

THE EFFECT OF CONFLICT TO THE PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE OF THE SOCIETIES

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is a concept synonymous with human behaviours. Since man cannot exist in isolation, then in the course of interactions with other members of the community there will be disagreements, intrigues and misunderstanding. The disagreement or misunderstanding occurs in forms of revolution or war. The reasons for the conflict may be as a result of cheating or struggle for a beneficial goal. To make peace and/or put an end to the conflicts, various measures are adopted by both parties and intervening parties to reach an agreement or compromise. In understanding the meaning of conflict, it must be seen from the perspective of inter-group relations whether, as individuals or groups.

Meaning of Conflicts

Disagreement, crises, war, violence, opposition, revolt are words synonymous with conflict. Conflict arises in different shapes, patterns or dimension. The emergence of conflict depends on the issue at stake. Conflict exists when two people wish to carry out acts that are mutually inconsistent. They will want to do the same thing or do different things that are incompatible. The definition of conflict can be extended from individuals to groups such as: states or nation. It can involve more than two parties Conflict is a negation which is anchored on behavioral norms. It is a negative or over-reaction to situation, idea, principles and other forms of behaviour. Once there is the cause for inter-group relations, conflict becomes inevitable and peace must be given a chance. Hence, conflict could be seen as a natural phenomenon which must occur among human beings.

Human behaviors in Conflict

- ✚ Competition over scarce resources such as: money, leisure, sexual partners and so on;
- ✚ Inequality in terms of power, reward, opportunity and chance; and
- ✚ Expansion and subjugation which leads to migration, unity and division of communities.
- ✚ Since conflict is associated with the inter-section of human behaviours, then, the quest for wealth, position, opportunity, chance, recognition brings about struggle. The struggle at its apex occurs in form of war, crises and violence when the parties involved failed to reach a conclusive and harmonious agreement. In a way, the breach of agreement or treaty by either of the parties involved leads to extreme reactions in forms of war.

Within a society, there is the possibility that individuals possess differing amounts of material and non-material resources. The more an individual possess the resources, the more the possibility of exploitation of other groups who lack the wherewithal. According to the Marxist based conflict theory, it is opined that money is the mechanism that creates social disorder. It is argued that the history of man is the history of conflict, in which a strong-rich exploiting the poor-weak. In such a situation, money is made through exploitation of the poor-weak, there is loss of individual freedoms (fundamental human rights), subsequently the need for change. Thus, the treaty or agreement for change makes peace building a necessary mechanism.

Human Behaviors' in Conflict Competition

Is a term synonymous with the business or economic parlance. A peculiar concept in the principles of Economic is 'scarce resources'. In order to make ends meet and satisfy human wants, man tends to make efforts to utilize the available resources which are scarce. By this, groups of individuals compete to access the opportunities available. For example, the quest for raw materials needed in the production of a particular product may be a source of conflict among industries involved in producing similar products. Hence, the conflict issues arising breeds all forms of acts that can mark the weak industries. In essence, the strong industries may assume monopolistic rights over the weak industries.

Other forms of competition that are behavioral occur in forms by which several groups of people compete for recognition. For instance, when several companies are competing with or against each other to gain contract, such conflicts result in character assassination of competing companies or false image making. In addition, conflict behaviours can occur when candidates are vying or contesting for a post which might involve elections and campaign. In such cases, the bid to campaign, convince or canvass for a candidate over other candidates might breed violence and revolts.

Inequality

It means unfair difference in size, rank, wealth or opportunity. Inequality occurs when the benefits of a community is concentrated in the hands of a few people or in few areas. Unequal access to opportunities in a community leads to tremendous damage to unity and integration. In Nigeria, acts of inequality breeds conflict in the sense that it creates cleavages based on language or ethnicity to fight a common cause.

Expansion and Subjugation

These are natural tendencies that occur among and within communities. The location or natural resources endowment available in a community determines the type of relationship with other communities. It involved expansion and occupation of smaller or weak communities through treaties and agreements that might be unfavorable. There is no doubt about the fact that the formation of a community starts from the family which is the primary unit. It is pertinent to note that division and formation of communities are mostly borne out of conflicts. Thus, existence of conflicts might be a source of revolution that can be a medium of resistance by the aggrieved group.

