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ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF COMMUNAL CONFLICT ON SOCIO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF BILLIRI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, GOMBE STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

Conflict is a key barrier to any community development effort. Yet, its incidence is unavoidable and demands thoughtfulness from relevant stakeholders. This study focused on the effects of communal conflicts on rural economic activities in Biliri Local Government, Gombe State, Nigeria. It specifically revealed the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents; identified the causes of conflict in the study area; determined the effects of conflicts on the economic activities and identified the strategies adopted in resolving the conflicts. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected using interview schedule and Key Informant Interview respectively. Data were analysed using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The results showed that majority (three-fifth) of the respondents were married and in their active ages (26-30 years) and two-third (66%) were males. Competition of community members over limited resources (100%), chieftaincy dispute (27.2%) and ethnic/tribal superiority by indigenes (26.1%) were the major causes of conflict. The effects of conflicts identified include loss of lives ($\bar{x}$=4.0, R1), damage to properties ($\bar{x}$ =3.9, R2), decrease in income ($\bar{x}$ =3.9, R2) and separation of families ($\bar{x}$ =3.9, R2) among others. Use of police or court (RII 0.55, R1), strategic withdrawal (RII, 0.54, R2), local mediation (RII 51, R3) and use of local government officials (RII 50, R4) were considered the most effective method of resolving conflicts. Inferential statistics (chi-square) used to test the relationship between effects of conflict and the socio-economic characteristics of the people of the study area revealed that occupation ($\chi2$=136.343; p≤ 0.01) and level of education ($\chi2$=18.929; p≤ 0.01) had significant association with effects of conflict. Hence, the study concluded that preventive measures against future conflict such as advocacy for tolerance and sensitivity of government to people's needs should be put in place to enhance sustainable development. Further research should explore effects of conflict on other variables such as migration, human health and food security.

Keywords: Analysis, Communal conflict, Economic Development, Impact
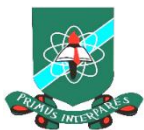
1. Introduction

Human conflict is a universal occurrence. The potential for conflict exists whenever individuals or groups pursue goals that they

perceive to be incompatible with one another (Abubakar, 2008). Conflict is an unavoidable feature of social life, and its effects are often beneficial either because it helps to clarify differences, let off steam or generate needed changes (Sandra, Daniel, and Lasisa, 2003). It is important to note that conflict and consensus are two major patterns of social interactions (Alabi and Famakinwa, 2017).
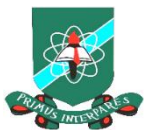
Similarly, Conflict simply suggests differences and disagreement, struggle and strife. It is an ever-present process in human relations and an integral part of human life (Alabi and Famakinwa, 2017). Without doubt, community houses a group of people with similar characteristics and goals who inhabit a specific geographical area with the view of promoting common values of social living. Hence, it is through the community that members are able to benefit and enjoy specific social living that satisfies their basic human functions and needs (Samuel and Evangeline, 2016).

However, many nations, countries, states and communities of the world today have witnessed and are still witnessing the outbreaks of several cases of communal conflict. The incidence of communal conflict are regarded as global phenomena as they occur in almost every part of the world,

especially within or among countries that had at one time or the other experienced colonialism or imperialism (Abubakar, 2008). From Europe to America, Africa to Asia, conflicts are common phenomena. Each year, 20 to 40 armed conflicts of various proportions rage around the world (Jeong, 2008). Several causes are attributed to the prevalence of communal conflict, according to Frynas, (2000) community conflicts result from age-long ethnic/communal rivalries or animosity, chieftaincy and land disputes between neighbouring communities, bad government policies, or even insensitivity of oil companies to local demands.

Essentially, conflict offers a mixture of the good, the bad, and the uncertain. On the positive side, conflicts give people the license to express important issues, produce new and creative ideas, release and build-up tensions. When managed properly, conflicts can strengthen relationships, help groups and organizations to re-evaluate and clarify goals and missions as well as initiate social changes to eradicate inequalities and injustice. However, the negative side of conflicts, which is more familiar to people, interrupt normal channels of co-operations and have varying degrees of impact on the development of the affected areas (Afegbua, 2010)

Different scholars have defined conflict in different ways. For instance, Folger, Marshall and Stutman, (2009) defines

conflict as the interaction among parties who are interdependent and perceive incompatibility with one another. Gyong, (2007) defines conflict as the struggle for dominance or control of one person or group by the other in such a way as to subjugate or even eliminate the opponent. However, it is observed that during conflicts, the losses of human lives and properties, destruction of social infrastructure are usually enormous, also inflicting sufferings and pains on the people and placing enormous stress on the environment (Gyabaah, 2006 and Afegbua 2010). Conflicts have had devastating consequences on the human life and socio-economic development of a community.

In rural areas impact of conflicts are more complex and often related to extreme events (Revi et al. 2014). For example, conflict leads to death of innocent people, loss of properties and loss of wealth (Revi 2008; Williams et al. 2012), damaging of transportation infrastructure (Gasper et al. 2011, Koetse and Rietveld 2009), and buildings. However, several studies have been carried out in community conflict in Nigeria among which included Omeje, (2004), Wosu (2011), Alimba (2014), Samuel and Evangeline, (2016), Alabi, and Famakinwa, (2017). Most of the studies were purely descriptive and lack rigorous statistical analysis, which can help to predict the onset of similar crisis in future. In addition, they have not comprehensively assessed the effects of such community conflicts on livelihood and development indicators; therefore the quality of such data cannot be guaranteed

for decision making and rural and urban planning.

