

CULTURE AS BASIS FOR CONFLICT CREATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN AFRICA

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Abstract

The main objective of this work is to examine culture in African traditional societies and how it has led to conflict and the resolution methods that were used to stop the menace in the contemporary societies. Culture by its definition is the computation of the peculiarities of a people's values which is regarded as the totality of their persons. It is seen as part of their culture. The study discovered that the outcome of western model of conflict was anchored on a tripped structure- win-win, win-loose, loose-loose (on rare occasion). A lot depended on the strata of maneuvering or tractability and the willingness of the people involved in the conflict to bring out their perceived realities evidently and with scrupulousness of resolution and ingenuous temperament. In the case of conventional schemes, the people involved in the encounter consistently and collective blame and acclaim so intrinsically in the difficulty and are repeatedly declared to change around through the pronouncement of the dictum. "give a little, get a little". This paper is used secondary method of data collection. This paper suggests that there is no victor no vanquished in the verdict of the intervenors of the reconciliations especially in the traditional methods.

Keywords: Culture, Conflict and Resolution

INTRODUCTION

People's culture show their peculiarity from other person's cultures in the household of human civilization. The analysis of ethnicity in all its immensity and breadth fits to the discipline called anthropology, which analyses social actualities and examines human physiognomies and their connection to their ecosystem. Culture entails the entirety of characters and eccentrics that are atypical behaviors which comprise the people's dialectal morphology, song, work, talents etc. It also comprises a people's communal norms, prohibitions and ethics

Skirmishes are predominant in Conventional African civilization and has its source in numerous facets of their social existence. It is understandable that divergences are a biological occurrence in anthropological discourse except that the method engaged in its understanding, characteristic and managing differs from one civilization to another. Even the configuration and segmentation of skirmishes differ from group to another.

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In conventional African cultures, the perception of conflict and its venality is fixed on the estrangement amongst the persons and the bizarre. Thus, except an ontological perspective is preserved between the two parties, dis-concord continues unmanageable. From this opinion, it is imperative to assert that conflict, from whatever viewpoint, is unescapable. In Africa, the first party to the conflict is human being (Africans imperfect people) and the supernatural (supreme being, deities and ancestors-perfect spirit) as the other part in conflict have quite a significant role to play in dislodging whatever might be responsible for the conflict. Thus, it is established here. (Bernardi, 1952).

CULTURE

As exemplified in Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* (1867). Culture referred to special intellectual or artistic endeavors or products, what today we might call "high culture" as opposed to "popular culture" (or folkways in an earlier usage). By this conceptualization, only a small portion of any group has culture. The rest are potential sources of anarchy. This sense of culture is more closely related to aesthetics to social science. (Schwartz, 1992). Culture consist of the derivatives of experience more or less organized, learned or created by the individuals of a population, including those images and their interpretations transmitted from past generation, from contemporaries or formed individuals themselves. (Hofstede, 1994). It is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another.

Matsumoto (1996), states that it is the set of attitudes, value, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a group of people but different for each individual, communication from one generation to the next. (Tyler, 1870). Culture is that complex whole which include knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habit acquired by man as a member of society

According to Aziza (2001), culture refers to the totality of the pattern of behavior of a particular group of people. It includes everything that makes them distinct from any other group of people, their greeting habit, dressing, social norms and taboos, food, songs and dance patterns, rites of passages from birth through marriage to death, traditional occupation, religion as well as philosophical beliefs.

Culture is an essential part of conflict and conflict resolution. Cultures are like underground rivers that run through our lives and relationships, giving us messages that shape our perceptions, attributions, judgments, and ideas of self and other. (UNESCO, 2013). Though cultures are powerful, they are often unconscious, influencing conflict and attempts to resolve conflict in imperceptible ways.

Etuk (2002), is of the opinion that an entire or total way of life would embody, among other things, what the people think of themselves and the universe in which they live, their world view in other word, how they organize their lives in order to ensure their survival. It can be stated there can be no culture without a society. It can also be said that culture is uniquely human.