Definition of Terms**Conflict Analysis**

This involves an evaluation of roles, values and attitudes of people in the conflict situation. It encompasses an assessment of interests and purposes responsible for the emergence of conflict and determines the cause of response and retaliatory actions of aggrieved parties. Hence, in analyzing conflict situations, it is germane to uncover the historical antecedents to place the crises in a position that would proffer amicable settlement (peace making).

Conflict Prevention

This involves a process of making peace recur based on historical antecedents. From the human behaviours explained earlier, the consequences of inequality can be prevented from recurring by ascertaining that the concept of equity and justice is upheld. This is most suitable where there are peoples with different cultural values.

Conflict Management and Resolution

A conflict is resolved when some mutual sets of actors are worked out. It involves an orderly and non-violent handling of parties involved. The parties with perceived incompatible goals seek to consider each other. This is peculiar to groups that are mutually dependent on each other. Each group will not wish to spread the conflicts because of cordial intergroup relations that have enhanced growth and development.

CONCLUSION

The first unit of our course has tried to help you understand and analyse the meaning of conflict. The concept of conflict has gain prominence in academic discourse in contemporary times. In various parts of the world, there are various issues of conflicts in forms of war and crises arising from competition, inequality and the bid to expand or subjugate. Though the acts involved in conflicts are negative, but it is inevitable because man's daily activities and interactions with one another will definitely exist. Much as conflict might appear devastating it may bring a positive result that will further enhance growth and development. To achieve growth and development then the concept of peace becomes a twin concept to resolve and manage conflict.

SUMMARY

Conflict is the expression of opposing interest and is a state of discord caused by differing needs, value and interest. It can be explained in all spheres of man's life be it in the social, political or economic realm. It can be man versus man, man versus group or group versus group. Conflicts that are mostly imminent are usually group versus group.

In a way, Inter-group relations remain a focal point in the study of conflicts. To properly analyze conflict situation the behaviours of peoples with other peoples in a community or among communities has to be considered. Commercial relations, intermarriages and slave trade are the basis of the contacts that led to linguistic and cultural borrowings among peoples in pre-colonial times. Thus, these activities can not all be peaceful. One time or the other, there would be an interchange of conflict and peace.

CONCEPT OF PEACE**INTRODUCTION**

In every stage in conflict situations, a channel for peace shall always be resorted to. In the bid to protect lives and properties, peaceful resolutions will be implored by negatively affected peoples to rescue the situation. This usually occurs in conflict situations that involves violence. If you would agree, making peace is a gradual process that everyone has to understand the need for it. Certain human behaviours become necessary to ensure peace. Good morals, patience and perseverance can be described as individual behaviours that must be critical appraisal of the behaviours. Hatred, selfish interest, discontentment, deceit must be avoided to ensure peace by all parties involved in it. However, if peace making or building is attached with selfish interest, then in the event of time, conflict situations will resurge.

OBJECTIVES

Attempt will be made in this lecture to analyse the various sub-concepts in peace making and building. By the end of the lecture, the learner should be able to:

- Highlight major processes in building
- Attempt an elaborate explanation of peace
- Appraise the concepts of negotiation, mediation and diplomacy.

MAIN CONTENT

What is Peace?

Peace is a concord, an agreement, an amicable resolution that is aimed at attaining friendly relations. As a concept, it is an idea of harmony and tranquility. Peace as a state of harmony is an ideal of life after conflict has occurred. For peace to occur, it must first occur in an individual's state of mind. In legal terms, peace is a treaty, a binding commitment to resolve violence that is a peace treaty, which is left to both parties to implement and enforce to resolve the conflict.

Thomas Hobbes proposed two laws of peace, first to seek peace and follow it, second – that a man to be willing for peace, when others are also willing so it is in defense or favour of himself. The first law of peace suggests that each progress of each other, the second law of peace suggests that a party/group agrees to make peace so far its interest is not jeopardized. Hence, the letter is usually the form of peace which is agreed to in the society. In other words, self interest is paramount in peace agreement.