Moreover, effects of conflict differ from locality to locality and from the existing literature available to the researcher, no detailed research has been carried out to examine the effects of conflicts on rural economic activities in Billiri Local Government Area of Gombe State. The present study therefore would investigate and analyze the impact of communal conflict on the socio-economic status of residents of Billiri LGA of Gombe State.The Specific Objectives are to assess the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of respondents in the study area; identify causes of past conflicts in the study area; determine the effects of such conflicts on the socio-economic life of the people and identify conflict resolution strategies used in the study area. The following hypothesis stated in the null form shall guide the phenomenon of this research: (1) There is no relationship between effects of conflict and the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. (2) There is no relationship between effects of conflict and causes of conflict in the area of study area.

The study will contribute to the total stock of knowledge in the study area especially as it relates to communal conflicts. The research will also help to broaden and better the conflict resolution strategies adopted in the area. This study will enlighten the government and other developmental actors regarding policies on resolution of conflicts
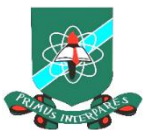
as well as prevent anything that can lead to violence resulting in damages to lives and

2. Conceptual and Theoretical underpinnings of conflict

2.1 The concept of conflict

Different scholars under different ideological, historical and cultural influences have defined conflict variously. However, Francis (2007) defines conflict as the 'pursuit of incompatible interests and goals by different groups'. According to Apender (2016) conflict is a situation in which two or more human beings desire goals which they perceive as being obtainable by one or the other, but not by both; each party is mobilizing energy to obtain a goal, a desired object or situation and each party perceives the other as a barrier or threat to that goal. Conversely, Coser (1956) perceives conflict in terms of the struggle between parties over desirable values. As stated by him, conflict refers to struggle over values or claims to status, power, and scarce resources, 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 and collectivities. Although conflict may be conceived from different perspectives, one crucial defining element of it is the presence of two or more actors struggling to secure a thing of value or adjudged to be valuable of which the gain by any of the actors amounts to a loss or deprivation to the other actor(s). The benefit that goes with access to or control of the

properties resulting in a fall in socioeconomic activities of people in a particular place.
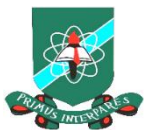
'valuable' and the deprivation or insecurity that follows denial of access underlie all conflicts. Similarly, Ho Won Jeong (2008) contends that a key element of all conflicts is the existence of resource scarcity where the wants of all actors cannot be fully satisfied and where the quests for such resources result in conflict behaviour.

Christopher and Ndubuisi (2018) views conflict as a condition in which one identifiable group of human beings in a given environment (whether tribal, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religions, socioeconomic, political, among others) is engaged in conscious opposition to or more identifiable human groups because these groups are pursuing what are or appear to be incompatible goals.

Martin, Desmond, Nnamani and Gowind (2018) conceptualize conflict as a situation in which two or more human beings desire goals, which they perceive as being obtainable by one or the other, but not both. Each party is mobilizing energy to obtain a goal, a desired object or situation and each perceives the other as a barrier or threat to that goal

2.2 Theoretical Perspectives on conflict

Various schools of thought of conflict theory have been explored to put into perspective the communal conflict in the study area. These include:

1. The Marxist theory of conflicts

Proponents of this school of thought proceed on the assumption that there exist two unequal classes of people in the society. On one hand, there exist the rich, powerful and noble, on the other hand exist, the poor, socially excluded, and deflected, identified as the proletariat. The former controls the live childhoods of the latter. The Marxist content that by the reason of this inequality, the society is set up to be in a state of perpetual conflict, and the poor will always agitate for equality and survival (Lenin, 1917).

2. The economic theory of conflict

The school of thought explains the link between economic deprivation and conflict (Dube and Vargas, 2013). They contend that because many people compete for scarce and limited economic resources, there is bound to be conflict when a group is threatened with lack or scarcity of livelihood (Bazzi and Blattman , 2013). They further argued that the threat of perceived threat of deprivation of farmlands and grazing lands are often the causes of conflict in agrarian societies.

3. The frustration and aggression theory of conflict

The underlying ideas of this school of thought is that bottled frustration is a major source of conflict (Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mower, and Sears, 1939). A feeling of frustration is a feeling of disappointment. This school of thought suggests that individuals become more aggressive when they perceive obstacles to success (Goor

1996). This theory contends that when individuals or groups are not given access to livelihoods or are constantly being deprived of livelihoods for no justifiable reasons, they are bound to react with anger and aggression, which will invariably lead to conflict (Berkowitz, 1969).

4. The relative deprivation theory of conflict

The theory is closely associated with frustration and aggression theory. Gurr (2005) argues that poverty and marginalization within countries are breeding ground for violent political movements and terrorism. The theory contends that people often perceived themselves to be perceived in comparison with others. This perception creates inter group hostility. These theories are germane in highlighting the nexus between lack of livelihoods and conflicts. When people hold others accountable for their inability to access sustainable livelihoods, they rebel against the perceived enemy. (Agbiboa, 2013).

