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## Local Conflict Management Strategies and Resilient Factors among selected Feuding Communities in Kwara State, Nigeria

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**Abstract**

This study explores the local conflict management strategies and resilient factors among feuding communities in Kwara State, Nigeria. Adopting a comprehensive qualitative method, the study held 12 Focus group discussions and 20 Key In-Depth Interviews with 20 stakeholders selected from Offa, Erin-Ile, Share and Tsaragi communities. These communities were chosen because they have experienced the most protracted inter-communal conflicts in the state. There were some challenges regarding the adoption of traditional methods and procedures of conflict resolution in the affected communities. The study concluded that traditional methods and procedures of conflict resolution should be adopted in the affected communities to build the resilience required for achieving sustainable peace. The study recommended that the Kwara State government should empower and motivate elders/chiefs in the affected communities to do what is needed to end the protracted feuds and ensure positive peace in the affected communities.

**Keywords:** *Feuding Communities, Resilient factors, Local Conflict, Conflict Management Strategies*

**Introduction**

Life revolves around conflict, and it has become a part of every society. According to Mboho (2023), conflict is a fight for values or claims to status, authority, and limited resources in which the parties involved want to neutralise, harm, or eradicate their opponents and achieve the desired values. Disparities in interests, ideas, beliefs, ideologies, orientations, perceptions, and dispositions are considered to be the source of this paradox. Anytime, there is a dispute or strong disagreements, conflicts between opposing goals and interests are common (Nyoyoko and Umotong, 2015). When two or more individuals or organisations try to own the same thing, occupy the same area or executive position, perform incompatible roles, maintain incompatible objectives, or use mutually incompatible methods to accomplish their goals, a conflict also arises (Nyoyoko and Umotong, 2015). It is believed that conflict is a multifaceted and multi-causal

occurrence. It implies that a single factor does not cause conflicts in civilisations. This further suggests that although it is normal for groups to have different interests and viewpoints, how these differences are communicated and handled influences whether disputes predominantly take the form of non-violent or violent forms. The implication is that, if not handled appropriately, disagreement may become violent, progress to a crisis, and lead to war in the worst situations. For this reason, it is essential to analyse conflicts in civilisations and develop preventative measures (Mboho, 2023).

Like any other post-colonial nation-state, Nigeria's history may be described as one of continuous confrontations with border conflicts among warring contiguous communities. The nature of boundary disputes in precolonial Nigeria had one unique nature: they were fundamentally inter-communal scampers that arose due to the disagreement between two communities exerting certain notable (minor) nobility, supremacy differences and origin and interest. The significance of peace in the socio-economic and political development of any society cannot be over-emphasised. The government can only plan for people when the community is peaceful. It is argued that all conflict-prone communities should develop resilience mechanisms or peacebuilding strategies (Gbadeyan, Ola, Osasola and Ojo, 2024). This underscores the fundamentality of resilience in conflict-prone communities.

While resilience may be challenging to measure, it is genuine in feuding communities. The capacities of the communities to manage, mediate and resolve conflicts differ from one community to the other. As conflict is inevitable, conflict strategy is very essential in ensuring peace within a community. Thus, a community's conflict resilience depends on the strength and quality of internal trust networks, social capital and leadership. Likewise, external assistance from international actors and partners of a country can enhance and strengthen the resilience of a community or communities in conflicts. Based on the above discussion, the study examined the various conflict management strategies that were utilised among elected conflicting communities in Kwara State, Nigeria.

## **Literature Review**

Conflict transformation is a process that goes beyond resolving disputes by addressing underlying issues and transforming relationships. It focuses on changing the structures and dynamics of a conflict to

promote understanding and collaboration rather than simply reaching a compromise or resolution. The process of conflict transformation involves addressing underlying problems and changing relationships in addition to settling disagreements. Rather than just arriving at a compromise or settlement, it focuses on altering the dynamics and structures of a dispute to foster understanding and cooperation. Subsequently, Van-Halema *et al.* (2013) determined that there are four entry steps that are required while trying to settle a dispute. They are as follows: Actor transformation, issue transformation, rule transformation and structural change.

