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## Management of Protracted Social Conflicts in a Multi Cultural Society: The Nigerian Example

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### ABSTRACT

The literature on conflicts in Nigeria largely implicates socio-economic, political and governmental deficits as the major causes of violent conflicts in Nigeria. The paper interrogates the challenges and prospects of managing protracted social conflicts in Nigeria by examining the socio-economic and political dynamics of the Nigerian State within the framework of the current security challenges in Nigeria. A careful evaluation of data from the field was supplemented with a desk review of secondary sources and integrated into the content analysis of the issues that arose from the subject matter under study. Findings indicates that the root causes of conflicts in Nigeria are located ethno-religious intolerance, struggle for power and scarce resources, bad governance, insincerity and haphazard approach towards the resolution of these conflicts. The paper concludes that there is no alternative to good governance in the fight against violent conflicts in Nigeria. Good governance is congenial to the promotion, reign and sustenance of peace. Therefore, it is the contention of this paper that to effectively manage protracted social conflict, strategic approaches anchored on good governance that will guarantee sustainable peace and security in Nigeria must be evolved.

### INTRODUCTION

Several literatures indicate that conflict is a normal part of every healthy relationship and learning how to deal with conflict than avoiding it, is crucial. When conflict is mismanaged it can cause great harm to relationship. When handled in respectful and positive ways, conflict provides opportunities to strengthen the bond between parties to the conflict (Azar, 1994; Burton, 1990; Rossati, 1990). What then matters is how a particular society responds to such conflict situations. The greatest threat facing the survival of Nigerian and her unity is insecurity occasioned by various ethno- religious, political, social and in recent time resource conflict manifested in farmers/herders conflict across the Nation. The current insecurity and conflict have even raised serious concern regarding the prediction of some Western countries that Nigeria will break up in the few years to come. Fingers are swift in pointing accusingly to Colonial experience and the continual interplay of external and internal imperialist forces that fans the embers of protracted social conflict for their selfish aggrandizement (Chikonwu 2013) Nevertheless the incidences of social conflicts in Nigeria are in actuality a reflection of the series of antithesis that characterized the Nigerian nation from her Colonial past, Religious differences, different Legal systems, Socio-economic and political setting coupled with ethnicity which is embedded in the struggle for political and economic control of resources exhibited by intellectual and political elites (Gboyega 1996). This is further intensified by corrupt and ineffective leadership. Akanji (2007) avers that "It is corrupt and ineffective political leadership that often engenders poverty and that consequently lead to violent activities".

In other words government failure to address certain

fundamental issues in the society bordering on human right violation, injustice, marginalization, religious intolerance, electoral malpractice, inequity, and ethnicity is largely responsible for social conflict generation and subsequent difficulty in its management in Nigeria. Though Government and other relevant stakeholders over the years have tried to stem the tide of protracted social conflict in Nigeria through a planned strategic, institutional, mutual and integrative approach, these conflicts still persist. This probably calls for a rethink and review of all existing levels of collaboration and synergies for a holistic, sustainable dynamic approach to management of protracted social conflicts in a pluralist society like Nigeria.

In the light of this, the paper interrogates the challenges of conflict management in Nigeria. To achieve this, the paper gave detailed clarifications of some of the concepts used in the study, interrogates the challenges of conflict management in Nigeria and make recommendations on how these conflicts could be effectively managed through strategic approaches anchored on good governance that will guarantee sustainable peace and security in Nigeria

### Clarification of Concepts Conflict

Due to the constant dynamics of conflicts, researchers/scholars have different meanings of the term conflict. According to Chiwonkwu (2013), Conflict is a friction that may occur whenever two or more persons come into a social relationship or interaction with one another. It is an inherent and unavoidable part of human existence entrenched in the pursuit of Irreconcilable interest and goals by different groups Hocker & Wilmot (1985), in their views perceives Conflict as a situation between two or more persons in whom one individual feels that another

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person has negatively affected, or is about to negatively affect him or her. There are three very important elements in Hocker & Wilmot's definition of conflict these are: the feeling or perception one person has over the other, whether the feeling is negative or positive, assumed or presumed, accurate or inaccurate, real or imagined does not matter as long as it is being held by the contending parties. Also, the feeling is generally negative because the one having the perception believes the other is going to outdo him. More so, the issue under contention must be something both parties desire and cherish.