5. The structural theory of conflict and the institutional theory of conflict:

In explaining the cases of conflict, these schools of thought argue that conflict is inherent in the way societies are structured. The causation of conflict is traceable to the tension generated when people compete for scarce resource. It is argued that social exclusion, discrimination, inequalities, and economic deprivation are among many factors that can generate conflict in the society (Oakland, 2005). The institutional
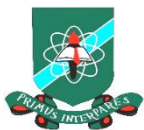
theory stresses that a combination of lack of opportunity to redress grievances high level of segregation and discrimination, irresponsive judicial system, and low capacity or lack of mechanisms for dispute resolution in advertently make conflict inevitable. A society that lacks an effective institutional approach to grievance resolution prone to conflict. There must be effective policing, law enforcement, rule of law, electoral system, and judicial system; otherwise, aggrieved individuals will resort to violence and conflict (Murshed and Tajoeddin, 2007; Stewart, 2003).

3. Methods

3.1 The study area

Billiri Local Government Area (LGA) is situated in the present Gombe State of Nigeria. It lies south of Gombe. Between lat. $9^0 51'53"$ N 11^0 13'31" E and long. 9^0 86472^0 N. $11^0.22528^0$E . The major towns and villages Billiri LGA include; Billiri (also known as lawisshi Biliri), the head quarter of the present Billiri Local Government Area council, Kalmai, Banganje, Tanglang, Tal, Todi, and Tudu Kwaya all in the above Local Government Area. Other notable settlements in the geographic location under reference include; Biliri-kufai, Komta, Pokwangli, Sikkirit, Lasale. Belfebe (Sansani), Kalindi, Lakwene, Lawisshi-lokorok, Pissi-ukko, Pagla, Pobdo, Lawilthew, Ladongor, Antawalam, Pobawure, Lawurkondo, Lamughu kulkul, Ayaba. Kolokk wannin. Lalaipitho, Pandi-kungu, kwi-bwa, Tangji. La-kwalak (Usaini, 1999)
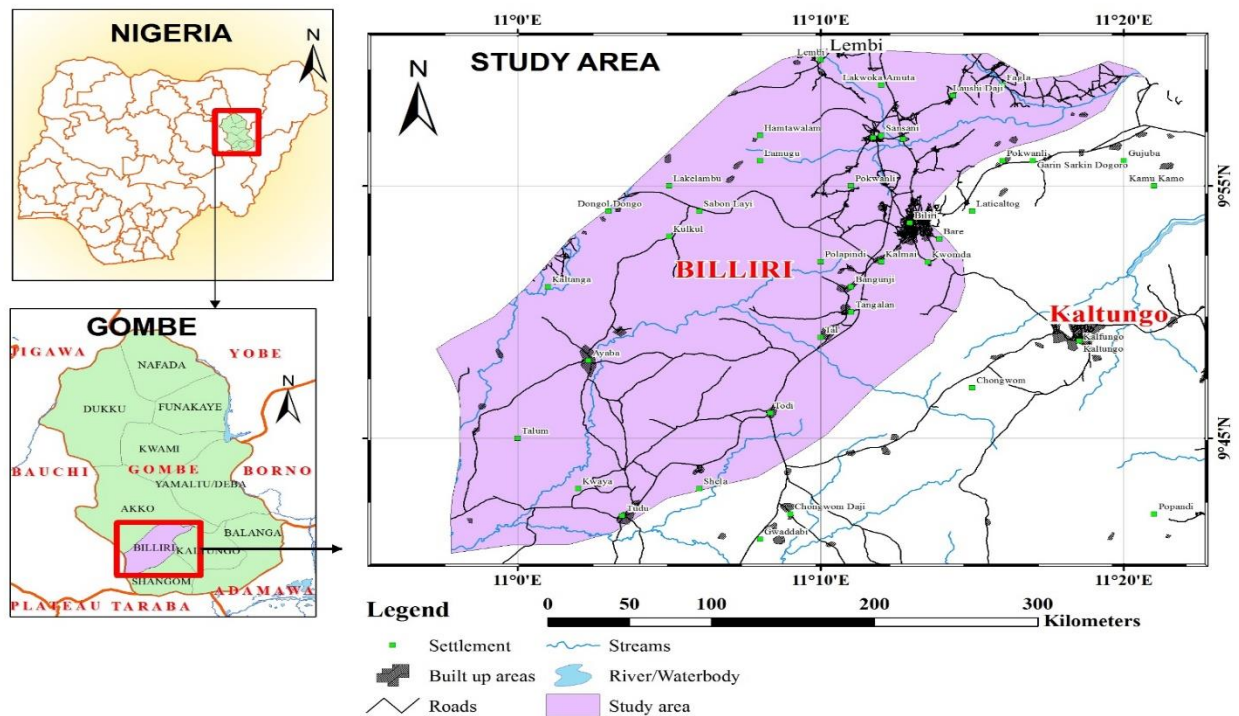
Figure 1: Study Area
Source: GIS unit, Department of Geography, Gombe State University, Gombe (2019)

3.2 Types and Sources of Data

The types of data used and sources of acquiring them were both primary and secondary. The primary data required for the study include data on the socio-economic characteristics of respondents, causes of past conflicts, effects of conflicts on the socio economic life of the people and organs, agencies and institutions responsible for management of conflicts in the area .The primary data were sourced through questionnaire, observation, and in-depth interview. Secondary data was sourced from National Population Commission (NPC); Census Reports of 1991 and 2006, Nigerian Police Force (NPF), Gombe State, Gombe State Ministry of Chieftaincy Affairs, Office of the Surveyor General of Gombe State, Journals and research projects. The information from secondary data sources served for literature review as well as supplement the primary data where applicable.