CONFLICT

It is significant to note from the onset that the derivatives of conflict in Traditional African societies was germane to the cultural activities of the people. Hence, peace and conflict are indices of culture allied to governance and social engineering in indigenous African societies.

Conflict derived from the families' level even though it has been considered as the basic unity of African political culture. The individual in the family had the right of protest showcasing annoyance over many things. This could be over property inheritance, interpersonal relations and marital matter. (Wade and Gluckman, 1956) have demonstrated, in their works, how conflict originated from the family.

In times of conflict, the protection of cultural heritage in all forms is paramount. Culture is not about stones and buildings. It is about identities and belongings. Culture and heritage carry values from the past that are important for the societies today and tomorrow. Culture must be safeguarded because it is what brings people together as a community, it is what binds them within a shared destiny. (World Heritage Convention, 1972).

CULTURE AS BASIS FOR CONFLICT CREATION IN TRADITIONAL AFRICAN SOCIETIES

The relationship between culture and conflict is deep and complex. It is often pointed out that the perpetrators of violence are really just 'regular people'. But focusing on the human capacity for conflict gives increased legitimacy to the idea that conflict is normal and expected. Conflict is inevitable, it's a hopeful embrace of the individual or group and collective potential for a transcendent and sustainable peace. (Norlander, 2012)

From the economic point of view, it has been found out that conflict also became inevitable in traditional African societies. This in a way justifies Coser's approach to the phenomenology of conflict even across cultural boundaries of the world, land encroachment, territorial dislocation, house sequestration, trade imbalance and non-payment of tributes or loans can be identified as the *r'asond'etre* of conflict origination in traditional African societies. An example could be seen in the chieftaincy imbroglios are prevalent in African Societies. They have had their origin, from time immemorial, from the inevitability of competing forces to the royal throne especially when the norms and customs have been relegated to the background. Conflict is derived from tussle to the throne, where you find particular family claiming rights to the throne which leads to misapplication of custom and tradition and later to impeachment or dethronement.

Conflict can also derive from the breakdown of diplomatic relations among various African societies. For example, what happened in South Africa, it often led to inter-communal conflict and violence and the aftermath is nothing to write home about. (Brautley, 1978).

Invasion of territories for one reason or the other had often occasion conflict, when a community feel their land is been taken away from them by foreigners or invades, it will definitely result to conflict. This has been a cause of dispute in the African traditional societies. An example could be seen between Nigeria and Bakasi Penninsula.

It is not in doubt that insult to the supernatural, breaking of communal taboo, breach of sacred sanctions and the defecation of shrines, sanctuaries, groves have been the derivatives of religious conflict in traditional African societies. Religion ethos often occasioned conflict between the Africans and their deities. The manifestation of such disaffection, and of course anisomery, had tilted the balance of relationship and power between the sacred and the profane. Most people do not tolerate any insult especially when it has to with their religion and as such leads to conflict. (Adewole, 1977).

Africans cherished their personality and ethos of respect and honour. Thus, assault on personality often generated conflict. When one has principles that he or she adhered to and they are asked to go against. It infringes against their belief and this could lead to conflict.

The breakdown of covenant and the negligence of social responsibilities were obvious ground for generating conflict, cultural norms, which often occasioned social engineering, especially during the celebration of festival and other traditional ceremonies, also generated conflict in traditional African societies. Where what is acceptable to one community is unacceptable to the other. For example, in some culture eating of dogs is seen as taboo while it is acceptable in other culture.

Despite many merits of conflict in social development, the lack of understanding of its positive dimensions has been contributory to the dominance of the negative ideas about conflict. In northern Ghana for example (which comprises the Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions).