Fisher (2000), on his part averred that Conflict is part of the social fabric which is arguably intrinsic and inevitable. Therefore, social settings are only complete and meaningful when conflicts exist, because even though it has its disadvantages there are merits too in some conflicts. The emphasis here is that conflict could be both positive and negative. Positive when it leads to positive changes in government and socio-economic aspects of society but negative when it becomes destructive and violent which are detrimental to the development of communities.

According to Hocker & Wilmot (1985), conflict could also be defined as the interaction of independent people who perceive incompatible goals and interference from each other in achieving such goals. The incompatibility of goals or values between two or more parties in a relationship combined with attempts to control each other. The incompatibility or difference may exist or maybe a delusion with opposing interest being the backdrop. Moreover, the goals might be the same but the approach to achieve the goals might differ which encourages parties to strive and impose their methods to control affairs.

### Conflict Resolution

According to Miller (2003), conflict resolution is a variety of approaches aimed at terminating conflict through the constructive solving of problems, distinct from management or transformation of conflict. Gaya (2006), on the other hand avers that conflict resolution connotes a sense of finality where the parties to a conflict are mutually satisfied with the outcome of a settlement and the conflict is resolved in a true sense. The conflicts he asserts are resolved when the basic needs of the parties have been met with necessary satisfiers and the fears have been allayed. Similarly, Falleti (2006) stated that by conflict resolution, it is expected that the deep rooted sources of conflict are addressed and resolved, and behaviour is no longer violent, nor are attitudes hostile any longer, while the structure of the conflict has been changed.

For Mitchel & Blank (2011), Conflict Resolution refers to an outcome in which the issues in an existing conflict is satisfactorily dealt with through a solution that is mutually acceptable to the parties, self-sustaining, long run and productive of a new positive relationship between parties that were previously hostile adversaries and any process or procedure by which such an outcome is achieved.

Conflict resolution is seen in this paper as a peaceful and non-violent approach in abating the disagreement(s) and incompatibilities of both parties involved in conflict and the willingness/ acceptance to live in peace and harmony by both parties. It involves a variety of approaches aimed at terminating conflicts through the constructive solving of problems, distinct from management or transformation of conflicts

### Conflict Management

The term conflict management is perhaps an admission of the reality that conflicts is inevitable, but that not all conflict can always be resolved; therefore what practitioners can do is to manage and regulate them. According to Gaya (2006), conflict management is the process of reducing the negative and destructive capacity of conflict through several measures and by working with and through the parties involved in the conflict. Thus conflict management covers the entire area of handling conflicts positively at different stages, including those efforts made to prevent conflict by being proactive. Also, Onu cited in Owede (2010) asserts that conflict management rather than advocating methods of removing conflict, it addresses the more realistic questions of managing conflict, that is, how to deal with it in a constructive way, how to bring opposing sides together in a cooperative process, how to design a practical, achievable, cooperative system for the constructive management of differences. Therefore, conflict management is basically the use of open and clear dialogue to assist opponents or parties not only to have agreements against hostile images or actions but to have compliance to agreed resolutions and strategies.

In this paper conflict resolution is seen as efforts aimed at addressing and resolving the root sources of conflict using a solution that is mutually accepted by both parties while conflict management on the other hand is employed to mitigate the destructive nature of conflict and manage it from escalating into a civil war. Thus while conflict resolution seeks to resolve the root cause of the conflict the mechanism of conflict management seeks to deescalate conflict.

