sharpened the nature of group conflicts. Group in government is perceived as a gain to its members. This is because having access to power guarantees access to public resources; whereas for the out-group this is tantamount to a loss and almost complete denial of this share. The frustration that often occasioned being edged out in power game generates aggressive and violent behaviour.

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CHAPTER FOUR

COMMUNAL CONFLICTS IN NIGERIA

One of the major problems threatening the peace of the Nigerian state is the recurring communal/sub-ethnic conflicts. It appears as if there is no geopolitical zone without one or more communal flashpoints. The implications of this condition may be far reaching than can be imagined. This lends credence to the assertion credited to Stavenhagen (cited in Akanji, 2005:1) “whatever it cause, an intra-state conflicts, if it continues, lead eventually to the disintegration of the state”. This section examined some of the communal conflicts in Nigeria. One of these communal conflicts is the Aguleri and Umuleri conflicts in Anambra State.

4.1 Aguleri-Umuleri Conflict

Ibeanu (2003) contends that Aguleri-Umuleri conflict is unique in the sense that the two communities belong to the same ethnic group (Igbo) and to the same clan (Eri). They equally belong to the same state Anambra, and the same Local Government Area- Anambra East. In addition:

Aguleri-Umuleri conflict focuses attention on intra-ethnic conflicts, which have not received adequate attention among research scholars of communal conflicts in Nigeria. Consequently, sub-ethnic identity has not featured very much in the study of ethnicity in Nigeria. Yet, such identity could become a strong basis for political mobilization and ferocious communal conflicts (Ibeanu, 2003:172).

In summary, a historical excursion into Aguleri-Umuleri conflict reveals that the struggle for the ownership of Otucha, a beach along River Anambra was the major cause of the conflict. The coming and activities of Europeans in the area transformed the economic value of land and social relations among communities that had used land in common till then. Thus, competition either to sell or lease land for profit to Levantine organizations, instead for farming and other communal purposes, became the primary objective behind land property.

4.2 Ife-Modakeke Conflicts

Local conflicts can also take inter-community dimension like the Ife Modakeke in Osun State, Tiv- Jukun in Taraba State, and Bassa- Egbura conflict in Nasarawa State. Some scholars argue that the oldest intra-ethnic conflict in Nigeria is the Ife-

Modakeke conflict. It has been going on for more than a century (Aguda, 1994; Albert, 1999; Agbe, 2001; Toriola, 2001 and Asiyanbola, 2007). In the empirical study conducted by Asiyanbola, (2007), the researcher contends that the causes of the crisis are many and varied; these are cultural identity, economic and politics.

However, from the view of Babajimi (2003) both communities have their own reasons for the conflict. The Modakekes, on the one hand, have identified five major ones. These are: non-recognition of Modakeke as a separate town; relocation of the Headquarters of the Ife East Local Government to Oke-Ogbo in Ile-Ife; the use of derogatory language against Modakeke such as “*Oyo pe*”; forceful ejection of Modakeke from their village and the confiscation of their farmlands by the Ifes; nonpayment of salaries to Ogunsua and his chiefs since 1997. The Ife, on the other hand, has identified seven major causes of the conflict. These are: non-recognition of *Oluaye*, the *Ooni* of Ife by the Modakekes as the supreme and paramount ruler of Ife land; the killing of Ife landlords by Modakekes and forceful acquisition of their land coupled with annexation of land that does not belong to them; arrogating undue authority to Baale of Modakeke by proclaiming him as an Oba and his appointment of Baales in Ife villages; refusal to pay tribute (*isakole*) by the Modakekes; daily radio propaganda, jingles, and advertisement most especially on Osun Radio suggesting that all Ife areas belong to Modakeke; removal of “Ife” inscriptions from the various sign posts or boards in Modakeke; some highly placed individuals such as Chief Arisekola Alao and Alafin of Oyo as backers of Modakeke (Babajimi, 2003).

There is a catalogue of wars between the Ifes and Modakekes: seven major wars- 1835-1849, 1882-1909, 1946-1949, 1981, 1983, 1997-1998 and 2000. The conflict is depicted as a conflict between the Ife “landlords” and the Modakeke “strangers/tenants”. The one of year 2000 caused over 2000 deaths and left several injured. Several hundreds of people were shot, slaughtered or lynched; several houses and property were destroyed (Asiyanbola, 2007).

Analyzing the political dimension of Ife-Modakeke conflicts, Akanji (2005) noted that the creation of local governments areas in 1981 by the Oyo state House of Assembly in which the only one requested by the Modakeke in Oyo state was the only

one not honoured by the state government generated hostility between the two groups. The Modakeke saw the trifling of their aspiration as nothing but a day light robbery. They saw the territorial restructuring process as a politicization policy hence, it served as the purveyor of communal conflicts and acrimony. One of the major implications of the interference of the political class in the communal conflict was that it portrayed it as another extension of the already polarized politics in Yorubaland. It is necessary to state that politics in Yorubaland was essentially constructed along two schools of thoughts: the Awoist and the anti-Awoist schools of thought. While the Awoist believed in and championed welfariest politics of chief Awolowo their mentor, the anti-Awoist, saw Awolowo politics as nothing but politics of vengeance orchestrated to exclude Oyo-Yoruba from the main stream of Yoruba Politics. To some Yoruba politicians, many staunch and core members of the Awoist camp in Yorubaand were non Oyo-Yoruba from communities such as Ekiti, Ondo, Ijesha, Ife, Egba, and Ijebu along side some Oyo-Yoruba who were oblivious of the “real” Awoist agenda but only aligned with the school of thought simply for its ideological appeal.

On the other hand the anti-Awoist camp was made up majorly of Oyo-Yoruba people, that is, people from Ibadan, Ogbomoso, Modakeke and other communities that aligned with Ibadan during the Kiriji war. It was believed that, it was this position that informed Chief Obafemi Awolowo opposition to the splitting of Ile-Ife in an attempt to create a local government for Modakeke in 1958 and again in 1981.

However, there was a dramatic twist of event in 1983 when chief Omololu Olunloyo NPN-led government of Oyo State created a local government area with Modakeke as the headquarters. It was believed that this was done as a way of rewarding the Modakeke for their massive support for the NPN in wresting power from the UPN government in the state (Akanji, 2005). The Ife-Modakeke led to wanton destruction of lives and property. We now look at the Tiv-Junkun conflict.

4.3 Tiv-Jukun Conflicts

Best, Idyorough and Shehu, (2001) have given a detailed analysis of conflict between the Tiv and Jukun. The analysis in this section is based on the study conducted by the aforementioned scholars. Land, traditional rulership, political authority, fear of

domination and marginalization are factors responsible for the conflict. The conflict burst out in 1990 and lasted for two years. The dead toll was quite worrisome and destruction of property was quite alarming. The conflict dealt a heavy blow on Wukari Local Government and the memory may remain for a long time.

The Tiv-Jukun conflict appears to be the most violent and well organized ever witnessed in Nigerian history apart from the civil war. It was characterized by barbarity and atrocities that beat human imaginations. Both side employed heartless methods in killing their victims. Road blocks were mounted by each side and after identifying “enemies” they were slaughtered or shot in nearby bush or beheaded. At times victims were set ablaze. Pregnant women had their wombs cut open with knives and foetus removed and put on their dead mothers’ breasts. No data existed about the exact figure of casualties in this imbroglio. Looting of property and foodstuffs by opportunists also characterized the conflict. The conflict had political, economic and psychological dimension.

The Jukun claimed that the Tiv met the Jukun at their present locations which they dominated for centuries in the ancient Kwararafa Empire. The Tiv were said to have sought their permission before establishing their earliest settlements. They claimed to have taught the Tiv who came in hunger for land how to wear cloth and the concept of rulership and that they were initially used as messengers. The Tiv seemed not to agree with this. They believed they were co-landlords and not squatters for some obvious reasons. They said they were there before the Jukun.

The political dimension of the conflicts manifested in the form of political participation in and control of Wukari Local Government Council ditto political appointments as well as other resources. Closely related to this is the Tiv desire for membership of the Wukari Traditional Council (WTC) given their numerical strength coupled with the fact that they do not regard themselves as strangers in the land. It is important to stress at this juncture that both groups sought to use control of the Local Government Council as an instrument to achieve other broader goals like employment of group members in the council.

Another factor hinges on the siting of government projects. The Tiv accused the Jukun of using the Wukari Local Government and other levels of government as machinery to deny them access to modern government facilities in areas dominated by the Tiv. Opinions are divided as regards land factor in the conflict. While most Jukun believed that land was the primary cause of the conflict, most Tiv were of the view that land only served as a vent for political and other forms of conflict.

The next on the list is the Egbura-Bassa communal conflict in Nassarawa State.

4.4 Egbura-Bassa Conflicts

The Egbura and Bassa communities are found in Toto and Doma Local Government Areas of Nassarawa state. The Bassa and Egbura have been living together for long. The Egbura claim that the Bassa are settlers. The Egbura are found in north and east of the confluence of the Niger and Benue Rivers. They are, therefore, found in Kogi, Edo, Nassarawa, Niger and the FCT. The Bassa who claim ownership of the area are domiciled also in the FCT, Niger and Kogi. But principally, they are found in Toto Local Government Area (LGA) of Nassarawa State and Koton-Karfe and Bassa Local Government Areas in Kogi State. In Kogi, they are usually called Egbura-Koto and Bassa-Kwomu. Any time conflict erupts between the two groups in Nassarawa State it usually spills into their kith and kin communities in Kogi State, and vice versa (Sanda, 2003).

Conflict between the two groups first broke out in 1986 and there have been several conflicts till 1998. In 1986 as a result of the death of the Ohinoyi of Toto there was serious agitation for the change of title of the traditional head of Toto by other ethnic groups who felt marginalized in the traditional arrangement. They also wanted the title to be rotated among the ethnic groups. The bone of contention was land ownership; other factors can be said to be accompanying. The Bassa claim ownership of the land. They felt shortchanged by the Egbura aided by government in the creation of kingdom. When the area was under former Plateau state government before it was carved out to be part of the present Nassarawa State, the former had created two chiefdoms for Egbura without creating any one for Bassa and Gbagyi. The conflict between the two groups has resulted in killings. For example in 1987 disagreement over the appointment of an Egbura man to the post of Sarkin Kasuwa (Head of

Market) to succeed another Egbira man who died (because Bassa people felt that the Egbura man should be succeeded by his deputy who was a Bassa man) led to a bloody battle in which seventy-two (72) people lost their lives. 1997/98 marked the bloodiest clash between the two groups. Sophisticated weapons and mercenaries were used. Over three thousand people were killed, more than hundred thousand (100,000) Bassas were displaced and forced to be refugees in at least six states (Oyo, Kwara, Niger, Kogi, Ondo and Federal Capital territory) (Sanda, 2003).

It is neccasr to state that one can also see the hand of politics in the communal conflict.

4.5 Itsekiri-Urhobo Conflicts

Other examples of such local conflicts include; the Itsekiri and Urhobo in Warri in Nigeria, Niger Delta region. The conflict in Warri involved three major ethnic groups- Urhobos, Ijaws and Itshekiris. Oromareghake and Akpotor (2005) in analyzing the Warri crisis disprove the integrative model usually associated with urbanization. This has to do with the conception that increasing urbanization can bring about the transformation of the relationship between different ethnic groups from a mere association to an integrated society based on organic solidarity, cemented by increased inter-dependence and harmonization of shared values and goals. This theory has been punctured as it fails to explain the Warri case. Rather than the expected evolutionary change that should bring about ethnic integration and peaceful co-existence, what is in vogue in Warri is a heightened awareness of ethnic identity. Put differently despite many years of association that have resulted in inter-ethnic marriages and functional exchanges, entrenchment of ancient identities and cultural boundaries remains as far as inter-ethnic relations in Warri are concerned.

The eccentricity of the Warri situation is traceable to the pattern of settlement at the time of migration of different ethnic groups into the town. As at the time of settlement rather than mix together, each of the ethnic group settled in a separate area which may be by their own choice or dictated by those that gave them right to settle there. With the passage of time, this settlement became exclusive domains of the ethnic groups in question. This pattern of settlement made their original cultural root to take deeper

root. In a nutshell, the incessant violent conflict in Warri is the result of a complex mix of historical development and contemporary political and sociological factors.

In clear terms, the causes of conflict in the three ethnic groups according to Oromareghake and Akpotor (2005) hinge on goals and means incompatibilities, varying from material resources to positional goods involving: dispute over ownership of Warri land and corresponding “settler” designation for “migrants”; suzerainty of the Olu of Warri. The Urhobos claim that they are the original owners and settlers in Warri, and that they only lease land to Itshekiri people to farm since they had no dry land to farm as they were occupying swampy areas of Delta. The Urhobos perceived Itshekiris as migrants whom they assisted to overcome their occupational challenge at a particular point in time in the history of their existence by leasing land to them but when their leasing period was over they refused to hand over. Rather they cashed in on the privilege position granted them by the colonial masters to engage in dispute with Urhobo over the ownership of Warri. The Urhobo also argued that Ode-Itshekiri is the ancestral home of the Itshekiris which they often refer to as “big Warri” while Warri town the area in contest they call small Warri. The Urhobos contend that how the Itshekiris could leave big Warri and make small Warri the seat of their traditional ruler if not because of social and economic advantage associated with small Warri. They argued that ancestral home of the people should be the seat of their traditional ruler (Equavoen, 2003).

Amongst the Urhobos there seems to be another version of the origin of the conflict. To some Urhobos according to Equavoen (2003), the conflict in Warri essentially is concerned with just a particular family lineage and Itshekiris. Those that subscribed to this school of thought believe that the family in question sold the disputed area long time ago to the Itshekiris unknowingly of the implications of their action. There after, the oil boom and the subsequent benefits associated with the position of Warri being central in an area blessed with many oil wells, inevitably resulted in the development of infrastructure and the likes, hence the quest and tussle of owner of area became a major crisis.

The Itshekiris, on the other hand claimed the ownership of Warri town. Their argument is that they are the original occupants of both the small and big Warri and that the area in contest was given by them to their slaves (the Urhobos) to farm since they were mainly fishermen and middlemen traders and that the distinction between big and small Warri was made because the river that separate the community into two. As the place developed with the activities of oil companies, a new dimension was introduced into the conflict. The Ijaws, who also occupy the place side-by-side with the Urhobos and Itshekiris complained of their marginalization and as such demanded for their own local government council so as to give them recognition. Thus, this twist of event introduced a new dimension in the conflict as it now pitched the Ijaws against Itshekiris in that zone. The resultant effect is that it exacerbated the already complex situation.

The conflict between these two groups started when the headquarters of Warri South Local Government area was sited in Ogbe-Ijo, an enclave of the Ijaws. The Itshekiri protested that they were the one that made a request for creation of new local government area and that the the headquarters of the new local government should be in Ogidigben, an area predominantly occupied by the Itshekiris. They argued further that the gazette announcing the local government creation named Ogidigben as the local government headquarters not Ogbe-Ijaw. The mix-up was attributed to the then military administrator of Delta state, Col. David Dung. An attempt to correct the mix-up culminated in mayhem leading to killing of people and burning of houses. The Urhobos capitalized on their standing grievances against Itshekiri thereby, given the Ijaws tacit support that further widened the conflict. While the mayhem lasted the elites in the three communities were accused of supplying arms and ammunitions to the youths in their respective communities which led to escalation of violent conflict in the region (Equavoen, 2003).

4.6 Ugep-Idomi Conflicts

Local conflict can also be in form of cultural conflict like the conflict between Ugep and Idomi in Cross River State. In analyzing the Ugep-Idomi conflict. Obono (2001) argues that the conflict could be explained within the context of the warring character of the people and their strong ties to land existing in juxtaposition with population

increase. In a sense, the author posits that the conflict has cultural and demography dimensions. The author also sees double-unilateral descent principles (linguistic and cultural homogeneity) as a factor responsible for mobilization for war. The dispersed nature of settlement and the potency of matrilineal in the realm of ritual provide an important key to war mobilization. Because of the rule of exogamy in vogue, together with the co-residential status of the patrilineal, the anguish concomitant with the killing of its member is localized. Conversely, with respect to the matrilineal a similar murder is capable of affecting numerous families concurrently and this makes mobilization of sentiments a lot easier unlike a thorough-going society of patrilineal. Matrilineal descent necessarily results in double unilineal society. The natural sentiment or passion matrilineal descent engenders makes mobilization for war very swift. In fact, many factors, remote and immediate, are responsible for frequent crisis at the border between Udomi and Ugep.

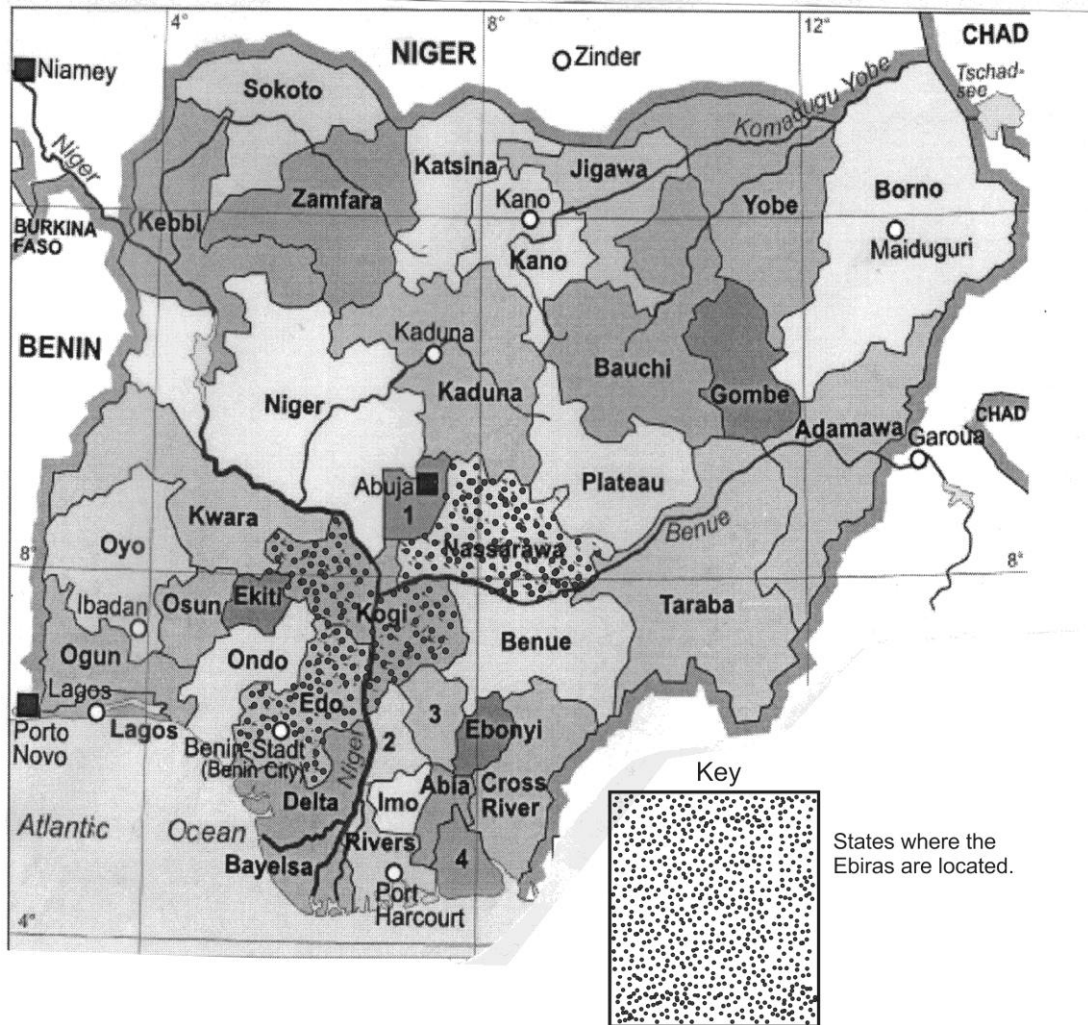
Quite often, the crisis takes the form of “hidden fight” i.e clandestine murders between the warring parties long after formal hostilities have ended. In a nutshell, the remote causes of the Ugep-Idomi war according to Obono (2001) included the long standing issue of undefined borders between the communities. For one, the rapid population expansion in the region brought about land scarcity. In order to respond to pressure on residential space a segment of patrilineal detached itself by migrating to “free lands” belonging to the patrilineal. The tendency for expansion through farming and building of hamlets in the context of ill defined boundaries between the Ugep and Idomi whom they share boundary with in the South east was the major cause of the conflict. In addition, simmering thoughts of vengeance over the previous murder of the patrikin or matrikin that went unavenged also contributed to tendency to wage war. This is because historically, deaths of innocent farmers usually triggered so much animosity in the families of the victims towards the offenders that the question of retaliation was hardly subjected to debate it was merely a question of time. Such families always appear ready to cash in on any crisis in a bid to seek “justifiable” revenge. This is often done through managing or mismanaging information and propaganda to maximum effect.

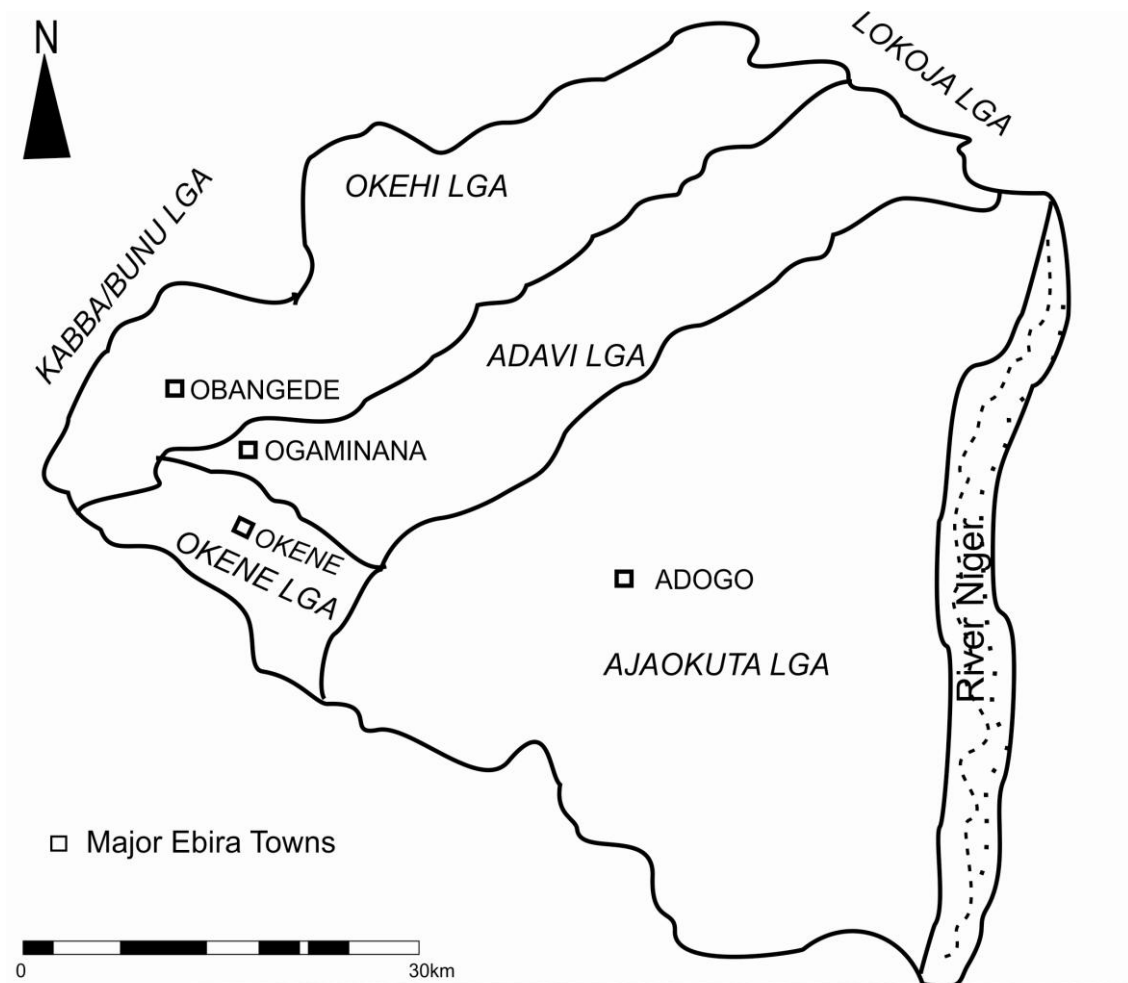
Other issue that exacerbated the conflicts includes a largely belligerent attitude by a section of the people whose faith in the power of black magic to make them invincible in war. While the conflict lasted, the Ugep is believed to invoke the aid of the war deity *Ojilipototor*. *Ojilipototor* is a society that has all its functions connected with incantations and the use of herbs and roots. The priest of this cult produced concoctions that the warriors swallowed which provided immunity for gunshots and machets cuts. The immediate factors for the conflict included claims and counter-claims of kidnappings and the killings of innocent indigenes (mostly farmers) in the area like Obol (Chief) Ebri Obla, Ete Onun Obeten and Madam Ojekn Ejeng. It appeared the killing of Obol who was seen as a helpless old man and at the same time the head of a military constituency was the most painful to the Ugep. Aside the aforementioned factors discussed above, other factors included violation of the terms of peace moves earlier initiated by the communities over the disputed area, molestation of persons and uprooting of farm products were other factors that gave fillip to the conflict. Obono concluded that the ethnographic setting is very crucial to understanding the interplay of political, geographical, psychological, demographic and economic factors combine to make war inevitable between Yakurs and Idomi.