3.3 Sample size and Sampling Techniques

Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for the study. Firstly, cluster sampling was used to divide Billiri LGA into three based on geographical zones of North, Central and South respectively. Secondly, systematic sampling technique was used; where the various wards will be listed alphabetically and serially numbered. Thereafter, every first and last ward was selected per zone to give six wards. The fourth stage involved the use of purposive sampling technique to determine the actual settlements from which respondents would be drawn. Consequently, settlements that were worst hit during the last crises was chosen; two from each ward to make twelve communities (Table 1)

The total population of selected communities in Billiri LGA is 7240 (NPC, 1991). To obtain the sample size, population of the communities was projected to 2018 usin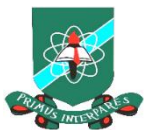g exponential formula $(P_{t+n} = P_t e^{r*n})$ with 3.2% inter-census growth rates for Gombe State (NPC, 2006). This gave a population size of 17174 (2018). P_{t+n} = Population at the future date (2018), P_t = Base year population (1991), e = exponential, r = Growth rate (3.2%), n = interval between the base year and the future year (2018-1991= 27).

Yamane (1967) formula (SS= $\frac{N}{1+N(e^2)}$ where, SS= sample size, N= Population size, e = sampling error of 0.09 significant level) was used to calculate the sample size. The above formula was used to obtain 156 as sample size for the study. To determine the proportion of respondents per unit area (community), Yamane (1967) was also used i.e. $\frac{n \times ss}{N}$, where n= population of each community, ss= sample size, N= Total population of selected the communities.

Table 1: Selected settlement and distribution of sample size by communities

Division of Billiri LGA into Geographic Zones	Selected Wards	Selected Community	Population 1991	Projected population 2018	Sample size
Billiri North	Kalmai	PupshiMamu	463	1098	10
		JauroAudu	762	1807	16
	Baganje	Layafi laushi	769	1825	16
		Latur	265	628	5
Billiri Central	Billiri	Popandi	405	960	9
		Laushidaji	737	1748	15
	Tanglang	Lamugu	704	1670	15
		Lakarai	359	851	7
Billiri South	T/kwaya	Yanshari	165	391	3

		Todi	409	970	8
	Tal	Ayaba	1979	4695	42
		Lasani	497	1179	10
3	**6**	**12**	**7514**	**17825**	**156**

Source: Author's compilation, 2019.

The household was the unit of observation, which was randomly selected for the administration of the questionnaire within the twelve communities using tables of random numbers. In each of the communities, the total number of questionnaire as stated above

was randomly distributed to each housing head. The head of household supplied all the information required and if not available, the eldest person was used.

3.4 Data Analysis

The quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social scientists (SPSS) Version 25. The data were categorized and the information summarized to obtain the descriptive statistics in form of frequency distribution tables and percentages. The data from the questionnaires were analyzed as per the research questions of the study. Formulated research hypothesis were tested using chi-square statistical techniques and correlation analyses.

Information on the effects of conflicts on rural economic activities in the study area were analysed using arithmetic mean. Respondents were asked to select from the list of variables that provided the effects of conflicts on rural economy. A four-point Likert rating scale was employed. Every respondent was required to specify opinion by ticking any of the four options i.e. Very severe (VS), Severe (S), Less severe (LS) and Not severe (NS). The four points scales were assigned weight in order of importance from

4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The mean of the respondents were calculated as follows: $4+3+2+1= 10/4=2.5$. Hence, the point of decision was fixed at 2.5. Hence, any statement that attracts a mean of 2.5 and above was regarded as severe while those with mean less than 2.5 was regarded as not severe.

Data on conflict resolution strategies was analysed using Relative Importance Index Technique to determine the relative importance of the various strategies to conflict resolution in the study area. The contribution of each of the resolution strategies used by the government was examined; and the ranking of the attributes in terms of their effectiveness as perceived by the respondents was done by the use of Relative Importance Index (RII) (Idoma, 2019, Muhwezi and Otim, 2014). RII is denoted by $\Sigma W / (A*N)$, where W = Weight given to each factor by the respondents, A = Highest weight (i.e., 3 in this case), N = the total number of respondents. The three-point

scale ranged from 1 (Not effective) to 3 (very effective). The higher the value of RII, the

more important or effective was the strategy to conflict resolution in the study area.

4. Results and Discussion

156 copies of questionnaires were administered in 12selected communities of Billiri LGA. Out of them, 140 were properly filled and returned. The return rate of the questionnaire is 89.74%.

