

TAROK, WOLOF, MANDIKA JOKING RELATIONSHIPS, HUMOUR AND PEACE BUILDING IN AFRICA

ELIAS NANKAP LAMLE (PhD: Leuven-Brussels)¹
&
ACP. DAUDA ILIYA AYUBA²

Conflict, to choose a simile, is like sex. Victorians saw sex as something one must tolerate, not enjoy. Like sex, conflict should happen between persons committed to continuity, occur with appropriate frequency, be mutually exciting, activate both parties equally to contribute their best selves, and be prolonged until mutually satisfactory climax is possible for each. When it is over, both should feel better as a result. And its energy should empower other areas of life with vitality and creativity. Like sex, conflict is a source of joy, fulfillment, empowerment and celebration. (*Augsburger 1992*)

Abstract

This paper introduced the concept of laughter and humor from the point of an African peace building ritual called joking relationship. The paper started by conceptualizing laughter, humor and conflict management and also explained the role of laughter and humors in conflict situations in Africa. It adopted the Relief theory of humor by Sigmund Freud to explain the role it plays in conflict management. This paper used secondary sources to explain the role of humor and laughter in managing conflict among the joking relationship of the Wolof-Mandinka in Gambians and the Tarok people of Plateau State of Nigeria as a case study. The paper recommends the continuous promotion of the use of joking relationships which emphasise humor and laughter by African societies in managing conflict. It also states clearly at the community level, joking relationships should be introduced by different societies as it cements relationships between communities and helps to manage many other forms of communal conflict.

Keywords: Laughter, humor, conflict management, peace building

INTRODUCTION

Humour and laughter plays a vital role in cementing relationships and managing conflict in conflict situations and inter-community relationships. Over time, African society have learned to infuse the concept of laughter and humour in managing conflict and also peace building between different societies and even at the community level. One of such avenues for humour and laughter is joking relationship.

The use of laughter and humour which is focal to this research has been argued by anthropologists to be a new phenomenon. To some, laughter and humour is as old as human itself. Anthropologists opine that societies differ and as such not every society has the ability to have joking relationships with others. On the other hand, psychologists view laughter as a means of relieving accumulated nervous energy (Freud, 1960). It is on this basis this paper adopts the relief theory of Sigmund Freud which states that all laugh-

¹ Elias Nankap Lamle (PhD: Leuven-Brussels) is a Senior Lecturer at the Centre for Conflict Managements and Peace Studies, University of Jos, Nigeria. Dr. Lamle is also a member of the International Advisory Board of the Peace Fellows / Center for African Peace and Conflict Resolution / California State University, Sacramento, USA.

² ACP. Dauda Iliya Ayuba is a PhD student at the Centre for Conflict Management and Peace studies, University of Jos. He is also the Commanding Officer No. 3 Squadron, Police Mobile Force Enugu

producing situations are pleasurable because they save psychic energy. The theory seeks to describe humour in the line of a tension release model. Freud (1960) posits that excess tension is relieved by laughter and humour which addresses the quest for conflict between people.

Laughter and humour is viewed as a form of friendliness and has over time served as a means of relieving people from having nervous feelings towards each other or between groups. Around the world today, laughter and humour can play a critical role in building positive relations. However, social institutions exist everywhere and many African States have interwoven elaborate ties of reciprocal obligations, behavioral conventions and taboos, stereotyping by ethnicity, region of origin. Plaisanterie has been enshrined in the classic Africanists anthropological literature as a social institution that reinforces inter-ethnic integration and manages inter-group conflict (Colson, 1953). Many scholars have adopted a more critical stand on laughter and humour and have applied conflict perspectives to the maintenance of harmony and management of conflict. This paper will explore the contemporary role of joking relationship, which produces laughter and humour in conflict management in southwestern Wolof Gambia, and the Tarok in middle belt of Nigeria.

HISTORY/ BACKGROUND OF WOLOF IN GAMBIA AND THE TAROK OF PLATEAU STATE IN NIGERIA

The Gambia is a small but ethnically and religiously plural nation that is viewed as a haven of stability in West Africa (Roberts, 2005). Some of this tranquility is attributable to historical and material conditions, such as a relatively peaceful colonial history and also a lack of natural resources or mineral wealth of interest to external factors. Social institutions such as laughter, humour, joking relationships have helped integrate diverse populations have also played a significant and ongoing role in conflict management.