### Conflict Transformation

Conflict transformation goes beyond conflict resolution to build longer standing relationships through a process of change in perceptions and attitude of parties. The aim of conflict transformation is to change the parties, their relationship and the condition that created the conflict (Gaya 2006) Conflict transformation stems from the recognition of the dialectical elements of conflict about the inevitability of change, secondly it recognizes the neutrality of conflict as such, and that conflict can either be negative or positive, but parties can transform it into positive to maximize opportunities. Thus conflict transformation is all about the changes created by parties involved in a conflict and the deliberate intervention by third parties to create change (Gaya 2006)

## METERIALS AND METHODS

The relationship between culture and conflict was first advanced by Paul Lederach (1995) one of the best theorist and practitioner in the field of conflict management when he propounded the Psycho cultural Theory of Conflict in 1995. He posits that “social conflicts emerges and develops on the basis of the meaning and interpretation people involved attach to actions and events. Social meaning is lodged in the accumulated knowledge that is a person’s bank of knowledge, conflict is related to meaning, meaning to knowledge, and knowledge is rooted in Culture” (9) People act on the basis of the meaning that things have for them. The symbolic interactionist Herbert Blumer (1986) emphasized the importance of symbols and the meaning attached to them.

The main assumptions of the psycho cultural theory of conflict is that conflict is a natural, common experience present in all relationship and culture, and that people are active participant in creating situations and interaction they experience as conflict. This interactive process they assert is accomplished through and rooted in people’s perceptions, interpretations, expressions and intentions, each of which grows from and cycles back to their common sense of knowledge (Lederach 1995)

For the purpose of this study Psycho cultural theory of conflict offers an insight into the nature and dynamics of protracted social conflict in Nigeria. Nigeria is a multi-ethnic and multi- religious nation with over 350 ethnic group and three major religion. Relationship between individuals and groups continue to express new stress defined by emerging realities. In the process new challenges that impact on the type of understanding and co-existence between people and groups of different values and orientations are also straining. Many a time these challenges manifest themselves in the form of violent conflict that damage social relations and threaten corporate existence. Sadly, the flash points of these conflict has been expanding with its attendant consequences. The consequences are, of course, the growing stress characterizing the relationship between individuals, tribes and religious group in Nigeria (Abdulrahman & Abdusalam 2018)

In Nigeria ethnic groups fight against each other, Adherent of one religion launch attacks against members of other religions, indigene fights against settlers, farmers fight against pastoralist and communities clash against one another. Sections of the country cry over marginalization for fear of domination by a particular ethnic group. This fear is further reinforced by the politics of prebendalism credited to Joseph Richard (1996) who depicts the politics of corruption in Nigeria where cronies or members of an ethnic group are compensated when an individual from the group comes into power or where; state offices are regarded as prebendals that can be appropriated by office holders who use them to generate material benefits for themselves and their constituents and kin groups. This patron client or identity politics has encouraged corruption in the country to the extent that appointments,

promotions, admissions, award of contracts among others are done with consideration for one’s ethnic or religious affiliations (Chinwokwu 2013).

For instance under the current Muhammadu Buhari’s administration, there are several complaints that the president is giving undue preference to some section of the country particularly the Fulani ethnic group over others in national appointments. The lopsidedness in Buhari’s appointment is more glaring in the leadership of the nation’s security service. According to Umar (2020), Nigeria has become “dangerously polarized under President Muhammadu Buhari” (9) Such prebendal and clannish appointments in a multi-cultural state like Nigeria without recourse to the principle of federal character could lead to violent activities from other ethnic groups who felt marginalized in the appointments. Therefore, although other theories may be useful in analyzing the emergence and escalation of conflict in Nigeria, the psycho cultural theory of conflict is remarkably strong in explaining the subject matter of protracted social conflict in Nigeria.