Additionally, the capacity of a conflict-ridden community to maintain or strive for a positive peace can be regarded as resilience. On this, resilience may be characterised as an individual's capacity to endure the consequences of stressful situations or as their inclination to overcome adversity. According to Allen *et al.* (2014), resilience may also include a process of adaptation, change, and even development. Restoring peace and security and ensuring the nation's and the region's resilient and sustained socio-economic growth depend heavily on post-conflict rehabilitation. Since efficient infrastructure is the foundation of the recovery process and urban resilience, along with ecological and social resilience and sustainability, repairing damaged infrastructure is essential to peacebuilding and social resilience (Schlor *et al.*, 2018).

Although the idea of resilience is relatively new to the area of peacebuilding and conflict resolution, it has been included in some studies that examined the relationship between stress and conflict (Fitzpatrick & McWilliam, 2013). Isa (2010) studied the state and ethnic conflicts in Taraba state. The study specifically focused on the Jukun/Chamba and Kuteb communal conflict. The researcher investigated the causes (both remote and immediate) of ethnic conflicts in the above warring communities and the roles of the state and its institutions in managing the conflict. The study used mixed methods (both questionnaire and interview). The study found that the causes of Jukun/Chamba and Kuteb conflict are intra-ruling class struggles for traditional authority, creation of local government, land, employment, resource allocation, and election into offices.

Nwanegbo, Odigbo, and Ochanja (2014) revealed that the crisis in Wukari crisis was caused by mutual suspicion between indigenes and settlers. The study recommended that all stakeholders, including government at all levels and community leaders in Wukari, should work together to address the causes of such a mutual suspicion between

settlers and indigenes. Bashir (2013) examined the activities of Kalare in political violence in Gombe state.

Also, Tuduks (2015) stated that conflicts often ensue between Muslims and Christians, although they are living in the same community. Based on this finding, the study recommended that Christians and Muslims accept that they live in a pluralistic and democratic society. The study further recommended that politicians should desist from using religion to campaign. However, the major gap in this study is that it dwelt so much on religiously-influenced crises by examining how religious conflicts evolved between Muslims and Christians.

Abdullahi and Saka (2007) revealed that the Sayawa uprising related/connected to ethnicity and religion in the state. In other words, the Sayawa uprising was influenced by ethnicity and religion, and it threatened political stability in the state. Based on the results, the study concluded that the conflicts between Sayawa and Hausa/Fulani were influenced by religion and ethnicity. From the conclusion, the study recommended that religious and tribal leaders in the affected communities should be more active and proactive in dealing with the problem. However, the major gap in this study is that it focused mainly on ethnicity and religion rather than on community (communal conflicts).

## **Background to the conflicts and historical analysis of the selected conflicts**

- **Background of the Offa-Erin-Ile Conflicts**

Offa and Erin-Ile are two contiguous communities in the southern part of Kwara State and were formerly in the same local government known as Oyun Local Government Area before the local government was split into two (due to their incessant violent clashes), i.e. Oyun Local Government Areas and Offa Local government Areas with headquarters in Ilemona and Offa respectively. While the new Offa Local Government was created for Offa, Erin-Ile was made to be part of the Oyun local government. Ilemona, the new headquarters of Oyun local government, is a small village when compared to Erin-Ile, but it was politically chosen as the headquarters. This development did not go well with the Erin-Ile community (Fatile, 2011).

According to historical documents, the first clashes between the two communities happened in 1961, following the alleged expansion of the Offa community towards Erin-Ile. Offa built a model market, 'Owode

market,' a disputed boundary land, and consequently, due to expansion, it extended towards Erin-Ile land. This resulted in a violent dispute between the two communities before it was later abandoned. The casualty was higher, forcing the then military administrator, Brigadier General David Bamigboye, to set up a panel of inquiry, which, among others, recommended that the controversial boundary area be made a buffer zone between the two communities, meaning that none of the contending communities could lay claim to the place (Akinyemi, 2006).