The main ethnic groups of Gambia are Wolof, Jola, Mandika, Serer, Sarahule, Manjango, Bassari, etc. according to scholars, the process of integration of the diverse groups might have commenced its germination and active gestation in the Sahara on antiquity and a green and well-watered area. The continuous emigration was accompanied by extensive inter-ethnic integration.

Gambia is an example of the model of indirect rule that characterized British colonialism. The post-colonial regimes of the Gambia have produced many aspects of the colonial model including minimal-legal rational state apparatus. Laughter, humour, folk systems, joking relationships have overtime maintained a strong and continuing presence of peace and also helped in conflict management. (Lamle, 2011). Despite the peaceful reputation of The Gambia, intra-societal and inter-communal friction is pervasive. Social institutions act as mediums for processes of inclusion and differentiation play a complex role in managing tensions and determining whether or not they develop into manifest disputes. Although conflict is an ongoing feature of The Gambia, the notion of the calming effects of robust networks of cross-cutting ties remains valid in contemporary southwest. These social institutions have historical roots of varying depth, but all of them are undergoing continual reworking as citizens apply and re-create them in changing circumstances. The most important of such structured institutions are a semi structurally accepted in station called joking relationship.

The Tarok People are located in the middle belt region of Nigeria. They are found in Langtang-North, Langtang-South, Wase, Mikang and Kanke Local Government Areas of Plateau State. The Tarok People are called O Tarok and they are an amalgamation of various peoples who form a homogenous group (Lamle, 1995). The constituents were Pe, Ngas, Jukun, Boghom, Tel and Yiwom migrated and settled with the Timwat and Funyallang clan of Tarok. (Lamle, 2001). Christianity and colonialism came into Tarok land in 1904 which the inhabitants could not trust missionaries and colonialists as such, did not encourage others to join them. With the advent of westernization, migrants of Tarok land used the connections of the colonialists and missionaries to acquire education (Lamle, 2005).

Other names have been used for Tarok as Appa, Yergem. The name Appa is used by Jukun to refer to i'Tarok as a friendship term. (Lamle, 2011). These points to the fact that Tarok was a nickname

given to the Tal/ Ngas immigrants. The name of the original group is lost and replaced by a nickname. The Tarok people have an ancestral cult which retains prestige and importance despite the influx of Christianity. Tarok ancestors are called O'rim that are represented by initiated males. They are mostly heard but appear to be masked figures for the purpose of disciplining stubborn women and for making prophecies. The primary purpose of the O'rim is to maintain order, both spiritually and physically within the society. They also prepare for warfare and other collective action. In maintaining order, women are obligated to cook food as chastisements for being stubborn. There is a special season where the O'rim come out to fine offenders. One of the institution in maintaining peace and the mediations of conflict in Tarokland is joking relationship. In Tarokland, joking relationship is practiced at the level of both human and the ancestors called O'rim. O'rim can enact joking relationship with people and people can also enact joking relationships with O'rim. It's a reciprocal relationship in which people and ancestors mediate their conflict stations. In this paper, the relief theory of Sigmund Freud in humor and laughter will be considered. In the next section of the paper, we examine the relief theory as propounded by Sigmund Freud.

RELIEF THEORY

The relief theory is propounded by Sigmund Freud (1960), a psychologist. The theory states that all laugh-producing situations are pleasurable because they save energy. It brings to the person pleasure because it spares expenditure of feeling, comedy. This excess energy is relieved by the act of laughter. Freud perceives laughter and humour as a form of release. He posits that deriving humour from a joke is a way human's relief tension and energy. It is on this basis that Freud concludes that jokes are more than they seem. He opines that the humour enjoyed in jokes bears close relations with dreams and this is because both have hidden benefits, which allows us to enjoy hidden pleasure unconsciously. In collation with Sigmund Freud theory, Augsburg's (1992) statement above indicates how conflict can be beneficial and pleasurable to the society if appropriately managed. That's form the basis of humor and laughter in some societies prominent among which joking relationship is practiced. We will in the next section conceptualize the terms that are used before examining how humour in joking relationships are engaged in the mediation of conflicts within the societies that are mentioned above.