The majority groups refer to the ethnic groups which hold traditional political power, while the minority ethnic groups constitute the subgroup or subordinate tribes (Gad, 2003; Chen, 2010). The majority ethnic groups include the Dagomba, Gonja, Nanumba and Mamprusi, which historically gained traditional political power over the previously non-chiefly or subgroups in neighbouring territories, such as the Konkomba, Mo, Nawuri and Kusasi, by conquest. (Ghandi: 2010). The major trigger of conflict between the majority and minority groups is usually by expressions of desire for emancipation by the latter groups for self-rule and ownership of land demarcated by territorial boundaries. (Hippolyt, 2003). The apparent emergence of conflicts between the two groups over the demands of the minorities finds explanations in various theories of conflict, such as the Psycho-cultural Conflict Theory, the Greed-grievance Theory, the Economic Conflict Theory and the Realistic Group Conflict Theory. All these explain the causes of conflict in the African traditional societies.

The Psycho-Cultural conflict theory contends that differences in identity based on people's ethnic origin and culture is one of the most important explanations for violent conflicts. Such conflicts aim to redeem the self-esteem and dignity of a cultural group (Ross: 2001). Identity related conflicts often result to violent, destructive and long lasting conflicts that are difficult to resolve (Tsikata and Seini, 2004). Such conflicts result from conceptual differences about identity between the majority and the minority.

According to Collier and Hoeffler (2002), the Greed-grievance theory explains that preferences and constraints dictate the circumstances that favor rebellions. They state that, societies can be more prone to conflict because preferences for rebellion are unusually strong, or because constraints on rebellion (e.g. power and greater control over resources-greed) are unusually weak. Thus, the greed side of the theory implies that majorities in a conflict are motivated to defend and maintain their desires for power and control over resources. This is usually against the interests of a rebelling minority group, who lack power and control over resources on the basis of identity e.g. ethnicity, as the grievance side of the theory.

The economic theory of conflict, Collier and Rohner (2007, cited in Mzumara, 2012), argue that the most important motivation of conflict is the ability of the predator group to sustain itself in terms of military and financial capabilities. These determine the likelihood of a country experiencing internal violent conflicts or civil war. Collier (2006) explains further that in societies where there are perceived grievances by minority group and lust for power by the majority group such that there is social inequality between the groups, a situation known as social deprivation on the part of the minority is said to exist. The risk of conflict occurring depends on the feasibility or the expected economic gains from the conflict by the rebelling minority group (Collier, 2006). Macartan (2003) asserts that economic conflicts over natural resources such as land, and power to control such resources result from poverty on the part of the aggrieved minority and greed by the majority. The author therefore suggests that such understanding should lead to the control of the proliferation of small arms and economic policies that encourage donors to focus on development projects for poverty reduction, and the promotion of agricultural production by the state. The recognition of conceptual differences in power should not also necessarily result to violence and chaos by the minority, but rather, a search for alternative sources of power such as the National House of Chiefs and religious leaders as mediators, and the judicial system for the purpose of negotiations for mutual agreements (Galaa and Bukari, 2014).

The realistic group conflict theory also expresses how selfish interests between groups lead to competition for scarce resources (Sidanius and Pratto, 1999). It explains that parties in conflict with each other identify themselves on the basis of some material and socio-cultural realities. As competition develops and inter-group hostility increases, there emerges a stage where cooperation and reciprocal interaction between the groups are restored. Thus, the realistic group

conflict theory anchors on three main elements as the basis of conflict, namely group identity, organisation and competition for scarce resources. A critical view of the inter-ethnic conflicts in northern Ghana under a theoretical lens shows that they are related to issues of identity (ethnicity), power (chieftaincy) and access to resources (e.g. land rights). In other words, they are struggles over questions of what constitutes authentic local representation, and legitimate land rights. (Jonsson, 2007).

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

In African traditional societies, conflict management through indigenous institutions perform a healing function. It provides opportunity for examinations of alternative positive decision to resolve differences. As a result, the role actors are Kings and chief, Elders, Family etc for dispute settlement and justice dispensation. (Nwosile, 2005).