Consequently, the two communities continued to live in fear and trepidation, which were usually ignited by slight provocations, turning the two communities into major flashpoints of violence in the state. The 1982/83 clashes between the two communities were the beginnings of the engagements of mercenaries to fight the course of the war between the two communities that were hitherto brothers. Then, the 'Erin-Osun' people joined forces with Erin-Ile to fight Offa. This solidarity was necessary because they shared the same historical origin with the Erin-Ile people. This explains why the chieftaincy titles in the two communities are still the same today. During this crisis, charms and other dangerous weapons were freely used. Erin-Ile women who were married to Offa people and their children were killed during the crisis. However, there were casualties on both parts of Offa and Erin-Ile, which was attributed to dangerous weapons and the potency of the charms. It was this development that led to a ceasefire before the matter was taken to court (Akpomuie and Forae, 2024).

On 20<sup>th</sup> June 2006, another crisis erupted; an indigene of Offa, according to reports, initiated a building project around the disputed boundary, leading to a communal clash that cumulated into the pulling down of the structure, including a part of the wall fence of the Federal Polytechnic, Offa which was also said to fall within the buffer zone. The magnitude of the destruction in both communities, as reported by Akinyemi (2006), resulted in the hiring of warfighters from Modakeke, Iseyin, and Ogbomoso, an action that was replicated in Erin-Ile, too. At both ends, the wealthy sons and daughters allegedly provided millions of naira for the purchase of weapons and ammunition for the touts, irate youths, and mercenaries to fight. The natives of Erin-Ile who had businesses in Offa had such businesses razed; those who got married to Erin-Ile indigenes from Offa were killed, too.

- **Background of the Share-Tsaragi Crisis**

Share and Tsaragi are two contiguous communities belonging to different Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Kwara State, Nigeria; where Share, a Yoruba community, is domiciled in Ifelodun LGA, while Tsaragi is a Nupe-speaking tribe and settlement in Edu LGA of Kwara State. The two communities, which shared an almost indescribable boundary, had cohabited for a long time. Undeniably, except for the indigenes of both communities' natives, it is arguably impossible to set a clear-cut line of boundary between the Yoruba and Nupe-speaking communities. To distinguish the boundary line between Share and Tsaragi, even for duteous observers, is an extraordinary task (IPCR, 2017).

The crises between the two communities have lasted for more than 40 years, involving claims to the rights of supremacy, land ownership, undecided boundary demarcation, and occupation (Gbadeyan 2012). The resurrection of crisis in the wake of the millennium and the escalation of three violent inter-ethnic conflicts between 2000 and 2008 due principally to land and boundary-related issues have characterised this region of the “State of Harmony” (Kwara State) among the crisis zones in Nigeria. With narratives and oral traditions peddled to favour the accounts of each party to the rights of first settlers on the land (Olademo *et al.*, 2021), the two communities that had cohabited peacefully for virtually two centuries before the escalation of crises have become crisis-ridden towns.

Courtesy of the social-cultural distinctions between the two tribes, the Nupe-speaking and also their Yoruba-speaking neighbours established segregated settlements, each with its distinct traditional leader, the Olupako in Share and Nda-Opoto in Tsaragi. Arguably, the attempt to legitimise the control of resources in the area, rather than cultural conflicts, might have been accountable for the set-apart negotiation (Tijani, 2008). This obviously has become the reason for the sporadic, terrible, violent confrontations over time. The Fiangiawa/Fejewe quarters (Gaa fejawe), which both warring neighbours uncompromisingly lay claim to has actually been recognised as the hotspot as well as the core of every clash (IPCR, 2017). The resurgence of crisis in the wake of the millennium and the escalation of three violent inter-ethnic conflicts between 2000 and 2015 due principally to land and boundary-related issues have enlisted this region of the “State of Harmony” (Kwara State) among the crisis zones in Nigeria.

## **Research Methodology**

The study employed qualitative research methods to answer the research questions of the study, which are to identify and analyse the various conflict management strategies employed by feuding communities in Kwara State; investigate the social, cultural, and economic factors that contribute to the resilience of these communities in the face of conflicts and to explore how the implementation of conflict management strategies and the presence of resilient factors impact the overall social dynamics, stability and development of the feuding communities in Kwara State.