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF TERMS

1. **Laughter:** Laughter is a part of human behavior regulated by the brain, helping humans clarify their intentions in social interaction and providing an emotional context to conversations. Laughter is used as a signal for being part of the group which connotes acceptance and positive interactions with others (Camazine, Denebourg, Sneyd, Theraulaz, Bonabeau, 2003). Laughter is viewed by many theorists as relieving an accumulation of nervous energy. It is argued that laugh producing situations are pleasurable because they save psychic energy (Freud, 1856:1939). Such could help in the management of conflict situations.
2. **Humour:** This is the tendency of experiences to provoke laughter and provide amusement. Humour is the quality which appeals to a sense of the ludicrous or absurdly incongruous. It is also said to be the mental faculty of discovering, expressing, or appreciating the ludicrous or absurdly incongruous. It is designed to be comical or amusing (Zelizer, 2010).
3. **Conflict Management:** Conflict management refers to the process of using preferred strategies to handle conflict with goals of limiting negative impact and enhancing positive impacts (Wang, 2015). Conflict management is focused more on a strategic implementation for positive outcomes. The managerial grid developed by Robert R. Blake and Jane, S. Mouton (1964) describes five stages of conflict management to be integration (win-win strategy that seeks to maximize mutual benefit by open

communication), accommodation (a win-lose strategy by giving up one's needs to satisfy the other's), domination (a lose-win strategy by maximizing one's own needs to satisfy the others), avoidance (a lose-lose behavior by withdrawal), and compromise (a give-and-take strategy to meet mutual needs in the middle).

HUMOUR AND LAUGHTER IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND PEACE BUILDING

Humour and laughter can be a valuable tool for defusing tensions brought on by conflict. Infusing humour and laughter into a relationship in conflict management can be beneficial, but it can also cause more issues if not articulated. Humour and laughter play a significant role in human discourse. Through humour and laughter, people are able to manage the social conflict they pass through. Lamle (2015) suggested that people employ humour and laughter in managing unusual occurrences from school field to battlegrounds. The social implication is that through humour and laughter, people emerge from the separation phase where they are set apart from the conflict.

HUMOUR AND LAUGHTER AS A PROCESS TOOL

Humour and laughter serve as a process tool. Accordingly, humour and laughter become the best conveyor that takes people from conflict, through the process of adjustment, to new life. The new form could only be possible because at one time or another. Through humour and laughter an opportunity is created to attain adjustments in managing situations. Therefore, humour and laughter has significant variables in approaching conflicts. It plays the role of breaking conflict cycle. Research over time has shown that humour and laughter has helped to interrupt or reframe conflict dynamics between warring parties (Ben, 2009). Encouraging parties in conflict to laugh at the conflict or provide a humorous perspective on a frustrating situation can sometimes help frame the dynamics of the conflict and also gives room for progress to be made. Humour can be used to diffuse tension between agitated individuals, to tease, insult, or remind a group of their shared social experience either to soften the blow of insult or to make a swipe at someone (Ben, 2009).

Humour and laughter can also play a role in traditional conflict management processes in developing societies. For example, in the Gambia, joking relationships and humour play a role in providing a space and process to address social conflicts (Davidheiser, 2006). The ritual space created through joking relations and their social capital make them effective even in the cases resistant to other mediation attempts.

LAUGHTER AND HUMOUR AS A TOOL IN BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Laughter and humour can help in bonding conflicting parties. Joking relationships build intimacy between conflicting parties. These moments of laughter and humour between parties assist in making relationships stronger. One of the challenges in conflict is trying to create an avenue where groups or conflicting parties can interact with each other. There are various processes that have been used to foster relationship building ranging from conflict management training, sports, arts and education. Humour serves as a vital tool to engage groups. For example, Israeli-Palestinian Comedy Tour, with four US born comedians from different backgrounds who have performed in many different countries. Their goal is to make people laugh, to realize the foolishness of violence and also to reflect on the situations at hand (Batrani, 2009). Humour plays an important role in conflict by fostering connections, helping groups cope with the effects of conflict and ensuring groups do not take themselves too seriously. Using humour and laughter can sometimes provide a degree of safety for expressing difficult ideas or opinions. The use of humour and laughter can allow a person or group to always claim that they are "just joking" (Swart, 2009) if sensitive topics are explored. The role of humour and laughter encourages conflicting societies to find humour in everyday moments and laugh as often as possible in relationships with others in managing conflicts. By doing this, it creates stronger bonds and relationships which can make difficult times more bearable.