KINGS AND CHIEFS

According to Taiwo (1982), in most cases, the word of an African king was law never to be flouted by anyone in his kingdom. African kings played very significant roles in conflict resolution. They have been adjudged suitable for providing Forum, process, principles, pattern, pace, context and direction for the fine-tuning and inauguration of peace and harmony, the preserves of growth and development in indigenous African societies. These provisions were in tune with the norms and customs of the kingdoms which the kings inherited from their ancestors. Thus, to facilitate peace in his domain and jurisdiction the African king was imbued with enduring sense of history of the norms and nuances of the kingdom, unwavering wisdom of distilling facts from falsehood in the treatment of issues of conflict, high level of epitomizing moral order, peace process and classical demonstration of harmony and broader legitimization of the vital link between the universe and the supernatural order.

The chiefs have the wherewithal of conflict resolution in the society. This they have learnt by heart and experience from their forebears who bequeathed the art to them. Some of them were more practical and experience than the kings who they installed. This was why it was not so easy a task for the kings to underrate the intelligence and wisdom of their chiefs. The chiefs were often respected for the wealth of knowledge in reconciliation and enduring sense of history of the culture of the kingdoms. By their status and role model, therefore, African kings and chiefs must foster unity, initiate program of development and especially partnered peace and harmony for the benefits of all the subjects in their domain.

African chiefs were the watchdogs for the morality and propriety of manners for the youth and the elderly in African societies. Fundamentally, the basis of unity, common understanding and mutuality was good behaviour and action geared towards social development in the society. Many African chiefs lived closely with the townspeople and monitored the mode of behaviour of the people. Indeed, chiefs in their various quarters and wards had court session where parties to the conflict often met for the resolution of their conflicts. In the event of mobility to handle the conflict, the chiefs of such a quarter or ward engineered the process of transferring the matter to the higher level, where kings and others chiefs listened to and resolved the conflict. This presupposes the fact that African chiefs always prepared the ground for eventual resolution of conflict in African societies.

ANCESTORS

The ancestors/ancestresses have been conceived as the living dead sharing dual existences, the living world and the spiritual community. (Oloba, 2008). The experience gained while on earth usually informed the level of reflections of earth activities in the spiritual community. Such an experience was never given off since the connective veins and blood continually flowed in their offspring, who

though, lacked the requisite experience, must be guided to gain the experience of life. Such an experience is that of motivation and coordination in the art of conflict resolution. Indeed, it is never in doubt that the ancestors would bring to bear on their ancestral and serene community, the art of facilitating peace and harmony, which undoubtedly, resonated in the modular exhibition of peaceful development. Thus, the art of conflict resolution would not have been limited to earthly living and sojourn but that it continued in the ancestral community. The ancestral community, therefore, would have been charged with series of well-coordinated activities reflective of the physical world. Hence, the ancestral community is the spiritual world/universe and therefore the next stage of human sojourn through transformation into the spiritual realm

The main responsibility of African ancestors for your proper understanding is to ensure social equilibrium and justice. Thus, authority is sufficiently vested in them. C.J. Calhoun (1980) identified marked differences between the authority of the ancestors and that of the living person. He concluded that the authority of the ancestors is “pervasive and absolute” while that of the living is “partial and subject to challenge”. This presupposes the fact that the living are subservient to the ancestors.

African ancestors have been adjudged one of the key personalities in conflict resolution. It has been established that the ancestors once lived the earthly universe before they transformed into the spiritual universe where they reflectively watched over the affairs and activities of the living person. (Ojo, 1973). By so doing they had the experience and wherewithal of peace-making far and above the living persons. Indeed, the ancestors bequeathed the art of conflict resolution to the living persons while quitting the earthly universe. This is the reason why the ancestors ensured that what they left behind in the physical world was maintained and upheld for continuity.

ELDERS

Elders have wisdom and knowledge and respect as trustworthy mediators. They play a pro active role to promote social cohesion, peace, harmony, co-existence and reactive role in resolving disputes which have already occurred. (Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, 2008). Prominent and old- age’s group are the source of indigenous knowledge as they have experience and perception about their environment, such age perception are different from the society. (Fiseha, et al, 2011).