4.1 Socio-economic characteristics of respondents

4.1.1 Distribution of respondents by gender

Respondents were grouped based on gender (Fig. 2). The outcome confirms that 92 respondents representing 66% of the population were males while 48 respondents representing 34% were females. This implied that more males than females were involved in the study. This is consistent with a study on communal resource conflict dynamics and socio-economic development in Cross-River state by Frank et al. (2018) who had more than half (56.8%) of the study population as males.
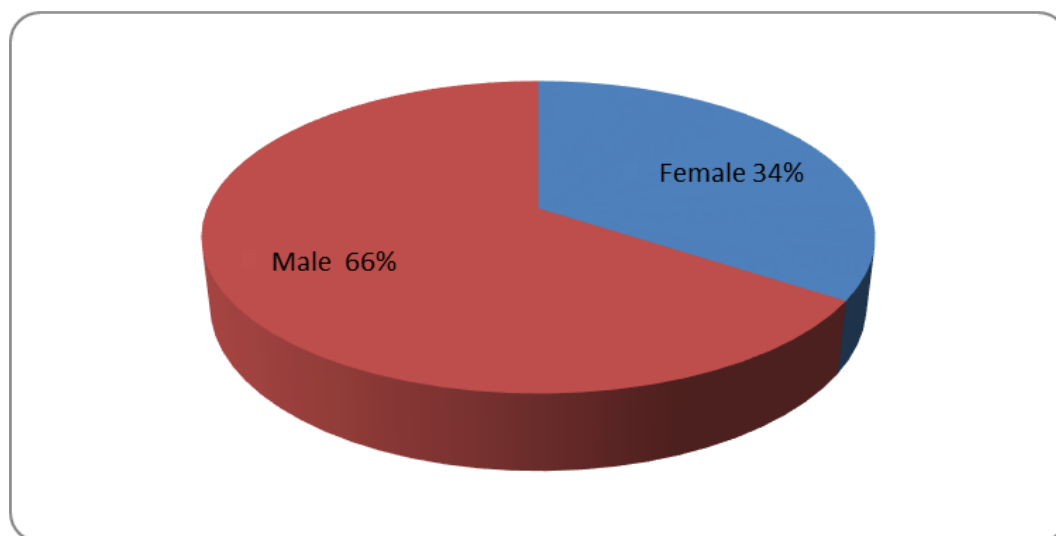

Figure 2 Gender of the respondents
Source: Fieldwork, 2019

4.1.2 Distribution of respondents by Age

The respondents were grouped based on age (Table 2). The results show that the highest number (27) of respondents were from the age bracket of 26-30 years, while the least number (21) fell within the ages of ages of 20-25 and 41-45 years. This implies that most (49.3%) of the respondents were mature and in their active ages who could adequately determine the effects of conflict on the economic activities in their respective communities. This finding agrees with Alabi

and Famakinwa (2017) who examined the effects of rural violence on rural economic activities in Osun State, Nigeria and asserted that the mean age of the respondents was 43.7years with standard deviation of 12.7 and hence, as adults should have understanding of the adverse effects of communal conflict in rural economic activities.

Table: 2 Age distribution (n=140)

Category	Frequency	Percentage
20-25 yrs	21	15.0
26-30 yrs	27	19.3
31-35 yrs	23	16.4
36-40 yrs	24	17.1
41-45 yrs	21	15.0
46 and above	24	17.1

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

4.1.3 Distribution of Respondents by Educational Attainment

Respondents were grouped based on education (Fig 3). Results show that greater proportion of the respondents (35%) had attained secondary education. Next in percentage is primary education (18.6%), tertiary education (17.9%), the unschool are (16.4%) and adult education (12.1%) respectively. This suggests that literacy level of the respondents was relatively high and this can have implication on conflict resolution and affect the management strategies to be adopted.
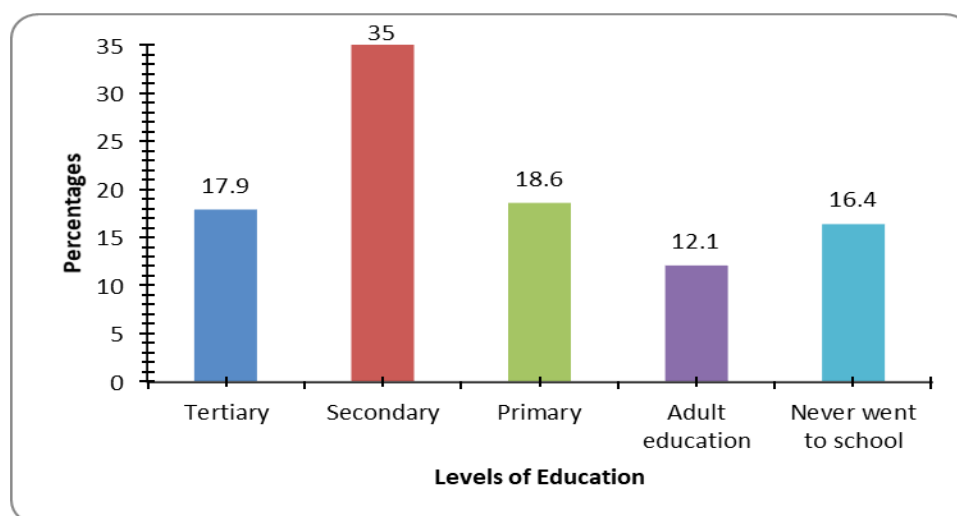
Figure 3: Educational attainments of respondents
Source: Fieldwork, 2019