3.) LAUGHTER AND HUMOUR AS A HEALING TOOL

Humour is used as a tool to help groups deal with tensions, release frustrations and also heal mental and emotional wounds. The use of humour for releasing emotions that have been built up as a result of conflicts can be important to help groups cope and maintain their sanity. The use of humour through jokes, movies, films or media can be excellent tools to help groups that have suffered from conflict begin to heal and laugh again. It serves as a form of therapy to release psychic tension through laughter (Worth, 2009). In warring situations where instances of individuals face dire circumstances, humour can provide a lifeline (Wooten and Dunkelbau, 2001). Humour also serves a healing agent. It is widely used as a tool to facilitate healing among groups that have suffered from conflict.

HUMOUR AND LAUGHTER IN THE GAMBIA AND AMONGST THE TAROK PEOPLE.

Social institutions in The Gambia comprises of laughter and humour, joking relationships, folk systems, rituals, plays etc. In this section, this paper will explain the different social institutions above and how it is engaged in conflict management.

Joking Relationship is a “relationship between two persons in whom one is, by custom, permitted, and in some instances required, to tease, or make fun of the other, who, in turn, is required to take no offence (Radcliffe Brown, 1940:1945). In other words, joking relationships are social contacts in which individuals, clans or ethnic groups possess the right to tease, abuse or insult one another in reciprocal jokes. Joking bonds are customary ties that link various groups and individuals. Joking relations can be found in many part of Sub-Saharan Africa. In the Gambia, such association can exist between the people of specific villages, between kinfolk such as cousins and grandparents and grandchildren, between the peoples of various regions. These relationships often signify a symbolic kinship.

The majority of Gambian ethnic groups practice joking relationships. The Mandinka, Jola, Fulbe, Wolof, Serer and Bambara are linked through multiple cross-cutting ties, including, joking kinship. The Aku and Manjago- two groups that migrated to The Gambia are not widely recognized. (Lamle, 2011). These relationships include mutual obligations and are most commonly manifested in semi-rituals. Joking partners usually tease each other about their big bellies and love for eating. Custom dictates that partners can interact in ways that would ordinarily be frowned upon or be offensive. Joking kins are not supposed to become angry with each other or get offended or even harm joking partners. This is prohibited.

There are different types of bonds (humour and laughter) in the Gambia and they are often associated with varying degrees of reciprocity. In Mandika, the trade languages of the southwest, in joking bonds are commonly known as *sanawuya* or *dangkuto*. *Sanawuya* can refer specially to joking ties between cousins, but is also used as a general name for laughter relationships. *Dangkuto* ties generally involve more mutual obligations than *sanawuya* and a greater threat of spiritual sanctions if one offends or harms a playmate.

Laughter and humour is usually associated with particular events in the past history of the partners. Residents explain these inter-group bonds with narratives that often have a legendary character. According to Diallo, oral histories in western Burkina Faso depict joking links as the “product of a blood pact” made after a conflict between two legendary persons (Diallo, 2002).

The Fofanna and Jaiteh are said to be playmates. Their ties began when their ancestors travelled on a long journey without food. The student (Fofanna) went into the bush, cut some meat from his leg and roasted it so that his teacher (Karamu) could eat. Jaiteh ate the meat without knowing the source. They continued travelling, until Fofanna became weak from loss of blood. When Jaiteh realized his student was injured, he healed the wound by laying his hands on it and praying. They then made an oath that their descendants will always support each other and never quarrel or suffer great misfortune. Laughter and humour and joking ties have gone a long way to manage conflict between different groups in the society. (Diallo, 2002)

Plaisanterie and folk systems appear to be alive and well in southwestern Gambia. A song mocking other ethnic groups was popular among Mandinka children. The ties promote both differentiation and integration. (Diallo, 2002). They also help to delimit abnormal behaviors and reinforce a sense of identity with each other. Plaisanteries set a precedent and expectations of co-existence and conflict management.