Elders were the focus of attention to the youth and the adolescent who look on in life for moments of enjoyment, fulfilling career and association and who regarded the aged person as repository of knowledge and wisdom as well as shining example of projecting an enduring sense of history of the society. That history is no doubt replete with methods of conflict resolution that must be learnt and acquired because the young shall grow and later become elderly. It is, therefore, significant for you to note that there is transitional period in the stages of life in African societies. The transitional period was, however, determined by the rate of mentality and the interest and enthusiasm of both the youth (to lean fast and acquire knowledge) and the living elders (to impart sufficient practical knowledge on the youth who will later take over the rein of affairs from them).

FAMILY

Fundamentally the family is a social unit and the bedrock of relationships and development. The family had been the unit of political culture in Africa and as such the foundation of conflict resolution. The art of conflict resolution, as we have discussed, promoted peace and harmony for the African populace. This presupposes the fact that the family must first feel the pulse of peace and harmony before it extends to the larger society. Thus, peace and harmony at the family level had been the foundation of a sound and positive political culture. At the family level the engineers (facilitators) of peace and harmony were the family heads, who, in their own rights were also considered as elders.

As a matter of fact, family heads in African societies were the most aged and matured otherwise they would have lacked the experience and wisdom with which to resolve conflicts. They must be the oldest person in the family.

The family heads in Africa had the capacity and experience of resolving conflicts within the family set up. As elders, the family heads possess all the sterling qualities which we earlier discussed on the living elders. As the oldest in the family and as ancestors in the making, they demonstrated the art of resolving conflict as bequeathed to them by the family ancestors. They therefore had the capacity of resolving conflicts such as marital brawl between co-wives in the family, between wives and husbands, between children and mothers as well as quarrels arising from property inheritance. Whatever conflicts the family heads were unable to resolve were transferred to the ward heads. The family heads were conscious of the cord of unity among family members. They therefore exercised: caution, patience and level headedness.

AGE-GRADE ASSOCIATION

The involvement of the individuals (with their oratory talents and mediating skills) in a given age-grade association resonated in the fact that conflicts never remained unresolved in African indigenous societies. For example, the Mbeere of Kenya had a significant moot proceeding which recognized the capacity of the individuals in conflict resolution. Jack Glazier (1976) observed among the Mbeere that,

Moots were not standing bodies in the sense that the same group of men had all the cases, but were situational assemblies which disbanded when any case concluded. Because argumentation, persuasion, and compromise determined the outcome of a dispute, the personal talent of moot members were emphasized, and particular men from the pool of elders appeared as councilors in case after case. An individual's ability to serve on such a moot was not contingent on his membership in a particular class or set without exception informants stress ability rather than set or class status as the major criterion in moot participation and leadership.

The moot among the Kpelle of Uganda as James I. Gibbs Jr. (1963) reported was a therapeutic model of conflict resolution. Similarly, the moot among the Suku of southwestern Congo, recognized the talent of the advocate in pleading for a case. Kopytoff (1978). The Yoruba of southwestern Nigeria had a different approach of the age-grade association towards conflict resolution. Although, the Yoruba recognized talent possession by some individual members of the association, it further required maturity, experience and wisdom.

The age-grade associations, as you must understand, were used to perform police duties since they were considered as having military process. Such duties included summoning offenders to the scene of conflict resolution, watching over the behaviour of parties to the conflict at the scene of reconciliation, ensuring adherence to and application of the norms and customs governing conflict resolution and especially protecting the lives of the crowd of spectators present at the scene of conflict resolution in African indigenous societies. Thus, the age-grade association, especially of the youthful sets, played so considerable roles in peace process and the actualization of reconciliation. It was, therefore, challenging for the age-grade association, to ascertain truthful disposition of the audience at the scene of conflict resolution. Equally and perhaps more challenging, was the fact of compromise among the tribunal or moot, to reach reasonable conclusion of restoring peace and harmony back to the society.