The study used both primary and secondary documents using Key In-depth Interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and historical and official documents ( Government white papers, Judicial commissions of inquiry, court judgments, historical documents and gazettes). Adopting a triangulated snowballing and purposive sampling, five key stakeholders were selected from each of the four communities for the qualitative part of the Key in-depth interviews, while 12 FGDs were conducted with the local communities based on the experience within the community, with each consisting of eight members. In all, 20 participants participated in the KIIs, while 96 took part in the FGDs.

## **Results**

### **The Role of Traditional Institutions in the Management of Inter-communal Feud**

Data collected revealed that while traditional institutions may be strong in both communities, they have not effectively managed the feuds between the two communities. Based on the official documents, the two current traditional rulers of the two communities stated that they are committed to ensuring sustainable peace between the two communities. However, there are allegations and counter-allegations that the two traditional rulers are intensifying the feud. One security expert stressed that “the two traditional rulers are expected to educate their subjects on the need for peace to enhance meaningful development. They should do whatever things they can to ensure the immediate end of the feud and restore the sustainable peace they once enjoyed ... We want to see them live as brothers and sisters as they used to in the past” (KII/Security Expert/Ilorin/Male/51years/2020). The researcher believed that it is the responsibility of the traditional rulers in the two communities to

educate their people on the importance of peace and security to development. The perceived failure to do this could have been intensifying the feud.

During the precolonial era, as noted by a traditional chief, “after the war, our forefathers made conscious efforts towards achieving cooperation with the opposing communities as well as inter-communal wellness ... Our forefathers used to see members of neighbouring communities as being part of them ... They used to see them as members of their own family as well. They often said that members of the same family did fight, but after the fight, they came together again even much stronger than before ... That is the kind of attitude or mindset we are expecting from both sides” (KII/Traditional Chief/Offa/Male/74years/2020).

Another elder from Erin-Ile expressed that “in the olden days, African people hardly harbour hatred ... Our forefathers do not have mind for hatred and they don’t fight to extinction since they considered the opposing side as part of their larger family” (KII/Elder/Erin-Ile/Male/68years/2020). Similarly, an elder expressed that “the major reason for the failure of previous peace efforts by the Kwara State Government is that the government did not make adequate use of indigenous/traditional agents of peace such as indigenous elders, kings/emirs, traditional chiefs, native doctors/priests, family heads, age grades, women, secret societies among others” (KII/Traditional Chief/Offa/Male/73years/2020). He added that music and proverbs were often used to resolve conflicts in the olden days. One participant from Tsaragi alleged that “the Olupako of Share does not want the conflict to end ... Imagine inviting a Yoruba militant group to fight and annihilate us. That is quite unexpected from a traditional ruler” (KII/Traditional Chief/Tsaragi/Male/70years/2020). Also, another participant from Tsaragi mentioned that “I don’t think the feud will end because the Olupako and other Share elites are heard seeking assistance from Yoruba-speaking states ... The actions of Olupako and his chiefs will likely worsen the feud” (KII/Traditional Chief/Tsaragi/Male/74years/2020).

The study discovered that the traditional rulers from the two communities were accused of purportedly fuelling the feud due to the deep-seated animosity, mutual suspicion and shared bitterness produced by the feud between the two traditional rulers. This is in line with Kabiti et al.’s (2024) opinion that there is a mutual understanding among communities in Kwara state, Nigeria.

## **Usage of Traditional Methods in Managing Inter-Communal Feuds**

Most of the elder statesmen from both communities opined that indigenous gods were consulted to restore peace. They believe that a major factor in the failure of the previous initiatives at ensuring peace between both neighbourhoods is that the native gods were not involved, unlike in the olden days when native gods were involved. They explained that during the precolonial period and even in some contemporary areas, people were afraid of native gods as well as worship with utmost reverence, even more than the understanding of God among Islamic and Christian faithfuls. One elder explained that “because people fear and worshipped native gods with fear and utmost reverence, parties to a conflict always abided by whatever the gods said through the priests” (KII/Elder /Offa/Male/71years/2020). Another elder from Erin-Ile expressed that:

