

Rural Violence in Obudu and Vandeikya Communities: Paths to Conflict Resolution

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Abstract

The rural areas in Nigeria are mostly known for agricultural productions which are basically carried out by the farmers in the rural settlements. This paper is focused on the rural violence and farmers clashes between the people of Obudu and Vandeikya Communities in Cross River and Benue States respectively. The objective of the study is to identify the root causes of the said conflict, the strategies used in the past and its failed attempts in handling the conflict over land disputes. The study adopts the use of qualitative research design through the conduct of interviews. The article therefore, proffers a holistic approach to conflict resolution on the said disputes among the farmers in the two communities. The research recommends urgent attention by the Federal Government of Nigeria on the disputed land to put beacons that would demarcates the boundary between the two communities (Obudu and Vandeikya) so as to resolve the conflict.

Keywords: Rural Violence, Farmers Clashes, Conflict Resolution, Vandeikya and Obudu Communities

Introduction

The world over, conflict between two or more nations has never been celebrated especially when lives are wasted through killings. It is painful to families whose members are gone or killed as a result of conflict and war. Many communities when involved in conflict, there is also a yearning by others on how to resolve such conflicts. Deininger & Castagnini (2006) worked on land disputes in Uganda and the impact of such conflict. Kolers (2009) opined that territorial disputes which also have to do with land conflict have defined modern politics. That has created a gap where little is done on how to resolve such disputes fairly and putting to an end to such conflict. Many communities over time in Nigeria have witnessed land disputes especially the communities between Benue State and Taraba State, Benue State and Cross River State. This research work is focused on rural violence with specific attention to farmers' clashes over land between Obudu and Vandeikya communities of Cross River and

Benue State respectively.

Historically, this land disputes between the two communities in Obudu and Vandeikya has been fought over decades. The ethnic nationalities from the two communities are known as the Tiv and Udam from Vandeikya and Obudu respectively. Ahom (2019) viewed that Tiv people of North-central Nigeria settled in the present day Benue State even before the colonial era of 1900-1960 where they practiced agricultural production as rural farmers. The work of Vaaseh (2019) asserts that the establishment of the two major markets between the two communities was the genesis of the dispute over land. These markets are known as Tsar and Obudu markets from Vandeikya and Obudu communities respectively. It is anchored on the premise that location of the said markets brought about the disputes.

The conflict between the Udam and Tiv people started even before the Nigerian independence of 1960 from the historical point of view, however, both ethnic nationalities

fought periodically as protest over the Tsar Market ownership (Vaaseh, 2019). The name Udam is referred to the ethnic group from Obudu Local government Area of Cross River State while the Tiv ethnic group is from Vandeikya local government Area of Benue State. Not much literature has been found on this issue unto why the unending conflict between the two ethnic groups and that necessitated the reason behind this present research work on rural violence, farmers' clashes and paths to conflict resolution between the two communities.

In other works, it is believed that the Tiv ethnic nationality from Benue State values fertile lands where they can farm and produce agricultural products. In most cases where the Tiv and the Udam ever fought was as a result of land dispute between the two ethnic groups. In view of these, it has been witnessed that in the 1990's down to the 20th century, these two groups had fought each other periodically. This has happened during the military era and in the return to democratic rule of 1999 to date. This year 2019 especially in July and early August, the Tiv people from Vandeikya community especially those from Mbaduku district fought with the Udam people from Obudu community of Cross River State. It is therefore, worrisome to see these two communities continuously and periodically engaging in land dispute where many are killed in the process of war between the two (Tsaaior, 2015; Akiga, 2003).

In the event of conflict, there is rural violence, killings and aggression against one another. These have been the character at any time when the two communities disagree over land at their neighboring environment of Obudu and Vandeikya. More so, in as much as it is also of note that both ethnic nationalities have collaborated in other areas such as trading between the two especially from and to Obudu market and Tsar market of Mbaduku district of Vandeikya local government area, there still exist ethnic tension and suspicion between the Udam and Tiv people. The suspicion and tension is dated back to the colonial era where the Udam people were waged against the Tiv people.

The British had conquered Udam people in 1912 before the Tiv people were captured during the colonial era of 1900 to 1960. The

Udam people had disclosed to the British colonial masters that the Tiv people were known to be quarrelsome and treacherous. The then colonial master known as Gordon, who was mandated to penetrate the Southern Tiv land, used his experience from the Northern part of today's Nigeria and he employed force as a means of adoption rather than peaceful acquisition. Gordon applied the brutal strategy in capturing the Tiv people when he was aided and informed of the Tiv by the Udam people who were aggrieved as a result of what was described as Tiv domination and independent people. The Udam who had the knowledge of the Tiv territory, gave full and adequate information to the British colonial Masters on how to capture the Tiv people (Akiga, 2003).