At other time, conflict could take the form of religious differences or between different religious groups. The most glaring examples of such conflicts are between Christians and Moslems in northern Nigeria. This manifested in the religious crisis in Kano, Kaduna and Plateau States in Nigeria, conflict between Hindus and Moslems in India, Jews and Moslems in Israel. Local conflicts are often organized along ethnic or lineage lines, and leaders organized around themes of group vulnerability and demonization of other group(s). According to Brinks (1995) local conflicts are often caused by competition over access to scarce resources like water, land, and cattle. One can also add that even at local level contest for social and political positions can result in conflict.

Having analysed cases of communal conflict in Nigeria it is pertinent at this juncture to take a look at the history of Ebiraland our case study.

Fig. 1 Map of Nigeria Showing Locations of the Ebiras





Source: KSU GIS Lab, 2008

FIGURE 2: EDITED MAP SHOWING THE STUDY AREA

4.7 The Ebira Tao

As earlier mentioned the Ebira who constitute the focus of this study are people of Okene, Okehi, Adavi and Ajaokuta Local Government Areas of Kogi state with a total population of 844,774 people (The National Population Commission, 2006). They are collectively called Ebira Tao. The word “Ebira” refers to the people themselves, their language and geographical location. The Ebira Tao occupy the hilly stretch of land Southwest of the Niger-Benue confluence area and share boundaries as stated before to the South with the Bassange, Bassa Kwomo and Igala; to the North and East is the Nassarawa Emirate, to the West are various Nupe speaking groups of

Kakanda, Eggan, Kupa and Nupe of Bida Emirate and to the South-West are the Bini, Yoruba-speaking people of Akoko, Owe and Ijumu.

Sani (1993) observed that attempts to trace the actual origin of Ebiras have not been easy. The early works in this direction are full of conflicting claims and contradictions. Scholars however agree that the various groups, who collectively constitute the Ebira race, are said to have migrated at different times before the First World War. According to Sani (1999) Ebiras along with their Jukuns brothers originally migrated from Egypt and Sudan Regions. While other accounts according to local legend trace their origin to Yemen in the Middle East from where they settled in the Kwararafa kingdom with other groups such as Jukun, Idoma, Tiv, Angas, Igala and Ebira ethnic groups (Salami 2002; Sani 1997; Enesi, 1996) and finally settled at Opete before they spread around the surrounding hills of Opete; that was after sojourning in Wukari, Apoto and Idah (Tenuche 2002). It is believed that, the leader of Ebira group settled at Opete while his five sons settled in groups around Opete. These areas of settlement include Eika, Okehi, Adavi, Okengwe and Ihima (Tenuche, 2002).

The account of Husaini (2009) is slightly different from the above. Husaini contends that the Egbira, now variously referred to as Egbira, Ebira or Igbira trace their origin from Bira, a city or territory in the upper Gongola valley down the middle and the lower Benue river region in the old kwararafa kingdom. In their migratory movements they emerged as a distinct people in the middle Benue region in the area now occupied by the Tiv and the Idoma and it is in these areas they identified themselves, and were recognized as people from Bira, hence they are now called Ebira, Egbira or Igbirra. In the course of their movements they intermingled with other peoples particularly the Akpoto, acquiring their cultures and traditions. Like many other peoples the (Igbirra) made their migration downward movements to Igaland and the consequent upwards movements to their present abodes in Koton-Karfi, Toto and Umaisha areas while the Ebira and Igarra crossed the Niger to their present abodes in Ebiraland and Igarra areas. Another account documented by Audu (2009) about the origin of Ebira establishes that Ebira historical development started with their migrations across the Niger at Itobe to the right bank of the Niger around the present site of Ajaokuta often known as Ebira-Opete (Old Ebira) around 18th Century. The

migration was premised on succession dispute. It was their desire to rid off Attah's political influence. In Ebira Opete they found small settlements in or around Upake, Ochobane, Ohuruku, Ohuenene, Ogodo, Obangede and so on. From Opete they moved gradually in families, lineages and in clans to the hills of Okehi, Upai and Eikoku with neighbours as Anowe, (owe Yoruba) Amuna, Anoso (Akoko-Edo group) Anivasa (Bassa Nge) and so on. The first settlements in Ebira present location include Eikaoku, Okengwen, Okehi, Ukpai, Ukpake, Okekere, and Obangede. They further spread inland to locations like Ihima, Okene, Kuroko, Ipaku, and Nagazi.

Looking at the various claims of the origin and migration of Ebira people, there is clear indication that most of these stories are shrouded in myths which tend to obscure the historical process. Audu (2009) argues that the idea that Ebira was part of the groups that founded the Kwararafa confederacy lacks concrete evidence to actually prove this fact. This may not be unconnected with the fact that memories of developments affecting the people in this period are very scanty as a result of its remoteness.

Be it as it may, it is apparent from the studies above that the people (Ebira Tao) at one time or the other has been associated with the Jukun, Idoma and Igala, to mention just a few. From the above it can be seen from the submission of scholars that the history of Ebira cannot be told without making reference to the settlements around the Niger-Benue trough. This position is in line with the argument of Ohiare (1988) who submits that recent in depth research indicates that the Ebira have been part and parcel of what is now generally known as central Nigeria since 4000 BC. In summary, there exists the Ebira Tao or Ebira Ehi (which is our focus of study) located in Kogi State; the Ebira Koto also in Kogi State; the Ebira Agatu in Benue State; Ebira Umaisha and the Ebira Oje or Ebira Toto in Benue State (Sani, 1997; Jibo et al, 2001; Tenuche 2002). The pre-colonial economy of Ebiraland was based on agriculture, land tenure, iron technology, trade and commerce, animal husbandry among others. Production was basically geared towards meeting the subsistence need of the family as well as for exchange. Some of the food crops cultivated in Ebiraland included yam (Enu), cassava (Echuka), maize (Apapa), water yam (Evina), Guinea corn (Aku), cocoyam

(Ikoko), beans (Eza) to mention just a few. Apart from the above they equally engaged in fishing (Audu, 2009).

4.7.1 Pre-colonial Political Structure in Ebiraland

Pre-colonial political structure in Ebiraland was characterized by the existence of units of settlements called Ohueje (homestead). Each of the homesteads is made up of a man, his wife or wives, brothers, children and those entrusted to such a man by his relatives collectively living in the same compound with the eldest surviving male occupying the headship of the family (Audu, 2009). Next was the Ovovu which was the patrilineal or extended family stead. This is consisted of more than one Ohueje. Literally, Ovovu simply denotes gate leading to Ohueje. People that belong to this extended family stead might include relations of patrilineal and matrilineal. It is essential to note that the stead was exclusively reserved for those related by blood through paternal side. However, there are occasions one may find people from maternal side residing in this stead although by right of inheritance they did not belong to that stead as they derived their inheritance from their fathers (Audu, 2009). This submission is contrary to that of Okene (2000) who postulated that Ovovu (outer compound) was the exclusive use of other people under the custody of the family. These include the family slaves, war or famine refugees on asylum and family labourers. The oldest surviving male was the head of this extended family. Indeed, he personified the cultural and economic heritages as he serves as the representative of the ancestors in the family.

The third stage was the Abara (kindred). Audu (2009) establishes that Abara was brought about as a result of fear of invasion and expansion in population as well as observance of the same religious taboos among others. Abara is a collection of two or more Ovovu. Decisions are reached after due consultation with the various family heads of the lineage or kindreds. The head of Abara was the oldest surviving male child who was vested with prerogatives of economic and political lives of the lineage. The lineage land and relics were vested on him and the sylvan produce of the lineage were gathered in his palace annually for distribution to the various member families based on the ancestral law of the age grade. Examples of Abara that still survive till date include Etumi, Adovosi, Egiri and Ogagu (Okene, 2000).

Following closely the Abara was the clan, Iresu. It was the largest group of family settlement in Ebiraland. A combination of more than two Abara made up Iresu. It was in short the main political institution in the area. In Ebira language clan means Ezi symbolizing children which was an indication of the descent from a common ancestor through the male child (Audu, 2009). Husaini (2009) observed that some clans are classified as pioneer clans, while others were old or new. As a result of which lineages emerged one after the other. The pioneer clans existed before migration especially clans which settled on the hills of Upai, Okehi and Eikoku, founding villages on the land acquired. Examples of these clans were the Okovi, the Agada, the Akuta and the Ogu of Okengwen clan group. Others were Anemani, Ogu and Anohueta of Ihima, to name just a few.

The combination of all these units or settlements is called Ekura which was the basic unit and the clan group representing the land area (Ete) as the highest unit. Pre-colonial political system in Ebiraland was a class society. It was indeed government of the elders (gerontocracy). This is because within the village (Ekura) were households in which elders were household heads, the lineage heads and the chiefs including the powerful and wealthy individuals in the village. The head of each household (Ada-rehi) administered their respective households, performed duties connected with resolution of disputes in the family, ritual matter and other commitments assigned to them. Ekura (clan group) was administered by village council the head of which must come from the most senior or oldest clan in the village. However, in a situation where the eldest clan had a weak position which rarely happen the clan that has the highest numerical strength might produce the head of village council (Husaini, 2009).

Examples of the clan heads of the councils based on seniority of clan are the Ogbu-Obanyi of Emani clan, the Ozumi of Ogu clan, and the Asema Upopuveta of Ihima, Okene, and Adavi respectively. There were times clan headship generated controversy which at times led to rotation among the pioneer clans. In Ihima, Eika, Adavi and Eganyi, the seniority of the clans hardly resulted in dispute because the headship had already been vested on the most senior clan but rotated among its components

lineages. This is quite different from that of Okengwen in which headship is rotated among the four clans, namely, the Ezi-Avi, the Ezi-Evine, the Ezi-Omavi and the Ezi-Omoye, the first two representing the Agada group, while the last two represented the Okovi group of clans.

Aside the aforementioned, the village council had some people in its membership, they include; the lineage head (Ozoku-Iresu), the village powerful and wealthy individuals (Ohu-ekura), and the lineage-priest (Ohinoyi-Iresu). At the land area (Ete) level, there was the council of Iregba consisted of the heads of clans, which made up the entire Ete. At the head of this council were important offices of the Ohi-ekura and the Ohinoyi-ete. The Ohinoyi-ete was the chief priest of etc (Husaini, 2009). The chief priest was the highest spiritual and socio-political head of clan-group (Okene, 2000). The nomenclature of this position differs from one Ekura to another. For example in Adavi it was called Asema, in Ihima (Obobanyi), Okengwen (Ohindase), Eika (Adeika), Okehi (Ohiemeli) and Eganyi (Adogu) (Audu, 2009). The chief priest coordinated the activities of other functionaries in the settlement. Sensitive areas relating to capital punishment, war, abduction, sorcery, robbery and theft, arson, disputes over land and hunting rights were brought to the chief priest for adjudication (Audu, 2009). When there were inter-clan clashes the Ete council would intervene, although with limited political power and the intervention would be recognized and respected (Husini, 2009).

4.7.2 Masquerade Festivals in Ebiraland

There are different versions of the origin of masked performance culture in Ebiraland. According to Adinoyi-Ojo (1996), masquerade performance started shortly after Ebira settlements were founded. Ebira mythology traced the origin of masquerade performances to Ododo and Obaji, two fiercely competitive farmer-hunters who lived in Okehi and Eika towns. Their post-burial celebrations were marked with the raising of masked figures as an embodiment of their returned spirits and as a symbolic defeat of death. A year after that, Eika and Okehi commemoration of the event was marked with more masked figures. With the passage of time, it became a spectacle and acquired a definite pattern and structure, which graduated into a communal celebration of all Ebira ancestors. Thus, the masked figures multiplied. Ododo (2001)

version of the origin of Masquerade in Ebiraland is in Contrast with the above. The author argued that, generally, Ireba Eku (masquerade cult) formation was believed to have divine origin. That its formation was a divine instruction from God to check women excesses, aside serving as ancestor worship. Myth has it that there was a day God sent for man after creating man and woman as husband and wife. The man was too busy to honour the call. The man decided to send his wife as his representative. “God gave her Irakwo (an egg-like object that contains the secrets of life and has the capacity to manifest supernatural powers) for her husband”. Having discovered its potency, she decided to keep it for her use. It made her powerful, performing supernatural feats like turning into any animal and changing back to a human being. She could develop wings that could make her fly around in astral travels. She was enabled for all forms of mysterious transformations. This made her to be the envy of her husband. God had sympathy on the man by empowering him to create the Eku masquerade cult to counter the powers possessed by women.

Another version Sani (1993) contends that Obaji and Ododo were the progenitors of Eku. These were two brothers who were in constant opposition to each other on account of contest for seniority. However, Obaji was always generally considered as the senior, which was very displeasing to Ododo. Legend has it that Obaji took ill one day and was about to die. His brother, Ododo, concluded a plan that he would not like Obaji to be his senior here on earth and again be his senior in the great beyond. When Obaji died, Ododo put on the costumes of an Eku and the women were persuaded to believe that Ododo had died and had risen. Thus, while Obaji became the senior of the living, Ododo became the senior in the great beyond.

Some of the masquerades in Ebiraland include: “the eku ana ki ise” which fore-tells and heals; “eku-echichi”-cane wielding masked entertainers; the highly revered sac-like “eku-oba” which opens the masking season; the eku-ananyi-eze which dances and thrills; the eku ahere, the farm-based rehearsal mask; the akatapa, the jester which pokes fun at people; and the eku-ahete, which clears and cleanses the way for all other performers (Adinoyi-Ojo, 1996). In fact, masked performances have become the most important calendrical event in the social life of Ebira people. There are three major

festivals specifically dedicated to masked performances every year. They are Ebe in March; Echeane in May or June; Ekuechi in late November or early December.

Ebira people believe that eku has the power to cleanse the community of evil forces and impurities; Ebira culture either at school or state-sponsored cultural extravaganza is showcased through eku performance. At other time eku outing may be to commemorate historic events in Ebiraland like the end of a war, electoral success of favourite's sons and daughter of Ebiraland. It is also performed as part of the ritual to bring an end to national disasters like drought, locust invasion, floods, and fire (Adinoyi, 1996). However, as time went by, eku performance has become associated with violence.

4.7.3 The British Conquest of Ebiraland

The situation which finally culminated in the forceful occupation of Ebiraland in 1903 by the British imperial power has long history which is beyond the scope of this work. However, before the forceful occupation of Ebiraland by the British, Ebira had successfully resisted between 1865 and 1880 the Sokoto Jihadists who sought to make them vassals of the Caliphate conglomerate (Okene 2008). Despite the stiff resistance put up by the Ebiras against the colonialist, the land eventually fell to British power as a result of superior fire power of the colonialist. Thus, the people could not match the alien maxim-guns. They realized the feebleness and inefficiency of weak weapons made of bows and arrows, machets and cutlasses, even if poisoned, in the face of the colonialist superior arsenals and effective organization (Okene 2000). After the British took over Ebiraland, serious uprising against alien rule continued especially against the introduction of taxation until the transfer of divisional police headquarters from Kabba to Okene in 1916.

When the British took over Ebiraland, they found a loose confederation of 5 clan-groups, the Eika, the Okehi, the Adavi, the Okengwe, the Ihima, each running a divine form of traditional government (Husani, 2009). In an attempt to consolidate their victory in Ebiraland vis-à-vis the heterogeneity that was prevalent in the area, the British resident, Morgan acting on the advice of Malcom in 1904 recognized and appointed Attah Omadivi as the district head of Okene, Owuda Adidi of Eika, Opoh

of Obehira and Apata of Ihima (Audu, 2009). However the appointment of Attah Omodivi as the Warrant Chief was not accepted because each District Head of Okene, Eike, Obehira and Ihima considered himself suitable for the British local agent. In spite of the resistance put up by the other district heads, the British preferred Attach Omadiil (Audu, 2009) because of what they described as “always being the most loyal to the government” (Okene, 2000: 32). But Ebira people in general saw Omadiivi as a collaborator whom they remember today as the man who invited the British in 1913 to take over their land (Okene, 2000). Between 1913 and 1917, Attah Omadiivi was virtually the white man, chief of Ebira (Audu 2009).

Atta Omadiivi death in 1917 gave room for the British to reorganize and restructure the Native Administration in Ebiraland. Having found out that the Ebira nation practiced a republican system epitomized by chieftaincy system, the British was poised to create an acceptable central leadership so as to be able to attain her indirect rule policy. Ohindase Adano was appointed by the British colonial administration to the office of the late Omadiivi. However, this choice was not accepted by chiefs of the remaining clan groups, Obobanyin, Adeika and Asena of Ihima, Eika and Adavi respectively who felt that one of the clan group chief’s was being imposed on them. It was therefore easy for the colonial government to find excuse, to dismiss him in November of the same year for what they termed administrative and judicial corruption (Okene, 2000).

In November 1917, the British imposed Ibrahim Onoruoiza, later known as Attah Ibrahim, as the District Head of Ebira native Authority. Ibrahim after assuming the position, set out to implement the entire British ordinances, He put in place an organized native authority police which enable him to maintain peace, law and order. He merged existing courts in other districts of Ebiraland such as Ihima, Eganyi, Adani, Eika, Ogori and so on with that of Okene and presided over it. He re-organized the administrative structure of Ebira in line with the current dispensation. He constituted the council of chiefs in which preference were given to clan heads that were loyal to him. His dynamism, intelligence and effectiveness, led to his subsequent appointment by the British as the paramount ruler of Ebiraland (Audu, 2009). This was contrary to existing situation. Sani (1999) observed that the resentment of a single

central authority manifested and still manifest, itself in the republican life style and nature of the Ebiras as a people, wherever they are. Thus, no single clan chief is accepted to be superior to the other rank. They respect the calendar age differential wherever they meet for common purpose.

The influence of Attah grew and there was much socio-economic development during his time. He ruled from 1917-1954. From the above account, the fact can be gleaned that colonial rule brought about central administration in Ebiraland. Attah Ibrahim was later promoted from a Third Class Chief to a Second Class Chief (Sani, 1999; Tenuche, 2002). However, Tenuche (2002) noted that the change in the colonial native administrative system in 1952 gave the opponets of Attah the opportunity to challenge his authority. This was because the Chief-in-Council system in operation which gave Atta tremendous power was replaced by the Chief and Council system. Thus, Atta no longer enjoyed veto power over Native Authority members who were now elected.

The struggle over chieftaincy and local power structure according to Tenuche (2002, 2009) has been one important basis for intra-ethnic conflicts in Ebiraland. After Attah abdicated the throne as the paramount ruler of Ebiraland, for two years, the Native Authority ruled the land as there was no laid down rules for appointing a paramount ruler. According to Abdul cited in Tenuche (2002), 368 representatives made up of elected councilors, ward heads and two representatives (which include clan heads), from the eight districts in Ebiraland were constituted into a committee to select a new paramount ruler for Ebiraland. Sani Omonori a leading opposition figure of Attah won 342 and was appointed Ohinoyi on June 1st 1956 (Audu, 2009). Ohida (2012) noted that the rules and processes for the appointment of a traditional ruler for Ebiraland is still contentious as a High Court in Nigeria in February 2009 set aside the appointment of Ado Ibrahim the current paramount ruler who took over the rulership of Ebiraland after the death of Sani Omonori in 1994. The court ruled that the procedure for his appointment was not valid (<http://www.sunnewsonline/webpages/politics/2011/sept/14politi...>).

4.7.4 Democratization Process and Violent Conflicts in Ebiraland

Today Ebiraland is ridden with phenomenon of violent conflict. The people have taken to nerve explosion and self immolation borrowing a leaf from (Audu 2009) if it is not a violent contest between political parties; it is one Ebira community versus another. At other time, it could be one masquerade group versus another or one clan against another. At a time it was Idozumi versus I Idoji in Okene, at other time it was two clan groups in Adavi that engaged in war of attrition. Again in the Adavi area, it was Adavi versus Ihima and two clan groups in Ogaminana tore each other apart. Today, it is Ogu and Omoye clan groups mauling each other to bits. The violent conflicts are often occasioned with the use of guns and other dangerous weapon, leading to razing down of magnificence building of opponents, cremation of lives and fleeing of people who also become refugees in neighboring towns and villages (Audu, 2009).

There was a general consensus among persons interviewed (Sani 2011, Raji 2011, Okaraga 2011 Jeremiah, 2011) as well as in some literature Sani (1993, 1999) that violence in Ebiraland has its origin in the 1950s. Then, the wind of democracy blowing across Nigeria provided ample opportunity for those who vehemently opposed the ascendancy of Attah Ibrahim in 1917 to resist his authority openly. This culminated to his overthrow in 1954 and his replacement with sani Omonori as Ohinoyi of Ebiraland. This ugly scenario had serious political implication on the peace and stability of the area. The jostling for authority and control of state power by political leaders in Ebiraland resulted in the development of clan and sub-clan group identity as the base to ascend to political office (Audu, 2009). Clan now became the basis of selection to contest for position of authority either at federal state or local level. When Attah was a paramount ruler of Ebira land, there was a strong opposition group which was bent at wresting power from him. This was the Igbira Tribal Union (ITU). While Attah belong to Igbira Progressive Union (IPU) led by the late Attah proxy Alhaji Umoru Adabara who was the president of the party. Its major ideology was to defend the ruling class interest of the IPU as a means of sustaining the paramount ruler in power.

The Igbira Tribal Union (ITU) was on the other hand a mass oriented party whose ideology was the freedom of the suffering masses from the perceived tyranny of the ruling class (Sanni, 1993). Attah was eventually dethroned in 1954. His abdication of the throne led to the enthronement of Sanni Omonori who became the new paramount ruler (Audu, 2009). The ITU was instrumental to the change of traditional title of paramount ruler of Ebira land from Attah to Ohinoyi (Sanni, 1993). What actually led to violence in Ebira land in the 1950's was the struggle for control of the Native Authority (NA) between ITU and the (NPC/IPU). Both parties engaged the youth to perpetrate violence. The ITU had the 'Boma boys', while the NPU/IPU youth were known as the Cow Boys (Sanni, 2011, Raji 2011, Obobayn of Emami 2011).

The old divide between the ITU and the NPC again manifested in the politics of the Second Republic (1979-1983). A good number of those who were strong opponents of Attah and the NPC joined the Great Nigerian Peoples Party (GNPP), while the NPC supporters aligned forces with the National Party of Nigeria (NPN). Indeed the second republic led to the introduction of new dimension into party politics in Ebira land with increased political mobilization of sub-ethnic identities. For example there was a fierce contest for power between Adamu Attah (a son of Ibrahim Attah) and Obatemi Usman for a seat into the Constituent Assembly in 1977. Adamu Attah won and Obatemi Usman resorted to appeal to the sentiments of his Oziogu clan, accusing Aniku sub-clan of Adavi to which Attah belonged, of occupying most of the public offices in Ebira land (Tenuche, 2002).