In the past, where people worshipped native gods, people dreaded and worshipped native gods with fear and reverence. Any judgments made by the gods through priests were strictly followed without questioning and with love. Whenever there was a conflict, people did consult the gods for guidance. The decisions of the gods are followed to the letter with much love, unlike today, where the decisions/judgments of even the Supreme Court and recommendations of the judicial commissions of enquiries are not followed ... If the judgment of the Supreme Court had been enforced, the feud would have been laid to rest ... If the judgments were given by the gods through priests, no party would have rejected them. (KII/Elder /Erin-Ile/Male/71years/2020)

Also, an 81-year-old elder from Erin-Ile explained how oracles/gods are effective in restoring peace and/or conflict resolutions thus:

Whenever there is a conflict, the priest would consult the gods for clarifications regarding which part[ies] is/are wrong, what causes the conflicts, what should be done to address, and what judgment should be given, among others. Parties to the conflict normally found the clarifications and judgments of the gods more appealing and convincing. The judgments of the gods are always respected and honoured by all parties to the conflict ... Native gods were effective in the management and resolution of conflicts in the olden days. If we can return to the past methods, it would be better. (KII/Elder /Erin-Ile/Female/81years/2020)

It was observed that the judgments of the gods on intra or inter-communal conflicts were irrevocable. In those days, people believed that whatever the gods said about the implications of the communal conflicts would surely come to pass, and failure to abide by the judgments of the gods would bring severe consequences to the people. Thus, people were always afraid of disobeying the orders or pronouncements of the gods. One elder mentioned, “In those days, nobody dared disobey the judgments of the gods, unlike how we are even disobeying the judgments of the apex court in Nigeria” (KII/Elder/Offa/Female/69years/2020). Therefore, the priests of the native gods perform the function of mediation through occultism. A 90-year-old woman in Erin-Ile expressed that “the involvement of the gods during conflict is the last stage of conflict resolution in those days. Conflicts were resolved by administering oaths, preparing some concussions for conflicting parties to drink, and offering sacrifices and prayers to appease gods because sometimes conflicts might have been inflicted because gods or ancestors might be angry. Also, divination and incantation were employed to get to the bottom of the conflicts” (KII/Elder/Erin-Ile/Female/90years/2020)

The study found that the traditional conflict resolution and management model can also work in Share/Tsaragi feud because the two groups shared some religious and cultural relationships in the past. These relationships could be brought back again. From the historical document gathered for this study, it was found that the ancestors of the two groups exchanged religious activities such as the masquerades and worshipping of Sango, Ifa and Sanponna deities in the olden days. Specifically, the two groups believed in Egungun festival in the past. While the Masquerade festival is called the Egungun among the Yoruba, it is called the Ndako Gboya or Igunnu among the Nupe. The study found that one of the Masquerades, Gugu masquerade, was said to have originated from the Old Oyo Kingdom. The study also found that the Nupes introduced some Egungun mysteries to the Yoruba people. Besides, the study found that the forefathers of the two groups shared Sango worshipping. It should be noted that Sango was the fourth Alaafin of Oyo Kingdom. He was a Priest-King and transformed into a deity when he died. Thus, the people of the Kingdom always converged to worship him. One participant suggested that Sango could be involved in bringing a sustainable peace between the two communities. According to him, Sango is believed by the Yoruba to be the god of thunder and

lightning, and it is believed to always punish those who have committed crimes such as stealing and even lying. Sango punishes using strikes of lightening. Among the Nupe, Sango can be likened to Sakogba deities because they share a lot in common. To demonstrate their similarity, the grove of both Sango and Sakogba is called Koso. Sango and Sakogba could be involved in bringing a lasting solution to the conflict. Those who are fuelling the crisis, those who are mobilising and equipping the youths and those who are inviting or hiring external warriors should be cursed at the Sango and Sakogba shrines. Also, the youths who allow themselves to be used in the crisis should be cursed as well ... You know, people fear Sango and Sakogba more than they fear God among Muslims and Christians. (KII/Elder/Share/Male/84years/2020).

