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Review

# The Impact of Inter-Ethnic Conflicts on Women's Participation in Livelihood Activities in Logo Local Government Area

Allison B.R (Ph.D)<sup>1</sup>, Nasigba A<sup>2</sup>, Victor, A, O<sup>3</sup> and Sunny D<sup>4</sup>

Corresponding author E-mail: hartaboma@gmail.com.

hartaboma@gmail.com

<sup>1</sup>Department of Sociology, Federal University Wukari, Taraba State.

<sup>2</sup>Department of Primary Education, Ajuru University Of Education, Port-Harcourt.

<sup>3</sup>Department of Physical And Health Education Federal University Wukari Taraba State Nigeria

<sup>4</sup>Department of Educational Foundations, University Of Port-Harcourt.

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**Abstract:** *Over the past years Nigerians have been experiencing different forms of violence, the major one being inter-ethnic or tribal conflicts. The first tribal conflicts since the return to civilian government occurred in May 30th –June 9th 1999 in the Warri region of Delta state where an estimated twelve to two hundred people were killed and over 6000 forced to flee their homes. Also, in July 18th 1999 an estimated 120 people died and many more were made homeless in ethnic clashes between OPC and Hausa traders in Sagamu. Similarly, the ethnic clashes on 25th November 1999, between OPC and Hausa traders in Lagos, where several people lost their lives and many more fled their homes. A structured questionnaire was used for personal interviews, a focus group discussion guideline was used for focus group discussions, listed discussion topics guide was used for an in depth interviews with key informants, a check list was used for observation. A total of 105 respondents participated in the research. The findings revealed that women had been working together in groups and had made significant achievements in improvement of their individual standards of living and in development of Wukari local government area. Most of the respondents were actively involved in self-help groups work. The study found out that the inter-ethnic conflicts in the area had negatively affected participation of women in livelihood activities. Most of the respondents had experienced inter-ethnic conflicts and were unanimous that no livelihood activities could take place in times of conflicts. People were displaced from their homes and lost their properties. The findings also proved that fear and tension in Wukari, will permanently affect the relationship between women from the warring communities. The major recommendation was that the government should intensify its efforts in restoration of peace and unity in the area. Future studies should address a permanent solution to the inter-ethnic conflicts in wukari and in the whole country.*

**Keywords:** *Inter-Ethnic, Livelihood, Women Participation, Activities.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Over the past years Nigerians have been experiencing different forms of violence. The major one being inter-ethnic or tribal conflicts. The first tribal conflicts since the return to civilian government occurred in May 30<sup>th</sup> –June 9<sup>th</sup> 1999 in the Warri region of Delta state where an

estimated twelve to two hundred people were killed and over 6000 forced to flee their homes. Also, in July 18<sup>th</sup> 1999 an estimated 120 people died and many more were made homeless in ethnic clashes between OPC and Hausa traders in Sagamu. Similarly, the ethnic clashes on 25<sup>th</sup> November 1999, between OPC and Hausa traders in Lagos, where several people lost their lives and many

more fled their homes. (The Nigerian tribune 1999). Ever since, cases of inter-ethnic conflicts that have led to loss of lives, internal displacement of people, destruction of properties, hundreds of people being injured, children orphaned and women widowed continue to be reported in various parts of the country. Other outcomes have to do with political instability in the country, which discourages tourists from visiting the nation, leading to economic decline among other outcomes.

With the advent of multi-party politics, political leaders are believed to be inciting the people into fighting one another. Conflicts also occur as a result of other factors beyond social and political situations. Before independence, each ethnic group in Nigeria used to live on its own land, but after independence things changed following settlement of people in different parts of the country. Competition for scarce resources, particularly land and business opportunities have led to violence among different communities in Nigeria (SelvaMeera, 2005). The inter-ethnic conflicts have various and different effects on different groups of people in our society. Hundreds of men have lost their lives in wars and many more have been injured making them unproductive in the society. Many men also experience problems when displaced and their resources destroyed. With these problems, men are unable to contribute towards livelihood activities in their homes and the whole society at large. Women are usually widowed and left homeless. With the death of breadwinners, the women take over their responsibilities. When displaced, women's participation in livelihood activities is affected and mostly hindered especially when most of the group members move to different areas never to return to their homes. This study assessed the effect of inter-ethnic conflicts on the Health of women and children. Women make significant contribution to the economic, social and political livelihood activities. Snyder Margaret (2016) argues that the success of development, for example, rests essentially on the quality of women's work. She therefore, recommends participation of women at the conception, the execution of national and regional development programmes.