While Adamu Attah led the majority faction of the NPN in the old Kwara State, Obatemi Usman leader of the minority faction of the NPN in the same State defected to the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN). During the second republic election, while Obatemi was deputy gubernatorial candidate of UPN, Adamu Attah became the gubernatorial flag bearer of NPN. The fierce campaigns that occasioned the contest between the two candidates culminated in thuggery and wanton destruction of properties. Important centers of convergence in Ebira land were torched. Okene central market was burnt down, shops and stalls of important party notables were burnt, and it also led to dislocation and dismemberment of families (Audu, 2009).

It is essential to note that beginning from the Second Republic politics in 1979, zoning of public office along ethnic divide became increasingly entrenched in the body politic of Ebira land (Nelson, 2011). This is because groups in each district or clan groups hardly agreed on choice of candidate for elective post (Raji Report, 2006). Tenuche (2009) gave quite a number of examples of entrenchment of zoning system in Ebira land. In 1990 for instance, the chairman of Adavi Local Government was produced by the Aniku sub-clan, while in 1999 it was zoned to Ezuka clan. In 2003 it was the turn of Adeieka sub-clan. In Okene Local Government, occupation of public office is often rotated between Okene and Okengwen district (between the sub-clans: Agada and Okovi), in Ihima between Eika and Ihima district.

It is important to stress that the clan heads play a very prominent role in who is nominated to contest for an office zoned to the group. This has implication for violence as the struggle for such position is fiercely fought. In addition, political alignment along clan lines has provided a convenient platform for politicians to whip clan sentiment to further their parochial and selfish objective or ambition. The resultant effect is that, inter-clan conflicts have been brought to the front burner of politics in Ebira land which is evident in the incessant violence conflict between Okengwen and Ihima districts and Adavi Eba and Okenwe district (Tenuche, 2002). The violent nature of politics in Ebiraland entered the third and fourth republics. Contest for political office among politicians exacerbated the spate of violent conflict among clans and politicians in Ebira land. To seek for political office, there was need to recourse to sub- ethnic identity. Politicians who felt marginalized instigated their sub-ethnic groups against the other clan members. In 1991, Kogi state was created. It was a product of the continuous process of adjustment to the structure of Nigeria federalism. The creation of Kogi State resulted in new configuration of power politics especially in Ebiraland (Omotola, 2006).

Since the creation of Kogi State the eastern senatorial district (Igala), has continued to monopolize the state governorship position. Alhaji Abubakar Audu was the first executive governor of the state and was in power till 1993. During the return to democracy in 1999, he won the gubernatorial election under the auspices of the All People's Party (APP), which later transmuted to All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP).

He governed till 2003 when the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) governorship flag bearer Ibrahim Idris wrestled power from him (Omotola, 2006).

From the Third Republic till date, violent conflicts have assumed a different dimension. Marginalization seems to be the nucleus of unhealthy relationship among the groups in the state. The Igalas are seen as oppressors, but Ebiras hardly turn their violence against the Igalas they rather prefer making Ebiras who are in support of “Igala’s” government their target. One thing that characterized the reigns of both Audu and Idris is the marginalization of other ethnic groups in the state (Saliu, 2011, Nelson 2011, Obeitor 2011, Raji 2011). It was observed by Omotola (2006) that there was no time when Kogi East (Igala) had less than 70 per cent of the commissioners and chairmen, as well as board and parastatals members. The situation is disturbing in terms of distribution facilities such as higher institutions of learning, roads, water, projects and also recruitment into the state public service. Audu (2009) equally observed as at year 2000, the staff strength of the state civil service was 30,000. Out of this figure, 18,000 were Igalas, 3000 Ebiras and 9000 Okuns. In the state executive council, the Ebira had 20 per cent of the appointments, 14 percent of permanent secretaries; as against Igala’s 50 per cent and 61 per cent respectively. By 2011, in the state civil service, while the Eastern senatorial zone of the state had about 21,000, the West had 6,000 and the Central 3,150 (Field Survey 2011).

Also, in March 2002 an attempt to create new local government areas further revealed the marginalization instinct in Audu. Out of the 25 new councils, he gave 14 to his ethnic group (Igala), Okun 6 and Ebira 5. This generated spontaneous violent riots across the state especially in Ebiraland resulting in large scale killing and arson. In the same vein, at the official celebration of Democracy Day on 29 May 2005, an armed group believed to be loyal to Senator A. T Ahmed, the head of the ‘power shift’ from Ebiraland, Kogi Central, launched a violent attack on Kogi State Stadium leaving several people seriously injured. It took the reinforcement of security operatives to rescue the state governor from the venue (Omotola, 2006).

On another occasion, the governor’s entourage to Okene was way laid by militant Ebira youths causing serious damage of their cars. In fact it got to the point that the

Governor was not allowed to enter Okene, the heart of Ebiraland. The same episode was played out when the Governor and his entourage went for the funeral rites of Senator A. T Ahmed (Confluence Mirror). Shortly before the 2007 general election, the idea of Ebira Agenda was hatched. That is an Ebira man should be the governor of the state. Ohiare (an Ebira man), a Senator between 2003 and 2007 contested under the platform of Action Congress for the Governorship of Kogi State in 2007 but lost to Ibrahim Idris (a PDP candidate of Igala extraction). The Ebiras found this too hard to swallow they felt they have been robbed of opportunity to occupy the highest position in the state. This made them to vent their anger on Ebiras who were supporters of PDP in Ebiraland because they saw them as betrayers of Ebira collective interest (Nelson, 2011, Saliu, 2011).

4.7.5 Traditional Chieftaincy Crisis

Another source of conflict in Ebiraland under the Idris dispensation was the creation of additional traditional stool in Ebiraland. The crisis emanated from complaint on imbalance in key appointments within the state. The Ebiras had observed that only the Ohinoyi of Ebiraland is a first class chief in the whole of Ebiraland (Kogi Central Senatorial District). Whereas Kogi East and West have 5 and 4 respectively. A recent reorganization in the State Traditional Council was supposed to partly address the perceived imbalance which subsequently led to the creation of a new traditional stool- the Adanihima of Ihima, as the first class chief to be rated amongst the 6 clans of Ihima ended up pitching two of the dominant clans against each other in a violent confrontation. The Obobanyi of Ihima from Emani clan felt slighted by the elevation, while the Obabayin of Ihuowan and his clan who were historically and implacable foe of Emani enthusiastically embraced the new Adanihima stool (Raji Report, 2006).

Government reports concerning the cases of violence indicted politicians for fomenting violence in Ebira land. The accused are usually left unpunished, thus, it appeared the government was interested in the conflicts. Although relative peace has been restored in Ebiraland as the 2011 elections were peaceful. Yet the problem is far from being totally resolved. This is because people are not ready to say the truth as result of fear of been killed. The police too have not been helpful as they collect

money from politicians to facilitate the release of thugs whenever arrested. They teach them what to say in order to escape been held culpable (Raji, 2011).

4.7.6 Masquerade Festival and Violent Conflict in Ebiraland

Before 1979, the institution of masquerade was under the control of farmers and the rural folks, who arranged festivals when there were no much farming activities. Since masquerades were considered as the representatives of the ancestors' spirits on earth, the emergence of a masquerade was only possible following the death of a powerful clan elder or clan chief. Initially, masquerade institution could only be identified with specific households or individual, who could be held responsible for any violence during festivals. It is interesting to note that during colonial era, singers and masquerades could only perform after request for permit, with a guarantor who could be held liable for breach of peace (Tenuche, 2002).

This may not be far-fetched because some of the masquerades appeared violent. For example, Adinoyi (1996) noted that some of them wield cane to flog, while some drink water others prefer palm wine, beer or local or imported liquor. *Ekú ahere* is noted for strapping cutlass around its body to mow down anybody who stood in its way. The *eku-echichi* at times succeeds in getting past the restrainers in order to beat spectator-participants. Some *eku-echichi* mostly made up of boys move around a town or village on their own looking for people to beat (Adinoyi, 1996).

Tenuche, (2002) however, noted that things changed as time went by due to a combination of many factors which included the politicization of clan identities, and the democratization process associated with the first Republic that followed. Cultural festivities like masquerade tow party lines (Igbira Tribal Union (ITU)/Northern People Congress (NPC) in the fifties. From 1979 there was an increase in sense of attachment to clan which invariably led to dividing prominent masquerades along clan lines. A good example is Achewuru masquerades which had the support of the Omoye clan and Okeverse supported by Oziogus clan.

Another example was the experience of the Second Republic that led to rivalry between politicians from Oziogu and other clans which reflected in the pattern of

support for the two prominent masquerades. Suffice to say that the partisan divide in Ebiraland as reflected in the second Republic between the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) and the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) equally provided the platform for division among the masquerades as each political party financed the activities of rival masquerades and also provided political protection for those that perpetrated violence. The idea of protecting masquerades against arrests for violent crimes, led to the creation of masquerades that were not backed by guarantors who could be held responsible for offences of masquerades (Tenuche, 2002). Although there are no statistical records of the number of casualties, however, Adinoyi (1996) averred that: The masked rituals have become very promiscuous, rough, and violent. Partisan politics, religious fanaticism, and clannish chauvinism continued to threaten the peace and stability of a once relatively cohesive society.

It was observed that, the control of masquerade institution by young gangs has led to its use as instrument of unleashing terror and fomenting troubles thereby, forcing successive governments in both Kwara and Kogi states to enact laws banning the ehane festival celebration. In fact, the threat and imposition of ban at one time or the other have not yielded positive result as the festival continued to be characterized by violence. Tenuche, (2009) notes that since 1979, none of the celebrations of the annual Ekuechi festival has been devoid of violence. Unemployment among youths and manipulation by some powerful community leaders have been attributed to youth violence under the façade of masquerade festival.

However, Sani (2009); Abdulkarim (2009) and Olorunmolu (2008) argued that politicians are responsible for perpetuation of violence in Ebiraland till date. The prominent role played by the youth in the circles of violence in Ebiraland is attributed in part to unemployment.

Tenuche, (2009) observed that youth perpetrators of violence are unemployed and hungry, and out of desperation, constitute themselves into groups referred to as “Aduvusu” (I’m ready to die) or “Ozomateyisu” (one cannot hide from death). They tend to be more violent under the cover of masquerades. This is in line of argument of Omobowale (2011) that, the Nigerian polity is replete with a mass of poor majority,

with restricted access to basic needs and survival, the political class therefore, has access to a pool of underprivileged human resources, out of which willing individuals may be recruited as “foot soldiers” to cause violence in order to acquire and sustain power.

Politicians’ started using masquerade cultural festivals right from fifties for campaigns, unleashing terror and witch-hunting political opponents. As noted by Tenuche (2009), the strained relationship between the ITU and NPC were exacerbated as each party was determined to get a man of its own appointed chief of Ebiraland, leading to the introduction of thuggery, arson and other forms of violence into the body politic of the land. The masquerade institution became instrument of violence as masquerades were divided along party lines. The traditional belief among the people in the powers of the masquerades as representatives of the ancestors on earth was demystified. Masquerades and singers who hitherto entertained during cultural festivals were now aligned with the different political parties thus turning such festivals into an arena of conflict and violence (Ododo, 2001:3 & Sani, 1997).

From 1979, the sense of attachment to clan increased which invariably led to dividing prominent masquerades along clan lines. The Achewuru masquerades for instance have the support of the Omoye clan while Okeverse masquerades have the support of the Oziogus clan. Similarly, the rivalry between politicians from Oziogu and other clans reflected in the pattern of support for the two prominent masquerades in the second Republic. Suffice to say that the partisan divide in Ebiraland as reflected in the second Republic between the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) and the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) equally provided the platform for division among the masquerades as each political party financed the activities of rival masquerades and also provided political protection for those that perpetrated violence (Tenuche, 2002).

The idea of protecting masquerades against arrests for violent crimes, led to the creation of masquerades that were not backed by guarantors who could be held responsible for offences of masquerades as stated before (Tenuche, 2002). Although there are no statistical records of the number of casualties, the chains of violent conflicts have impacted negatively on the socioeconomic organization of Ebiraland.

The victims of violence are mainly the women and the children; several women turned widows with added responsibilities of children upbringing in addition to industrious women having their wares destroyed when properties and markets are torched by irate youth's groups (Kogi State of Nigeria, 1997).

Furthermore, the gory that attend the Ebiraland masquerade festivals have the implication of socializing youths into a culture of violence and other forms of delinquent behaviours. As Adinoyi-Ojo (1996) further noticed, the control of masquerade institution by young gangs has led to its use as instrument of unleashing terror and fomenting troubles. The acrimony, thereby, forcing successive governments in both Kwara and Kogi states to enact laws banning the *ehane* festival celebration (Adaba, 2010:1). As Tenuche (2009) noted however, since 1979, none of the celebrations of the annual Ekuechi festival has been devoid of violence. This shows that imposition of ban on the masquerade traditional festivals such as ekuechi, echane, ebe, etc is not the panacea to violence that has now found a hiding place in the masquerade cultural festivals in Ebiraland. This is because youth violence under the façade of masquerade festival in Ebira land is perpetuated by unemployed youths and manipulation by some powerful community leaders who use such avenue to perpetuate selfish political aggrandizement. This is because politicians in Ebiraland hadly believe in winning election without using the youths as thugs and it is unemployed youths that mostly fall prey of their antics.

Youths in Ebiraland are fast becoming the focus of attention not just by all Anebira at home and in diaspora but for Kogi state government. This is predicated on the fact that the youth's beviour is not in tandem with acceptable manner of behavior in a civilized society. They have refused to imbibe and cherish good virtues. They have refused to be a link between the present generation and oncoming generation. They are not interested in education thereby, constituting themselves into a bunch of deviant, vagabond and social misfits in the society. No wonder they are now a willing tool in the hands of discredited politicians who hire them to maim, kill and destroy (Audu, 2009). No politicians in Ebiraland can freely play politics without employing Ebira youth to protect them. As a result, many Ebira youth have been deprived by the same politicians the possibility to envision anything better (Ebira Vonya, 2006). Their

poor financial status made them to easily succumb to politicians who use them as thugs and other associated ills in politics (Ogido, 2008). The reason for this is not far fetched. Omeiza (2010) is of the view that politics in Ebiraland is not like other responsible places where the zeal is about development, that of Ebira is politics of revenge, bitterness, do or die affairs, thuggery, to mention just a few. He said politicians in Ebiraland are very desperate, they can use their immediate relations for sacrifice to attain a position that will last them for just four years or less. And if crocodile can eat their own eggs what will they not do to the flesh of frogs?

Commenting on the crisis ravaging Ebiraland, Ado (2010) argues that most of the violent conflicts are politically motivated by some who wanted to wrestle political power without going through a democratic system which made gun-running the chief merchandise of Ebiraland. He said in Ebiraland, there are three major causes of crisis: masquerade, politics and clannish differences. But political crises have succeeded in dominating others because the politicians have cleverly used politics to cause division among the people. Politicians have used cultural system to their advantage in causing problems and when the problems come, they blame culture. Masquerading and other related violent activities have provided ample opportunity for the youth to exhibit their callous behavior. They possess sophisticated weapons used in unleashing terror in the land (Audu, 2009).

Adoke (2008) argues that some of the arms used by Ebira boys are more lethal or sophisticated than the ones used by the security agents, thus making it dangerously impossible for the police to effectively check their activities. In order to make themselves relevant they engaged in farming and stealing to get money to consult soothsayers, spiritualists and haberdashers in order to acquire spiritual strength. They sought for charms to disappear in case of trouble and arrest, to protect them from bullet penetrating into their bodies and numerous other charms to protect them in situations of gun battle or any form of attacks (Audu, 2009). This has resulted in perpetration of other social vices such as burglary, armed robbery, strange and mysterious killing among others (Ohida, 2002).

4.7.7 Modernity

The change of value system also has its finger prints of youth restiveness in Ebiraland. The Ebira society was mainly agrarian. Having a large family in those days was an asset which could be employed for farm work. Hence people were encouraged to marry as many wives as possible because it was not difficult to cater for the family. Laziness and joblessness were never condoned. With modern civilization children have to go to school. Children no longer labour with their parents in the farm; hence, the need for marrying many wives was no longer necessary. The inability or refusal of many parents to change in line with the current value system created some social problems which include having many children beyond what one could cater for, leading to denial of education because of lack of funds to pay school fees, poverty, lack of control among others. The resultant effect is becoming unruling and rebellious to parents, alienation to express their feeling leading to antagonism and resistance, encouraging the use of drug and other stimulants to strike back at parents and society (Audu, 2009).

A corollary of the above is what Ogido (2008) described as parent “eating the food they cannot swallow” that parents should have children they will be able to cater for. The implication of this is that if husband could not provide for his wife and children, abdicating his responsibilities will serve as a negative role model for the children.

Another observable phenomenon responsible for youth violence in Ebiraland is the growing discontentment amongst the youths on the activities of the elders in Ebiraland. Their performance in public offices left much to be desired. The youth saw their failure in the inability to create an enabling environment for the youth to prove their mettle. They failed to use their public offices to alleviate poverty in form of job creation and provision of social facilities. In the light of the above, the youths have determined to shift the balance of power. They insisted on fielding in their candidates to contest elections. This has led to the procreation of several youth organizations that straddle civil servants, academics, market women, retired military personnel and even students (Tenuche, 2002b). Examples of these youth organizations are The People Initiative Foundation (PIF), Ebira Youth Congress (EYC), Pal Collectives (PC) to mention just a few (Audu 2009). It is also interesting to note that these organisations

are conglomerate of different youth associations of Ebira descent across the country with main objectives of promoting unity, peace and development of Ebiraland. For example, the EYC is made up of 152 Ebira clubs and association across the length and breadth of Nigeria (Tenuche, 2002b).

It is necessary to state that the aforementioned clubs and association are also implicated in conflicts situation in Ebiraland. Once a member was attacked, the club members jointly retaliated to put their enemies at bay and equally showed the strength of their club through display of weapons. These clubs financed their activities through collection of levies and dues from their members in accordance with the charter of their clubs. These clubs compete among themselves by demonstrating the immense proportion and sophistication of their weapons at any slightest provocation. A good case in point is the organization of a beauty pageant to select the most beautiful girl in Ebiraland. This contest resulted in violent conflagration in which Ebira central market was burnt and many lives were lost all on an alledged “trespass” of another club members’ girl friend (Audu, 2009).

In summary, this section has taken a look at conflict in Africa, Nigeria and Ebiraland. The study finds struggle for political power at the centre of the various conflicts although the impact of socio-economic variables cannot be overlooked. The consequences of the various conflicts include psychological trauma, loss of human and material resources.

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CHAPTER FIVE

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSIONS

This section focuses on the presentation, interpretation and analysis of the data obtained in the course of this study. Data collected were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 15.0) software. Statistical analyses include frequency distribution tables and simple percentages. In view of the geographical spread of Ebira people into 4 local governments in Kogi State, a sufficiently large sample size of 1,200 is utilized in the study. This is consistent with common wisdom and statistician opinion that favour a fairly large sample in studies of this nature. As stated earlier, a total number of 1200 questionnaires were administered to respondents out of which 850 were returned. The remaining 350 questionnaires were either unreturned or badly filled that made them unusable.

Table 1 RESPONSE RATE

Number of Questionnaire Returned	850	70.83%
Number of Questionnaire not Returned	350	29.16%
Total	1, 200	100%

The table above details the response rate of our respondents. Out of the 1200 questionnaires administered, 850 were returned as stated before. The return rate of 70.83% is satisfactory and deemed large enough to make valid conclusion. This is in line with the submission of Dane (1990:120), as stated before that “a survey research project may include as few as 100 participants or as many as 250 million”.

In addition, it was observed that some of our respondents omitted few items of the questionnaire but this is not sufficient to discard the entire questionnaires affected.

The Tables below present the socio-demographic characteristics of our respondents.

5.1 Demographic profile of Respondents

Table 2 Gender Distribution of Respondents

The following subsections detail the demographic characteristics of the respondents and provide an overview of the make up of the study sample.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	528	62.1	63.5	63.5
Female	304	35.8	36.5	100.0
Total	832	97.9	100.0	
		100.0		

Source: Author (2011)

528 (63.5percent) are males while 304 (36.5percent) are females. From Table 2 above, it is evident that both gender are represented, however, the percentage of male respondents is higher. The explanation for this could be found in the cultural roles of males and the structure of the society which is male dominated. In addition, males are much more involved in issues of violence and conflict because they are more predisposed to seeking power and political offices, therefore, have more interest on issues raised than their female counterparts.

Table 3 Age Distribution of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
18-30	577	67.9	71.1	71.1
31-40	152	17.9	18.7	89.8
41-50	50	5.9	6.2	95.9
51-60	21	2.5	2.6	98.5
60+	12	1.4	1.5	100.0
Total	812	95.5	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

The frequency of the age distribution inTable 3 reflects larger percentage of the respondents between 18 and 30 years of age followed by respondents between 31 and 40, 41 and 50, 51, and 60 and above 60 respectively. This is helpful in this study because those that are often involved in violent conflicts are mostly within ages 18-40. These ones, given the frequency of conflicts in Ebiraland, perhaps might have participated in at least one of the violent conflicts in Ebiraland. Admittedly, they may not have historical knowledge of past conflicts; the representation of the older age

grades is expected to compensate for this shortcoming. In addition, other instruments adopted in the study are expected to capture the views of all age grouping.

Table 4 Marital Status

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Single	584	68.7	70.4	70.4
Married	230	27.1	27.7	98.2
Divorced	9	1.1	1.1	99.3
Separated	5	.6	.6	99.9
Widowed	1	.1	.1	100.0
Total	829	97.6	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

We reasonably expect marital status to affect the reaction of respondents to issues of conflict. For example, the burden of marriage may play a significant role in willingness to participate in conflicts or reduction of situation that breeds conflict. Therefore, a classification of respondents along marital status is presented in Table 4 above. From the Table above, 70.4 percent of the total respondents are single compared to 27.7 percent married, 1.1 percent divorced, 0.6 percent separated and 1percent widowed.

Table 5 Occupation Distribution

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Civil servants	99	11.6	11.9	11.9
Farmers	27	3.2	3.3	15.2
Traders	193	22.7	23.3	38.4
Students	490	57.6	59.0	97.5
Others	21	2.5	2.5	100.0
Total	830	97.6	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

As shown above in table 5, 11.9 percent are civil servants, 3.3 percent are farmers, and 23.3 percent are traders, students 59.0 percent and others 2.5percent. A significant proportion of our sample are students who understand the demand of the research instruments and are mostly likely to have opinions on the issues causing conflict in

Ebiraland. However, it is necessary to add that having more student respondents was not deliberate.

Table 6 Academic Qualifications of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Illiterate	16	1.9	1.9	1.9
Primary	18	2.1	2.2	4.1
JSS	14	1.6	1.7	5.8
SSS	243	28.6	29.5	35.3
Tertiary	534	62.8	64.7	100.0
Total	825	97.1	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

Table 6 above shows that the vast majority of the respondents are educated to answer the questionnaire. 534 (64.7 percent) are either in higher institutions or have graduated from higher institutions, Senior Secondary School certificate holders are 243 (29.5 percent), Junior Secondary School certificate 14 (1.7 percent), Primary School Leaving certificate 18 (2.2 percent) and 16 (1.9 percent) are not literate.

Table 7 Local Government Area

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Adavi	246	28.9	29.7	29.7
Ajaokuta	72	8.5	8.7	38.4
Okehi	248	29.2	29.9	68.3
Okene	226	26.6	27.3	95.5
Others	37	4.4	4.5	100.0
Total	829	97.5	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

The questionnaire was prepared to capture the four local government areas especially conflict prone areas in Ebiraland. However, as a way of verifying the reliability of the information given by the respondents, some non-indigenes were equally captured in the questionnaire administration.