## Management of Protracted Social Conflict In Nigeria Leadership Challenge

One of the greatest challenges of conflict management in Nigeria is the internal or domestic sources in other words called “forces” which are anchored on bad leadership and governance. Although, historically Nigeria inherited a system of government that was anchored on oppression, suppression, marginalization, divide and rule from her colonial master. Subsequent political leaders in Nigeria whether military or democratic regimes have failed to change some of the draconian political rules of their political masters. Ihonvbere (2007) rightly observed that: The nation since independence has remained a crisis generating mechanisms hardly shedding its colonial attributes. Repression, suppression and intimidation have remained their enduring feature. The establishment of consensus building, dialogues and negotiations, respect for human rights and the rule of law are largely alien to its modus operandi (46).

Subsequent administration in Nigeria has failed to change the pattern of leadership to reflect the people popular demand instead they intensify them and re- packaged it in a modern way with different brand names. For instance the issue of Minority rights, Resource control and true federalism has remained a mirage and intractable issues in the wheel of protracted social conflict management in Nigeria. These agitations have become even more intensified as a result of the global economic meltdown occasioned by the Covid 19 Pandemic. The prices of oil nosedived to unimaginable low in recent years. Frustration amongst the populace resulted in mass protest across the country by irate youths against police brutality code-named End SARS protest. Though the protest was said to be against police brutality, the underlying causes of the protest arose from multiplicities of factors ranging from inflations, unemployment, insecurity, hike in fuel prices,



agitations for resources control, marginalization, poverty, political manipulations amongst others.

Similarly, The Niger Delta Region over the years has remained a hotbed of violent agitations. The government response in managing the conflict hardly endure. Huge financial allocations budgeted specifically for the oil-producing areas by various administration to address issues of neglect and development is yet to achieve the desired result. These financial allocations have been voted through the Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC) created in 1993 by the Military Regime of General Ibrahim Babangida, the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) established in 2000 by the civilian regime of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo and the Ministry of Niger Delta created in 2008 by Umaru Musa Yaradua's government. Their sole mandate was to develop the region by addressing all the challenges evident in the region. The existence of these institutions and agencies and the huge financial allocations given to them have not translated to any visible development and truthfully, corruption and general poor political leadership is to blame (Olite & Umuokoro 2011)

Nigerian under- development, including under development in the Niger Delta, is a consequence of bad leadership characterized by corruption and perbenalism. Also involved in the corruption complicity and conspiracy are the political leaders of the Niger Delta States. The 13% derivation fund, the statutory allocations from the Federation Account and the internally generated revenue (IGR) received by these oil states in this region were looted and diverted by these political leaders (Olite & Umuokoro 2011)

Consequently the region is still facing increasing conflicts and military operations as the government respond to new waves of militancy led by a group named Niger Delta Avengers which has claimed responsibility for a series of coordinated attacks on oil and gas infrastructure. Government highhanded response using military might to suppress agitations has always failed in the region, this is the same with conflict situations in the South East and North East Nigeria. It is obvious that Government must adopt a new strategy in managing protracted social conflict in Nigeria. The strategy to be adopted should tune down the narrative of "show of force" and explore alternative ways of dealing with the conflict by involving stakeholders drawn from the civil society, community leadership and state actors including representations of women and gender expert to discuss the way forward for the region. However, suggestions like are not new with regards to social conflict in Nigeria. It is the lack of political will on the part of the government to implement such recommendations that have continued to hinder effective conflict management in Nigeria.

### Religious and Cultural Differences

The cultural and religious diversity in Nigeria also constitutes a barrier to effective conflict management and peace building effort in Nigeria. Culture is described

as the total way of life of a people (Asuni 2007). As explained by Uchendu (2010) it is the "social legacy the individual acquires from his group, that part of the environment that is the creation of man is what is referred to as culture" (18). Benedict (1960) accepted all these characteristics of culture and observed that what binds men together is their culture, ideas and the standard they have in common.