Also, the study found that the two communities believed in oath-taking in the past. They believed oath-taking could bring about trust and confidence and strengthen social relationships. One participant noted that “since both communities believed in the existence and efficacy of oath-taking in social relationship in the past, oath-taking should be brought again to mend the dented social relationship between the two communities” (KII/Elder/Tsaragi /Male/72years/2020). He added that “since court injunctions, third parties interventions and judicial commissions of enquiry have failed to restore the historical socio-cultural relationship between the two communities, arrangements should be made for the leaders and elites in two communities to take an oath that they would never mobilise and equip youths to engage in violent acts” (KII/Elder/Tsaragi /Male/72years/2020). Another participant expressed that “all conflict actors in the two communities should be mandated to take an oath that they would abide by the agreements/resolutions reached and they would not say, do and act in any way that would trigger violence between the two communities” (KII/Security Expert/Ilorin/Male/44years/2020).

However, some participants from both communities cautioned that oath-taking may not be accepted by most members of the two communities because of the influence of Christianity and Islam.

### **Intermarriage System as a Tool for Managing Inter-Communal Feuds?**

In furtherance, the analysis revealed that the inter-marriage system has failed as a resilience factor between Offa and Erin-Ile. As found by the researcher, the inter-marriage system has long been practised between

the two communities because of the fact that they are both Ibolo-speaking people and because of their proximity. It was also observed that the two communities shared a lot of socio-cultural attributes before the division started. The majority of the participants from both Erin-Ile and Offa argued that both communities practised inter-marriage systems in the past. They, however, mentioned that the practice is gradually fading due to the persistent feud between the two communities. One participant from Erin-Ile stressed that “the practice is fading out because during the previous conflicts, our daughters who were married to Offa people were chased out and their properties were destroyed ... Even an old woman whose marriage was almost 50 years was not exempted ... We even heard that some of them were killed by the Offa thugs” (FGD/Transporter/Erin-Ile/Male/48years/2020). Another participant from Erin-Ile expressed that “you don’t expect such practice to continue when the people of Offa slaughtered, chase out and maimed our daughters/women who married them. Even our girls are scared of marrying people from Offa; they even prefer marrying from other ethnic groups than marrying Offa men because they are insecure ... We never did that to them. Offa women who were married to our people did not experience anything of such ... We protect them” (FGD/Trader/Erin-Ile/Female/55years/2020).

In a counter-argument, a participant from Offa noted that “the allegation of people of Erin-Ile that we killed their daughters who were married to us is baseless. We can never do that ... They are indirectly telling what they did to our daughters who married Erin-Ile men. We have shreds of evidence of how they maimed and molested our daughters who married them... We Offa people value relationships; we can never do that because those Erin-Ile women we married are now Offa people by virtue of marriage” (FGD/Printer/Offa/Male/53years/2020). Another participant from Offa added that “don’t mind those people. They are accusing us of what they did to our daughters who married there ... I could remember during the crisis; they sent our daughters back to us without anything. Their properties were destroyed. One of them told me they were forced out by thugs. Some of them who were recalcitrant were maimed and a few were killed. That is to show how bad the people of Erin-Ile are ... They too rely on *Ogun* [charms]” (FGD/Food seller/Offa/Female/51years/2020). The researcher deduced that the inter-marriage system between the two communities is waning because of the feud, as shown in the arguments or counter-arguments that they maltreated women who married to either

community. Thus, the inter-marriage system is no longer a decisive resilience factor between the two communities.

However, in the case of Share/Tsaragi, despite the indescribable demarcation between the two communities, the inter-marriage system is not as pronounced as stated by the majority of the participants. The researcher observed that this might be as a result of cultural differences between the two communities. The majority of the participants from Tsaragi argued that a Tsaragi man prefers to marry a Tsaragi woman, and families appreciate it more if their sons or daughters marry close to home. According to a participant from Share, “Intermarriage is not that common here, though there are a few cases because of the ethnic and cultural differences” (FGD/Mechanics/Share/Male/47years/2020).