The age-grade association equals a task force which was given a special mandate in indigenous African societies. A task force in that context was an organized labour unit working for the development of the society. They ensured the well-being and social welfare of the populace

thereby making them peaceful and ready to shun chaos and violence. Indeed, law and order was ascertained and sustained in indigenous African societies.

SECRET SOCIETIES

Secret societies occupied prominent place in traditional African societies. They had been so widespread in Africa before the advent of missionaries and European administrators. They are broadly categorized into two viz religious secret societies connected with divinities or ancestors, examples include the Leopard, the Crocodile and the Alligator widespread in Sierra Leone, Ghana and in some parts of Benin and Nigeria. Those secret societies connected with the ancestral secret societies, are the ogboni, Agemo and Egungun of the Yoruba, the Ekpe of Calabar and the Poro and the Sande of the Mendes in Sierra Leone. The divinities include Orim for the Tarok people, Oro of the Yoruba of south west Nigeria and the Ekpe of the Efiks as well as Ekpo among the Ibibios. And the totemic secret societies examples, which are the ancestral secret societies, are the Ogboni, Agemo and Egungun of the Yoruba, the Ekpe of Calabar and the Poro and the Sande of the Mendes in Sierra Leone.

The secret societies impacted a lot on the Africans at the grass root level. Religiously the secret societies often performed sacrifices towards warding off evil spirit, bad omen and they generally influence the well-being of the people in the society. Politically, the members of secret societies saw to it that they influence political development in the society. Indeed, they are involved in the selection of kings and chiefs in African societies with a view to curbing despotic rule. Socially, they act as law enforcing agenda towards enhancing public morality.

Members of the secret societies in Africa are pursuers of truth, enforcers of order and ethics of the society. They are well disciplined and often chastise erring members thus projecting good image of public probity. This was why they often detected antisocial activities and crimes against the supernatural and humanity. Thus, undesirable elements in traditional African societies often received the wrath of the punishment of secret societies across cultural boundaries. Enforcement of discipline, enhancement of mutuality neutralized the unpleasantness of criminal tendencies in societies. It is only in the atmosphere of truth, transparent honesty and harmonious relationship that development can take place. Idowu (2005). Conflict resolution demands maturity on the part of peace facilitators, openness of mind, great sense of history and enthusiasm anchored on capacity to wield enough power. Members of various secret societies in Africa before the colonial rule, had enough of the foregoing attributes. The Poro society in Sierra Leone and the Ogboni cult among the Yoruba of south west Nigeria had long established the models of conflict resolution geared towards peaceful co-existence of people in their environment.

Secret societies in Africa had devised the extra-judicial means of seeking to resolve an almost difficult conflict. It usually involved ritual performance, oath taking and the administration of ordeals. For example, you will get to understand that the edan was a symbol of ritual detection of crime in ogboni cult among the Yoruba of southwest Nigeria. The Poro of Sierra Leone also devised a ritual performance in the act ensuring peaceful and harmonious relationship. (Ukpong, 1989).

EXTRAJUDICIAL METHOD

In traditional African society, peacemaking models, religion and philosophy were inseparable. Thus, dealing with extra-judicial methods in African societies, the force of traditional religion is inevitable. Adewoye (1977) succinctly subscribed to this view. It thus shows quite clearly that in the African setting, there were known and unknown causes of conflict. In the known causes of conflict, the kings, chiefs and elders stood the ground of resolving them, while in the unknown causes of conflict, the supernatural and their ministers/representatives (such as priests, priestesses and diviners) stage

managed the conflict resolution through strategies considered very metaphysical in approach and administration.