The term 'peace building' came into widespread use after 1992 when Boutros-Boutros Ghali (Former United States Secretary General from Egypt) announced the agenda for peace. Ever since then it has become broadly in use for crisis intervention, building of governance structures and institutions. It is a term that also encompasses the activities of religions for transformation and reforms. It involves a full range of approaches, processes and stages towards sustainable peace relationship.

Major Processes in Peace Building

- Participatory planning
- Co-ordination of various efforts
- Sustainable investment
- Gathering and co-ordination of human and material resources and
- Long-term maintenance of reconciliatory modes

Peace Negotiation

It takes place between two conflicting parties without the intervention of a third party. It is a situation in which a group is able to convince the other group. Both parties put forth their views and analyse by educating each other. In this case, there is basic a sort of trust between conflicting parties. Among nation-states official negotiation processes are implored to settle and issue or dispute. Conferences are usually held to technically outline rules and procedures to reach an accord.

Mediation

It is a process which aims to assist group in conflict to find the necessary skills to resolve conflict. Mediation is always managed by a third party. It involves a process of transforming aggression to gradually reduce violence. A mediator summons both parties and listens to all sides of issues.

Diplomacy

This is the act of conducting negotiations by representatives of conflicting parties. Diplomacy is a contemporary term associated with international relations and ensuring conflict. Hence, international treaties are strategised by country representatives to make peace. For example, resolving the problem of gender-based conflict is a product of diplomacy. Following series of global inequality on woman, the United Nations Decade on women was established in 1975 as a forum to bring together women from various nations of the world. The conference was held in Mexico; by 1985 it was held in Kenya, Beijing (China) in 1995. At each of the conference, agreements are reached in form of declaration to guide nation-states on policy issues that could enhance women's participation and productivity for development.

CONCLUSION

The concept of peace as a process of making or building firstly occurs as a state of mind. The readiness of the mind will give way to external peace. Peace is a social order that aims at maintaining cordial relationship among conflicting parties. Peace is synonymous with development in contemporary times. This is because its continuity results in co-operation, thus, it brings mutual trust and communal participation for sustainable development. In Africa, for example, the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) is a recent programme targeted towards economic co-operative for sustainable development.

SUMMARY

So far, this unit has been able to expose you to the meaning of peace and key processes aimed at peace building. Furthermore, the sub-concepts of negotiation, mediation and diplomacy are all geared towards maintenance of peace. Hence, peace in the long-term is synonymous to development, which in contemporary times has further encouraged cooperation sustainable development.

DEFINITION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF CONFLICTS

INTRODUCTION

There is somewhat general agreement that conflict is basic to every society. It is sometimes said to be a sign of healthy organization of men in the society, especially if its generic implication is to redress injustice. Even in the most economically advanced nations, conflict still take place at one point or the other. The basic truth is that individual's or group's interest differs, and their objectives, values and needs do not always coincide. Bland agreement on everything would be unnatural. Therefore, there should be opportunities for natural clashes of ideas and interests about tasks, projects, public decisions and allocation of values in the society so that the issues are explored and resolved.

Yet extreme cases of conflict in the society or organization can have adverse consequence, especially if the opportunities and tool-kits for resolving such negative behaviour are scarcely available or utilized.

Definitions and Characteristic Nature of Conflict

Conflict could be defined as the pursuit of incompatibility of goals by individuals or groups as a result of the inability of social structure to allocate values objectively. Ball (1983) situates conflict as a political process that generates from diversity of choices and distribution of scarce resources in the society.

Stagner (1995) adds that the occurrence of cheat and aggressive behaviour on the part of individuals or groups that leads to the frustration of others may cause conflict. It is a disagreement that results from the allocation of scarce values or clashes regarding incompatibility of goals. It can also be regarded as disagreement that generates from distributive injustice. There are both positive and negative sides of conflict when it is resolved and when it exist respectively. The positive side can be used to minimize or resolve conflict.