4.1.4 Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status

Information was obtained on the marital status of the respondents (Fig 4). The results show that married people constituted the highest proportion (nearly three-fifth) of the respondents.
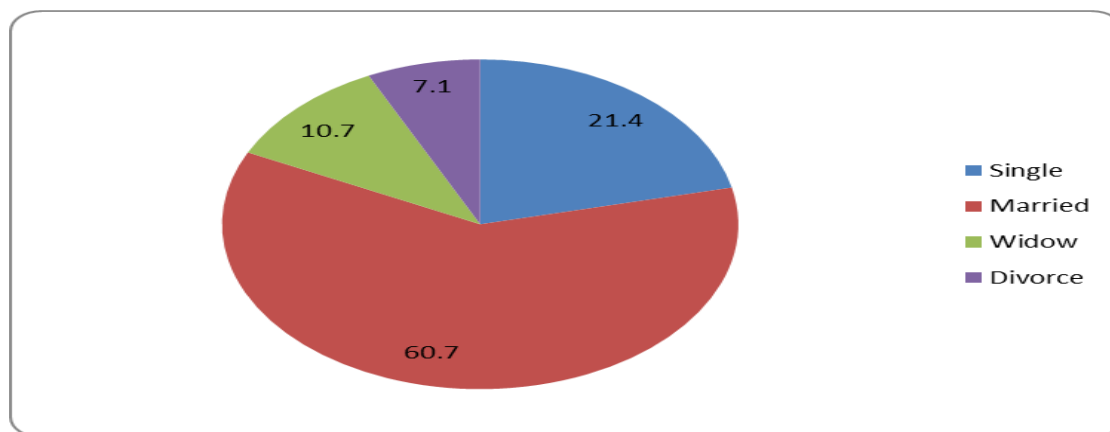

Figure 4: Marital Status of respondents
Source: Fieldwork, 2019

4.1.5 Distribution of Respondents by Occupation

Data obtained on the occupational status of the respondents (Table 3) indicates that the people of the study area are predominantly (67.1%) Farmers. Only 10% are civil servants and traders are 12.9%. This implies that people in the study area engaged in varieties of economic activities in order to make ends meet. This is in line with the submission of Oyesola (2007) which established that rural dwellers engage in various economic activities for their living.

Table 3: Occupation (n=140)

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Farmer	94	67.1
Civil servant	14	10.0
Trader	18	12.9
Farmer and civil servant	1	0.7
Farmer and trader	13	9.3

Source: Fieldwork, 2019

4.1.6 Respondents experience of conflict

Investigations on respondents experience of conflict indicates that all the respondents have previously experienced conflict in the study area. Hence, they are very familiar with the nature of the conflict in their communities.
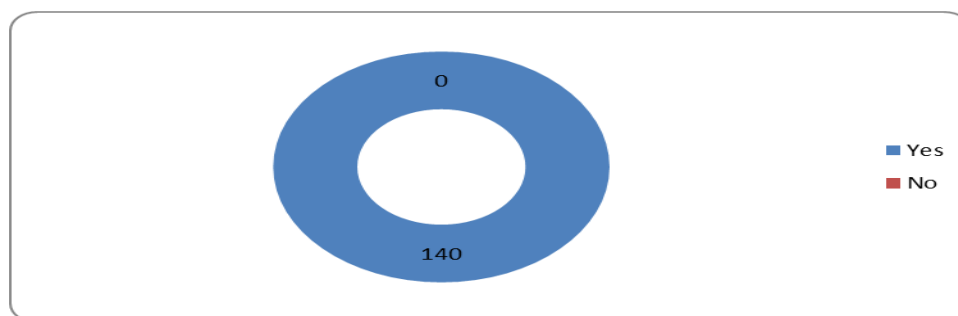

Figure 5: Experience of conflict
Source: Fieldwork, 2019

4.1.7 Frequency of conflict

Information gathered from respondents regarding the frequency of the incidence of conflict in the study area indicates that conflicts occur occasionally. This was affirmed by 88% of the respondents.
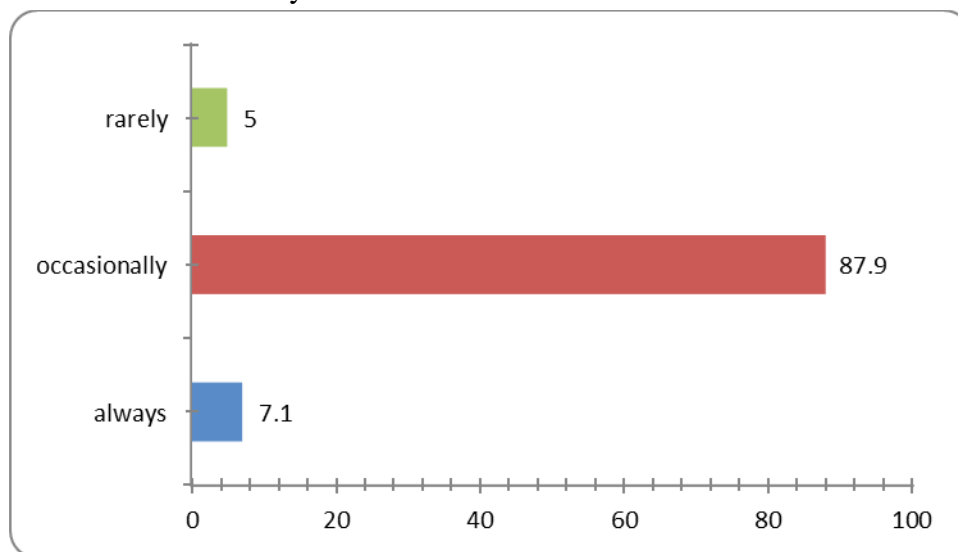

Figure 6: Frequency of conflict
Source: Fieldwork, 2019.