According to Chitereand Mutiso (2019), women constitute nearly two-thirds of the rural population and they are the majority of small scale farmers in the rural areas. In Nigeria, women have a long tradition of participation in community and national development as well as being producers and custodians of family life. They argue that the history of women participation in rural development in Nigeria is long; it dates back to the pre-colonial period. Women have always worked within the framework of mutual aid groups and have frilly participated in rural development activities through self-help group activities. The expansion of the women's group movement is demonstrated by increased numbers of groups that carry out agricultural and other welfare activities in rural areas. Snyder looks at coalitions among women as typifying African societies for generations. These groups offer

solidarity between women even after their projects have failed to produce the expected incomes. Women have formed national branches of international women's organizations. Since 1970's there has been a surge in specialized groups formed by lawyers, businessmen, bankers, home economists and other professional (Snyder 2018). This is also happening in rural areas where most of the uneducated population is found.

### **Objectives**

1. To assess the effects of inter-ethnic conflicts on the livelihood activities of women in Logo LGA

### **Scope of the study**

The research's scope comprises of Logo of Benue state in Nigeria. The state sited in the north east geo-political location in Nigeria. Hence, the state contains former federation of Logo that are present. The LGAs are coexisted with surrounding rural settlements. In order to create important and sufficient analysis, the investigation is limited to the effect of inter-ethnic conflict on the health of women and children in Logo LGA Benue State.

### **Significance of the Study**

The women's role of being daily tasks providers and caregivers within the family and the wider society comes under threat during periods of conflict, such as that which is ethnically motivated, has detrimental effect on women and children's health and participation in livelihood activities. The physical and mental stress, resulting from death, separation, rape, torture, destruction, loss of livelihood and material deprivation," have an even larger effect on women as their access to adequate health care is extremely limited (United Nation Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, March 2004). The Nigerian government in an effort to address the problem and to bring the perpetrators of inter-ethnic conflicts to book has formed several commissions into the tribal conflicts. It is expected that the findings from this study will complement such efforts through contributing to peace and reconciliation efforts among the affected communities as well as informing in the policy and decision making towards mitigating such conflicts in future.

### **Effect of inter-ethnic conflict on the health of women and children**

The UN Plugom for Action (2016) described how women and children are especially affected by inter-ethnic conflict because of their unequal status in society

and their sex. Among the specific effects experienced by women of all ages are displacement, loss of home and property, loss or involuntary disappearance of close relatives, poverty and family separation and disintegration, victimization through acts of murder, terrorism, torture, involuntary disappearance, rape, and sexual abuse. If one intends to destroy a culture, women are tactical targets of special significance because of their important roles within the family structure (Seifert, 2019). Compounding these gender-specific effects are the lifelong social, economic and psychologically traumatic consequences of inter-ethnic conflict and foreign occupation and domination (UN, 2020).

**The Study eloquently addresses how Children and women are differentially affected by inter-ethnic conflict and describes the tremendous challenges in responding to gender-specific violence. Although statistics are increasingly available on sexual violence against women during warfare, they are not generally available for the other ways that women suffer during inter-ethnic conflict (Gardam, 2014). Gardam observed that this is hardly surprising because, traditionally, men compile the data and inevitably assign women to categories used for male civilians, thus ignoring, and consequently obscuring, the unique suffering of women. Gardam (2016) argued that [Children and] women suffer under a double disability compared to combatants because women possess inferior status not only as civilians but more so as women civilians. For example, some residents in Wukari local government suffered from malnutrition in 2001, and 2019, the figure was/is much higher among women and Children, because in crisis they women make sure that the men have everything to their satisfaction and women and children frequently receive leftovers. El-Bushra and Lopez (2017) observed how few support systems exist at the community level for women suffering psychosocial effects of conflict and how most governmental agencies do not consider psychosocial assistance as part of their work. NGOs seldom focus on women's psychosocial problems resulting from inter-ethnic conflict (El-Bushra and Lopez, 2018).**

## Theoretical Framework

### Frustration Aggression Theory

According to Ohara (2013), knowledge does not exist in a vacuum. In every descriptive, there is a body of theories that provides the explanation for observable phenomena in that field. This section attempt to draw analogy between established theories and the problem being investigated, where analogies drawn to support the importance of the study, the theoretical requirement of this work is draw from frustration-aggression and relatively deprivation

theory which I believe provided a detailed explanation for the emergence of Boko Haram insurgence in Nigeria.