Culture influences almost all aspect of an individual life as a result individual and group differs with the way they interprets events. This is also true with individuals and group directly involved in a conflict as a first or third party. What one person or group perceives as measures viable for dealing with a given social conflict may be rejected by another person or group (Gaya 2006) Culture influences both the perception of the causes of social conflicts as well as the modalities for managing them. Nigeria is a country with over 300 ethnic groups and a multicultural entity it is apparent that when conflict arises involving this ethnic and diverse cultural group it becomes difficult for managing such conflict, what the other person believes is the best approach to resolve the conflict the other may feel differently.

Similarly, religious beliefs may differ, what a Christian or Muslim beliefs or hold Sacred a Traditional worshipper may not accept. Religious conflicts seem to be very prevalent in the history of Nigeria, as a result of the sentiment attached to religious symbols and identities. For instance, Asuni (2007) uses the symbol of the cross and the crescent to emphasize the importance of these symbols and the meaning attached to them in conflict resolution and management in Nigeria. The cross and the crescent are symbols of two major religions which have great importance to different groups of people in Nigeria. Perceived disrespect or denigration of these symbols has often had deadly consequences. Someone who perceives a cross simply as two intersecting lines, or the crescent as a curved line, has no knowledge of these symbols which consequently has no meaning for him or her. Sadly the outright manipulation of religious doctrines to compel people towards violence and wanton destruction of life has been the other of the day by some adherent of religious group in Nigeria (Chinwokwu 2013) It is worthy to note that conflicts arising from religious or cultural differences are regarded as value conflict which usually erupts as a result of preference, principles, or ideologies that people have. Scholars have argued that value conflicts are usually the most dangerous, violent and difficult to resolve or manage because values create a sense of identity which is an unshakeable sense of self-worth, which makes life meaningful and include the feeling that one is physically, socially, psychologically and spiritually safe (Asuni 2007) It is theoretically possible to expand resource base, to reduce that form of conflict. It is also theoretically possible to satisfy most psychological needs, once they are recognized and identified. However, it is very difficult to resolve value-based conflicts, as they are non-negotiable for most people (Asuni 2007)

The persistent conflict between crop farmers and herders in Nigeria is an example of how religious and cultural differences can pose a serious challenge in managing protracted social conflict in Nigeria. The increasing Southward migrations of herders has not been without its difficulties for crop farmer as they herders are coming into contact with local communities in the south and west with whom they do not share any cultural affinities or histories. These communities are unfamiliar with their transhumance pattern of life just as the herders have little or no knowledge about the farming behaviours of crop farmers in the South. This becomes further complicated because they differ in terms of religion as is the case with most of the newly arrived herders in the southern part of the country. In the past, the practice of religion by Fulani herders was so unobtrusive that local farmers in the south believed they were Muslim only in name. With their conspicuous display of amulets and magical wares, they were to be avoided as much as possible as they were considered by the natives as people possessed by an evil spirit. To be sure, the practice of Christianity too, was not as high as it is today. But religion has now become a polarizing factor in group relations in Nigeria and the Fulani whose instinct for self-survival had been honed on his adaptability now has to face cultural rejection or hostility from the locals (Ishaku 2017)

The mix of ethnicity and religion has given rise to the present tendency to interpret every disagreement arising from economic tension between the farming communities and the Fulani pastoralist within the framework of religious conflict. This tension became even more profound with the activities of Boko Haram insurgency in Northern Nigeria that seems to target Christianity and Western cultures (Ishaku 2017). The situation is further exacerbated with the influx of foreign Fulani pastoralist in a period of heightened ethno religious crisis. Furthermore, the wanton killings and destruction of farm lands, orchestrated by suspected herdsman across the country, particularly in the middle belt and the south west have led to growing anti-Fulani sentiment across the country. Thus, mere disagreement between herdsman and host communities often lead to widespread violence and killings (Akah 2021)