Having looked at the socio-demographic profile of the respondents, the tables below present the data on some of the causal variables of conflict in Ebiraland. Conflicts

generally have been identified to have multivariate and interrelated causes. This as shown in chapter two (2) of the study is the general consensus among conflict researchers and scholars. We however sought to test the validity of the proposition that politics constitutes the major cause of conflict in Ebiraland. In line with this, economic and socio-cultural variables were also tested. This was done to examine the relationship between youth unemployment and economic motive on the one hand, and violence associated with masquerade festival, and the struggle for chieftaincy title on the other hand.

5.2 POLITICS AND COMMUNAL CONFLICTS

In line with the focus of this study, this section explores the impact of politics on clan and communal conflicts in Ebiraland. Taking into cognizance the role of political elite, it examines responses to series of questions exploring the political dimension of communal conflicts in Ebiraland.

Table 8 Contest for political power as factor for conflict

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	23	2.7	2.7	2.7
Disagree	53	6.2	6.3	9.1
Undecided	16	1.9	1.9	11.0
Agree	243	28.6	29.0	40.0
strongly agree	503	59.2	60.0	100.0
Total	838	98.6	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

In an attempt to shed light on the understanding of conflict as a result of political competition, respondents were asked if “contest for political power is one of the factors responsible for conflicts in Ebiraland?” Table 8 above details responses of the respondents to the statement relating contest for political power to conflict. Analysis of respondents’ responses seems to overwhelmingly indicate that competition for political power among political elites in Ebiraland is responsible for conflicts in the region. Thus, 503 (59.2 percent) strongly agree to the above question, 243 (28.6 percent) merely agree while those that strongly disagree were just 23 (2.7 percent);

disagree 53 (6.2 percent) and undecided 16 (1.9 percent). In all, 87.8 percent agreed to the above question. In fact, our findings from above did not differ significantly from the views expressed by the community leaders interviewed and the responses from FGD that political competition is the driver of conflicts in Ebiraland. In the words of some of the key traditional rulers interviewed; “the politicians in most cases when they strive to win election often resulted into violence” (Obobayin of Ihonwa, 2011). This has equally been supported by Obobayin of Ihima that violent conflict in Ebiraland is traceable to the political era of the 1950s. He stated categorically that it was politics that brought violent conflict to Ebiraland. In an interview with M.S Audu, he saw politics and political competition as the only source of conflict in Ebiraland, to corroborate earlier opinions. He put it as follows:

It is not clannish crises, it is politics. They just give it clannish colouration. Intra-party conflict, they wear it the garment of clan just as violence is coloured with religion in Nigeria, it is purely politics. The houses that are burnt during crises are houses of political opponents. There cannot be clannish or religious crises in Ebiraland. They only colour it as clan conflict. The crises in Ebiraland are clearly political (Audu, 2011).

The researcher sought to investigate whether there is a relationship between personality of politicians, followership and conflict in Ebiraland, so as to ascertain whether political followership are often deeply identified with individuals such that their cause become the rally point for followership who may sometime become fanatical in their identification with such personalities and their cause. The respondents were asked if “individual personality is the main political issue in Ebiraland” i.e the selfish pursuit of political interest by politicians is the factor generating conflicts in Ebiraland. Table 9 below depicts the positions of the respondents.

Table 9 Personality and Politics

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	105	12.4	12.7	12.7
Disagree	69	8.1	8.4	21.1
Undecided	58	6.8	7.0	28.1
Agree	272	32.0	32.9	61.0
strongly agree	321	37.8	38.9	99.9
				100.0
Total	826	97.2	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

321 (37.8 percent) of the respondents strongly agree to the assertion that selfish pursuit of political interest of key personalities is one of the factors generating conflict in Ebiraland, while 272 (32.0 percent) merely agree to the assertion. Only 105 (12.4 percent) strongly disagree, 69 (8.1 percent) disagree and 58 (6.8 percent) were undecided on the assertion. The implication of 69.8 percent of our respondents agreeing to the statement above shows that selfish pursuit of political interests by key personality is one of the causes of conflicts in Ebiraland.

It is a commonplace occurrence that sentiments trigger conflicts among clans. That is, a particular clan or tribe may perceive itself as superior to other clans. Consequently, we explore clan sentiments as a factor generating conflicts in the region by eliciting respondents' responses to the statement "clannish sentiment is the main issue in Ebiraland". Table 10 below is the summation of the reactions of respondents to the question.

Table 10 Clannish Sentiment

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	25	2.9	3.0	3.0
Disagree	39	4.6	4.6	7.6
Undecided	28	3.3	3.3	11.0
Agree	303	35.6	36.1	47.0
strongly agree	445	52.4	53.0	100.0
Total	840	98.8	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

Contrary to Audu (2011) position, the reaction of some other respondents to the question “clannish sentiment is the main issue in Ebiraland” revealed that there is dimension of clannish sentiment to violent conflict in Ebiraland. This is predicated on the fact that 445 (52.4percent) strongly agree, 303 (35.6percent) agree, 25 (2.9percent) strongly disagree, 39 (4.6percent) disagree and 28 (3.3percent) are undecided. Thus, 88 percent of the respondents are of the opinion that there is clannish dimension to the conflict. The percentage of response to the above question is quite high, meaning clan has become the instrument for the pursuit of political power. The paramount ruler- Ohinoyi of Ebiraland Ado (2011), similarly enumerated politics, clan sentiments and masquerade festival as the causal factors of violent conflicts in his domain.

The clan dimension is further explored with the statement “conflicts between clans provide opportunity for politicians to stress their relevance”. Table 11 below details the reactions of respondents.

Table 11 Inter-Clan Conflict and Political Relevance

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	36	4.2	4.4	4.4
Disagree	87	10.2	10.5	14.9
Undecided	67	7.9	8.1	23.0
Agree	276	32.5	33.4	56.3
strongly agree	361	42.5	43.7	100.0
Total	827	97.3	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

Our findings from the above clearly show that conflict between clans provides opportunity for politicians to stress their relevance. 361 (42.5 percent) strongly agree to the assertion that politicians often capitalize on conflicts between or among clans to draw support for their political cause, thereby, stressing their relevance, while 276 (32.5 percent) merely agree to the assertion, 36 (4.2 percent) strongly disagree to the assertion, 87 (10.2 percent) disagree, and 67 (7.9 percent) were undecided on the assertion. Responses from Focus Group Discussion (FGD 2011) point to the fact that, some politicians sponsor conflicts by instigating the youths and their clans against their political opponents.

Next to the above question is an attempt to probe into differences in political party alliances of clans and conflicts in the region. This is because the clearest expression of differences in political views and ideas is often expressed in political party to which one aligns. It is reasonable to assume that individuals will align to parties that closely support their views and ambition. Therefore, we sought responses on differences in political party alliances and its effect on conflicts in Ebiraland. The question posed is “differences in political party alliances between clans often degenerate into conflicts in Ebiraland”. Table 12 below presents the responses.

Table 12 Party Alliances and Conflict.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	49	5.8	5.9	5.9
Disagree	82	9.6	9.9	15.7
Undecided	112	13.2	13.5	29.2
Agree	293	34.5	35.2	64.4
strongly agree	296	34.8	35.6	100.0
Total	832	97.9	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

In Table 12 above, 296 (34.8percent) strongly agreed and 293 (34.5percent) agreed to the view that differences in political party alliances between clans often degenerate into conflicts in Ebiraland. Others as shown in the Table strongly disagreed, disagreed or were undecided. However, responses from interviews and Focus Group Discussion FGD (2011) were at variance with the above position as they did not believe that clans’ political party alliances have any role in conflicts in the region. The difference

in opinion may be attributed to the fact that while it is difficult to ascertain the veracity of the above proposition as other clans are concerned, it is not the case with the Omoeye clan that constitutes majority and it has always been aligned with the ruling party right from the time of political independence of the country in 1960.

The researcher also sought to establish whether there is a relationship between political party affiliation of community leaders and conflicts in the region. This is because traditional role of community leaders entrusts them the privilege position of being the opinion leaders, rallying point and motivators of the led. Consequently, their political affiliations and interests may count in terms of conflict among followers. The study raised a question to explore the implication of differences in the political party affiliation of community leaders. Table 13 contains respondents' reactions on the issue.

Table 13 Political Affiliation of Community Leaders and Conflict

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	129	15.2	15.4	15.4
Disagree	118	13.9	14.1	29.6
Undecided	112	13.2	13.4	43.0
Agree	268	31.5	32.1	75.1
strongly agree	206	24.2	24.7	99.8
Total	833	98	99	

Source: Author (2011)

Table 13 above shows that 56.8 percent of the respondents believe that differences in political party affiliation of community leaders and the community have implications for conflict. While 206 respondents (24.7 percent) strongly agreed, 268 (32.1 percent) agreed to the assertion that differences in political party affiliation of community leaders have implications for conflict, 112 (13.4) were undecided, 118 (14.1 percent) disagreed and 129 (15.2 percent) strongly disagreed to the assertion.

Corollary to the question above is the succeeding statements “exercise of political supremacy between clan leaders often lead to violent conflict”. The responses’ are summed in Table 14 below:

Table 14 Political Supremacy between Clan Leaders as Source of Conflict

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	137	16.1	16.5	16.5
Disagree	109	12.8	13.1	29.6
Undecided	44	5.2	5.3	34.9
Agree	305	35.9	36.7	71.7
strongly agree	235	27.6	28.3	100.0
Total	830	97.6	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

In Table 14 above, the perceptions of the respondents indicate that overwhelming majority see exercise of political supremacy between clan leaders as one of the factors responsible for violent conflicts in Ebiraland. In fact, 235 (28.3percent) strongly agreed to the assertion that political supremacy among clan leaders is the source of conflicts in Ebiraland, 305 representing (36.7 percent) agreed to the assertion as well, while only 44 (5.3percent) were undecided, 109 (13.1percent) disagreed and 137 (16.5 percent) strongly disagree. The results of the interviews show that there were several cases of violent conflicts among clans in Ebiraland except in Ogori, for example between Ogu and Omoye clan groups, Agada and Okovi in Okene, Ire and Ohegbe, Adavi Vosu, Ihima among others. However, respondents interviewed believed that all the aforementioned crises and many others were inspired by political contests with clannish colouration. The import of this is that the exercise of political supremacy between or among clan leaders often leads to violent conflicts in Ebiraland. This probably often occurs in democratic dispensation.

Derived from responses to earlier question is the statement that hinges on political affiliation on clan lines. The statement is “each clan is often affiliated to a particular political party” responses are presented in Table 15 below:

Table 15 Political Affiliation of Clan

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	153	18.0	18.4	18.4
Disagree	157	18.5	18.9	37.3
Undecided	79	9.3	9.5	46.9
Agree	229	26.9	27.6	74.5
strongly agree	212	24.9	25.5	100.0
Total	830	97.6	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

As shown in Table 15 above, 25 percent of the respondents or 212 respondents are of the opinion that each clan is affiliated to a particular political party. Slightly higher respondents agreed to the statement 229 (27.6 percent). Overall 37 percent of the respondents showed various degrees of disagreements with the fact that each clan is affiliated to a party. Only 9.5 percent of the respondents seemed not to have enough evidence to make decision on the mono-political affiliation of clans in Ebiraland. However, if the evidence in Table 15 is weighed, there is a cause for concern given the place of political difference in conflict (Table 12) in the area.

A follow up item probed the use of clan affiliation to foster individual's political ambition and the consequence of inter-clan conflict. Respondents' reactions are as captured in Table 16 below.

Table 16 Inter-Clan Conflicts and Political Ambition

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	165	19.4	19.9	19.9
Disagree	106	12.5	12.8	32.7
Undecided	85	10.0	10.2	42.9
Agree	257	30.2	31.0	73.9
strongly agree	217	25.5	26.1	100.0
Total	830	97.6	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

Before going into the analysis of the table above, it is necessary to state that in politically developed setting where issues and welfare drive political competition,

tribal and clan sentiments exert less influence as basis for political followership. However, history of political competition in Nigeria does not wholesomely support this view point which is also reflected in our case study. From Table 16 above 26.1 percent of the respondents strongly agreed to the fact that clan affiliation is often employed to foster individual political ambition. In other words, these respondents believed that the clan of political office seeker is more an issue rather than his political programmes and agenda for the welfare of the society. Above half of the respondents agreed in various degrees that clan affiliation as used to foster political support engenders inter-clan conflict. 85 respondents or 10 percent of the respondents were undecided on the issue while less than 30 percent of the respondents disagreed with the statement that clan affiliation used to foster political ambition is a source of inter-clan conflict.

The analysis above confirms that political office seekers by their activities often fan the embers of inter-clan conflicts. Observations from FGD (2011) also supported the above position that, contests for political power by political elites in different clans often lead to polarization or support based on clan affiliations.

Close to the question above is an attempt to assess competition for clan headship and violence in the region. This is not unconnected with the fact that, clan heads wield much influence over the clan and serve as rally point for the clan's cultural and political viewpoints. Consequently, succession to clan headship has attracted much interest from the government, competitors to clan headship and individuals charged with responsibilities of appointing clan heads. The interest is more exacerbated where several qualified candidates are to be screened to the most qualified. Consequently, to test the validity of competition for clan headship the statement was raised "succession to clan headship involve contest among the ruling houses" which explored the nature of contest between contestants in the ruling houses. The responses are as shown below in Table 17.

Table 17 Clan Headship Succession

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	89	10.5	10.7	10.7
Disagree	233	27.4	27.9	38.6
Undecided	107	12.6	12.8	51.4
Agree	244	28.7	29.3	80.7
strongly agree	161	18.9	19.3	100.0
Total	834	98.1	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

Assessing the reactions of respondents in Table 17 above, 161 respondents or (19.3 percent) strongly agreed that succession to clan headship involved contests among the ruling houses, 244 (29.3 percent) merely agreed, 107 (12.8 percent) undecided, 233 (27.9 percent) disagreed and 89 (10.7 percent) strongly disagreed. The total number of respondents indicating varying degrees of agreement with the opinion amount to 405 (48.6 percent). The views expressed by Ohinoyi of Ebiraland indicated that succession to clan headship involves contest among ruling houses. That is, the selection procedures involved competition rather than ascendancy on the basis of seniority or some other criteria based on tradition.

The follow up item to the above examines the relationship between contest for supremacy among clans and conflict in Ebiraland. Traditionally, clans may be ranked according to seniority based on history or origin of a community. Key positions in such a community may be reserved for specific clans which may have justification in the tradition of the community or based on time of settlement or some criteria in tandem with traditions of the people. Succeeding generations put in a disadvantaged position may not be comfortable with such arrangement. Hence, while those that are not benefiting much with such arrangement may want to challenge the status quo, those gaining from it may fight for the perpetuation of it which may lead to conflicts. In addition, decisions and actions of groups and political party in power determine much of social and economic well being of others. Clans therefore, may strive for political relevance in the main stream of political group and party at the state and federal levels. Conflicts are promoted when clans are of different political divides

within a state and the clan affiliated to the main stream of political group may want to assert its supremacy over other clans who may resist such disposition.

Therefore, the issue of contest for political supremacy among clans and its implications for conflict in Ebiraland were explored. Table 18 below portrays respondents' responses to the assertion "contest for political supremacy among clans has implications for conflicts in Ebiraland".

Table 18 Political Supremacy and Clan Conflict

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	124	14.6	15.0	15.0
Disagree	113	13.3	13.6	28.6
Undecided	60	7.1	7.2	35.8
Agree	254	29.9	30.6	66.5
strongly agree	278	32.7	33.5	100.0
Total	829	97.5	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

The question elicited overwhelming responses that contest for political supremacy among clans has implications for conflict in Ebiraland. 278 (33.5percent) strongly agreed to the statement above, 254 (30.6percent) agreed, only 60 (7.2percent) were undecided, 113 (13.6percent) disagreed and 124 (15.0 percent) strongly disagreed. This finding appears constant with the position of discussants during FGD (2011) that contest for political power between two clans has implication for conflict. For instance, an individual from another clan may usurp the position exclusively reserved for a particular clan through the use of money or political connections which may result in violence.

5.3 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POWER AND CONFLICT

Political power affords individuals in politics to influence others and determine the course of events in most cases. The following subsection explores series of questions on the relationship between political power and conflicts in Ebiraland. The first in the series of statements under this subsection was designed in this manner "privileges

attached to political offices encourage violent contest for elective post” the results are as contained in Table 19 below:

Table 19 Privileges of Political Offices

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	51	6.0	6.2	6.2
Disagree	63	7.4	7.6	13.8
Undecided	51	6.0	6.2	20.0
Agree	214	25.2	25.9	45.9
strongly agree	446	52.5	54.1	100.0
Total	825	97.1	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

446 (54.1percent) strongly agreed that such privileges encourage violent contest for such political posts, 214 (25.9 percent) merely agreed 51 (6.27 percent) were undecided, only 114 representing (13.8) percent were in opposition to the assertion. The total percentage of those that agreed (strongly and merely) is 80 percent which shows that an overwhelming respondents are of the view that privileges attached to political offices encourage violent contest for elective posts.

Political office seekers often contest for political power before a winner can emerge. Since it is a zero-sum game in which one of the contestants must win and others invariably become losers, we sought to know whether competition for political offices is the major cause of violent conflicts in Ebiraland. Hence the statement: “competition for political offices is the main cause of violent conflict in Ebiraland” the analysis is presented in Table 20:

Table 20 Political Competition and conflict

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	59	6.9	7.2	7.2
Disagree	63	7.4	7.7	14.8
Undecided	39	4.6	4.7	19.6
Agree	312	36.7	37.9	57.5
strongly agree	350	41.2	42.5	100.0
Total	823	96.8	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

350 respondents or 42.5 percent of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement above with 312 respondents merely agreeing representing 37.9 percent, 39 respondents or 4.7 percent were undecided, 63 respondents (7.7 percent) disagreed on the issue raised in the question and 7.2 percent of the respondents expressed strong disagreement with the question. On the whole, the total percentage of those expressing varying degrees of agreement equals 80.4 percent of the respondents. This view supports the findings in the previous section that politics is the major driver of conflicts in Ebiraland.

The level of political tolerance and maturity of politicians in any political enclave is often tested during elections. In addition, the relationship between politics and violent conflict can better be understood during elections. In order to assess whether violence is more intense during election time, a similar assertion to the above was designed- “violence is more intense and frequent in Ebiraland during election times”. The respondents’ reactions are as encapsulated in Table 21 below:

Table 21 Violence and election

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	22	2.6	2.7	2.7
Disagree	41	4.8	5.0	7.6
Undecided	41	4.8	5.0	12.6
Agree	311	36.6	37.6	50.2
strongly agree	412	48.5	49.8	100.0
Total	827	97.3	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

It was observed that almost a majority of the respondents are strongly in agreement to the assertion that violence is more intense during elections. Thus, 412 (49.8 percent), 311(37.6percent) strongly and merely agreed 41(5.0percent) undecided 63 representing just (7.7percent) were in total disagreement to the statement. The summation of those that agreed (strongly and merely) is 87.4 percent. The above findings are in line with arguments of some of our respondents during interview: “Whatever happens that has traces of violence (sic) in Ebiraland has connection with politics” (Jeremiah, 2011). Another respondent from Ihima also said “violence came to Ebiraland as a result of politics” (Okagara, 2011). In the same vein, Obeitor (2011)

contends that crises in Ebiraland were escalated by politics. A clan spokesman Raji (2011) interviewed in Lokoja said “violence is only during politics, without politics there is no violence”. In fact, Ohinoyi of Ebiraland Ado (2011) during interview conducted through proxy explicated that there are three causes of violent conflicts in Ebiraland: clan divide, masquerade festivial and politics. But the influence of politics on violence in Ebiraland dominates other factors.

Political conflicts most often are the handiwork of political entrepreneurs popularly known as political elites who drive wedge of division within a group or among groups by dividing them along thin or major lines of differences for their political advantage with implication for violence. An attempt was made to interrogate the employment of violence by political elites through mobilization of people along group lines. Table 22 detailed responses of our respondents to the statement “political elite employ violence to mobilize people along group lines for their political advantage”.

Table 22 Elite Mobilization of People along Group Lines and Conflict

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	68	8.0	8.2	8.2
Disagree	40	4.7	4.8	13.1
Undecided	42	4.9	5.1	18.1
Agree	323	38.0	39.1	57.2
strongly agree	354	41.6	42.8	100.0
Total	827	97.3	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

The above findings revealed that 354 (42.8 percent) strongly agreed, that elites use violence to mobilize people along ethnic lines for their political advantage 323 (39.1 percent) merely agreed, 42 (5.1percent) undecided 40 (4.8percent) disagreed 68 (8.2 percent) strongly disagreed to the statement. The percentage sum of those that agreed (strongly and merely) is 81.9 that is, 81.9 percent believed that political elites employed violence to mobilize people along group lines for their political advantage.

In some societies, conflict sometimes is predicated on the ways societies are structured and organized. If the structure of a society puts a particular group in a position to monopolise political and socio-economic advantages to the detriment of other groups, conflict may ensue. Thus, we try to find out whether political structure in the state has a major role in violent conflict in Ebiraland. A statement was raised- “The political structure of the state has implication on unrest in Ebiraland”. the responses of respondents are as presented in Table 23 below:

Table23 State Political Structure and Conflict

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	49	5.8	5.9	5.9
Disagree	50	5.9	6.1	12.0
Undecided	66	7.8	8.0	20.0
Agree	324	38.1	39.3	59.3
strongly Agree	335	39.4	40.7	100.0
Total	824	96.9	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

Perceptions of our respondents indicate that political structure of the state has implication for unrest in Ebiraland. Analysis of the respondents shows that 335(40.7 percent) strongly agreed that it did, 324(39.3 percent) agree 66 (8.0percent) undecided 50 (6.1 percent) disagree 49 (5.9 percent) strongly disagree. 80 percent of the respondents agreed strongly and merely.

Analysis of our respondents during interview and Focus Group Discussion revealed the fact that opinions are divided on whether the political structure of the state has implication on violent conflict in Ebiraland. While some believed it did some did not agree. Those in agreement argued that politicians who formed alliance with government in power are seen as traitors and betrayers of the common course of the Ebiras. The Kogi State Government is dominated by the Igalas, thus they see the Ebiras that joined the Igalas as oppressors and enemies and during crisis they make them object of attacks. Others opined that this cannot be said to be true because the Ebiras do not attack Igalas during crisis rather they attack fellow Ebiras, thereby debunking the claim that the structure of the state has implication for violent conflicts

in Ebiraland. Also, the Ebiras are spread in the major political parties in the state even though a particular clan- “omoye” that also constitutes the majority, are predominantly members of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

A follow up question to the above Table 23 was asked for a thorough examination of the relationship between the structure of the state and violence in Ebiraland. Thus, the question on whether “perceived domination of the state by a section of the state promotes conflicts in Ebiraland”. The responses are as indicated below:

Table 24 Perceived domination of the state apparatuses by a section

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	84	9.9	10.2	10.2
Disagree	107	12.6	13.0	23.2
Undecided	96	11.3	11.6	34.8
Agree	217	25.5	26.3	61.1
Strongly Agree	321	37.8	38.9	100.0
Total	825	97.1	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

321 (38.9percent) strongly agreed that perceived domination of the state apparatuses by a section has implication for violent conflicts in Ebiraland 217(26.3 percent) merely agreed to the assertion 96 (11.6 percent) undecided, 107(13.0 percent) disagreed 84 (10.2 percent) strongly disagreed with the statement above. Total percentage of those that agreed (strongly and merely) is 65percent. This suggests that perceived domination of the state by a section has a role in conflicts in Ebiraland.

We also sought to know whether activities of political parties cause violent conflicts in Ebiraland. In a nutshell, the responses to the question “Activities of political parties provide avenue for clashes among their supporters” are as depicted in Table 25 below:

Table 25 Activities of Political Parties and clashes among supporters

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	132	15.5	16.1	16.1
Disagree	84	9.9	10.2	26.3
Undecided	70	8.2	8.5	34.8
Agree	302	35.5	36.7	71.5
Strongly Agree	233	27.4	28.3	99.9
Total	822	96.7	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

233 (28.3 percent) strongly agreed to the statement 302 (36.7 percent) agreed 70 (8.5 percent) undecided 84 (10.2 percent) disagreed 132 (16.1 percent) strongly disagreed. In summary 65percent strongly and merely agreed that political parties' activities provide avenue for clashes among supporters. It can be deduced from the above that activities of political parties are also one of the drivers of conflicts in Ebiraland.