The theory was propounded and developed by John Dollard and his research associates initially developed in 1939 and has been expanded and modified by school like Leonard Berlowitz (2019) and Audrey Yales (2017). According to John Dollard (2019) he explained that it seems to be that most common explanation for violent behaviour stemmed from inability to fulfill needs. In attempts to explain aggression, scholars points to the difference between what people feel they want or deserve to what they actually gets the want get-ratio (Teocrabends 2015) and difference between —expected need satisfaction and actual need satisfaction (Davies, 2017). When expectation does not meet attainment the tendency is for people to confront those hold responsible for frustrating their ambitions. Therefore, frustration aggression provides that aggression is not just undertaking as a natural reaction or instinct as realist and biological theorist assumes but that is the outcome of frustration and that is in a situation where the desire of an individual is denied either directly or by the indirectly consequence of the way the society is structured, the feeling of disappointment may lead such a person to express his anger through violence that will be directed those he holds responsible or people who are directly or indirect related to them (Akwen, 2017).

According to Mayor,( 2018), states that Inter-ethnic conflict is a product of bad government and corruption and therefore, fueled by politics . In Nigeria, approximately 76 percent of northerners live on basis less than one dollar per day. Schools are un-finance and the standard of education is so poor that graduate is often unfit for employment. The worst of it all is the Nigerian government poor responses to the northern desire on economic and security conditions which has fueled resentment, making many young men vulnerable to Boko Haram recruiters. People in the north are significantly marginalized and are not provided the same economic opportunities and benefits that the rest of the country enjoys. The founder and also the leader of the group, Mohammad Yusuf argued that Western education or Boko had brought nothing but poverty and suffering to the region and was therefore, forbidden or Haram in Islam (Reutrs, 2012). As described by John Dollard, that most common explanation for violence behavior is instability to fulfill needs.

This is the central government argument that led Robert Gurr's (2017) relative deprivation these addressed in saying that: The greater the discrepancy, however marginal between what is sought and what seems attainable, the greater will be the chances that anger and violence will result (Ted, 2016). A part from Nigeria government being corrupt in the year 1999, the police claimed down on Boko Haram members who were ignoring a law requiring motorcyclist to wear helmets.

That sparked a furious back lash. Police stations and government offices in Borno state were burned to ground hundreds of citizens released in prison break, innocent citizens died on bomb explosion, public and private properties destroyed etc. as the violence spread across northern Nigeria. The last stroke that broke the camel's back was the government and its army reacting with force, the leader of the Boko Haram group Mohammed Yusuf was captured and shot dead in police custody. Five days of fighting left more than 800 people dead (Morgan, 2011). In other words, the group remains fiercely anti-government and anti-authority, and resentful of the decades of corrupt, poor government that have improvise it home region.

#### Conflict Theory

The Marx conflict theory begins with the notion that there are two basic groups of people within society - the wealthy and the poor. This theory looks at what happens when one group attempts to rebel against the other group and the various roles a group of people (or one person) has over another group of people. Conflict theory studies the social control that the rich have over the masses. Further, Marx believed that one society or organization only functions in order to try and better their social situation, which can result in some type of social upheaval. The theory brings out different types of conflicts; Conflict regarding class, Conflict regarding race and ethnicity, Conflict regarding gender, Conflict regarding religion, Conflict regarding region Marx, Karl. 1971. Marxian conflict theory can be applied to a number of social disputes as it relates to how one group controls the rest, the struggle within the oppressed group, and the way that the controlling group maintains power. According to Marx, the existence of different social classes in human society is the continuous source of inevitable conflict, and changes on the social structure occur through violent upheavals affecting class composition Abraham (2014). Marx sees the human society as a collection of competing interest groups and individuals, each with their own motives and expectations.

Kombo and Tromp (2016) state that the principle assumption underlying Marx's theory is that all members in society do not have the same values, interests or expectations. These vary according to one's position, privileges, ability, class, and wealth. Agreement tends to appear among those who share similar privileges. This is likely to encourage unequal distribution of the scarce but valuable resources and opportunities. This results in divisions in society resulting in hostility and opposition.

#### Methodology

##### Research Design

The survey research design was adopted for this study. Survey research design is easy reliable of flexible to

carryout study of this nature. The survey research design would be prefer because the aim is to achieve a generalized understanding. The survey design help the research to collect, analyze and summarize data more easily.

##### Research design:

This study is designed to asses' effect of inter-ethnic conflict on the health of women and children in Wukaril local government. The methodological approach in this study is descriptive, (qualitative design) because we attempt to identify and explain variables in other to provide a picture of a particular phenomenon.

##### Sample size

Sample size: in social science, research implies the sequent or the part researcher have systematically selected to represent the whole population of the study in order generate the required data for the study.

For the purpose of an effective research work, 105 sample size was systematically selected

##### Methods of data collection

The instruments of primary data used were the questionnaire administered. The questionnaires were designed in simple language using close-ended and open-ended pattern. Similarly, an unstructured interview and observation schedule was designed and contributed to the selected local government Area. On the other hand, the secondary source of data was generated from the stock or available relevant materials on the topic under study. Published and unpublished materials have been consulted and were duly acknowledged in like manners. The instrument used in collecting data for this study is secondary (online materials, textbooks, journals) and primary data (questionnaire and oral interview).