### **Proliferation of Small and Light Weapons**

It would not be out of place to mention the proliferation of arms as a key factor in fueling and sustaining social conflict across Nigeria. Protracted conflict management challenges facing Nigeria in the age of globalization is revealed by massive suppliers of and importation of small arms and light weapons. The nation has no visible traces of substantial arms and light weapon production, yet there are so many of these weapons in the wrong hands. By 2011, it was estimated that over 640 million small arms were circulating in the world and of these, 100 million were in Africa and eight million were in West Africa. Most intriguing is the fact that 59 per cent of these were in the hands of civilians (Oji and Okeke in Bagudu 2017).

The Arab Spring, especially the Libyan uprising after 2012, seems to have exacerbated the proliferation quagmire. This period also coincided with the globalization of Islamic fundamentalist evidenced by Nigeria's Boko Haram insurgency in northeastern Nigeria and Mali's Tuareg rebels who desire to establish an Islamic State in Mali (Ishaku 2007) Small arms and light weapons are easy to conceal, maintain and cheap to procure and use, but very lethal. Considering the porous nature of the Nigerian borders, the situation is better imagined than seen. Also, the inspired relaxation of boundary enforcement rules caused by globalization appears to have made the Nation lost much of its power on transnational crimes including arms importation which has thwarted peace-building efforts in Nigeria (Awosolu & Esugbohunge 2002)

### **Lack of Funds**

Generally conflict management requires a lot of funds, whether at the family level, group or communal level this is why most African societies choose negotiation rather than adjudication that require more expensive litigation. Lack of funds can hinder both state and non-state actors working in the areas of conflict management. Funding Military operations for peacekeeping or peace enforcement is a capital intensive project. This no doubt is one of the greatest problems encountered in managing protracted social conflict in Nigeria. Nigerian armed forces lack up to date equipments, the equipment mobilized by some of the contingents to support operations are obsolete. The military lacked the manpower and equipment to effectively manage conflict through peace enforcement. In the fight against Boko Haram and banditry in the North east, the military lacked much of the equipment and maintenance capacity, manpower and administration; and the essential intelligence required for counter insurgency operations. Modern counter insurgency warfare invariably requires sufficient and sophisticated jets and spotter aircraft. This would require huge capital to purchased and maintain during field operations. The governments should make an adequate budgetary allocation to the military and other stakeholders and institutions working in the peace-building efforts in Nigeria. The government and civil societies should ensure the funds are not diverted. The case of the former National Security Adviser under Goodluck Jonathan's administration Sambo Dasuki who is currently under investigation by the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) for diverting funds meant for the purchased of military equipment into privates accounts of prominent politicians signpost danger in the fight against insurgency, peace building and enforcement efforts in Nigeria.

### **Corruption**

Over the years, corruption have remained the bane of Nigerian society. The phenomenon is systemic and affects every facet of the Nigerian nation. Despite her rich natural resources and high-quality human capital, the nation is yet to find its rightful place among the

community of Nations. Although there is no widespread or comprehensive definition as to what constitute corrupt behaviours. The most prominent definitions share a common emphasis on the abuse of public power or position for personal or group advantage. Gboyega (1996) refers to corruption as “an impairment of virtues and moral principle” (9) Donnel (2000) on his part sees corruption as the dishonest or fraudulent conduct by those in power it involves the illegitimate use of power to benefit a private or group interest Transparency International a leading global anti-corruption watchdog defines corruption as the abuse of public office for private gains for the benefit of the holder of the office or some third party ( Transparency International in Gboyega 1996)