At this point, the British colonial masters invited the Tiv people of Kunav district to Obudu where the garrison for dialogue was stationed. Unknown to the Tiv people who thought it was a peaceful dialogue; they came to the dialogue with different dance groups to entertain their host. As such, about three districts of Kunav in Vandeikya community attended the dialogue. These districts were Mbaduku, Mbagbera and Mbayongo. This informed that, the British never established their garrison in Tiv land but rather did in Obudu so as to invade the Tiv land and to make them subordinate. Tiv felt betrayed by the Udam and that created an atmosphere for suspicion and tension between the Udam and the Tiv people. The British did not station in Tiv land but administered the Tiv from Obudu and that created and promoted aggression between the Tiv people and Udam since the Tiv felt that was a clear sign as well as an indication of their submission to the powers of the Udam people of present day Cross River State (Akiga, 2003).

This work therefore, sought to establish the gap why this conflict has lingered for decades yet unresolved? To what extent the government has played a role in resolving the long conflict over land disputes between the Udam people of Cross River State and the Tiv people of Mbaduku district of Vandeikya Local Government of Benue State? What are the possible solutions in resolving this conflict between the Tiv and Udam people of Vandeikya and Obudu communities of Benue and Cross River States respectively?

Conceptualisation

The following concepts are used in this paper to give clear understanding of the work.

Communal Conflict: The term communal conflict covers inter-ethnic and inter-religious, it may also include inter-village clashes which may also be defined in terms of identities (Smidt, 2020). In this work, it is the conflict between two ethnic groups as identified as Udam and Tiv ethnic nationalities from Obudu and Vandeikya communities respective (N-ue & Awortu, 2020). As such, the conflict as lingered between the two ethnic groups over decades. This has led to the cause of the research work on why the lingered conflict over decades and to what extent this conflict has been handled in terms of resolving the said conflict. The communal conflict as a concept in relation to inter-ethnic crisis has help the paper in understanding the various reasons why the conflict exist between the two groups as well as the measures in handling/resolving the conflict.

Farmers Clashes: In this paper, it is notably the clashes between the Tiv farmers from Vandeikya community and the Udam farmers from Obudu community both from Benue State and Cross River States respectively. The clashes most often is as a result of fight over farm land between the two communities. It has been proven that the disputed land has not been demarcated by the government and that has created tension over decades resulting to clashes between the two ethnic groups (Wade, 2019).

Rural Violence: Many people have been killed as a result of the conflict between Udam and Tiv ethnic groups within the rural communities. The land disputes as noted, has claimed many lives since the conflict has lingered for decades between the two rural communities (Fwatshak, 2016; Wade, 2019). The term rural violence here reflect on the violent act as demonstrated in killings done by both the Tiv and Udam people in the cause of the conflict between the two ethnic groups. This has motivated the researchers on why the continuous lingered conflicts for decades and what measures can be used by the government to resolve the said conflict.

Theoretical Framework

This made use of frustration-aggression theory as used in the work of Terwase, Terwase, Puldu & Abdul-Talib (2018) which posed that men rebel against the state as a result of issues that are unattended to and are unaddressed. The failure on the part of the government to address the boundary demarcation led to the frustration of the people on both divides to fight against each other. They became aggressive due to their frustration over decades.

This theory further explained that, unless the boundary issue is resolved, their frustrations will still continue and the tendency to rebel will still be obtainable or future concurrencies could provoke either of the groups to fight against one another until the government through the national boundary commission would establish beacons demarcating the said boundaries. Maiangwa, Uzodike, Whetho, and Onapajo (2012) opined that men rebel when their issues are unattended to as a result of frustration. They can become aggressive until their issues are addressed.

Research Methods

This research work employed qualitative research design in conducting the research with the use of interview technique by employing focus group discussion where the elderly ranging between 60 to 80 years old were interviewed, as well as the youth most especially the foot soldiers were equally interviewed in this work. About thirteen (13) respondents were interviewed from the field where we reached a point of saturation. According to the work of Creswell (1998) a minimum of five (5) and maximum of twenty-five (25) respondents are used in a qualitative research design and when it reaches a point of saturation, the researcher can stop from there. At that stage, the researchers were not getting anything new or different information on the subject matter again. The research also made use of secondary sources such as journal publications and other sources from the internet. The major source of data was gotten from Obudu and Vandeikya communities.