Election results are a litmus test of the popularity and acceptability of political office seekers. Since acquisition of political power is often considered the gateway to economic prosperity as stated in the introduction to Chapter One of this study, politicians often see victory in an election as a do or die affair. Hence electoral defeat appears a difficult pill to swallow which may be contested through violence. In order to test whether election results' have implications for violent conflicts in Ebiraland, a question was designed in this manner- "election results can lead to violent conflicts". Table 26 shows the responses of our respondents to the question.

Table 26 Electoral results and violence

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	132	15.5	15.9	15.9
Disagree	101	11.9	12.2	28.1
Undecided	66	7.8	8.0	36.1
Agree	283	33.3	34.2	70.3
strongly agree	246	28.9	29.7	100.0
Total	828	97.4	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

246 (29.7 percent) strongly agreed that election results can lead to violent conflicts, 283(34.2 percent) agreed, 66 (8.0 percent) undecided, 101(12.2 percent) disagreed,

132(15.5 percent) strongly disagreed that election results could lead to violent conflicts. In all 63.9 percent agreed both (strongly and merely). The finding above suggests that there is a linkage between election results and violent conflicts in Ebiraland.

Politics is all about struggle for power, resources, and values among others. We sought to establish whether there is a link between struggles for power among groups and conflicts in the region. Hence, we put up a statement- “there is a deep-seated struggle among warring groups to acquire, use and retain power and conflict in Ebiraland”. Table 27 below detailed the responses.

Table 27 Struggle among Groups for Power and Conflict

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	65	7.6	7.9	7.9
Disagree	123	14.5	14.9	22.8
Undecided	107	12.6	13.0	35.8
Agree	287	33.8	34.9	70.7
strongly agree	241	28.4	29.3	100.0
Total	823	96.8	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

241(29.3 percent) strongly agreed, 287(34.9 percent) agree, 107 (13.0 percent) undecided, 123(14.9 percent) disagreed, 65 (7.9 percent) strongly disagreed. The results got from the interview confirm this fact. A traditional ruler from Ihima Jeremiah (2011) asserted that “the politicians in most cases when they strive to win election often degenerates into violence as their followers become violent to each other”.

5.4 INTRA AND INTER-PARTY CLASHES

This section attempts to gain insight into the dynamics of intra and inter-party political disagreement and its implications for conflicts in Ebiraland. The issue of political disagreement among political elites within and between parties may be

pursued violently. Tables 31, 32 and 33 capture the responses of the respondents to a set of questions in this line of thought.

Thus, in order to examine the role of intra-party conflict especially during election and violence in Ebiraland a question was posed- “political competition within a party for elective post often results in violence”. Responses to this question are detailed in Table 28 below:

Table 28 Intra-party Political Competition and Violenc

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly disagree	50	5.9	6.0	6.0
Disagree	87	10.2	10.5	16.5
Undecided	62	7.3	7.5	23.9
Agree	364	42.8	43.8	67.7
Strongly agree	269	31.6	32.3	100.0
Total	832	97.9	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

269 (32.3 percent) respondents strongly agreed to the statement that intra-party competition for political offices has implication on violence in Ebiraland, 364 (43.8 percent) merely agreed, 62 (7.5 percent) were undecided, 87 (10.5 percent) disagreed and 50 (6.0 percent) strongly disagreed. In summary 76.1 percent of the total respondents agreed (strongly and merely). With 76.1 percent of our respondents agreeing to the the question raised authenticates the fact that intra-part squabble has implications on unrest in Ebiraland.

A follow- up item intended to assess the role of inter-party conflicts in violent conflicts in Ebiraland through this statement- “Political Competition between parties are pursued violently” the results are as presented in Table 29.

Table 29 Competition between parties and Violence

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	54	6.4	6.5	6.5
Disagree	85	10.0	10.2	16.7
Undecided	54	6.4	6.5	23.2
Agree	390	45.9	46.8	70.0
strongly agree	250	29.4	30.0	100.0
Total	833	98.0	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

To the above question, 250 (30.0percent) strongly agreed that political competition between parties are pursued violently, 390 (46.8percent) merely agreed, 54 (6.5percent) undecided, 85 (10.2percent) disagreed and 54 (6.5percent) strongly disagreed. In all 76.8percent agreed (strongly and merely). This implies that inter-party competition for political power is among the factors that generates conflicts in the land.

Lastly, under this section the researcher intend to probe into the interface between the politics of winners take it all (winner getting all advantages derivable from winning in an election to a political office) and losers lose it all (missing all benefits accruable to political office as a result of electoral defeat) syndrome in Nigeria’s politics and its implication on violence in Ebiraland. This is premised on the fact that local politics is a mirror of national politics in most countries. Hence the question “winners take it all in multi-party system like Nigeria has implication on violent conflicts in Ebiraland”. Table 30 below sums up responses of our respondents to the statement:

Table 30 Winners take it all violent conflict

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	57	6.7	6.9	6.9
Disagree	105	12.4	12.7	19.6
Undecided	89	10.5	10.8	30.4
Agree	333	39.2	40.3	70.6
strongly agree	243	28.6	29.4	100.0
Total	827	97.3	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

243 (29.4 percent) strongly agreed that indeed it did (that winners take it all approach to politics in Nigeria has implication for violence in Ebiraland), 333 (40.3 percent) merely agreed, 89 (10.8 percent) were undecided, 105 (12.7 percent) disagreed and 57 (6.9 percent) strongly disagreed. In all, 69.7 percent agreed (strongly and merely) to the statement. It can be deduced from the findings above that politics and violence in Ebiraland are a fall out of violence-oriented politics at the national level.

5.5 INTERVENING VARIABLES BETWEEN POLITICS AND CONFLICTS

This section attempts to shed light on some intervening variables between politics and conflict. Under this section, the following factors were discussed in relation to conflict in the region. They include youth unemployment, poor educational background and economic gain of conflict, struggle for land, masquerade festival, and struggle for chieftaincy titles. The essence is to find out if the variables listed above among others serve as intervening factors between politics and conflicts in Ebiraland. The researcher explored the youth as the first variable. Thus, Tables 34-35 examined youth unemployment, poor educational background and economic gain correlates of conflict. One significant issue here is that socio-economic milieu created by the state is fundamental to the issue of youth involvement in violent conflict. This prompted us to inquire from our respondents the issue of youth unemployment as the basis for youth involvement in violent conflict in Ebiraland. The table below is the presentation of the responses of the respondents to this assertion.

Table 31 Youth Unemployment and Conflicts

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	34	4.0	4.1	4.1
Disagree	39	4.6	4.7	8.8
Undecided	19	2.2	2.3	11.1
Agree	166	19.5	20.0	31.0
strongly agree	574	67.5	69.0	100.0
Total	832	97.9	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

It is important to know that 547(69.0 percent) strongly agreed that unemployment among youths has implication for their involvement in violent conflicts in Ebiraland, while 166 (20.0 percent) merely agreed, (2.2 percent) undecided (4.7 percent) disagreed (4.1 percent) strongly disagreed to the postulation. In other words 89 percent agreed (strongly and merely). This confirms the fact that youth unemployment plays a cardinal role in violence in Ebiraland. The response from interview and Focus Group Discussion conducted revealed that youths are the tools of violent conflict in Ebiraland because of unemployment. The unanimous position by our respondents was that when Ajaokuta Steel Company and Itakpe Iron Ore Company were functioning, it absorbed quite a number of youths in Ebiraland. In fact, Ajaokuta Steel Company absorbed not less than 10,000 workers and cases of violence in Ebiraland were reduced to the barest minimum. But with the moribund state of the two companies, youth have become willing tools in the hands of politicians who frequently use them for their selfish political gains. Some of our respondents argued that politicians in Ebiraland do not believe they can win election without using the youth as thugs.

Closely in line with the above is the statement “Poor educational background and economic gain are the main motivation for youth involment in violence”. The results are shown below:

Table 32 Poor educational background and economic gain

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	46	5.4	5.5	5.5
Disagree	49	5.8	5.9	11.4
Undecided	30	3.5	3.6	15.0
Agree	227	26.7	27.2	42.2
strongly agree	483	56.8	57.8	100.0
Total	835	98.2	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

On this question, 483 (57.8percent) strongly agreed 227 (27.2percent) merely agreed 30 (3.6percent) undecided 49 (5.9percent) disagreed 46 (5.5percent) strongly disagreed. In summary, 85percent agreed (strongly and merely) that poor educational background and economic gain from conflicts were some of the factors responsible for conflicts in the land. The position of respondents interviewed corroborated the above. It can be gleaned from their position that the prevalent family style in Ebiraland has implication for poor educational condition of quite a number of youths. This is because an average Ebira man marries many wives with chain of concubines. Thus, they keep procreating without proper plan to care for such children. Many of such children live with their maternal grand parents. These children are neither in school nor learning any trade and are not under parental control. Roaming about the streets, some end up as thugs for politicians. Observations of the respondents during Focus Group Discussion, (2011) showed that if a youth is given 1,000 naira, it is enough to make such a youth kill in the interest of the benefactor.

Having looked at youth factor in violent conflict in Ebiraland, the focus now is on another variable which is land. This is predicated on the fact that land has generated protracted conflicts in some regions as a result of value attached to it. This prompted us to inquire from our respondents if they think economic values of land, land ownership and inter-group struggle for land has implications on violent conflicts in Ebiraland. Tables 33 to 35 present analysis on the impact of land on conflict in the region. Table 33 below is a summation of responses to the statement “economic values of land has increased struggle for land ownership”,

Table 33 Economic values of land

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	69	8.1	8.3	8.3
Disagree	117	13.8	14.1	22.4
Undecided	84	9.9	10.1	32.5
Agree	278	32.7	33.5	66.0
strongly agree	282	33.2	34.0	100.0
Total	830	97.6	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

282 (34.0 percent) strongly agreed 278(33.5 percent) merely agreed to the assertion, 84 (10.17 percent) undecided 117(14.1 percent) disagreed 69 (8.3 percent) strongly disagree to the postulation. The percentage of those that strongly and merely agreed is 67.5percent. This shows that there is struggle for land in the area. We now beam our searchlight on wether struggle for land is one of the drivers of conflicts in the area. The responses of the respondents to the statement “land ownership system breeds conflicts in Ebiraland” are given in Table 34 below:

Table 34 Land ownership and conflicts

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	101	11.9	12.3	12.3
Disagree	249	29.3	30.2	42.5
Undecided	105	12.4	12.7	55.2
Agree	216	25.4	26.2	81.4
strongly agree	153	18.0	18.6	100.0
Total	824	96.9	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

153(18.6percent) strongly agreed 216(26.2percent) merely agreed 105(12.7percent) undecided 249 (30.2 percent) disagreed 101(12.3percent) strongly disagreed. In summary, only 44.8percent agreed (strongly and merely). The findings above show that land dispute is not a major factor of conflicts in the region.

To further capture the relevance of land ownership on violent conflicts in Ebiraland, the question was reframed in a different way as “inter-.group struggle for land ownership (between groups/individuals) is often attended with violent conflict”. The statement was responded to in the manner contained in Table 35 below:

Table 35 Inter-group struggle for land and conflicts

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	121	14.2	14.6	14.6
Disagree	252	29.6	30.3	44.9
Undecided	111	13.1	13.4	58.2
Agree	201	23.6	24.2	82.4
strongly agree	146	17.2	17.6	100.0
Total	831	97.8	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

146 (17.6 percent) strongly agreed to the assertion 201(24.2 percent) merely agreed 111(13.4 percent) undecided 252 (30.3 percent) disagreed 121(14.6 percent) strongly disagreed with the statement above. In all, only 41.8 percent agreed (strongly and merely). The implication of our findings is that land ownership, acquisition and use have no major role in communal conflicts in Ebiraland.

Another variable the researcher sought to find out whether it interferes with politics and conflict is the masquerade festival (which is a major part of the larger culture of the Ebiras). It has been shown in Chapter Two of the study that, culture which is an agent of socialization could provide a convenient platform for violent conflict. In an attempt to examine the validity of this proposition, a number of statements were used to probe into the relationship between masquerade festival and violent conflicts in Ebiraland. Tables 41 to 44 present the implications of masquerade festivals on violent conflict in Ebiraland. The first statement on the list is “politicians and groups political interests make masquerade festival conflict prone”. The responses of our respondents are contained in Table 36 below:

Table 36 Politicians, groups' political interests and masquerade festival

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	85	10.0	10.3	10.3
Disagree	146	17.2	17.8	28.1
Undecided	81	9.5	9.9	38.0
Agree	215	25.3	26.2	64.1
strongly agree	295	34.7	35.9	100.0
Total	822	96.7	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

295(35.9 percent) strongly agreed that politicians and group political interests make masquerade festival conflict prone 215(26.2 percent) merely agreed to the statement 81(9.9 percent) undecided 146 (17.8 percent) disagreed 85(10.3 percent) strongly expressed disagreement to the statement. In summary, 62.2 percent agreed (strongly and merely) that politicians and group political interests as demonstrated during masquerade festival have implication for violence in the land.

The results of a similar question designed to assess the role of masquerade festival in political groupings in the area is revealed in the Table 37 below:

Table 37 Group Political Affiliation and Masquerade Festivals

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	115	13.5	14.0	14.0
Disagree	222	26.1	27.0	41.0
Undecided	84	9.9	10.2	51.2
Agree	215	25.3	26.2	77.4
strongly agree	186	21.9	22.6	100.0
Total	822	96.7	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

186 (22.6 percent) strongly agreed that political affiliation of groups are often demonstrated in masquerade festivals. 215(26.2 percent) merely agreed to the assertion; 84 (10.27 percent) undecided 222 (27.0 percent) disagreed 115 (14.0

percent) strongly disagreed to the statement. The total percentage of respondents that agreed (strongly and merely) is 48.8 percent.

As a follow up to this, the issue of political acceptability and supremacy was looked into within the context of masquerade festivals as depicted in Table 38 below:

Table 38 Political acceptability and supremacy

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	138	16.2	16.8	16.8
Disagree	195	22.9	23.7	40.5
Undecided	154	18.1	18.7	59.2
Agree	204	24.0	24.8	84.0
strongly agree	132	15.5	16.0	100.0
Total	823	96.8	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

The responses of the respondent to the question, “Political acceptability and supremacy are pursued through masquerade festival”. From the Table above, it is observed that, 132 (16.0 percent) strongly agreed that political acceptability and supremacy are pursued through the masquerade festival, 204 (24.8 percent) merely agreed 154 (18.7percent) undecided 195 while 333 responses representing (40.5 percent) have contrary view. The total number of those who strongly agreed and merely agreed is (48.8 percent). It is deducible from the above that masquerade festival only plays a nominal role in political acceptability and supremacy in Ebiraland.

The researcher also sought to know whether superiority and power contest between masquerade groups is a major cause of conflicts in the area. To this end, this question was asked- “superiority and power contest between masquerade groups is a major cause of conflicts in Ebiraland”. Below is the tabular analysis of our respondents:

Table 39 Superiority and power contest between masquerade groups

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	110	12.9	13.3	13.3
Disagree	113	13.3	13.7	27.0
Undecided	84	9.9	10.2	37.1
Agree	243	28.6	29.4	66.5
strongly agree	277	32.6	33.5	100.0
Total	827	97.3	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

In this item, it is observed that, 227 (33.5 percent) strongly agreed to the assertion 243 (29.4 percent) merely agreed 84 (10.2 percent) undecided 113(13.7 percent) disagreed 110 (13.3 percent) strongly disagreed to the question. A total of 62.9 percent strongly and merely agreed. The implication of our finding is that superiority and power contest among masquerade groups in Ebiraland is one of the sources of conflicts in the area.

Table 40 below illustrates the percentage of responses to the question on whether masquerade festivals provide avenue for the expression of political interests and alliances

Table 40 Masquerade festivals and expression of Political Alliances

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	216	25.4	26.1	26.1
Disagree	137	16.1	16.5	42.6
Undecided	75	8.8	9.1	51.7
Agree	244	28.7	29.5	81.2
strongly agree	156	18.4	18.8	100.0
Total	828	97.4	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

156 (18.8 percent) strongly agreed that it did 244 (29.5 percent) merely agreed 75(9.1percent) undecided 137(16.5 percent) disagreed 216 (26.1 percent) strongly disagreed to the assertion. The total number of percentage of the respondents that

agreed (strongly and merely) is 48.3 percent. Thus, it is deducible from the above that there is no strong relationship between masquerade festivals and expression of political alliances.

Furthermore, in order to gain deeper insight into the role of masquerade festival and conflicts in Ebiraland, the statement was raised “Politicians often draw the support of masquerade groups to advance their interests”. The results are presented in Table 41:

Table 41 Politicians often draw the support of masquerade groups

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	105	12.4	12.7	12.7
Disagree	118	13.9	14.2	26.9
Undecided	96	11.3	11.6	38.4
Agree	308	36.2	37.1	75.5
strongly agree	203	23.9	24.5	100.0
Total	830	97.6	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

203 (24.5 percent) strongly agreed 308(37.1 percent) merely agreed 96(11.6 percent) undecided 118(14.2 percent) disagreed 105(12.7 percent) strongly disagreed. Total percentage of those that agreed (strongly and merely) is 61.6 percent. We understand from the findings above that politicians in Ebiraland are in the habit of drawing support from masquerade groups to further their political interests which may results in the polarization and politicization of masquerade groups, with implication for violence.

Table 42 is the presentation of the respondents’ reactions to the question “Political affiliation and views of public praise singers during festivals often promote conflicts in Ebiraland”.

Table 42 Political affiliation and views of public praise singers during festivals

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	101	11.9	12.1	12.1
Disagree	122	14.4	14.7	26.8
Undecided	82	9.6	9.9	36.7
Agree	243	28.6	29.2	65.9
strongly agree	284	33.4	34.1	100.0
Total	832	97.9	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

284 (34.1 percent) are strongly of the view that there is a correlation between political affiliation and views of public praise singers during festivals and conflicts in Ebiraland, 243 (29.2 percent) merely agreed to the statement 82 (9.9 percent) undecided while 223 representing (26.8 percent) are of contrary opinion. The total percentage of respondents that strongly and merely agreed is 63.3 percent. The submission above is a reflection of (one of the respondents interviewed) Uveida (2011) who avers that one of the causes of conflicts in Ebiraland is hinged on public praise singers recounting the negative past of opposing clan(s) during masquerade festivals couched in abusive tone.

In the same vein, another statement was used to test the veracity of the above position “masquerade festivals are used to pursue personal and clan conflicts” The results from Table 43 below show that:

Table 43 Masquerade Festivals and Personal/ Clan conflict

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	111	13.1	13.4	13.4
Disagree	122	14.4	14.7	28.0
Undecided	44	5.2	5.3	33.3
Agree	234	27.5	28.2	61.5
strongly agree	320	37.6	38.5	100.0
Total	831	97.8	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

320(38.5 percent) strongly agreed that masquerade festivals are used to pursue personal and clan conflicts while, 234(28.2 percent) merely agreed to the assertion 44(5.3 percent) undecided 122(14.7 percent) disagreed 111(13.4 percent) strongly disagreed to the question. Total percentage of the respondents that strongly and merely agreed is 66.7percent. The import of this is that masquerade festivals in Ebiraland is a veritable tool for the pursuit of personal and clan politics.

Responses to the previous question on the use of masquerade festival to pursue personal and clan conflicts in Ebiraland prompted us to inquire from our respondents if they think strict control of masquerade activities will reduce conflicts in Ebiraland as shown in Table 44 below:

Table 44 Control of Masquerade Activities and Reduction in Conflicts

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	84	9.9	10.1	10.1
Disagree	86	10.1	10.3	20.4
Undecided	27	3.2	3.2	23.7
Agree	205	24.1	24.6	48.3
strongly agree	430	50.6	51.7	100.0
Total	832	97.9	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

Majority responded overwhelmingly in affirmative 76.3percent strongly and merely agreed. From the various tables above, it can be deduced that masquerade festival is one of the drivers of conflicts in Ebiraland. Some of our respondents during interview and Focus Group Discussion also attested to this fact. For example, Ohinoyi of Ebira Alhaji Ado Ibrahim as stated before observed that there are three major causes of conflicts in Ebiraland. They are: politics, clan differences and masquerade festival although politics dominates other factors in Ebiraland. Yusuf (2011) reveals that masquerade festivals in Ebiraland are associated with “heavy competition among artists and there must be winners and losers and in the course of somebody trying to be a winner violence ensues”. Thus, he sees violence in Ebira politics as a carry-over from masquerade festivals.

In the same vein, another respondent interviewed, Uveida (2011), as stated before observed that competition among artists gives rise to political violence. This is often the case when a masquerade recount the negative past of opposing clan(s) violence is triggered.

The above position was also supported by the observations from Focus Group Discussions (2011) that when elders were in control of masquerades with rules and regulations guiding their operations, violence was at a low ebb. Clannish conflicts ensued as masquerades became organised around clan lines leading to masquerades throwing verbal missiles at opposite clans.

The next variable sought to investigate the interplay between politics and conflict in Ebiraland from the angle of struggle for chieftaincy titles. A statement was designed to probe the relationship between struggle for chieftaincy title and conflicts in Ebira: “struggles for chieftaincy title are one of the bases for conflicts in Ebiraland”. Table 45 presents the analysis of the respondents’ opinions:

Table 45 Struggles for Chieftaincy Title

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	103	12.1	12.4	12.4
Disagree	182	21.4	21.8	34.2
Undecided	72	8.5	8.6	42.9
Agree	270	31.8	32.4	75.3
strongly agree	206	24.2	24.7	100.0
Total	833	98.0	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

From Table 45 above, it is observed that, 206 (24.7 percent) strongly agree that struggle for chieftaincy title is one of the bases for conflict in Ebiraland, 270 (32.4 percent) merely agreed to the postulation 72(8.6 percent) undecided 182 (21.8 percent) disagreed 103(12.4 percent) strongly disagreed to the statement. In summary, 57.1percent affirmed strongly and merely that struggles for chieftaincy title has a role in conflicts in Ebiraland. However, observation during interview with Okaraga (2011) reveals that struggles for chieftaincy title and conflicts are more relevant to Ihima

group of district than other places in Ebiraland because chietaincy title has generated more violence in the area than other places in the land.

We also sought to know whether the acceptability or otherwise of the central ruler in Ebiraland is a major factor of conflicts in the land. To this end the statement “lack of acceptable central leadership in Ebiraland is responsible for conflicts in the community” the responses as presented are contained in Table 46.

Table 46 Lack of acceptable central leadership

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly	67	7.9	8.1	8.1
Disagree	85	10.0	10.3	18.4
Undecided	45	5.3	5.4	23.8
Agree	228	26.8	27.5	51.3
strongly agree	402	47.3	48.6	99.9
Total	828	97.4	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

To the above question, 402 (48.6 percent) strongly agreed 228(27.5 percent) merely agreed 45(5.4 percent) undecided 85(10.3 percent) disagreed 67 (8.17 percent) strongly disagreed. A total of 86.1 percent overwhelmingly affirmed that lack of acceptable central leadership in Ebiraland is responsible for conflicts in the community. This finding established the fact that the choice of the present Ohinoyi of Ebiraland Alhaji Ado Ibrahim does not enjoy the support of majority of the Ebira and thus has potential to generate conflicts in the land. In addition, since his choice is not acceptable to majority of the Ebiras, he can do little or nothing in his capacity to resolve conflict in the land as some of the respondents interviewed saw him as government appointee and not the true choice of Ebira people.