4.1.8 Duration of the conflict

Information on the period covered by the conflict in the study area is depicted in Figure 7. Results in Figure 7 revealed that overwhelming majority (79.3%) of the respondents stated three to five weeks duration.
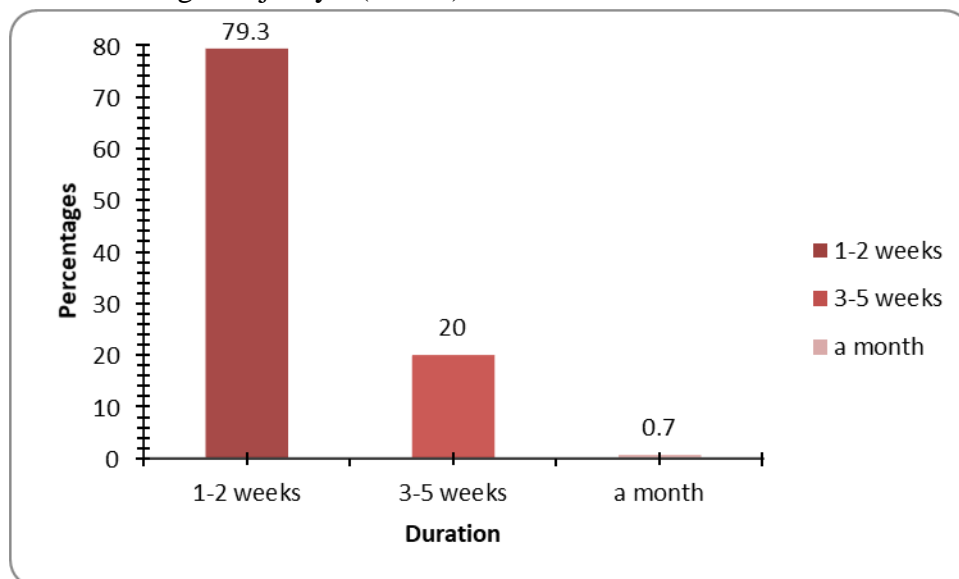

Figure 4.7: Duration of conflict
Source: Fieldwork, 2019.

4.2: Causes of Conflicts

Results in Table 4 shows that the respondents identified multiple causes of conflict. 140 respondents representing 100% agreed that competition over limited resources is a major cause of conflict in the study area. This is followed by chieftaincy disputes (27.2%), next in percentage is ethnic/tribal superiority by indigenes (26.1%), relocation of public institution (21%), political tussle (13%), issues related to payment of tributes (14.3%) and destruction of crops by straying animals (13.6%). The implication of the finding is that those causes of conflict that were identified by majority of the respondents indicate the sensitive issues that needed to be amicably considered among all the parties concerned. This result is in line with the findings of Manu, et al., (2014) and Alabi (2010) who identified competition over land, struggle for leadership position, conflict of culture, communication breakdown, poverty and differences in values as major causes of conflict in their study areas.
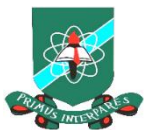
Table 4: Causes of conflicts

S/N	Causes of Conflicts	SA	A	D	SD
1	Competition over limited resources (land, water etc.)	140 (100)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
2	Chieftaincy disputes	13 (9.3)	25 (17.9)	54 (38.6)	48 (34.3)
3	Relocation of public institution (e.g. local govt. secretariat)	6 (4.3)	23 (16.4)	42 (30)	69 (49.3)
4	Political tussle	4 (2.9)	14 (10)	56 (40)	66 (47.1)
5	Destruction of crops by unrestricted animals	7 (5)	12 (8.6)	47 (33.6)	74 (52.9)
6	Ethnic/tribal superiority by indigenes in the community	4 (9)	24 (17.1)	58 (41.4)	54 (38.6)
7	Issues related to payment of tributes	7 (5)	13 (9.3)	65 (46.4)	55 (39.3)

Source: Fieldwork, 2019   Note: (Figures in parenthesis are in percentages)

4.3: Effects of Conflicts

Results in Table 5 reveal that loss of lives ($\bar{x}$ =4.0, R1) is the most severe effects of conflict on the communities. This is followed by damage to properties ($\bar{x}$ =3.9, R2), decrease in income ($\bar{x}$ =3.9, R2) and separation of families ($\bar{x}$ =3.9, R2). Next in order of ranking include destruction of farms ($\bar{x}$ =3.4 R5), loss of employment ($\bar{x}$ =3.0, R6), and loss of shops and goods ($\bar{x}$=2.2, R7). The least is travel and transport ($\bar{x}$ =1.5, R11). The implication is that the devastating effects of conflicts on the communities could constitute a major hindrance to the vitality of economic activities and sustainable development. In general, it would be unreasonable for entrepreneurs to invest in a conflict prone area. The result conforms to the submission of Alabi and Famakinwa, (2017) who reported that reduction in income, displacement of farmers from their land, loss of lives, arms running and loss of houses and properties were the common effects of conflict among their respondents.

Table 5: Effects of Conflicts in the study

S/N	EFFECTS OF CONFLICTS	VS	S	LS	NS	$\bar{x}$	R
1	Damage to properties	120	20	0	0	3.9	2
2	Decrease in income	130	0	10	0	3.9	2
3	Loss of lives	140	0	0	0	4.0	1
4	Destruction of farms	100	15	10	15	3.4	5
5	Damage to infrastructures (Telecomm., power supplies, bridges etc.	0	50	50	40	2.0	8
6	Loss of shops and goods	20	30	50	40	2.2	7
7	Relocation of businesses	0	0	140	0	2.0	8
8	Increase in the cost of living	0	50	40	50	2.0	8
9	Loss of employment	70	30	5	35	3.0	6
10	Separation of families	120	20	0	0	3.9	2
11	Travel and transport	10	15	15	100	1.5	11

Source: Fieldwork, 2019.