Another participant expressed that “some Muslims did allow intermarriage in the past because of the similar religion. You know, some core Muslims among us do follow the Islamic system of marriage, which is similar to what the majority of Tsaragi people practice. But that was in the past ... The feud has strained our relationship to an unimaginable point” (FGD/Islamic Cleric/Share/Male/60years/2020). However, one participant from Tsaragi mentioned that “our forefathers allowed the forefathers of Share to stay with us ... they taught them Islamic education [Qur’an] ... and a few of our forefathers gave a few of the well-behaved forefathers of Share their daughters to marry. It was like a reward for being good students” (FGD/farmer/politician/Tsaragi/Male/64years/2020). Based on these narratives, it can be deduced that the inter-marriage system between the two communities is not strong and even perhaps non-existent at the present time. While some participants argued that there were few cases in the past, there is perhaps no case in the present era because of the event of war.

## **Discussion of findings**

The study found that modern/democratic methods of resolving and managing conflicts have not yielded the expected results. Therefore, the study suggests that the indigenous/traditional methods should be incorporated as conflict resolutions and management models as well as mechanisms for building resilience. Traditional methods of conflict resolution and management give more attention towards ensuring communal wellness and cooperation after the conflict (either intra or inter-communal conflict) had been resolved. It was found and observed

that the use of Judicial Commission of Enquiries, Courts and other modern conflict resolution methods have consistently failed in restoring cordial relationships between Erin-Ile/Offa on the one hand and Share/Tsaragi on the other hand that they once enjoyed. The effectiveness of the traditional methods of conflict resolution lies in the fact that people dreaded native gods more than God, and consequently worshipped them with utmost reverence. The pronouncements or judgments they give whenever there is either intra or inter-communal conflict are always followed without questioning (Afigbo, 1972; Adewoye, 1977; Cavender, 1988). As found in this study, most of the recommendations of the Judicial Commissions of Enquiries that were set up to resolve the conflicts and Courts' judgments to put the conflicts between Share and Tsaragi and between ErinIle and Offa have not been strictly followed by either or both part(ies). The study posited that if the recommendations and judgments were given by the gods, no party would have disobeyed. According to David (2015), the oracle is "an invaluable means of conflict resolution/management". Zartman (2000) and Busia (1967) cited in Akpurr-Aja (2007) argued that there is a great deal of similarities in traditional methods and procedures of conflict resolution in various ethnic groups in sub-Saharan Africa.

This agrees with the studies of Lanek (1999) cited in Brock-Utne (2000) and Bob-Manuel (2000). The authors concluded that traditional methods stressed the importance of post-conflict cooperation and exchanges. For instance, consensual norms are achievable with the adoption of traditional methods and procedures. This consensual norm is called *Parapo* (togetherness) among the Yoruba of Nigeria and *Ubuntu* among the Zulu-speaking people of South Africa, among others. Conflict groups have to accept the norm because they strongly believe that there would be severe repercussions if they refused to accept it, whereas modern laws are obeyed for fear of punishment.

While democratic/modern institutions have been deployed and applied to resolve the feuds, they have been relatively ineffective in bringing sustainable peace to the four communities. Therefore, the study concluded that traditional methods and procedures of conflict resolution should be adopted in the affected communities to build the resilience required for achieving sustainable peace.

## Conclusion and Recommendations.

Since the feuds have defied democratic/modern methods of conflict resolution and management, the study suggests that solutions should be sought within the affected communities. One way of doing this is that members of the affected communities should be socialised and taught how to live harmoniously and cohesively by the elders/chiefs from the affected communities and outside. Put differently, progress-positive-thinking elders/chiefs in each of the communities should educate and remind the youths how their forefathers lived harmoniously and cohesively in the past and what they need to do to restore that ‘social order’. The Kwara State government should empower and motivate elders/chiefs in the affected communities to do what is needed to end the protracted feuds in the affected communities. Since youths are the dominant conflict agents/actors in most conflict situations, elders/chiefs of the affected communities should be mandated and supported to calm them down and be informed on how they related in the past. Also, they should be encouraged to forgive and move forward. Forgiveness is fundamental in the peacebuilding process. At the same time, they should be taught how to admit mistakes and seek sincere forgiveness.

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