The Issues, Causes and Impacts of the Conflicts

This section, we will focus on the following

below to discuss on the issues between the Tiv ethnic group and the Udam, as well as the conflicting issues between the two groups from Obudu and Vandeikya communities.

Intermarriages

Marriages brings different people of different ethnic nationalities, different races, different countries as well as different backgrounds together in order to form a union between two adults male and female (Nock, 1995; Olson, DeFrain, & Skogrand, 2010; Hamamy, 2012; Chakrabarti, Gupta-Mukherjee, & Jayaraman, 2009). When marriages are established, it gives credible opportunity for the extension of relationships between and among families and relations. That's why; there are in-laws as a result of marriages. To this background, it is not exceptional to the two ethnic nationalities Tiv-Udam ethnic groups from Benue and Cross River States. The Tiv men are said to women marry from Obudu community of Cross River State and the Udam men are equally said to marry Tiv Women from Vandeikya community of Benue State. In view of this, respondent opined that:

Yes, we intermarry between the Tiv and the Udam people. We have their children (Udam women) and they have ours (Tiv Women). It is not good for us to have conflict actually. We are in-laws and it is not good for in-laws to fight. In-laws are supposed to love each other considering the fact that we intermarry and we bear children. There are Tiv men who went to Obudu and they got married to their daughters and they brought them back to Tiv land, our present Vandeikya community of Benue State. Likewise, there are Udam men who came here and married our daughters, so, we don't need to fight one another or even go to war against each other.

The respondent further asserts that:

During war, we do not kill the Udam women that we married from Obudu because they have become part of us. As in laws, it is not good to have

conflict, not at all. We don't desire to fight. Even this recent war, they (Udam, from Obudu community) were the one that attacked us first. Also, those Udam people who are living in Tiv land are not killed during the war and those who travel on the Federal road along Obudu and Vandeikya communities are equally not killed or attacked by the Tiv people. You can travel and nothing will happen to you. The only people that are killed are those who go to the battle field of war against the Tiv people.

More so, the research work has revealed that people become diversified when they intermarry as in the case of the Tiv and Udam from Vandeikya and Obudu since the families that directly marry each other learn different ways of doing things as a result of their cultural differences. Parekh (2001); Kottak (2011) and Spector (2002) wrote on cultural diversity and its impact and the lessons from marrying people of different backgrounds. The work of Spector (2002) talks about marrying in health and illness meaning that, marriage should be appreciated both in good times and in bad times. That is why, when there is conflict between the Obudu and Vandeikya communities, those who intermarry are protected from attacks or being killed.

Hospitality

Research has proven that both Benue people and Cross River people are hospitable, that is why there is trade between other ethnic nationalities into these two states. Notably, Obudu is known for her endowed natural resources which serve as a place for tourist destination in Cross River State. Terwase, Abdul-Talib, Edogbanya, Zengeni, Yerima, & Ibrahim (2015) showcase how the Obudu Cattle Ranch has become a tourist destination in Nigeria. Obudu is naturally beautiful and endowed with plateaus, as such, both locals and foreigners do visit the ranch for tourism activities. Anene, Chime, Jibike & Anika (1991) suggest that Obudu ranch is known for tsetse-free zone in Nigeria which equally posed as an environment good for tourist destination in Nigeria.

Ekanemand Bai (2019) on the other hand,

suggest that, the Tiv people are well known for hospitable culture where they like non-indigenous people to dwell among them. Hence, they accommodate both locals and foreigners in Tiv land and to that extend, some of them got married to other people who are not of Tiv ethnic origin in Benue state. An example of such is the marriage between the former Governor of Benue State, Gabriel Suswam who married Yemisi from Yoruba ethnic nationality and she became the First Lady of Benue State for a period of eight years when the husband was the Governor of Benue State (Zivkovic, 2014; Ikyereve, 2011; Jibo, 1993). Findings from the field as responded by another respondent informed that:

Both the Tiv people and Obudu people are very hospitable, they like foreigners, strangers, and they equally welcome other people who are not from Benue State and Cross River State to dwell among them. That is why you see a lot of people going to the Obudu cattle ranch on tourism activities because the environment is beautiful and it attract many people who are also foreigners. Likewise, the Tiv people are hospitable too. They are mostly farmers and as such, many people visit them to buy food and other agricultural products from them. Food is very cheap in Tiv land. The only problem between these two ethnic nationalities is the land disputes which they have been fighting periodically. However, this can be resolved when the government steps in to demarcate the land which there is no boundary.