Similarly, the negative can be used to exacerbate conflict. To promote conflict resolution and peaceful co-existence, one important tool is communication. Of course Otite and Albert (1999) have argued that adequate consultation and communication is one of the hallmarks of transforming conflict environment to manageable situation. Where communication is lacking either as result of the inability of the mediator to initiate it or the principals' blatant refusal to talk to each other, resolution may be difficult. Consultation and communication aims to promote the positive side of conflict and deterring the negative side.

Cosrer in Otite and Albert (1999) provides an elaborate definition:. Accordingly, he states that; Social conflict may be defined as a struggle over values or claims to status power, and scarce resources, in which in which the aims of the conflicting parties are not only to gain the desired values, but also to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals. Such conflicts may take place between individuals, between collectivities, or between individuals and collectivities. Intergroup as well as intra-group conflicts are perennial features of social life

In conflict situation, one individual or group tries to prevent or obstruct the other in achieving his goals because their behaviours are in opposition. Competition for a common goal has been singled out as the most basic element that may cause conflict. Mullins (1995) writes that where goals have no resemblance, conflict tends to be absent. This is rather instructive for conflict resolution challenges as a whole. If so, how do we redirect the goals of individuals or group in the society such that they are able to benefit adequately, yet pursuing different goals?

Stated otherwise, how we allow individuals or groups to pursue same goals within different processes such that the interest of one realizing his goal does not endanger those of others. Why? How do we make individuals or group achieve their goals without necessarily utilizing the same tools or same means of achieving same goals? Availability of choices that lead to the accomplishment of same basic goals are, perhaps, important.

Causes of Conflict

The cause of conflict in societies where it has occurred and where it may potentially take place is similar. The available literature on causes of conflict in the West Africa sub-region, for example, is tied to the struggle for economic resources, boundary disputes, environmental degradation, and struggle for political power between or among ethnic groups, religious sentiments. Elsewhere in Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern European countries and the Americas, the story is the same or similar. For example, the conflict in Liberia in which late Samuel Doe was accused of dominating the government with members of his ethnic Kahn people is much related to tribal sentiments and struggle for political power; the conflict between Nigeria and Cameroun over the oil rich Bakassi Peninsular, which was concluded in 2006 was as a result of boundary dispute and the accompanying natural resources/economic resources located therein. When in 1990, late Saddam Hussein of Iraq invaded Kuwait (an independent country) and made frantic attempt to annex it, claiming that Kuwait is historically part of Iraq, his motive was most probably informed by two reasons. Firstly, Kuwait is an oil-rich country and if successfully annexed, it will boost Iraq command of global oil influence and resources. Secondly, if successfully annexed, it will broaden the opportunity to anger the West by starving it of oil.

The **Parochial interests of two groups (A & B)** long-standing disputes between Ethiopia and Somalia on the one hand and Somalia and Kenya on the other hand are related to boundary disputes. The recurring conflict between China and Japan over fishing territories on what the Japanese calls the Japanese and what the Chinese similarly refers to as the Chinese sea is an issue that is quite related to boundary dispute and control of economic resources. The protracted civil war that bedevils Sudan in the last ten years is connected to tribal and religious sentiments. Thus, causal factors of conflict (whether inter-state or intra state), are quite similar and interconnected with little or no variations. Where the control or share of economic resources constitute the generic factor, it is most likely that it has some elements of boundary disputes, religious interpretations, political undertones or the inhabitants of such area claiming their citizenship on one of the two states or communities. In describing the causes of conflict the world over, the causes are interconnected, and no one factor is entirely independent of the other. However, we will mention and discuss these factors in specific terms, but in their interdependent nature.

Struggle for Political/Economic Resources

As we had noted, the struggle for economic resources among or between communities or states underscores the genesis of some conflicts. Again these conflicts have overt or covert political definitions. Most inter-tribal wars in West Africa in particular and Africa in general are traceable to this factor. More than 90% of African countries are plural societies. The struggle and partition of Africa (1884-1885) and the tribal wars that follow in attempts to forge out unified societies for the purpose of stability and trade increased the intensity of pluralism in African states.