Over time, Gambians have often employed various means of managing conflict different from that of the westernized world. Gambians have been able to reinforce the principles of social solidarity rather than identifying and addressing the specific situational needs of the people (Darboe 1982, Elias 1956). Maintaining and restoring good relationships with others are central is pertinent and as such, it can take precedence over negotiating agreements about substantive or concrete issues. One of the reasons why joking relationship in conflict management is popular in and effective in the Gambia is because; it correlates with the norms, beliefs of the society. Conflict management is infused into the fabric of the society and it is consistent with the norms of the society. Shared norms and values are central to peacemaking. Social dynamics bring a sense of relief during dispute settlements as parties discuss rules and expectations. Conflict management is important in the renegotiations of relationships. issues of land disputes are mostly managed through laughter, humour and joking ties with playmates. For such conflicts, parties are more likely to than normal resort to court adjudication, however, issues of land conflict have been resolved through friendly relations.

In many African nations, presidential elections are characterized by collective identities and inter-group conflict. However, in Gambia, the Jola and Mandinka candidates used humour and jokes during their campaigns. They joked their way through the election period which relieved the society of the tension. Social institutions have been able to promote cooperation, friendly ties and minimized violence. (Darboe 1982, Elias 1956)

The Tarok people have created friendly relationships with indigenes of other communities and have acquired for themselves playmates (Ijam) with Jukun and Ngas. Having playmates with other communities strengthens the bond between those communities and also aids in building peace in the community. The symbolic representation of having a playmate is that naturally, it down plays the emergence of conflict between such communities. Such communities cannot go to war with each other. They (Tarok) have a lot of joking relationships and activities which have in turn produced laughter and a created a sense of humour that have over time helped in managing conflict. (Lamle 2011).

The Tarok people view conflict as a situation that affects not just one person but affects everyone in the community. They have a sense of communal living and as such, they view conflict on a communal level. They are described as brave because they always stand out to defend not just their community but also indigenes of Tarok land. They do not only view conflict as a situation that occurs only between human beings but rather emanates from the ancestral realms. They view conflict as a direct repercussion of the influence of the ancestors. A proper conflict management process in Tarok land stems from two dimensions: the physical and the ancestral stage. It is only through the adoption of these stages that conflict is regarded as properly managed. In adopting these processes, it becomes a tool for social transformation and also reduces the tension and differences that people have towards each other.

Tarok people realize the diversities that exists in the community as to what they see as truth, this creates a forum to clarify and manage conflict that exists between them. This helps them to acknowledge the interconnectedness within the community. In this case, laughter and humour serves as a means of managing conflict and also helps in understanding the conflict that exists between them. Furthermore, when conflict arises, it creates room for competition, collaboration and reconciliation. This is achieved through humour and laughter, joking relationships organized which helps in relieving tension between conflict parties and also in managing conflict (Lamle 2011).

It is important to note that the joking relationship among the Tarok people is both intra and inter. This section will discuss the different festivals among the Tarok people which is used as a form of joking

relationship to mediate conflict and help in managing conflict amongst them. These festivals are the *Imalkan*, *Ibyari*. These various festivals have their rules of engagement which does not involve killing, bloodshed, no injury in revenge. (Lamle 2011).

IMALKAN FESTIVAL (JOKING IN THE RAIN)

The main aim of the *imalkan* festival is the promotion of peaceful co-existence between the Tarok people and creating harmony. The *imalkan* festival serves three purposes:

1. It allows those who have offended or hurt others to acknowledge their wrongs and allows those wronged to seek justice and redress.
2. It ensures forgiveness; at this festival, the offender should feel forgiven while the one offended should feel vindicated.
3. The cleansing of the land. When sins are forgiven, wrong made right and grudges are forgiven. *Imalkan* helps in clearing all incriminating relationship and mending differences among people who have *ijam*. (Lamle 2011). Divergent forms of joking relationships are undertaken during this festival of *imalkan*.