Both known and unknown causes of conflict were treated in the religious cults. The divinities played crucial roles not only in deputizing for the Supreme Being, but also in the enhancement of social stability and harmonious relationship. They were significant anchors of peace making through the invisible order. They instilled psychological fear in the people. Among the Yoruba, for example, Sango (god of thunder) Ogun (god of iron) Aiyelala (god of social justice), had great force on the administration of justice and moral ethics. Woe betides an erring African who encounters the wrath of these gods. This explains why Sango usually exposed theft and lying. Lightening usually struck the offender dead. The emblem of Ogun (iron) was always given to a witness to kiss as a means of verifying his claims of truthful disposition. (Fadipe, 1991)

Extrajudicial method was designed for the purpose of unraveling difficult and unknown conflicts aimed at resolving them. There were different types of conflict with some issues attached. Such issues were not easily identified for resolution. They sometimes deserved divine ordering when human comprehension has failed, wise, wisdom and diligence were significantly resorted to. The method was adjudged so relevant to speedy understanding and early resolution of conflicts in African societies. Indeed, the knowledge of conflicting situation often resulted in the understanding and articulation of the suitable resolution model attendant on it. This suggests to you that history played a crucial role in dictating the trend or magnitude or direction of conflict resolution. (Olaoba, 2008).

INTER-MARRIAGES

Marital institution entails such organizational structure of marriage, which produced systemic relationship in traditional African societies. It also means the production of familial relationship that sets in motion cohabitation and mutuality. Marital institution is the basic level of unity across cultural boundaries. What emerged from the marital institution in traditional African societies included: -

- Family unit
- Lineage system
- Social attachment
- Unity of ideas
- Fraternity

Inter-marriages were initiated and concluded in traditional African societies for diverse purposes. These purposes, typified the unity of action and celebration of mutuality. Inter-marriages extended the frontier of knowledge and broadened the geography of development in societies. African culture thrives on solid foundation and good mannerly disposition, through which development had flourished in the society. Such a development began with the family system orchestrated in marital institution.

In the understanding of inter-marriages inducing peacemaking projection in traditional African societies, marital institution enhanced great deal of respect and honour for the in-laws. It also demonstrated certain degree of humility and was almost impossible to ignite conflict between and among in-laws. It was also a reality for the in-laws to resolve conflicts between and among spouses with accelerated dispensation of social justice. Among the Barotse of Southern Africa, Max Gluckman (1956) recorded significant drives towards exhibiting the power of relating well with one's own in-laws. Thus, the in-laws had powerful means of dousing tension that might envelope social relationship occasioned in African inter-marriages.

Fabunmi (1895) states that in Yoruba society of southwestern Nigeria, it is interesting to know that Moremi demonstrated the dynamism of beauty cherished by the Igbo king when the former was captured in an inter-ethnic insurrection. Moremi with a drive of luck from her beauty inter-married the Igbo King even-though with a keen sense of diplomacy and patriotism for her Ife origin.

The Ife/Igbo inter-ethnic fratricidal war produced a romantic device of peace making gestures except that this was unknown to the Igbo warring contingents let alone to the unassuming Igbo king, who lavished his love to a thoroughly scheming beautiful woman in Moremi. The end result of the 'temporary' inter- marriage with the Igbo king under suspicious circumstances was peaceful restoration of law and order to a turbulent muddy environment.

MEDIATION METHOD

Mediation is an art of intervening in a conflicting situation. This interventionist process allowed for installing common ground for restoring friendly relations, at one time or the other that interventionist tendencies usually allowed for dousing tension brought about by conflict. Mediation entails standing shoulder high have others toward interceding and ensuring peaceful relations in the society.

Africans had often displayed interventionist approach to conflict resolution in their domain-family, market, farmstead and shrines as well as on the street. Mediation was a purposeful art through significant media and principles governing the process of social justice and harmonious relationship. You will find out that the parties to the conflict hardly ever appreciated the effects of the conflict until persuaded to understand the implications of their actions. It was also observable that one of the parties to the conflict, must after a while, be reasonable by Gluckman's standard (1956) before the parties were assisted by the mediators. Rage and fury were understandably akin to demonstration of fists without regard to sensibility on the part of the parties to the conflict. The scene of the conflict was no doubt a hot bed of argument, disaffection and displeasure borne out of the clash of interest with which the issues of conflict were couched.