##### Methods of data analysis

For the analysis of data, we will rely on qualitative descriptive analysis. Asika [2006:118] defines qualitative descriptive analysis to mean summarizing the information generated in the research verbally so as to further discover relationships among variables

The researcher used simple percentage, tables, and descriptive statistical method in analysis. Analysis of Data

### Does inter-Ethnic Conflict Affect Women and Children in Logo Local Government?

Responses	Frequency	Performance
Yes	90	86
No	15	14
Total	105	100

Source: field survey 2022

The above table shows that 90 respondent with 86 percent believe that inter-ethnic conflict affect women and children in Logo local government, while 15 respondent with 14 percent are of the opinion that inter-ethnic conflict does not affect women and children in Logo local government.

### How long does the Conflict last in your area?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
less than one year	30	29
One year	50	48
More than one year	15	14
Others	10	10
Total	105	100

Source: field survey 2022

### Test of hypothesis

1. Inter-ethnic conflict has a negative effect on women and children in Logo Local government area, Benue State
2. Inter-ethnic conflict has no negative effect on women and children in Logo Local government area, Benue State

### Contingency

	Respondents		
	YES	N	Total
	90	85	175
	15	20	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>210</b>

### Chi Square Computation

Fo	Fe	Fo-fe	(fo-fe) <sup>2</sup>	$\frac{(Fo - fe)^2}{Fe}$
90	87.5	2.5	6.2	0.1
85	87.5	2.5	6.2	4
15	17.5	-2.5	6.2	0.3
20	17.5	2.5	6.2	5
			$\frac{(Fo - fe)^2}{Fe}$	= 9.4

Source: field survey 2022



Therefore chi square ( $\chi^2$ ) calculated =9.4

Degree of freedom

$Df=(r-1) (c-1)$

$Df=(2-1) (2-1)=1 \times 1=1$

At 1 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance  $\chi^2$  tabulated = 6.635

The respondents were asked, as to what happens to their group activities when the inter-ethnic conflicts erupt? Many of them were of the opinion that the groups become desolate, while some say they still manage the group and strive to survive. Also the researcher discovered that the scoping strategy adopted after the inter-ethnic conflict is terrible, this is because they don't have a choice than to accept and go with the options available. Furthermore, the researcher also finds out that the activities in the environment take time before it must times resume to normalcy.

## Findings

Findings reveal that that, the women and livelihood activities are shut down making life unbearable for the women and children of the affected area. After this clashes most times women turn to selling charcoal, and doing minimal jobs just to survive the traumatic situation of these conflict. It was also revealed that there is no safeguarding of safe help group (SHG) as all the groups are shattered and scattered. Findings also revealed that all or almost all the day to day activities are been very skeptical and with fear of the rivalry ethnic group The researcher discovered that religion, politics, unemployment, illiteracy, poverty, indigenship and settlership problems, disproportional access to power, resource and land are the major factors responsible for continuous societal upheaval in Logo local government. Until these ill factors are properly handle and corrected, peace in Logo will be a thing of the past.

## Conclusion

Nigeria unarguably has been a theatre of Inter-ethnic conflicts since independence. While it may be true that the crisis in Northern Nigeria is intrinsically religious in nature, the crisis in Southern Nigeria may not be fundamentally religious. Thus the crisis witnessed in Northern Nigeria over time has been engendered by the fusion of ethnic and religious factors. From the foregoing, it can be concluded that 'Inter-ethnic' conflicts retards the practice of federalism in Nigeria, contaminates social relations and undermines the economy of the state. Inter-ethnic bigotry in Nigeria has become a fulcrum of various forms of Nationalism ranging from assertion language, cultural autonomy and superiority to demands for local political autonomy and self determination. The realities of ethnic and communal conflict in Logo are alarming and

require very urgent, apt and continued attention. Ethnicity, religion and politics should rather unite us as Nigeria in order to promote peace, harmonious peaceful co-existence and unity.

## Recommendations

1.The study recommends that ethnic and religious leaders in various organization should advocate for religious tolerance and better understanding differences for the purpose of building a unified nation, through proper education and knowledge of the plight of each ethnic group, an amicable settlement of the differences could be facilitated.

2.The study also recommends that the government at all levels, civil societies and organizations, Human Right Organizations, NGOs, elder state men and community leaders should intensify efforts towards vigorous public enlightenment programmed on ethnic and inter-group relations.

3.The study recommends that security agencies should step up efforts and observe their constitutional mandate in their service to the nation an also observe inter-agencies cooperation through sharing of relevant information that will enhance their performances.

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