IBYARI (HARVEST SEASON RITE)

Ibyari is a yearly festival that tarok people perform immediately after harvesting unlike *Imalkan*, all Tarok clans practice *ibyari*, a thanksgiving celebration aimed at invoking the blessing of the ancestors at the time of the first crop. It is the period of sober reflection and an opportunity to propitiate for crimes committed during the farming season, as such, those who had a bumper harvest give thanks, while those who lost will reflect on the season for their failure in order to make amendments the next farming season. (Lamle 2011).

The festival plays a vital role in the Tarok perception of the ancestral world. *Ibyari* is significant for promoting a cohesive relationship to ensure that the ancestors bless the material world, for the *ibyari* celebration address the ancestors who are jubilant and rejoice with their human venerators, such relationships bring blessings which are beneficial to both the ancestors and their human elements. As a festival for thanksgiving and venerating the ancestors, *ibyari* is held between November and January, when all the crops are harvested and stored in the barn. The *ibyari* rites are celebrated in the hills, the dwelling place of the ancestors. (Lamle 2011). All shrines of *ibyari* are located in the homeland of the various clans who have more form the hills to other places in the plain have to go back to the hills to perform their *ibyari* festival. This is because *ibyari* is period when the skull of a benevolent elder is chosen and such veneration is only possible in the hills where the chosen skulls are buried. The graves of the tarok people are located in the hills as the appropriate place for burial. If an elder die outside his homeland, his body might be buried there, but the skull must be buried on the hills. Any burial perform outside the hills is considered equivalent to burying a person in the river (water), something greatly abhorred for their corpses easily decomposed or fish eat them. This section discusses the role of laughter and humour in mediation processes in conflict situations. This of course is an off short laughter (2010) who opines that one of the richest yet virtually neglected area of research in tarok mannerisms and utterances is the ample use of allusion and the virtual information on the people's life and history. Mention was made of the rich repatriate of the tarok oral literature by Langtang (Lamle 2008: 224-225)

ACHU-NZAM (LANGUAGE OF DISPLAY)

Is of two kinds: slang used by children and miniature studies usual by adults mainly for launching, creating humour and teaching morals. Generally speaking, *achu-nzam* has harmful geographical special slang may arise from an obvious mistake that is a deviation from the standard language the only one who made the mistake will must on the use of the expulsion he has (created) and it secures all table within his immediate social circle. Miniature studies in the language they develop from a short saying by an

individual that is not proverb as such, but an apt statement from the occasions. People who are familiar with it will use such a statement from similar occasion. However, in most cases the use of the statement will be followed by a request demanding an elaboration on the statement. This sores as an occasion for telling the short story behind the statement. Much laughter usually follows the narrative. All Tarok miniature stories are non-fictional. The wisdom sayings of the miniature stories are used all the time as informal conflict mediation strategies together with other oral literature (dramas as joking relationships and songs (Lamle, 2010). It is to be noted that the laughter and humour the stories generate from the cushion the embarrassments the sayings could potentially for wade. Most of the stories in question date back to antiquity which others are pursued. We therefore present few of these stories to further make one position cleanse.

HE, WENT PERMANENTLY. (THE NAME OF A MAN IN WASE)

Between 1884 and 1907, there was influx of Hausa-Fulani in Wase and the relation between the Hausa-Fulani and the indigenes was not so cordial. Within the period in question, salt was a very scarce commodity. Therefore there were constant raids along the salt trade route then between Bauchi via Wase and Awe in Nassarawa State. Rather than resort to criminality, one tarok man chose to play a trick. He came across a Hausa-Fulani man who was coming from awe with a bunch of salt, the hausa-fulani man was tired and worn out. The tarok man offered to help the hausa-fulani man and the man obliged. The Tarok man told the Hausa-Fulani man not to worry, on getting to Wase he asked for *haryang* however, when the Hausa- Fulani man eventually got to Wase to reclaim his bunch of salt he asked for the house of *haryang* but no one had heard of that name talk more of knowing someone with the name. The Hausa-Fulani man was later told that *haryang* means gone forever in the Tarok language this story can be used in resolving conflict between the Tarok and the Hausa-Fulani even in this modern time (Longtau, 2010)