In as much as the Tiv people are hospitable, they equally enjoy farming, they are well known as local farmers. The work of Terwase, Abdul-Talib, Zengeni, & Terwase (2015) opined that part of the Tiv people from Vandeikya Local Area of Benue State whom are of Tsambe District; tend to farm agricultural products such as tomatoes, cassava, sweet potatoes, sorghum, citrus, yam and pepper. Other Districts such as Mbara, Ute, Mbagbera, Ningev, Mbakaange, Mbayongo, and Mbaduku, equally produces

agricultural products which are generally sold to other parts of the country and not just to people in Benue State alone. By so doing, they accommodate many people from different ethnic nationalities as well as having a hospitable relationship with both locals and settlers. In respect to hospitality, both Obudu and Vandeikya communities host Federal Government institutions such as Federal College of Education, Obudu and Federal Government College, Vandeikya which accommodates people from across the federation to whom some are staff and students alike (Aer & Anikpa, 2013; Suskind, Iseghohimhen & Aondo-Akaa, 1998).

The Tsar Market Factor

Vaaseh (2019) connotes that markets are purely established for the generality of people to engage in buying and selling of goods between different communities so as to meet their demands and supply. The work also suggests that, in the issue of markets involves the exchange of goods and services. Obioha and Tilley-Gyado (2007) indicates that rural women do participate in the development of the rural areas through farming, buying and selling of agricultural products which are viable for the purpose of economic development. In the case of Tsar Market, it was established for the purpose of doing business with the nearby communities especially with the people of Mbaduku, Obudu, Mbayongo, Mbakaange, Mbagbera, Ute, Tsambe, Mbara, Ogoja, Ningev, Kwande, and Ushongo communities across Benue and Cross River States. The Tsar Market became an area known for environmental conflict between the Tiv and Udam people. Subject to knowing why the fight over the Tsar Market in the past, the Elders responded that:

Yes. We don't know how Tsar was in Udam. We used to go to Tsar, we don't know whether Udam used to come to Tsar, but all we know was that Tsar Market was ours. So when we fought with Udam and defeated them, we recovered Tsar and till now is our market. Now, Udam can only come to Tsar Market.

It is of the opinion that, markets brings about the development of communities economically for

the purpose of growth and development amongst the people of different ethnic nationalities and not just for the Tiv and Udam alone as in the case of Tsar Market in Vandeikya local government area of Benue State (Vaaseh, 2019). George, Adelaja & Weatherspoon (2019) concurred that armed conflict has negative impact on food security. The conflict between Tiv and Udam can equally create food scarcity which will have negative impact on the society not just in Vandeikya and Obudu alone but also to the nearby communities. Hence, Tsar Market situation is very important for the purpose of economic well-being and development.

The Farm Land Factor

The work of Vaaseh (2019) point out those major conflicts in Tiv land is as a result of farm land, land disputes and communal clashes between Tiv and other ethnic nationalities such as the Udam and Jukum. Since most of the Tiv people dwell in the rural environments, they engage in farming activities such as cultivation of yam farms, maize, soya beans, rice, sweet potatoes, oranges, and so on. Vaaseh (2019) further notes Tiv people usually use most of their land for farming and engagement in other agricultural production which serves as source of income to them. The Tiv people equally sustain Nigeria's food security since they are mostly known for farming. As such, they fight for land when they feel other ethnic nationalities trespasses into their lands. A search for peaceful resolution on the periodically fight between Tiv and Udam as suggest by a respondent posed that:

The real cause has been communal conflict. When Udam (from Obudu) do their farming and cross over the boundary, we are provoked to a point that it results into a war. However, the recent conflict was not really about communal clash; our men were on the farm, the Udam came and shot one to death, one injured. The young men were farming in their backyard; they were not at the boundary. We were not pleased with this and we started war with them.

Deni, Husain and Madani (2019) argued that land conflict can affect tourism development

and that also applies to the case of Obudu cattle ranch as a tourist destination in Nigeria where such conflict may reduce the patronage of the said destination. The Obudu Cattle Ranch could serve as a source of income both to the Cross River State and Nigeria at large. The tourist destination is also an area for economic integration as well as national integration. Notwithstanding, land conflict create fear in the hearts of the rural dwellers and the issue needs to be addressed as in the case of the land disputes between the Obudu and Vandeikya communities.