Assessing the role of government in the creation of additional stool like Ohis and violent conflict in Ebiraland as shown in Table 47 a statement was raised, “Government creation of traditional stool like Ohis has implication for violent conflicts in Ebiraland”. (See Table 47 below):

Table 47 Government creation of traditional stool

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	244	28.7	29.4	29.4
Disagree	139	16.4	16.7	46.1
Undecided	70	8.2	8.4	54.5
Agree	197	23.2	23.7	78.2
strongly agree	181	21.3	21.8	100.0
Total	831	97.8	100.0	

Source: Author (2011)

to this question, 181(21.8 percent) strongly agreed to the question 197 (23.77 percent) merely agreed to the assertion 70 (8.4 percent) undecided 139 (16.7 percent) disagreed 244 (29.4 percent) strongly disagreed to the statement. In all 45percent of our total respondents strongly and merely agreed that the creation of Ohi has implication for violence in Ebiraland. However, the creation of the Ohi stool and violence in Ebiraland is more peculiar to Ihima Group of District. This was observed during interview with Okagara who saw the creation of Ohi and the subsequent elevation of the position above his office as a slight on him and his office.

5.6 Intervention Mechanisms

There have been several mechanisms of managing conflicts in Ebiraland. According to Tenuche (2002b), these mechanisms can be classified into formal and informal methods. The control measures put forward by local and state government can be categorized as formal while the informal mechanisms are spareheaded by non-governmental organizations. These two methods will be discussed briefly.

The Local Government Council Chairman is the Chief Security Officer of the local government area in Ebiraland. The Chairman of Ebira Traditional Council is the Ohinoyi of Ebiraland. The Divisional Police Officers in all the local government councils in the area are automatically Security Committee members including the officers in charge of Customs and State Security Service, Prisons and Immigration. During crisis it is expected that security structure at the local government area should be able as a matter of fact contain the situation but this seldomly happens. This is

often predicated on complaints of lack of fund to address security situation in the area. The request for funds to tackle the alarming spate of violence in Ebiraland from the state government appears to be meeting brick wall because the state government appears not to be cooperating in this regard on the pretext that such funds have been misappropriated in the past.

The inability of the local council chairmen to control violence in the area can be situated within the context of democratization process of the local government councils. As earlier stated, the various positions in the local councils in Ebiraland are being rotated among the various clans and sub-clans in the area. This has engendered absolute loyalty to clan and sub-clan groups in the area at the expense of the overall council. Consequently, attempts by the councils at curtailing violent conflicts are jeopardized by clannish and sub-clannish sentiments. For instance, it was discovered that local government chairmen do protect culprits (from their clans) from arrest and ensure their release from detention. Interfering with the course of justice on such primordial grounds as clannish affiliation has been a major bane in curtailing the violent conflicts in Ebiraland. In addition, members of panels and committees that were set up to determine the culpability of people involved in various violence discovered to their chagrin that their recommendations were not implemented particularly when their reports indicted the loyalists and clan groups of the authorities at the local council (Audu 2009).

Similarly, the Kogi State Government has intervened in violent conflicts in Ebiraland at one time or the other. Its intervention usually takes the form of deploying law enforcement agents like the police and the army to trouble spots to contain the situation. Various panels and committees have been set up at the instance of the government with the aim of identifying culprits and making recommendations to forestall future occurrences. Some of the panels and committees include: Justice Ekundayo Panel on the Modality for Appointment of Ohinoyi of Ebiraland in 1978, the committee to find acceptable modality for the appointment of Ohinoyi of Ebiraland in 1997, the Judicial Panel of Enquiry to determine the causes of violent crisis between the Adavi Eba and Uppuvete in 2001, the Justice Ochimana Panel on the violent crisis in Ebiraland in 2002.

Some peace brokering committees have equally been involved in this effort. They include the Eminent Persons Group, headed by Rev, George Bako, other committees worth mentioning include late Yunusa Kadir, Justice Medupin to which government even issued white paper (Yahaya 2010), Rev. Anthony Akande Peace Committee set up in March 2008 and the recent A.C Alli Panel among others. The efforts of all the aforementioned panels and committees have not engendered peace in Ebiraland because reports and white papers of these panels and committees were never implemented by government. The aforementioned panels according to Raji (2012) were just cover up. The various governments of Kogi State headed by Igala from inception till date are not interested in peace in Ebiraland. If Ebira are at peace then they will be able to challenge the Igalas as they will ensure that political power shift from the East (Igala land) Kogi to the central (Ebiraland) Kogi. The governments are not interested in peace in Ebiraland as the return of peace to Ebiraland will forestall Igala agenda of domination. The various panels from onset were not planned to succeed. In fact, nothing is heard about them.

However, the former Chairman of Okene Local Government Alhaji Yahaya Karaku is seen as a harbinger of peace in Ebiraland as a result of his Invaluable contributions towards bringing peace to Ebiraland even though he incurred a colossal loss in the crisis. In fact, eight (8) of his family members were killed, his two houses and a car were burnt. During his administration as the Chairman of Okene Local Government, Yahaya Karaku invested N48 million to empower about 500 youths in his Local Government Area as joblessness among the youths was one of the factors identified to be responsible for their restiveness. The monetary empowerment was to make them self reliant and also turn their attention from violence, thereby, forestalling any attempt to entice them with money to perpetrate evil.

Next on the agenda of Karaku was the disarmament project which was supervised by the State Commissioner for Police and representatives of government and other security agencies. Through this effort, 50 youths voluntarily disarmed/repented. They were among the youth that enjoyed financial empowerment. Karaku used his position to get appointments from the state government for some of these youths that disarmed. He also put in place youth monitoring group who supervised the judicious

use of the empowerment funds by beneficiaries. He also monitored the activities of unrepentant youths who were using their weapons to further commit crime like robbery. In this regards, not less than 10 youths were apprehended and handed over to the police (Nigeria Image, 2012). It is disappointing to discover that we did not hear of such moves been made by other Local Government Chairmen in Ebiraland.

At this juncture, it will be necessary to juxtapose our propositions in Chapter one with our findings.

5.7 Validity of Propositions

In this section, we shall examine the propositions formulated for the study vis-à-vis our findings.

5.8.1 Table 48 presents participants' responses on the determining factors of violent conflicts in Ebiraland

Variables	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	F	percent	F	Percent	F	Percent	F	Percent	F	percent
Identity Politics Factor										
Clannish sentiment	25	3.0	39	4.6	28	3.3	303	36.1	445	53.0
Clan affiliation to foster political ambition	165	19.9	106	12.8	85	10.2	257	31.1	217	26.1
Clan identities of political office seekers	144	17.5	125	15.2	82	9.9	254	30.8	220	26.1
Contest for political supremacy among clans	124	15.0	113	13.6	60	7.1	254	30.6	278	33.5
Struggling To Acquire Use Retain Power Factors										
Competition for political office	59	7.2	63	7.7	39	4.7	312	37.9	350	42.5
Violence is more intense, frequent during election	22	2.7	41	5.0	41	5.0	311	37.6	412	49.8
Electoral process provide avenue for clash among rivals	132	16.1	84	10.2	70	8.5	302	36.7	233	28.3
Struggles among group for power	65	7.9	123	14.9	107	13.0	287	34.9	241	29.3
Intra-Party And Inter Party Clashes Factor										
Political competition within a party factor	50	6.0	87	10.5	62	7.5	364	43.8	269	32.3
Political competition between parties factor	54	6.5	85	10.2	54	6.5	390	46.8	250	30.0
Political differences and struggle for power factor	76	9.3	146	17.8	96	11.7	259	31.6	242	29.5
Economic and socio-cultural factors										
Unemployment	34	4.1	39	4.7	19	2.3	166	20.0	574	69.0
Poor education and economic gain of conflict	46	5.5	49	5.9	30	3.6	227	27.2	483	57.8

View of public praise singers during masquerade festival	101	12.1	122	14.7	82	9.9	243	29.2	284	34.1
Personal and clan conflict pursued through masquerade festival	111	13.4	122	14.7	44	5.3	234	28.2	320	38.5
Strict control of masquerade will reduce conflict	84	10.1	86	10.3	27	3.2	205	24.6	430	51.7
Struggle for chieftaincy and local power position	103	12.4	182	21.8	72	8.6	270	32.4	206	24.7
Lack of acceptable central leadership	67	8.1	85	10.3	45	5.4	228	27.5	402	48.6

Source: Researcher's Analysis

5.7.1 Juxtaposition of Propositions and Findings

Proposition 1:

There is a significant relationship between identity politics and violent conflicts.

A list of identity factors that might influence conflicts in Ebiraland was included in the questionnaire and the participants were asked to express the extent of their agreement with each of them. Analysis of the respondents' opinions shows that clannish sentiment is a major identity factor that causes conflict in Ebiraland as reflected in the table above. However, other identity factors that influenced conflicts in Ebiraland include the use of clan affiliation by politicians to foster individual political ambition, clan identities of political office seekers and contest for supremacy among clans in Ebiraland.

Our finding is in tandem with the findings of some scholars. For example, Hilker (2008) argues that resultant effect of identity politics is noticeable in the diverse reactions it has generated across political spectrum. In fact to Hilker identity politics provides a convenient platform of group mobilization into collective action which may be violent or non-violent in nature. Akinteye (1999) in his study of Igbo-Ora in Nigeria argues that groups are often caught in the web of cross cutting political and economic cleavage which may give fillip to mobilization of collective violence at sub-group level. These internal cleavages may be traceable to clan or tribe-based loyalty which can be exploited for manipulation by opportunistic political entrepreneurs. Somalia is a homogenous society but clan politics and manipulation of clan differences for political power culminated in clan based civil war (Sereo, 2003). One observable fact is that the elite are culpable of negative identity construction of the "others" and these antagonistic identities construct perpetuate conflict and increase

violence. Faeron and Latin (2002:846) clarify “Violence has the effect, intended by the elites, of constructing group identities in more antagonistic and rigid ways. These newly constructed (or reconstructed) ethnic identities serve to increase support for the elites who provoked the violence while favouring the continuation of escalation of violence”.

Proposition 2 *There is a significant relationship between deep seated struggles among warring groups to acquire, use and retain power and conflicts.*

A number of factors premised on competition for political power were listed for the participants to see whether there is a strong correlation between deep-seated struggles among warring groups to acquire, use and retain power and conflicts in Ebiraland. It is clear from the table above that elite competition and actions of political or group entrepreneurs drive conflicts. Competition for political power among elites often lead to construction of identity based politics so as to garner support for their selfish goals. For example, with respect to the statement “there is a deep seated struggle among warring groups to acquire, use and retain power and conflicts” 64.2 percent of the respondents agreed that there is a nexus between deep-seated struggle for power and conflicts in Ebiraland.

The character of Ebira politicians in the struggle for power is a reflection of the character of the Nigerian politicians. Thus, violent politics has become a recurring decimal since Nigeria’s independence. It is necessary to state that the aftermath of colonial politics of divide and rule is the emergence of parochial and disunited elite manifesting via ethnic chauvinism. This scenario essentially turns politics to warfare in which struggle for control and use of state power is overvalued (Olaopa, et al 2009).

A historical excursion into Nigeria’s political history from pre-independence till date reveals that the country has witnessed quite a number of violent conflicts whose foundation is traceable to desperate tussle for political power. The Kano riot of 1953, Action Group crisis of 1959, Census crisis 1962-63, the Federal election crisis of 1964, Western election crisis of 1965, and series of crises that dogged the path of the Second and the aborted Third Republic, as well as the various crises that characterize the present Fourth Republic. Borrowing a leaf from Olaopa et al (2009), politics

appears the most lucrative endeavour, hence the contest for political office is fierce and the method is brutal. To an average Nigerian politician, political post is a job rather than a service to humanity.

The economic benefit(s) associated with state power makes contest for it assumes zero sum game. In fact, Nigerian politicians have “become more desperate and daring in taking and retaining power; more reckless and greedy in their use and abuse of power; and more intolerant of opposition, criticism and efforts at replacing them” (Alemika, 2011:26). Similarly, Egbo, (2001) postulates that struggle for political office is characterized by bloodletting, indecency and disregard for all norms of civilized behaviour because political office is seen as an end in itself and not a means to an end.

In the same vein, Ake (1996) asserts that the character of the states in Africa is quite antithetical to the politics of moderation. Indeed the feature of politics in Africa is that of lawlessness and extremism because the nature of state power makes the capture of it irresistibly attractive. While the winners in the competition win everything, the losers lose everything. Thus, nothing can be worse than losing as nothing can be better than winning. Given this scenario, everyone seeks power by every means which could be legal or otherwise and those already in power try to keep it by all means, hence the emergence of politics with expediency.

One interesting observation is that though politics is like the game of sport in which a winner or loser emerges yet it is quite different from it. This is because in the game of sport at times there can be draw; no winner no loser. Even in situation in which a winner must emerge, it is possible to repeat the event or competition till a clear winner emerges. This is not always the case in politics:

Politics is an attempt to access, influence or control political power. This is either by individual or through group relationship. Regardless of the pattern of the competition, there should always be a winner and runners-up (losers). This model is more and easily attainable in sports competition. When or where there are conflicting outcome that did not produce one winner, the event or competition could be repeated until a clear winner emerges. Unfortunately, this is not always the case in political competition (Ali, 2011).

In the same vein, Ajayi (2007:9) describes politics as a game of soccer that hinges on contest for supremacy. This is necessarily because both entail “the struggle for the control, use and retention of power even though the nature of such power differs from one another. Both phenomena involve the elements of conflict”. Politics is inexorably linked with conflict because “the degree of power or privileges an individual or group is able to control is largely determined by his ability to subdue opposition in the contest for such power”. The picture painted above cannot but result in politics and game of power becoming volatile and do or die affairs hence pursue with violence.

Proposition 3

There is a significant relationship between intra and inter-party clashes and communal unrest.

The results of the table above show that intra-party and inter-party clashes have implication for communal unrest. For instance, the responses of our respondents to the statement political competition within a party have implication for communal unrest in Ebiraland indicates that 43.8 percent agreed while 32.3 percent strongly agreed. Thus, a total of 76.1 percent of the respondents are in agreement. 76.8 percent also affirmed that competition between parties breeds violence in Ebiraland. It is necessary to state at this juncture that there is a consensus among scholars, politicians and the public that political parties form a critical pillar for the entrenchment of democratic culture and practices. However, one of the major challenges facing political parties in Nigeria is internal conflicts and fierce contest for power within and among political parties. Therefore, it is not surprising that intra and inter-party conflicts often revolve around elections. Madueke (2006) asserts that central to intra-party conflicts in Nigeria is the issue of control of political power and access to resource otherwise referred to as self serving pathological conception of politics. Thus, in the face of rabid and uncontrolled selfish ambition by politicians and hegemonic tendencies of party leaders, intra party squabbles become an inevitable occurrence- a trend which has continued to play itself out in partisan politics.

From the work of Muhammed (2008) and Osaghae (2002), intra and inter- party conflicts have been an endemic feature of Nigerian politics from independence till

date with implication for violence. Some of the violent conflicts orchestrated by intra and inter-party competition include the Action Group (AG) crises between Awolowo and Akintola which degenerated into a serious political conflict that engulfed the entire Western region, leading to a state of emergency. Second, the Western election crises of 1965 that led to unprecedented electoral violence in the region; the UPN and NPN crises in Ondo state in the Second Republic over governorship election. A cursory look at the Fourth Republic quickly brings to the fore some cases of intra and inter-party conflicts. Anifowose and Akinbobola (2005) note that although intra-party feud is evident in all the parties; however, that of the PDP and ANPP seem to be greater. Little wonders that the PDP is seen as a marriage of strange quarrelsome bed fellows who do not only misunderstand one another but are regularly feuding (Aina, 2002). The PDP crisis in Ogun State from 2007-2011 buttressed the above position. In addition, a good example of inter-party conflicts in the Fourth Republic is that of Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Akwa Ibom over governorship election. The death toll was about twenty (20) with about 1300 brand new tricycle and some other valuable properties destroyed (The Punch, 2011)

Proposition 4

There is a significant relationship between economic and socio-cultural factors and violent conflicts.

To this proposition, a list of economic and socio-cultural factors that might precipitate conflicts that were listed include youth unemployment, poor education and economic benefits derivable from conflicts, views of public praise singer during cultural festivals, chieftaincy title, and lack of acceptable central leadership in Ebiraland. To all these, the general consensus of our respondents is in affirmative. For example, 89 percent of our respondents are of the opinion that unemployment among youths has implications for their involvement in violent conflicts in Ebiraland, 85 percent agreed to the question that poor educational background and economic gain are of paramount importance in understanding youth involvement in violence. Land issue seems not to be a major concern in conflict going by the responses of our respondents, while the remaining questions border on culture. In fact, 77.3 percent of

the respondents agreed that strict control of masquerade activities (a dominant part of Ebira culture) will reduce incidence of conflicts in Ebiraland.

Some of the findings above are in tandem with the position of some scholars who submit that unemployment is primarily youth unemployment (Fashoyin, 1993; Anyawu et al 1997; UN, 2005). When young people are jobless, have few opportunities for positive engagement, they represent a ready pool of recruits for groups seeking to mobilize violence (USAID, 2005). Politicians, public and party officials, are fond of recruiting, financing and arming jobless youths to fight opposition figures and their supporters (Saka, 2010). Some of the reasons adduced for youth involvement in violence include poor education (Fashoyin 1993), lack of skills for profitable engagement (UN, 2005) economic incentives from violence (USAID, 2005).

In addition, we discovered in the course of this research that culture is essential to understanding conflicts in Ebiraland. This is because most of our respondents believed that masquerade festival which is a major part of Ebira culture and struggle for chieftaincy titles are some of the key drivers of conflicts in the land. In the same vein, LeBaron and Pillay (2006) assert that culture is inextricable from conflict though it does not cause it and that culture may play a central role in a conflict or it might influence a conflict subtly and gently. They added that research or practice addressing conflict that do not take culture into account have missed the largest part of the iceberg (the part beneath the surface). In the literature, the popular position is that cross-cultural contact or differences in culture divide groups and increase differentiation resulting in conflict. This runs counters to our findings. Because Ebira people have the same culture but politicization of masquerade festival an aspect of Ebira culture has resulted in the cultural festival being violent-oriented.

5.8 DISCUSSIONS ON FINDINGS

This section distills our major findings. Our submissions here cut across the various sections and reflect our findings from extant literature, survey including both questionnaire administrations, follow up interviews as well as Focus Group Discussion. From our analyses of conflict in various countries, communal conflict in Nigeria and Ebiraland, violence seems to be the predominant route to political power,

or better still violent conflict is often exacerbated by political activities. Violence appears to be a variant of struggle for political power. Democracy is supposed to reduce political violence as election serves as a veritable platform to elect political leaders based on the wishes of the people but it is not so in Africa. Rather the advent of democratic government has increased the spate of violent conflict. Identity-based politics, privileges attached to political offices, widespread poverty, struggle for economic resources, values, status cum elite manipulations of their various ethnic or sub-ethnic groups for their selfish interest and many others combined to amplify violent conflict in developing democracies. The communal conflict which is our case study predates the independence of the Nigerian-State. The origin of the conflict is traceable to British colonial domination of people grouped in the area now referred to as Nigeria. There was no evidence of communal hostilities among the clans that constituted Ebira community before colonial incursion into the area.

The colonization of Ebiraland started between 1902-1917. However, although colonialism laid the foundation of communal conflicts in Ebiraland, politics and political competition in Ebiraland especially from 1979 to date have exacerbated the spate of conflicts in the area. Pre-colonial administration in Ebiraland was purely indigenous system of self- rule, anchored on clan system. The administrative structure of clan operated in a hierarchical and pyramidal order in which the most senior clan chief automatically becomes the clan head.

Sani (1999:21) argues that “no single clan or group owes any form of central allegiance to any other clan or age group”. He added that:

The Ebira clan system is an intricate web of socio-economic and political relations. No member of one clan is allowed to assume and bear the title of another clan. This partly explains why the Atta from the “Aniku” clan could not assume and bear the title of the “Ozumi” or the Ohindasi clan. The constituent clan units vary in size, type and territorial spread in each village or ward; you have different clan and age group whose settlements have no territorial boundaries (Sani, 1997:21-22).

He concluded that:

the clan and age group members in respect of each clan and age group live and function within overlapping geographical territories whether as administrative wards, districts or local government areas. It takes a very discerning observer with penetrating insight into the family and matrimonial life patterns of the people to distinguish between one age group and dominant clan or the other in a particular unit of settlement in each of these administrative sub-areas (Sani, 1997:22).

In other words, each clan was autonomous. However, the appointment of Atta Ibrahim by the British as the paramount ruler of the Ebiraland without taking into cognizance the variegated nature of the clan configurations, sow the seed of conflict which ipso facto with the passage of time snowballed into violent conflict through politicking.

Equally, Atta Ibrahim Chogudu Onorueiza became powerful and autocratic (Raji 2011). His reign marked the introduction of force labour and imprisonment of opponents in Ebiraland. This led to a plot by ex-military men in Ebiraland to dethrone him. Political activities in the 50s presented this opportunity. It is necessary to state at this juncture that during the preparation for independence in 1960, three political parties were dominant in Nigeria- the Northern People Congress (NPC) in the north, Action Group (AG) in the west and the National Council for Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) in the east. Politically, Ebiraland is located in the north and was under the grip of NPC then. The NPC in Ebiraland became fractionalized into pro-Atta and anti-Atta groups. The anti-Atta group formed the Igbira Tribal Union (ITU) led by World War 1 veterans and the Roman Catholic Mission, while pro-Atta formed Igbira Progressive Union (IPU). This political division in Ebiraland culminated in eventual abdication of the throne by Atta Ibrahim Chogudo in 1954 (Audu, 2009). Atta's position was taken over by one of his opponents, Sani Omonori, who was succeeded by the incumbent Alhaji Ado Ibrahim.

It is worthy of note that, democratization of party politics has brought in its wake conflicts in Ebiraland. Politics in Ebiraland in the 1950s was characterized by violence. Some of the people interviewed believe that politics in Ebiraland still tow the 1950 political divide. This visibly reflected in the politics of the second republic

which was characterized by violence, arson, destruction of lives and properties. From the interview conducted, it is discernable that the violence that attended politics in Ebiraland in the 1950s was a child play when compared with that of the second republic. The latter was characterized by the use of guns and burning of houses. One of those interviewed Raji (2011) noted that it was during the Second Republic politics that thuggery became a major feature of Ebiraland and the situation has grown from bad to worse. Raji further asserts that there were many associations of thugs during the Second Republic. However, the prominent amongst them were the “Edo” and “Dio” groups, fighting on the side of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN). He noted that violence in the Second Republic was basically on political competition between UPN and NPN in Ebiraland.

Bello (2011) during an interview equally stated that competition for political offices either at federal, state or local government levels has continued to tow clan lines especially from the Second Republic till date with implications for violence. Suffice to say that competition for political power between the major political parties in Ebiraland- People’s Democratic Party (PDP) and Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) in the Fourth Republic is also a major factor of conflicts in the land. Perceived marginalization of Ebira people in governance, the uneven development and distribution of resources of the state as claimed by most Ebiras that were interviewed, culminated in complaints/agitations for power shift or rotation.

The agitation for power shift was enthusiastically embraced by the majority of Ebira people that constitutes the Kogi Central. Quite a number of them defected from the PDP to ACN in order to actualize their dream as this would have been difficult under the auspices of PDP. This was because it would be pretty difficult for the Central Senatorial district to present a candidate with political clout that will be able to defeat Ibrahim Idris a candidate of Igala extraction. Notwithstanding, it is necessary to state that the support the ACN got from the central was further strengthened by the choice of Senator Muhammed Ohiare as its governorship candidate and Alhaji Salihu Ohize as the party’s Senatorial Candidates. Senator A.T Ahmed who founded the power shift movement eventually died making the leadership of the movement to fall squarely on Senators Ohiare and Ohize. It is necessary at this juncture to state that

there were some notable Ebira politicians like the Deputy Governor Chief Philip Salawu, Ambassador Amuda Yusuf, Ambassador Usman Bello, General Salihu Ibrahim, Chief Patrick Adaba, Alhaji Yahaya Karku and a host of others that remained in PDP.