The atmosphere under which mediation took place was hitherto helly and hot until transformed to free and fair dealing not only of the parties to the conflict but also the mediators. Thus, the mediators had a good and working knowledge of the conflict situation and the enraged mood of the parties to the conflict. The mediators, therefore, struggled to cool the temper and doused the tension as the starting point of positive mediation which had certain enviable qualities that which the parties to the conflict admired. (Adewoye, 1977).

CULTURE RESOLUTION OF CONFLICT WITHIN THE TRADITIONAL AND URBAN SOCIETIES

It is necessary to weigh the level of balance in the wedlock between traditional and western methods of conflict resolution in a totally different environment, space and time. Doing so helps us to understand the degree of mutual relationship they could be subjected to. It also helps us to measure the degree of relevance and application of one method to the other under whatever circumstance and capacity. Both methods are representative of a culture and civilization and product of totally different era and epoch of development. It is just good enough that both methods signified development process and experience of yet totally different people and psyche. The merger of the two methods symbolized cultural fusion brought about by acculturation for whatever purpose and motive. It is not in doubt, however, that the imperial tendencies of the western method were an overriding clause subjecting the traditional method to reduction in substance and relevance. Each method of conflict resolution whether traditional or western had its salient characteristics hereunder catalogued.

In the area of fundamental differentiation, traditional and western methods markedly varied. Too much of confidentiality is associated with the western method in the process of conflict resolution. In the case of the traditional method, you will find out that it is open-ended given room to structural application of principles and the dominance of custom and norms at the procedural level.

In the resolution of conflict in traditional African societies, the audience included all members of the community and thus the result was always community focused. No one dare

disagreed with the outcome since it would have received supernatural attention and blessing. Whereas western method of conflict resolution had the exclusive audience in the disputants.

Western model of conflict is very flexible in operation paving way for manipulation and pliability. This is absent in the traditional method which derived its mode of operation from the laid down customs and norms. This suggests that it is culture specific. Traditional method of conflict resolution recognized extrajudicial devices and power in the process of resolving conflict. The supernatural connectivity enforced sanctions and plagued erring offenders. Western method of conflict resolution lacks such mundane powers.

The outcome of western model of conflict is anchored on a tripod structure – win-win, win-loose, loose-loose (on rare occasion). A lot depend on the level of manipulation or flexibility and the readiness of the parties to the conflict to state the facts clearly and with honesty of purpose and truthful disposition. In the case of traditional method, the parties to the conflict proportionately shared the blame and praise so inherent in the matter and were often adjudged to shift ground through the pronouncement of the dictum: “give a little, get a little”. This thesis suggests that there is no victor no vanquished in the verdict of the interveners or the reconciliatory.

The training of the peacemakers or facilitators even though required for the traditional and western methods of conflict resolution, they quite varied. One requires informal training (traditional/method) with lots of experience through observation, the other demands for a formal training (western method) with experimental sensibility. Thus, the professionalism that was so required are also of different posturing. One requires the school system and rigorous systemization of the process (western method) while the other needs sound memory, closer observation and systemic demonstration (traditional method) of the process involved in comprehending conflict resolution in traditional African societies.

Advantageously, western model saves time much more than litigation (which was the early pattern of western adjudicatory system). Traditional method can be rated much cheaper, quicker and peace-focused. There is enough evidence to attest to the desirability of party to the conflict through the end of conflict resolution ceremony. In that ceremony, one needs to understand that parties to the conflict exhibited their peaceful disposition and acceptability of the resolution out come through palm wine drink, bean cake eating, kolanut chewing and warm embrace as well as glowing and beaming smiles to the admiration of members of the audience and the delight of the facilitators of the emergent peace and harmony.

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