4.4. Conflict Resolution Strategies Used in the study area

Results in Table 4.5 show that the use of police or court (RII 0.55, R1) to resolve conflict was considered the most effective method of resolving conflicts. This shows a high level of intolerance and total breakdown of law by the conflicting parties in the study area. This disagrees with what Pkalya et al. (2004) observed that the use of local mediation was more effective in resolving conflicts among rural dwellers due to its potency. Others include strategic withdrawal (RII, 0.54, R2), local mediation (RII 51, R3) and use of local government officials (RII 50, R4), super-ordination (RII 50, R4) and use of truce (RII 50, R4). These findings agree with the report of Manu et al. (2014) that both farmers and grazers in their study area preferred peaceful negotiation to resolve conflict because once both parties are satisfied, there is lasting peace.
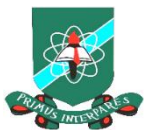
Table 6: Conflict Resolution Strategies used in the Study Area

S/N	Resolution Strategies	Very Effective	Effective	Not Effective	RII	Rank
1	Peaceful negotiation (identifying and correcting source of conflicts)	16	23	101	0.46	7
2	Local mediation by elders or community leaders (use of third party)	25	27	88	0.51	3
3	Use of court or police (confrontation)	32	26	82	0.55	1
4	Allowing conflict to take care of itself over time (Strategic withdrawal)	32	21	87	0.54	2
5	Use of local government officials	17	38	85	0.50	4
6	Conflicting parties accept each other views (Tolerance)	17	21	102	0.46	7
7	Ending conflict by one party completely surrendering to other party (Super-ordination)	23	24	93	0.50	4
8	Conflicting parties agree to suspend the conflict (use of truce)	24	20	96	0.50	4

Source: Fieldwork, 2019.

4:5 Relationship between Conflict and Socio Economic Characteristics of the People of the Study Area

Results in Table 7 revealed that occupation ($\chi 2$=136.343; $p \leq 0.01$) and level of education ($\chi 2$=18.929; $p \leq 0.01$) of the respondents had significant association with effects of conflict. Whereas age ($\chi 2$=1.086; $p \leq 0.05$) had no significant association with effects of conflict. Thus, the effect that conflict will have on respondents is not a function of their ages. However, the significant association between level of education and effects of conflict hypothesizes that education has inverse relationship with conflicts. The higher the level of education the less the conflict and verse versa. The link between education and conflict is well known, that education (or some aspects of it) contributes to conflict; that education is neutral; that education (or some aspects of it) contributes to peace (Davies, 2005). Education makes citizens more peaceful and resilient by enabling people form their own opinions and decisions, thereby providing citizens with the ability to read the facts for themselves and analyze what those facts mean for them.
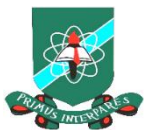
Table 7: Association between conflict and Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Inhabitants of the Study Area (n= 140)

Variable	Degree of Freedom	χ^2calculated	χ^2tabulated	Probability	Comment
Age	5	1.086	16.750	0.955	Not Significant
Education	4	18.929	14.860	0.001	Significant
Occupation	3	136.343	12.838	0.000	Significant

Source: Fieldwork, 2019.

5. Conclusion

The dynamic nature of communal conflict in this democratic region is rather threatening and has exacerbated the state of insecurity in Billiri. The reoccurrences of conflicts in Billri Local Government Area for years have increased the poverty level of the people and hence falling standard of living. However, the casual factors are known, the inability of elders to resolve the crisis has made people to live in fear and mutual suspicion. In the state of insecurity and lack of trust, no meaningful rival development programme can succeed. Notwithstanding, the circumstances of the crisis there is a need to transform the Socio-spatial and economic structure of the area to minimize living conditions. In addition, one can say that there is relationship between poverty and crisis in the study area.
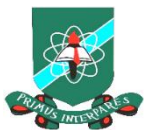
6. Recommendations

The finding through the study shows that peace is in dispersal to development and a prerequisite to the living at human activities. Based on these findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

a) The Government, private individuals and communities should join hands to provide uninterrupted access to basic education, health services, employment and other physical development facilities for quality living. This can be done through the rebuilding of those facilities destroyed during the crisis years and the development of new ones. This will give people a sense of belonging and an empowerment, which will avert reoccurrence of violent conflicts.

b) Skills acquisition centers should be established to train youths in the area that have not been privileged to be educated to harness their strengths and channel their energies into usable profitable ventures. This will reduce the rate of youth's unrest and

rural violence in the area. On causes of the crisis, chieftaincy, land, boundary maladjustment, elites influence etc.have been identified as the main causes of the conflicts. On this, the government should implement the report of various commissions of inquiries into the crisis in the area. Redefine the boundary within the Local Government Council to reflect the wishes of the majority of the people in the area.
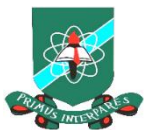
c) Government should meet periodically to dialogue with youth leaders, community leaders, traditional rulers and religious leaders in the area on issues that affect them, seek their opinion and suggestions where necessary. Finally, based on the issue of political marginalization and suppression, more political units like wards Local Government Councils, State and Federal constituencies be created to enable widespread representation at Local, State and the Federal Levels, this will give every strata of the society a sense of belonging and reduce conflicts to small scale and manageable dimension.

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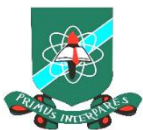
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