The do-or-die nature the power shift agitation has assumed, championed by the majority of Ebiras in ACN, in a bid to force a one party system on Ebira people of the Central Senatorial district especially during the 2007 gubernatorial election, orchestrated, the incessant clashes of the two main political groupings in the land. The aftermath was a chain of political crises that involved killings, arson and wanton destruction of properties, especially when Senator Ohiare, the AC now ACN candidate lose gallantly to his PDP counterpart in the general election in 2007. Although the AC now ACN lose out in the gubernatorial election, yet, it continued to detest the the rulership of the PDP in Kogi Central as evident in the rejection of the appointment of Yahaya Karku in Okene Local Government. The same scenario was also played out in the appointment of Hon. Ahmed Raji of PDP as a care-taker Chairman of Adavi Local Government. This development resulted in fierce crisis between supporters of the ACN and PDP both in Okene and Adavi. In short, the appointees used Lokoja as their functional base while the crises rages on in their home land.

As the crises pummeted, Alhaji Karku incurred colossal lost as 8 of his family members were killed, his two houses and one of his cars were burnt. During this period, Ebiraland especially, Okene became the theatre of war as thugs took over control of security, unleashing terror of unimaginable proportion on innocent citizens. It got to a stage Okene and parts of Adavi became uninhabited by its citizens most especially notable politicians from both PDP and ACN. While prominent politicians from the ACN fled to Abuja where Senator Ohiare/Salihu Ohize operated from, notable PDP politicians in the land took refuge in Lokoja, the state capital controlled by the PDP government in the state.

As the crisis graduated, politicians from ACN seem to be losing strength and interest with their armed youth wing that have become uncontrollable by their employers (the

leaders of the party). It was in this state of disenchantment and disorganization of the ACN that the PDP controlled government conducted local government election which they won using the state's machineries. The PDP gradually asserted her authority and dominance in the area with the aid of government machines while the ACN was palyed out with only the ACN youth wing organizing pockets of resistance (National Image News, 2012). Presently if not all, most of the political offices at local, state and federal in Ebiraland are occupied by the PDP. For instance, Senator Obatemi representing the Central Senatorial district at the senate is from PDP, the former speaker Momoh Jimoh Lawal appointed on 16th October 2012 are Ebiras and both from PDP, all the former Local Government Chairmen in Ebiraland and the present care-takers of councils in the land are all from PDP.

In summary, it can be deduced that, while the colonial substructure orchestrated the stage for violence in Ebiraland, the complexity and prolongation of the conflicts find expression in the activities of politicians who have turned the area to a war torn zone in their contest for political offices.

Another finding of the research is that there is no acceptable model of ascension to the throne of Ohinoyi of Ebiraland. Unlike in other places especially among the Yoruba in which ascension to the throne is hereditary, the first paramount ruler of Ebiraland was a colonial appointee. Sani Omonori the second ruler was enthroned after an electoral contest, in which he had a total of 342 out of the 386 total votes cast by a representative committee of the five districts of Ebiraland constituted by colonial masters for election into the paramount position. This arrangement appears to have been discontinued for no obvious reason. The incumbent Ohinoyi (Ado Ibrahim) is seen as government appointee and not the choice of the people; therefore, he does not command the respect of the people nor enjoy their cooperation.

The legitimacy crisis later became a matter of judicial adjudication, in which the court declared the position of the Ohinoyi vacant in its judgement, the incumbent was not validly appointed. We also found out that there are no king makers or royal family (es) or ruling clan(s) in Ebiraland. Any Ebira male adults can aspire to be the Ohinoyi of Ebiraland. Thus, to resolve leadership tussle surrounding the traditional stool, it

was agreed before the incumbent Ohinoyi ascended the throne that the position would be rotated among the five districts (Okene/Okengwen, Adavi, Eika, Ihima and Eganyi) that constitute Ebiraland. However, the implementation of this rotational principle among the aforementioned five districts is dogged with much controversy and appears to have become deadlocked. This was because when it was the turn of Ihima in Okehi district to ascend the throne, the incumbent Ado Ibrahim from Adavi used his wealth and government support to usurp the throne in June 1997. Another discovery made during this study is that some of the respondents interviewed (both Ebira and non Ebira) believe that an average Ebira man is pugilistic- an attitude that underlies the violent disposition of most conflicts in the land.

Similarly, the researcher found that politics has exacerbated the divisions among the various clans in Ebiraland which has led to the zoning of political offices at local government and state levels between and among major clans in each district, with the senior clan taking the lead. There is also an arrangement on rotation of federal political offices that are zoned to the Kogi Central Senatorial District, made up of mostly the Ebira. While rotation of political offices among major clans in a district has helped to douse inter-clan conflict, it has also triggered intra-clan conflicts, especially in candidate selection for political offices.

The study also shows that the politicians and the youths are the major perpetrators of violence in Ebiraland. While much is being done to re-orientate the youths towards embracing peace, no significant effort is put in place to address the role of the political class in the community. According to Ebira Vonya (2006) and interview conducted with Audu (2011), well-meaning Ebiras at home and in the Diasporas are making strident efforts to educate the non-educated youths in Ebiraland by giving them scholarships, but much has not been done to provide jobs for the unemployed youths.

In addition, in order to bring about sanity in politics in Ebiraland, there is an agreement among the Ebiras that the minimum academic qualification for elective posts be introduced, for example for the position of local government councilor minimum of diploma certificate is required. This has made so many Ebira youths and

some adults as well to start enrolling for both full time and part time programmes in some higher institutions in the state.

The creation of additional stool (Ohi) seems to have generated much controversy especially in Ihima district. Thus, the creation of Ohi by government as a stool was born out of a petition by a group of people seeking additional traditional title holders in Ebira land. Government responded by setting up a committee. The outcome of which was the introduction of the Ohi stool. However, the matter generated some litigations. In particular, the Obobayin of Ihima from Emani clan (Okaraga) felt slighted by a hierarchical arrangement that placed Ohi above him.

Another factor that aided conflict in the area is state recognition of traditional title holders and the privileges attached to such titles, like salary, official cars and other pecuniary allowances. Such material considerations have made the struggle for those traditional stools violent and crisis-laden.

Another finding of the study is that the political structure of the state has contributed to friction in Ebira land. Kogi State is a miniature Nigeria with three major ethnic groups: the Igala in the Eastern part of the state, Okun–Yoruba in the West and Ebira that constitute the central senatorial district. The tripartite structure has not augured well for two of the three groups in the state. The Igala group has perpetually occupied the governorship position of the state from inception till date, and in terms of state and federal appointments the Okun- Yoruba and Ebira have always felt cheated. Social amenities have not been equitably distributed among the three major ethnic groups in the state.

The response to the statement “the political structure of the state has implication on unrest in Ebira land” saw 80 agreed that it did. This perceived marginalization gave fillip to the evolvement of the Ebira agenda that an Ebira man should emerge as governor of Kogi State. The opportunity came during the 2007 governorship election, when Senator Ohiare contested under the platform of the Action Congress (AC) now ACN against Ibrahim Idris a People Democratic Party (PDP) flagbearer. Ohiare’s campaign did not go beyond Kogi Central Senatorial District. In fact, he did little or nothing in the Eastern and Western Senatorial Districts of the State as far as campaign was concerned, and he lost gallantly. Although Ebira people did not engage the Igalas

in a fight, they saw the Ebiras that supported Igala candidature as traitors who frustrated Ebira agenda and consequently unleashed mayhem on them and their properties in Ebiraland. For example Phillip Salau's house, the running mate of Ibrahim Idris who later became the Deputy Governor of the state was one of the several torched.

It is important to stress that at the inception of Kogi State, its ethnic mix, gave it a perjorative description as a bubbling cauldron of small groups (Ajayi, 1997). Therefore, the present problem bordering on a fair share of resources among the various ethnic groups in Kogi State is not a surprise. Ajayi (1994) pointed out that the heterogeneity of a state like Kogi should be exploited for positive development, but only achievable in atmosphere of fair play, justice and equity on the part of all, especially in the distribution of socio-economic and political resources. In other words, to allay the fears of the so-called "minorities", the allocation of societal values must take into consideration the divergent views of the various groups in Kogi State.

In fact, when the idea of creating Kogi State was conceived, a particular group now occupying parts of the Kogi West registered their objections by showing their unwillingness to be part of the envisaged union. It sent a memorandum to the presidency in 1987 putting their objections more bluntly:

If we are included in Kogi State most of our manpower will be marginalized because they will be quotarised. Many will be retrenched and many will go (sic) and serve under junior officers who get (sic) high posts through quota system (Olorunnishola, 1989 cited in Ajayi 1997:33).

The group went further to state that:

There are many secondary schools in Oyi LGA (14.05%) of the population than there are in Igala area (53.5%) of the population. For them to catch up no new school may be opened in Oyi in the foreseeable future. Indeed, children from these areas may be sent to school, which we built with our sweat, denying our own students (Ajayi, 1997:33).

In deed, Ajayi (1997) has demonstrated that, marginalization of other ethnic groups by the Igalas started with Abubakar Audu the first governor of the state. The situation has not changed ever since. Ajayi concluded that feelings of neglect and alienation of some segments of the state from the "engine room" of government cannot but

generate resentment given the pivotal role of the institution in public policy making and implementation.

Another identified reason for conflict which is a reflection of the failure of the state is the inability of the government to control the rate at which arms were being ferreted into the area for use in conflicts, as well as the ineffectiveness of the security agent to forestall a breakdown of law and order. These two factors were identified along with others by our respondents as being responsible for the escalation of conflicts in the region. On one hand, some of the sophisticated weapons used were imported by politicians because it is obvious that youths cannot buy such arms and ammunition.

In the same vein, Raji (2011) stated that:

Politicians at state and federal level promote thuggery and sponsor mayhem. They promote jungle type of politicking by buying guns, enticing youths with money. The youths mask and use guns. This has been the pre-occupation of the outgoing senators and the present chairman of Okene Local Government. They are very much involved in the crises in Ebiraland.

Similarly, Momoh Jimoh Ahuraka made a confession that “I am in deep pains as a result of my past activities with my political fathers for the past two weeks I could not stay in the school; the ghosts of the innocent people we killed are chasing me with whips forcing me to have sleepless nights. I had to back out when I discovered that our politicians are not interested in Ebira people’s affairs but their selfish interests” (<http://www.sunnewsonline.com/webpages/politics/2011/sep/14/politi...>) it is disheartening that politicians are the one buying guns for students to burn houses and kill their opponents for mere elective office. Abdulazeez Farouk, one of the few industrialists Ebira have, and who was a victim of the arson visited on his home in Okene said “Today, my sadness is that I am ashamed to say I am from that part of the country. Any God fearing person from that part ought to share my view” (<http://www.sunnewsonline.com/webpages/politics/2011/sept/14/politi...>)

On the other hand, allegations were rife that the state government led by an Igala between 2003 -2011 was actually interested in conflict in Ebiraland and as such did little in addressing the festering conflict. Obeitor (2011) believes that if Ebira is at

peace they will be united to challenge the domination of Igala ethnic group who has been ruling the state since inception. Obeitor accused the government of not doing much. Thus, he posited that “the major problem is that government is yet to take a decisive action on politicians aiding and arming the youth, the government knows them but is not ready to take action, if they are arrested and dealt with, conflict will be over. May be government is supporting such politicians”.

The festering conflict brought to the fore the weakness of the Nigeria Police Force in managing conflict situation. One of our respondents even accused the police of profiting from the violence in Ebiraland. Furthermore, Obeitor expressed disappointment over the role of the Police in the crisis. According to him, “rather than taking the bull by the horn, they are taking side. Nobody was prosecuted. No major political offenders. Whenever political thugs were arrested political warlords go and bail them. The political warlords are above the law and the security agency is not helping matters”. Raji (2011) expressed sadness that “Police shows culprits escape route and gain financially from it.”

It was also pointed out during indepth interview that the crisis in Ebiraland has been lingering because when government set up a fact-finding committee to broker peace, people were afraid to tell the truth or identify the perpetrators of violence in the community for fear of reprisal attacks. During interview it was stated in a frantic term that when there are no facts, violent conflict cannot be resolved and that what has been done presently is a temporary palliative measure because in no time the crisis might resuscitate. Furthermore, we found a correlation between the involvement of the youth in violence and the break down of family values. An average Ebira, it was discovered has many wives and still has concubines. Large families engender other social problems including child neglect and illiteracy arising from inability to send children to school. The uneducated youth consequently become ruthless and willing tools in the hands of desperate politicians. The Kogi State Commissioner of Police, P.C Aghanya lamented this situation as follows: “these boys carrying arms terrorizing the entire society are not Igalas and they are not Okuns; they are Ibira (sic) boys”. He further stated that no one was ready to give information as regards the “criminals who

live in their midst”

<http://www.sunnewsonline.com/webpages/politics/2011/sept/14/politi>

The involvement of the youths in violent conflicts in Ebiraland has equally been attributed to high rate of unemployment occasioned by the collapse of industries in the locality. For instance, the moribund state of Ajaokuta Steel Rolling Company and Itakpe Iron-Ore Deposit, which hitherto employed well over 15,000 workers mostly from Ebiraland are now in comatose and the workers, mostly youths have been thrown into the unemployment market. The problem is compounded by the statist economy structure, a situation in which the government is the only substantial employer of labour. The problem is worsen when the output of school leavers is compared with the new jobs available and the fact that People are no longer interested in farming. The effects, among others are youth restiveness and violence in the land. President Goodluck Jonathan promised the Ebira during his campaign for office to bring the companies back on their feet. The same was reiterated during the governorship campaign in 2011.

The relationship between youth unemployment and violence is not limited to Ebiraland. In fact, it is a reflection of the general character of the country. Statistics from the Ministry of Youth Development show that 28.14 million youths in the country, representing 42 percent of the youth population, are unemployed as at 2011. The statistics also indicate that 80 percent of the unemployed youths have only secondary school certificates and below. This ugly state of affairs has had and continues to have a very negative effect on the society in form of youth restiveness, involvement in social vices like armed robbery, kidnapping among others (The Sun, 2011).

It was also discovered that existing literature on the relationship between culture and conflict see cultural differences as the basis for conflict. However, the results suggest the contrary. That is ties of similarity (similar culture) rather than differences quite often give rise to conflict. This is because despite the fact that Ebira people have the same culture epitomizes by masquerade festival (which form part of the larger culture of the Ebira) yet conflict is still prevalent. This is predicated on the fact that masquerade festival has become political tool that politicians use against their

opponents. In short, Politics has brought division in Ebiraland, pitching one clan against another and politicians amplifying clan differences to draw support for their political ambition with devastating consequences.

It is necessary to mention that although there is no record of casualties, violent politics in Ebiraland has resulted in heavy casualties in form of destruction of lives and property, burning of houses and markets including commercial and private vehicles worth millions of naira (Oricha, 2008). For instance pa Aturu Jimoh, 70, claims he lost all he laboured for in his life to crisis in Ebiraland and that it was difficult for him and his family to start anew. Alhaji Aliyu Mohammed, a victim of one of the crises in Okene is now squatting with his relations in Lokoja. He describes the crisis this way:

The political crisis in Kogi can be described as terrible; the devastating effect of it in Ebiraland is beyond anybody's imagination. In my 65 years of existence on this planet, I have never seen a crisis that consumes a father and his son at the same time and almost an entire family. In some cases, property worth millions of naira were destroyed with ignominy (cited in Ahmed, 2012).

In the same vein, Malam Ahmed Ogembe, an indigene of Ebiraland based in the U.S, says he and his kinsmen abroad would have loved to return and invest at home but for the fear of political crisis in the area. He concluded that Ebiraland is seen by most people as a crisis-ridden and not safe for people to live peacefully and contribute to the development of the area (cited in Ahmed 2012).

Going by the conduct of the 2011 elections and the 2012 governorship election, there seems to be temporary peace in the land. Unfortunately, it has been observed that a new dimension of human elimination has quietly been introduced in the form of assassination. Prominent persons in Ebiraland have been assassinated recently by unknown gunmen, the list include a traditional title holder Chief Avinebe, the Ovopa of Ebogogo gunned down in his house; Chief Mohammed, the Ohimonovo of Kuroko killed in his palace; Chief Enesi, the Ohireba of Obangede gunned down in his palace; James Jimoh Ochamayi, the former Principal of Etahi Community Secondary School recently appointed as a Director in the Ministry of Education in Lokoja; Chief Jaguda

the undisputed lead-night-masquerade in Ebiraland who was ambushed by gunmen on his way from where he and his supporters had gone to practice their melodious songs in preparation for Eche-ebe festival among others (Adeiza, 2012).

The youths that were once hired by politicians as thugs according to Adeiza (2012) are responsible for the recent assassinations. As a result of relative peace in Ebiraland, these youths became redundant and of course they must survive without regular jobs have taken to assassination and armed robbery in the land. All the important banks in the land have suffered vicious attack and robbed with attendant loss of human, money and properties. In fact, the banks are all shut down, thereby paralyzing economic activities in the land. These are some of the consequences of violent politics in Ebiraland.

At this juncture it is necessary to look at the implication of violent-oriented politics to Nigeria's integration. In the case of Ebiraland our case study, attempt has been made to see how competition for political power among clans and politicians reinforced by economic and socio-cultural factors have turned the area to a war zone. However, it is necessary to state that the nature of political competition in Nigeria at large makes politics coterminous with violence thereby, posing a serious challenge to national integration. Over the years, Nigeria has suffered from ethnically charged political conflict epitomized by competition for political power among the major ethnic groups. For analytical purposes it is germane to situate it within a historical context.

Going down memory lane reveals that, the colonialists that brought the various groups under a monolithic grid now called Nigeria laid the foundation of divisive politics in the country by amplifying the differences between the various ethnic groups. But Nigerian leaders who gained power from the colonialists after independence had opportunity to redress this trend but rather preferred to utilize the existing colonial administrative structures for their selfish interests. Sadly, the same divide and rule tactic employed by the colonialists was later modified by the Nigerian "nationalists" in their quest for power and prestige, crystallizing in ethnic nationalism as against true nationalism that would have enhanced the integration of the various ethnic groups (Ekanola, 2006). Suffice to say that the way and manner politics was played by the foremost leaders, actually validated the fact that, these earliest political elites were not

interested in uniting the country but rather wanted to keep the country permanently divided along ethnic lines for their selfish political ends. As they competed for power, prestige and associated benefits, these foremost political elite sought support from members of their ethnic groups through accentuation of ethnic differences and demonizing members of other ethnic group (Ekanola, 2006).

Dent (1971:452) stated that a prominent northern political leader once confessed that “they had to teach the people to hate Southerners, to look at them as people depriving them of their rights, in order to win them over”. Albert (1999) also observed that the fear and anxiety of losing out by the Northern nationalist leaders in the struggle for power and prestige, in the fledgling Northern and the Southern protectorates under the same legislative system in 1947 by the Richards constitution compelled the Northern elite to appeal to religious and ethnic sentiments. This was done to unite the Hausa-Fulani constituency against the Southern people. Ekanola (2006) noticed that although the effort of the Northern political elite was successful as they continue to dominate the political landscape of the country, but the implication of this is that it took ethnic hostility to a new level and Nigeria has not been able to wriggle out of its debilitating effects. It has greatly impeded the chances of Nigeria becoming a united country in the true sense.

It is essential to note that it is not only the Northern political elite that are culpable, practically all political elite from other parts of the country did the same, indoctrinating members of their ethnic groups to see people from other ethnic groups as different people they must contend with in their efforts for survival and attainment of sectional interests. Thus, the earlier political elite in their competition for political power discouraged their followers from developing a sense of commitment towards the Nigerian nation-state and this spelt doom in the integration of the disparate ethnic entities in the country. For instance in 1948, Sir Ademola Alakija, the then President of the Egbe Omo Oduduwa stated that “this big tomorrow for the Yoruba is the future of our children how they will hold their own among other tribes of Nigeria” (cited in Coleman 1986:346).

The nationalists’ manipulation of ethnic sentiments for the benefits of political support also reflected in the formation of political parties. Political parties were formed along ethnic and regional lines. For instance, there was the Northern People’s

Congress (NPC), formed by the Northern educated elite in 1949. The National Council for Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC), formed by Herbert Macaulay and Nnamdi Azikwe, started as a national political party, but it was quickly taken over by Nigerians of the Igbo extraction. In the West, there was the Egbe Omo Oduduwa which quickly metamorphosed into a political party in 1951, by the name of the Action Group, dominated by the Yoruba Nation. These regional political parties sought to advance regional and ethnic interests as against the overall interest of the country (For details see Sklar, 1963; Oyibo, 1971; Oyediran, 1981; Coleman, 1986; Ejimofor, 1987; Osaghae, 2002 and Ekanola, 2006). The key political figures in each region used political party in their region to wage ethnic wars against their opponents in other regions. For instance, in summing up his judgment on the treasonable felony preferred on Chief Awolowo and others, by Balewa government, Justice Sowemimo noted the increasing tendency on the part of politicians in the various political parties to employ violent means in politics which further disunited the country. He stated that:

On the evidence before me, it would appear that politics generally in Nigeria has been conducted with a certain amount of bitterness. It appears that a person belonging to a party becomes an enemy of another who belongs to a rival party. Political parties are equivalent... to warring camps, elections are conducted with party thugs protecting the campaigners and this state of affairs has been described to have assumed a pitch that no method would be spared, however vindictive or extreme by any rival political party as against another in order to score over one or the other (cited in Anifowose, 2011:33).

The implication of the above scenario is that, the political area of Nigeria from pre-independence till date has been characterized by a struggle to control and exploit the offices of the state by all means. This is because the wealth of the country is virtually monopolized by the Federal Government; every group tries to make sure that it does not lose out in the struggle to control the government (Bah, 2002). That was why issues like the self-government motion moved by the late Anthony Enahoro under the auspices of Action Group (AG) in 1953 that Nigeria should become an independent state in 1956 was vehemently resisted by the Northern political elite who felt they had not got enough educated people to step into the shoes of the colonialists. This resulted in the Kano Riot in 1953 when supporters of the motion felt that the Northern elite

were not saying the minds of the northern people that it would be better to take the motion to the people themselves.

Another good instance was the Census controversy between 1962-1963. The census that was supposed to be a purely demographic issue based on accurate head-count of people became a political tool towards maximizing access to power and resources. At the end of the day, a northern victory was achieved as the whole exercise turned out in their favour, but it had serious damaging effect on inter-ethnic relations. It is sad to note that there has not been any positive change in this regard since then. Instead, the relationship among the various ethnic and religious groups has grown from bad to worse in spite of all pretenses to the contrary. Ekanola (2006) notes that rather than integrating into a cohesive community having a common sense of national identity and destiny, evidence today points out to the contrary as citizens of Nigeria appear to be returning more and more to primordial affiliations for the purpose of identity, loyalty and security. Instead of forming a monolithic entity to face the challenges of development in a world that is becoming more competitive, Nigerians are preoccupied with waging ethnic and religious wars, struggling for political power and control of resources, resisting marginalization by dominant ethnic groups.

The unassailable carnage witnessed during the 1964 General election, 1965 Western election, the way and manner the first coup was plotted and the subsequent coups, the civil war, and the 1979 and 1983 General elections, the annulment of June 12, 1993 election and the crises that dogged the annulment, together with the accentuation and the magnitude of inter-ethnic and religious violence in the Fourth Republic are all eloquent testimonies to the fact that, the end of divisive politics and its implication on national integration is not yet in sight.

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CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary

In this chapter, attempts are made to first make a general summary of the work and then proffer policy suggestions to effectively manage the conflict. The rationale behind this effort is deduced from the view that “it is an intellectual obligation not only to analyze the problems of society but also to proffer solution” (Ademoyega 2003:47). This study has examined politics and communal conflicts in Ebiraland. This became necessary as a result of violence-orientated politics in the region.

From the findings in the preceding chapters it can be deduced that the causes of conflict in Ebiraland are multivariate. Although the imposition of central administration in the hitherto clan autonomous system laid the foundation of social crisis in the area, democratization and its attendant struggles for political power constitute a major factor behind inter-personal and inter-clan skirmishes.