Corruption has become the norm of the system of socio-political and economic order in Nigeria, and is a major obstacle in conflict management and resolution at all levels of human interaction. The phenomenon has been identified by scholars and practitioners alike as a major cause and or obstacle to conflicts resolution, management and peace building efforts in Nigeria. Corruption undermines state legitimacy and effectiveness by distorting the distribution of public goods; complicates state abilities to manage and resolve conflicts and potentially reignite conflicts and causes violence by fueling political, economic and social grievances and weakening security institutions (Donnel 1996). For instance, terrorism, farmers/herders conflict, kidnapping, banditry, armed robbery, disease, unemployment and other factors which lead to insecurity are directly or indirectly related to corruption (Dike 2000). Political corruption occasioned by bad governance is one of the major causes of poverty in Nigeria. Despite its oil wealth and abundant resources, due to corruption, the nation remains one of the poorest countries in the world with many Nigerians living below the poverty line ((World Bank 2020)

The poverty status of the country results from the fact that selfish individuals divert funds needed for development into their pockets while the masses are left in abject poverty (Gboyega 1996). The result of the widespread corruption in the country plagued by mass poverty and very high levels of unemployment has left a corrosive effect on trust in government and contributes to conflicts and political disorder (Atoubi 2007). Similarly Rev. Fr. Kukah (1999) averred that “unbridled corruption leads to state fragility and destructive conflicts which plunges a state into political instability and destroys legitimacy of government”

### Frequent Changes in Policy Directions

The instability in the political system due to constant change of administration in the country with its attendant change in policy direction has affected protracted conflict management in Nigeria. In Nigeria, most political leaders lack clear knowledge of conflict situation and how to manage them. While some leaders may use negotiation and mediation, others may prefer outright military force

or suppression (Gaya 2006) The Niger Delta conflict is a case in point. To manage the conflict in the region the late President Yardua’s administration introduces the Amnesty Programme in 2009, with the introduction of the Amnesty Programme for repentant militants, some lay down their arms and embrace peace talks with the Government. This laudable initiative brought relative peace in the region as the country and the people in the region benefited from the outcome (Chikonwu 2013). Similarly Jonathan administration continued with the Amnesty Programme. However, the current administration of President Muhammadu Buhari doesn’t seem to pay more attention to the Amnesty Programme. The Government cut funding for the Programmes citing monumental corruption in the Amnesty programme. This invariably affects the peace process in the region. Similarly the host communities’ benefits recently passed by the National Assembly and sent to the President for assent reduced the benefits of host communities in the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB) from the initial 5 to 3 percent. The host communities has roundly rejected the 3 percent and have threatened to shut down oil production if the percentage is not reversed. This policy fluctuations is a cog in the wheel of effective conflict management in Nigeria

### CONCLUSION

The study has examined the challenges of effective conflict management in Nigeria. The discussion focused more on the Government deficit in handling conflicts across the country. Over the years the response of the government to conflict management has been mainly the use of police and military force. The root and trigger causes of violent conflicts have been allowed to persist over time without any sign insight of their solutions. Therefore effective conflict management must be anchored on Good governance in stemming the tide of social conflict in Nigeria. Good governance is sine-quo-non in conflict management especially when it is based on accountability, rule of law, equity and social justice that is capable of accommodating the rich and the poor, the strong and weak, the big and the small within the policy. In this regards good governance is congenial to the promotion, reign and sustenance of peace, and therefore does consciously embark on measures that resolve conflict among its populace and with neighbours.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Government should develop and implements Programmes aimed at promoting multi-cultural and inter-religious dialogue, develop the educational systems and other sources of socialization to strengthen the values of tolerance, pluralism and human co-existence at the grass-root level.

2. Adopt a sustainable long term approach to peace building and conflict transformation in Nigeria that does not merely focus on reducing the systems of social restiveness.

3. The use of dialogue, mediation, negotiation as a feature of integrated conflict management must be put in place as against the show of force employed by the Federal Government in conflict situation across the country.

4. A clear cut policy directive on conflict management must be put in place and must be sustained.

5. Mediator and other third party interveners must be persons of integrity in other not to cast doubt on parties involved in a conflict.

6. Grass root method that involves the traditional method of conflict management should be encouraged.

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