A DIFFICULT TASK HAS BEEN MADE

A story was told of a man from Gazum district of Langtang LGA who once claimed a mahogany tree with much difficulty. When he wanted coming down from the tree, it was another difficult and near impossible task, he eventually slipped off the tree and dangerously fell on the ground sustaining no injuries. He humorously said: “the difficult task has been made easy” after all, his intention was to get off the mahogany tree anyway. This has become axiomatic in Tarok land for any easy and quick way out of a very difficult and dangerous situation in Tarok land, this can also lay credence on man tines, courage and endurance which forbids a man from crying even if he is severely injured. It is the best prove of masculine prowess and the ability to endure pain and make lightest of precarious situation. This story forever can be a stereotype of the Gazum people in a conflict situation without bad reaching because of the humour that comes with it.

IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE HYENA ATTACKED THE GBAK PEOPLE

The Europeans made their presence felt in Tarok land between 1904-1910. During this period, the Tarok people left the mountains to the plains. Wild animals then were common. The Tarok people have the tradition of sitting by from side alder meals in the evening. One faithful evening, a hyena appeared in Gbak community. Since it was not strange to the people, they fought up and pursued the best without killing it and returned back to their seats. Soon after that, there was a loud sound. Everyone was still wondering the cause of the sound. Someone then asked in the hyena last returned and another reply “it is possible” however, when people checked, they saw to their disappointment that a bundle of guinea-corn being dried on a tree fell. After that incident, any clan that maintain a joking relationship with the Gbak people coined an even more ridiculous vision of the story. According to the vision, it was a bundle of guinea-corn that held the Gbak community hostage instead of hyena. This can be used to resolve community conflict with the Gbak community because of the humorous nature.

I HAVE KEPT QUIET

A man from the Pe clan went into the forest and got lost. He tried everything possible to find his way out but to no avail. He stands crying on top of his voice. As he was morning and agony he came near a swab under which a haze was sleeping. When the haze heard the steps and loud walking sound, the animal rushed out of its hiding place, but mistakenly the sudden rush of the haze to mean someone has heads him and wanted to beat the fell out to him, he said; "I have kept quiet" so that he could be spared. He later turned to look at the supposal angry man that he saw a haze escaped from it's destine. When the man eventually found his way out of the forest and got home, he narrated his ordeal without masking the truth. Subsequently, other claims that maintain joking relationship with the Pe people quote the opening statement broken from place.

WE WILL BEAT EACH OTHER HERE

In the 1980s during the reign of late Mr. Ishaku Katnap, the Chief of Pil Gani, these was to be a community gathering in which every member of the community must be in attendance. However, a certain middle man who had mental issues was confounded by the thing on why others are out there working while he was sitting at home. The chief therefore threatens the mentally unstable man with beating. But instead of being threatened by the words of the chief, the mad man rudely replied the chief: "we will beat each other here". If it was with a normal person, it would have not been taking likely but because it was it an abnormal person, no serious action was taken, in resolving conflict situation with the people of Pil Gani, when this is employed and the cause of the conflict is pointed to mental instability by the actors the conflict is easily resolved and managed. Going by the above therefore could serve as types of humour and laughter that spice up oral discourse playing very important role in mediating conflicts between individuals and communities. A study of joking relationship (Lamle, 2010) has the potential to be applied at a national or international conflict.

CONCLUSION

African States should learn and continuously promote the use of humour and laughter in conflict situations as it strengthens the bond of friendship between societies. Various societies and even the community level in managing conflict should imbibe the culture of joking relationships, laughter and humour. Joking Relationships should be part of the history subject taught in schools and it should be taken seriously because he who rejects history is bound to repeat the same mistakes others made. The concept of laughter and humour cannot be overemphasized as it enables and strengthens bonds and relationships between societies as portrayed in this paper amongst the Gambians. Through humour and laughter, Gambians and the Tarok people have been able to manage conflict effectively. Social institutions have over time played an important role of managing conflict, peace building and fostering relationships amongst Tarok in Plateau State of Nigeria and Gambians which has resulted in peaceful co-existence.

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