Further interrogation of the source of conflict led to a design of some set of questions. The questions were intended to enable the researcher to come to terms with the political, cultural and socio-economic factors that drive conflict in the area. To achieve this and other objectives, the study combined both qualitative and quantitative data gathering techniques, including primary sources as surveys, interviews and Focus Group Discussion. The secondary sources derive from documented materials such as books, journals, conference reports, periodicals including newspapers and magazines as well as internet sources. One thousand and two hundred copies of questionnaire each containing forty-one items questions were administered in the selected areas of violent conflict in Ebiraland.

Apart from the survey, some notable individuals in Ebiraland were identified and interviewed so as to obtain useful information for the study. The list includes the Ohinoyi of Ebiraland Alhaji Ado Ibrahim, President of Ebira People’s Association Alhaji Obeitor, Obobayin of Ihima (a herbalist and traditional ruler) where violence was most volatile, Obobayin of Ihuonwa (a traditional ruler), Mr. Raji Zubairu (a clan

spokesman for Oziogu clan), and Mr. Saliu Usman (Registrar Kogi state Polytechnic, Lokoja) whose house was completely burnt down. Others include politicians like Ambassador Usman Bello, Senator Balogun Mr. Uvieda Isiaka of Deputy Governor's office Lokoja. Also interviewed were some scholars that have conducted research on Ebiraland like Dr. M.S Audu, Dr Sani Habibu Angulu, and civil servants like Mr. M.J Yusuf (a state permanent secretary in the ministry of works) among others. In addition to this method, Focus Group Discussion was also conducted. The respondents were classified according to their sexes. Each group was further stratified into adult and youth. No group had less than eight respondents or more than eleven participants. Lastly, documented materials were also consulted to support some of the findings derived from the primary sources of data.

One major finding of this study is that, although competition for political power among politicians and clans constitutes the major cause of conflict in the land, there are other causative factors. These include the politicization of cultural activities such as masquerade festivals and the increasing rate of youth unemployment occasioned by the collapse of the Itakpe Iron-ore Deposit and Ajaokuta Steel Rolling Company. Both companies, located in Ebiraland were once providers of employment opportunities mostly for Ebira indigenes. Many of these indigenes have become willing tools in the hands of perpetrators of violence.

Another finding of the study is the uneven political structure of the state which puts a particular ethnic group (Igala) in a vantage position vis-à-vis other groups in the state owing to their numerical strength. The Igala have been governing the state since creation. The implication of this to violence in Ebiraland is that in an attempt to wrestle power from the Igala, the Ebira people came up with an agenda that it was the turn of an Ebira man to be the governor of the state. However, Senator Ohiare the Ebira candidate for the governorship election in 2007 lost to an Igala indigene, which made youths in Ebiraland to unleash terror on the Ebiras that supported the candidature of an Igala man who eventually won the election.

It was also discovered from the study that an average Ebira man is pugilistic. He tends to display aggressive tendency under minor provocation.

Another discovery made from the study is the prevalence of polygamy and its attendant large family sizes and the dwindling resources to provide for the needs of those families. This social malaise has exacerbated in the society the poverty level, illiteracy and deprivations, and in the process engendered an army of unemployed youth as instrument for violent conflicts.

The creation of Ohi additional stool in Ebiraland has been partly responsible for violence in the Ihima District of Ebiraland. Findings from the field revealed that governments at various levels have not really done much to solve the problem in Ebiraland. In fact, government attitude over the years has been very poor and the status quo remains without addressing the fundamental causes of the problem. While government had set up several Panels of inquiry or committees what has been lacking is the will to execute their recommendations. Some of our respondents claimed that government has indeed encouraged the continuous conflict in Ebiraland in order to forestall a united opposition against the domination of the state's political space by the Igala.

It is our contention that past efforts to manage the conflict failed because of government indecisive posture and inability to get to the root of the matter. Lastly, the role of the Nigerian police is very unenviable. The Nigeria Police Force only exploits the conflicts as an opportunity to make money. No major offender, even thugs arrested were granted bail courtesy of their sponsors.

6.2 Conclusion

The central theme of this work has been "Politics and Conflicts in Ebiraland, Nigeria (1977-2007)". The research is an attempt to examine the impact of politics on violent conflicts in Ebiraland. The justification for this exercise is premised on the prevailing violence in the land, especially during political activities that has led to the description of Ebira people as being lawless and violent. In the pristine past, the people had lived under segmented clan arrangement without central leader. However, the British incursion in the 19th century and the subsequent establishment of a centralized political arrangement halted the relative political stability that hitherto pervaded the

land. Democratization process characterized by intense rivalry among politicians and clan groups for political power exacerbated the spate of violence in the land.

The first objective is to find out the impact of clan identity on conflicts in Ebiraland. Going by the findings in this study, it can therefore, be concluded that although clan differences may divide, it is not sufficient for conflict if there is no element of politicization and power struggle among politicians belonging to different clans. This is also in line with the second objective that deep-seated struggle among groups to acquire, use and retain power have implication for conflicts in Ebiraland. The third objective revolves around the idea that intra and inter party clashes have contributory role on violence in Ebiraland. From the findings, it can be concluded that politics is a major driver of conflicts in Ebiraland and is a reflection of the inherent and endemic conflict of the Nigerian state. This is because from independence till date, political activities have generated more conflicts in the country than any other factors. Most conflicts that appear religious or ethnic have political undertone as reflected in the study. This is not to say that economic and socio-cultural factors are not embedded in the conflicts. For instance, youth unemployment, poor educational background and economic benefits from conflicts, masquerade festival, struggle for chieftaincy titles among others are economic and socio-cultural factors that are very relevant in discussing violent conflicts in Ebiraland. Lastly, although there seems to be a relative peace in Ebiraland giving the peaceful conduct of the 2011 elections, that may turn out to be a pyrrhic victory as the root causes of violence have not been adequately addressed.

6.3 Recommendations

The study made the following recommendations:

Since youth unemployment is a major factor fueling conflicts in Ebiraland, the government should embark on youth mass employment. This can be done by resuscitating the moribund Ajaokuta Steel Rolling Company and Itakpe Iron Ore Deposit both in Ebiraland. It has been stated in the study that when these two companies were functioning, violence was not common in Ebiraland as many youths in the area were employed then in the companies. However, when the companies

became moribund and the staff thrown out of employment which also closed doors for other youths to be employed, youths in the area now became willing tools in the hands of politicians to perpetrate violence for their political interests.

There is need for government regulatory measure on masquerades and other traditional festivals. It has been demonstrated in the study that when the idea of masquerade having a guarantor that could be held liable in situation of breach of peace before a masquerade can perform was introduced, masquerade festivals were not fraught with violence. Hence, the need for government to re-introduce such measure to check violence inclination of traditional festivals in Ebiraland.

The prevalence of violence-oriented politics in Ebiraland calls for the building of the culture of peace in Ebiraland. It is necessary to educate Ebira people that if somebody acts violently against another person, it is possible that such violent act may be inadvertently on wrong assumption which may be impossible to reverse. For instance, killing someone cannot be reversed ditto with many forms of physical or serious psychological violence.

It should be understood that when violence is used it results in counter-violence and the possibility of escalating beyond control is very real. Violent means ipso facto results in violent ends. While non-violent means aimed at addressing the problem that result into violent conflict, violent means only focus on persons rather than problem. In other words, there is need to sensitize Ebira people to see themselves as a peaceful people (as the name Ebira connotes good manner) with norms that emphasize cooperation and resolution of conflicts with dialogue, negotiation and non-violence. There is need to build the culture of tolerance, understanding, mutual obligation, open communication among the people and clans in Ebiraland. There is need to transform violent competition for political power into cooperation for shared goals. Since peace education is very integral to building the culture of peace, educated Ebiras should organize workshops for adults, youths and children at periodic intervals with the aim of inculcating the culture of peace in them.

Such workshops should be designed through talks and speeches with the aim of changing adversary image people must have formed against opposing politicians and

clans. It should be skewed towards changing negative relationships between clans to positive one. The workshop should provide general knowledge about conflicts, its causes and how to cultivate general attitudes about peace, forgiveness and non-violence by bringing to the awareness of the people the consequences of violent conflicts.

Rotation of political offices among the elite groups in Kogi State is also recommended to mitigate acrimony in inter-group relations. This will put an end to allegation of domination of a particular ethnic group in ethnic ratio as far as political offices are concerned in Kogi State.

Justiciable distribution of resources and amenities among the various ethnic groups in the state will go a long way to bring harmonious relationship in Kogi State.

6.4 Contributions of Study to Knowledge

1. The study has demonstrated the utility of eclectic model for the explanation of conflict. This is a unique contribution to conflict as a field of study because most previous studies utilized one or two theories which do not possess explanatory power for the various dimensions of conflict. Thus, this model helps to elucidate the complexities of etiology of conflict. It is a mono-plural framework that incorporates political, economic, socio-cultural factors of conflict. The superiority of this model, as stated before, to others is in its comprehensiveness and inclusiveness of other models, in providing the basis for the analysis of multiple factors of conflict.
2. The study has contributed to bridging the knowledge gap in the literature on conflict studies by combining qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis that involves interview, focus group discussion and questionnaire administration (survey). This is hardly the case in previous studies on conflict as most previous studies utilized qualitative method of data analysis.

3. The study has demonstrated the juxtaposition of various factors- political, economic, socio-economic and cultural as the catalysts of various dimensions of conflict. This is consequent upon the position in the literature that a mono-causal based explanation of conflict is inadequate for understanding not only conflict in Ebiraland, but also any incidence of conflict at whatever level. The juxtaposition of various factors-political, economic, socio-economic and cultural among others provides a more realistic basis for understanding complex social phenomena.
4. The study has shown that cultural homogeneity as hypothesized by some scholars especially Samuel Huntington is not sufficient reasons for peace. This is because cultural homogeneity can also be susceptible to conflict if politicized by some political elements as demonstrated by the study. If cultural homogeneity alone has the capacity to foster unity, then there wouldn't have been conflict in Ebiraland in the first instance as culture would have served as a cord of unity or harmony.

6.5 Suggestions for Further Research

1. Further research in this area should focus on the impact of politics and violence on the socio-economic prospects of Ebiraland as this was not within the purview of the present study. Efforts on studies that will bring the implications of politics and violence on the socio-economic prospect of Ebiraland to the limelight will be a step in the right direction as it will educate the Ebiras on the evil of violent oriented politics on their socio-economic prosperity. This knowledge may make them to re-think, thereby, shunning divisive and acrimonious politics.
2. Also, there is need for research on non-violent means to conflict resolution in Ebiraland. This is very necessary in the sense that two wrongs cannot make a right. Alternative dispute resolution mechanism will serve as a panacea to frequent conflict in Ebiraland.
3. Another area that requires further exposition is inter-group relations in Kogi State. Kogi State is miniature Nigeria. Inequality in resource allocation is a

deliberating factor in inter-group relations in Kogi State. There is need for further study in this area so as to come up with recommendations that will bring harmony in the relationship among the various groups that constitute Kogi State.

4. Further research in this area should focus on the impact of violent conflict in Ebiraland on her neighbours. This becomes necessary because the impact of violent conflict in Ebiraland on her neighbours remains a virgin area that requires exposition. No doubt some Ebiras have fled their community because of frequent conflict and had settled in neighbouring towns. In what way or ways has this influx affected their host communities?

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- Interview with Yusuf, M.J (2011, June 4th) Government Science Secondary School, Ogaminana
- Interview with Uveida, I (2011, June 4th) Government Science Secondary School, Ogaminana

Appendix

Fieldwork Pictures

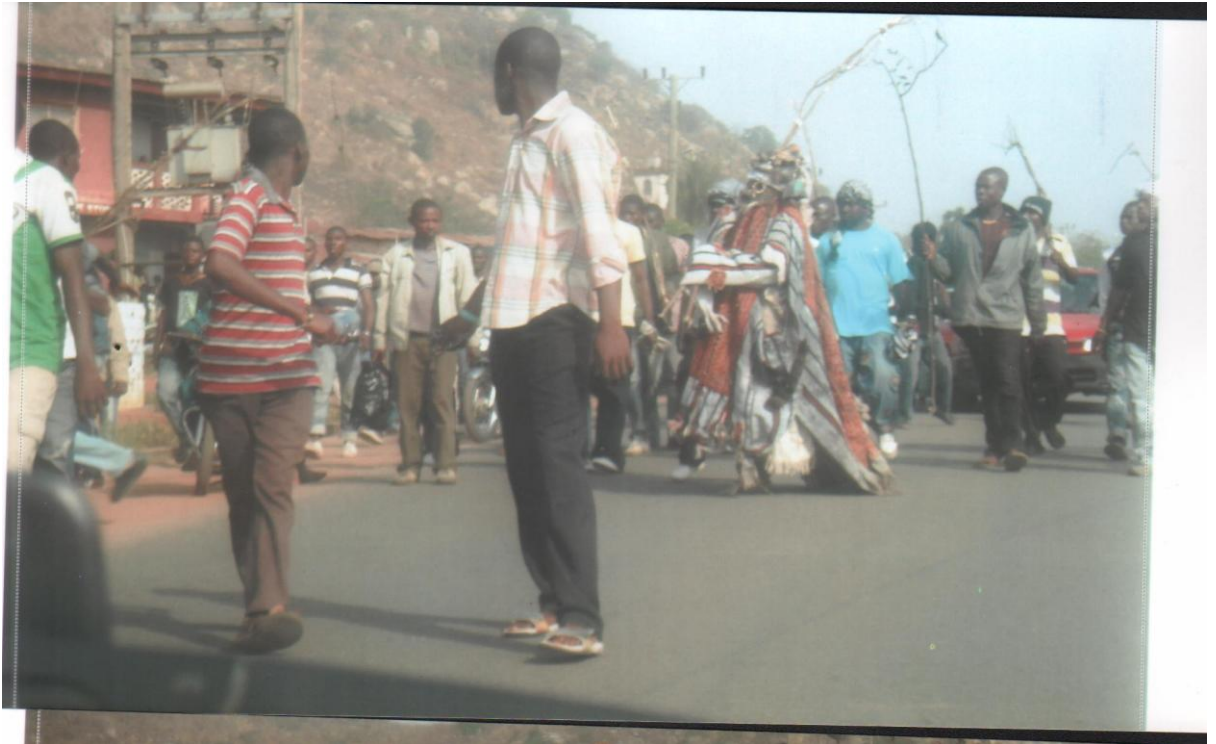
Front View of the Palace of Ado Ibrahim the Ohinoyi of Ebiraland



The Palace of Alhaji Ado Ibrahim the Ohinoyi of Ebiraland



One of the masquerades performing (the picture was taken during field work at Ihima)



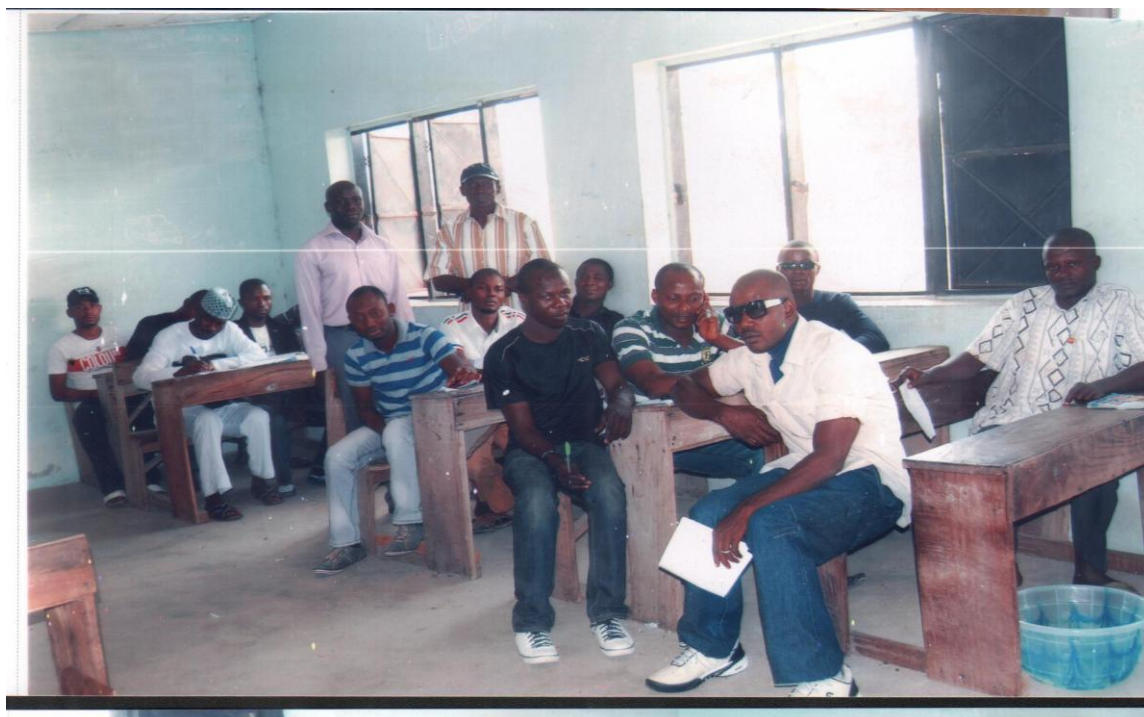
Some of the burnt buildings in Ihima, fallout of communal conflicts



Some of the participants during focus group discussion



Another set of participants during focus group discussion



Questionnaire

Department of Political Science and International
Relations,
Covenant University,
P.M.B 1023,
Ota,
Ogun State.

Dear Respondent,

I am a PhD student of Covenant University currently researching on *Politics and Conflicts: A Study of Epiraland, Nigeria (1977-2007)*. The research intends to investigate the political and socio-economic dimensions of conflicts in Epiraland. We therefore, solicit your participation in this study in form of expressing your opinion (s) on the issues raised in this questionnaire. I will appreciate if you could answer the questions the way things were and are and not the way things ought to be. It is mainly for research purposes and your response will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thanks for your participation and response.

JOSHUA, Segun.

PhD Student/Researcher

Instruction: please tick the appropriate box in the area provided. Thank you.

1. Sex: Male () Female ()
2. How old are you as at last birth day? 18-30 () 31-40 () 41-50 () 51-60 () 61 and above ()
3. Marital status: Single () Married () Divorced () Separated () Widowed ()
4. Occupation: Civil Servant () Farmer () Trader () Student () others (please specify)
.....
5. Academic Qualification: No Education () Primary Education () Junior Secondary Education () Senior Secondary Education () Tertiary Education () others please specify

6. Local Government Area: Adavi () Ajaokuta () Okehi () Okene () others specify

7. Your Religious affiliation: Christian () Islam () Traditionalist () others please specify

On a scale of 1 to 5: 5- strongly agree; 4- agree; 3-undecided; 2-le of 5: disagreed; 1- strongly disagreed; please indicate by a tick option that describes your opinion on each item.

SECTION B: IMPACT OF POLITICS ON CLAN AND COMMUNAL CONFLICT

SN.	STATEMENTS	OPTIONS				
		SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	The contest for political power is one of the factors responsible for conflict in Ebira land					
2.	Individual personality is the main political issue in Ebiraland					
3.	Clannish sentiment is the main issue in Ebiraland					
4.	Conflict between clans provides local politicians opportunity to stress their relevance					
5.	Differences in political party alliances between clans often degenerate into conflict in Ebiraland					
6.	Differences in political party affiliation of community leaders and the community often results into conflict					
7.	Exercise of political supremacy between clans leaders often lead to violent conflict					
8.	Differences in political party affiliation of clan leaders is a cause of inter-clan confrontation					
9.	Each clan is often affiliated to a political party					
10.	The use of clan affiliation to foster individual's political ambition often result in inter-clan conflict					
11.	Clan identities of political office seekers is a main cause of inter-clan conflict					
12.	Contest for political supremacy among clans has implications for conflict in Ebira land					
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEEP SEATED STRUGGLES AMONG WARRING GROUPS TO ACQUIRE, USE AND RETAIN POWER AND CONFLICT						
13.	Privileges attached to political offices encourage violent contest for elective post					

14	competition for political office is a main cause of violent conflict in Ebiraland					
15	Violence is more intense and frequent in Ebiraland during election times					
16	Political elite employ violence to mobilize people along group line for their political advantage.					
17	The political structure of the state has implication on unrest in Ebiraland					
18	Perceived domination of the state apparatuses by a section of the state promotes conflicts in Ebiraland					
20	Political Parties activities provide avenue for clashes among rival supporters					
21	Political elite in Ebiraland are likely to reject an electoral results where they have lost which may lead to violence					
22	There is a deep seated struggles among warring groups to acquire, use and retain power and conflict in Ebiraland					
LINKAGE BETWEEN INTRA AND INTER-PARTY CLASHES AND COMMUNAL UNREST						
23	Opposing groups in political contest are enemies at war	SA	A	U	D	SD
24	political competition within a party for elective post often results in violence					
25	Political competition between parties are pursued violently					
26	Winners takes it all in multi-party system like Nigeria has implication on violent conflict in Ebiraland					
ECOMONIC AND SOCIO-CULTURAL VARIABLES INTERVENING BETWEEN POLITICS AND CONFLICTS IN EBIRA LAND						
27	Unemployment is the basis of youth involvement in violent conflict in Ebiraland					
28	Poor educational background and economic gain are the main motivation for youth involvement in violence					
29	Economic values of land has increased struggle for land ownership					
30	Land ownership system breeds conflicts in Ebiraland					
31	Inter-group struggle for land ownership (between groups/individuals) is often attended with violent conflict					
32	Politicians and groups political interests make the masquerade festivals conflict prone					
33	Political affiliation of groups are often demonstrated in masquerade festivals					

34	Political acceptability and supremacy are pursued through the masquerade festivals					
35	Superiority and power contest between masquerade groups is a major cause of conflict in Ebiraland					
36	Masquerade festivals provide avenue to express political interests and alliances					
37	Politicians often draw the support of masquerade groups to advance their interests					
38	Political affiliation and views of public praise singers during festivals often promote conflicts in Ebiraland					
39	Masquerade festivals is used to pursue personal and clan conflicts					
40	Strict control of masquerade activities will reduce conflicts in Ebiraland					
41	The struggle for chieftaincy and local power positions is one of the bases for intra-ethnic conflict in Ebiraland					
42	Lack of acceptable central leadership in Ebiraland is responsible for conflict in the community					
43	Government creation of traditional stool like Ohis has implication for violent conflicts in Ebiraland					

SECTION C

Instruction: Please give precise answer to the following questions. You may give practical examples where possible.

1. What efforts have the local leaders and state made in resolving violent conflicts in Ebiraland?

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.....
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2. How effective have those conflict resolution mechanisms been?

.....
.....
.....

3. What would you suggest to be done in bringing permanent peace to Ebiraland?

.....
.....
.....

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR POLITICIANS, TRADITIONAL RULERS, CLAN HEADS AND SOME EMINENTS EBIRAS,

1. When did violence first occur in Ebira land?
2. How many cases of violent conflict have you witnessed in Ebira land?
3. What do you think are the major causes of violence in Ebira land?
4. Have the politicians in the cause of pursuing their political ambition contributed to conflict in Ebira land?
5. Can you give examples to prove that politicians play key role in conflict in Ebira land?
6. Has there been any conflict as a result of politics i.e. during election?
7. Are there occasion in which struggle for traditional stool result in conflict?
8. Honestly speaking would you say Ebira people are violent or peace loving?
9. In all the conflict you have experienced where their loss of lives or property?
10. Has there been attempt at resolution?
11. In your own opinion how will you assess the effectiveness of the resolution methods?
12. Are there local conflict management methods that you think have not been used adequately in managing the conflict?
13. What do you think should be done to address continuous violent conflict in Ebira land?

QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

1. When did crises in Ebira land start?
2. What are the causes of violent conflict in Ebira land?
3. Is there any relationship between contest for political power and conflict in Ebira land?
4. Do you think the political structure of the state has impact on conflict in Ebira land?
5. Do you think Masquerade festival in Ebira land is of relevance to conflict in the land?
6. Is there any connection between the struggle for traditional stool and conflict in Ebiraland?
7. Do you think youth unemployment has any_impact on conflict in Ebira land?
8. Has there been attempt at resolution?
9. How effective were those conflict resolution mechanisms been?

10. What do you think should be done to bring lasting peace to Epira land?