The characteristic nature of plural societies is well-known. First and foremost, a plural society is prone to conflict. A plural society is a society divided by what Harry and Eckstein in Lijphart (1977) call “segmental cleavages”, and it exists where political divisions follow very closely with lines of objective social differentiation, salient in a society. Segmental cleavages may be of religious, ideological, ethnic, cultural and regional definitions. Democracy is regarded as the best political system for galvanizing, promoting justice and equity in plural societies.

When communism retreated in 1989, the concepts of globalization intensified the agitation for democracy in both developed and developing countries. Oppressed communities and people, suppressed conflict and emotions got opportunities for candid and renewed expressions. In the West Africa sub-region, Liberia, Cote d’Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Nigeria etc, people saw these expressions in different dimensions. The conflict between Nigeria and Cameroun over Bakassi peninsular received wide attention as a result of the availability of petroleum resources and opportunities for commercialised fishing. Prior to the resolution of the conflict at the International Court of Justice (ICJ Hague, 2005), the interests of both parties (Nigeria and Cameroun) and French support to Cameroun in attempting to police the territory was not informed by ordinary interest of annexation and redraw their respective political maps or interest on an expanse of land, rather the real struggle was on economic resources.

Struggle and Claims to Land Ownership

The struggle, claim to land ownership and usage is directly and indirectly connected to economic factors. Perhaps, the most common generic factor of conflict, especially in Africa in general and West Africa in particular is the struggle for land ownership between or among ethnic groups. The most vivid is the Ife-Modakeke conflict. The Modakekes claimed that they owned the farmland and settlement where they currently cohabit with the Yorubas in a “conterminous” living pattern. And the word ‘Modakekes’ itself is a Yoruba terminology. It seems that, altogether, they are one people of same historical origin who migrated to the present place after the collapse of Oyo empire as well as the invasion by the Fulani religious warriors (the Jihadists). Yet conflict became endemic in this community. The Ooni (the king and progenitor of Yoruba race) and the people of Ife resisted this claim vehemently. Severe disagreement and conflict ensued resulting in lost of many lives and property.

Religious/Ethnic-related Factors

Perhaps, one single and conspicuous sources of conflict in Nigeria as in other states in the East and North Africa are religious sentiments. Otite and Albert reported that the first major religious crisis in Nigeria was the Fagge crisis in Kano in 1982. According to them, the conflict started on the suspicion of the rising ascendancy of Christianity in Kano – a heavily dominated Muslim city of the north. The Christians have attempted to reconstruct a dilapidated church building in Sabon –Gari area of Kano. The Moslems felt that the church should be relocated elsewhere and made several concrete attempts to foil the reality of the reconstruction. The Christians insisted that they were free law abiding citizens of Nigeria, whose inalienable rights include freedom of worship and religion, and association. Thus they obtained police protection and reconstructed the Church. The Muslims consequently reacted violently, burnt down the church and other Christian properties near and far away in the city.

Globalization Processes

Many would wonder how globalization processes constitute generic factor of conflict around the world. Globalization is a process of economic, democratic and social revolution, which has intensified in an ongoing manner since the fall of communism in 1989. In particular, citizens of many countries more than ever, are demanding political and economic accountability in the hands of their governments and leaders. Reacting to this wind of change, Emeh (2007) asserted that anti globalization protests and demonstrations have escalated, compelling world leaders to hold their summits in isolated areas. Such protests have taken place in Seattle December 1999; Davos February 2000; Melbourne September 2000; Nice

December 2000; Davos-Zurich January 2001; Quebec April 2001; Barcelona June 2001; Gothenburg June 2001; Cancun 2003.

The conflict that generates from the process is of two dimensions. One relates to the conflict of continuous economic divide and marginalization of the poor south by the rich north and to which the above protests and demonstrations are directed. The second, perhaps more specific, are the structural economic reforms currently going on in developing countries in response to World Bank prescription of public sector policy change and management.

In Zambia, the President announced in December 2006 that it will not implement the World Bank prescription of increasing consumption tax to avoid major conflict with citizens. Market economy on which the policy change partly focuses does not allocate resources justly. Some citizens benefit more compared with their fellow citizens, sometimes at the expense of the poor in the society.

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