Boundary Demarcation

The role of boundary demarcation is to foster peace and peaceful co-existence between the people of a given environment. Boundary demarcation gives a clear view of where A & B should start and stop. It put to an end land disputes, land conflict between a given community and another. Ngwa and Akara (2019) views boundary making as dates during the pre-colonial and colonial era. In Nigeria, the issue of boundary making was not done only in the time of colonial era but also after the independence as seen during the military administration where they created states and local government areas. Kansanga, Arku and Luginaah (2019) argue that most of the natural features that were used in land demarcation have been tempered with. In the case of Obudu and Vandeikya communities over land disputes, there is that the government needs to resolve the disputes by putting beacons at the disputed land. As such, Elders responded that:

We have complained to the Federal Government and she said, she is going to demarcate the land with beacons. They started putting beacons but did not go further. The Federal Government only put beacon along the road between Obudu and Vandeikya as boundary demarcation but failed to put beacons where the real land dispute is and that is why the conflict between the Tiv people and Udam from Obudu over land has not come to an end. As long as the Federal Government does not put beacons on the disputed land between the

Obudu and Vandeikya communities, this land dispute won't come to an end.

Below is an example of where the government



Figure 1: The Beacon inserted by the government at the boundary between Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State and Vandeikya Local Government Area of Benue State. Source: The Researchers (September, 2019).

When asked further on the government's role on the disputed farm land, an elderly man of over 75 years responded that:

No, the government has not set the boundary. It is the government that set boundaries to restrict people from land trespassing. Government has not set boundary for this very land that has been a communal conflict over the years. Yes, government did in those days. But now that the population has increased, there is no boundary; people are just farming without restraint. It started long ago before the democratic era. We cannot say it started in the time of Governor Aper Aku (democracy). It started in the time of Azikiwe and Abubakar Tafa Balewa. In the time of democracy, they have not done anything about the boundary adjustment.

The researchers actually visited the disputed land between the Tiv and the Udam people where they saw the efforts that were made by the government in the time past. *Figure 1* of this research work has shown the beacon that was set by the government in the past at the entrance between the two communities of Vandeikya and Obudu. It is acknowledged that, only one beacon that was established demarcating the two communities where it has become a

of Nigeria inserted a beacon as a sign of showing where the boundary starts between the two communities discussed in the work. This is help resolve the said farmers clashes over land disputes in the affected communities.

yardstick for the two communities not to fight within that geopolitical area. However, other parts of the land dividing the two communities have not been demarcated by the government and that has led to provocations, frustration and aggression between the two communities. More so, the democratically elected government of 1999 to date has not attempted demarcating the land between the Tiv and Udam people. As such the conflict continues and more clashes between the farmers, in view of that, another respondent put it that:

The democratic government has really not done anything to resolve this communal conflict. Yes, they only came and took measurement, but to put beacons at the boundaries, so that we can know our boundaries, they have not. Since we have not known our real boundary, at any time, we feel Udam have encroached our land and they also feel so, that create an atmosphere where and why the conflict is still lingering.

To show demarcation, when inquired if they planted trees at boundaries in order to restrict both communities from crossing over, another respondent asserts that:

We have, as a matter of fact, we farm orchards. The boundary where our fathers settled is called 'Ijor Igbough'. So when Udam crosses to

Ijor Igbough, we are provoked to fight. They have no peace of mind yet. This is because this recent war, they have not called for peace. When there is a call for peace, we know that there is desire to stop war. Udam have not called for peace and they are the one who started offending us.

Governor, Professor Ben Ayade, have been saying he doesn't want war, but they (Udam) are determined to retaliate. We (Tiv) when we are asked to stop, we do. Right now Udam don't come to our place, but we do go to their place.

In the cause of the research, the researchers also visited where trees were planted as part of the efforts in demarcation the land which was fought for over the years before the beacon was inserted by the government. Those trees can equally be seen in figure 1 afar the beacon which put an end to the fight against Tiv and Udam in that particular area. Although, the other parts where the contention over land is still lingering has not been demarcated. They called the place or land as 'Ijor Igbough' where the land has been disputed over decades and even now that this research has been conducted. In view of the above, until the said land would be demarcated, or else, both communities will continue to fight out of their frustrations that the land is not demarcated and for that reason, the land belongs to all of them. Furthermore, in view of getting more information on how the recent war between the two communities ended, they were asked if it is the government that intervened in this recent war that they halted, they responded that:

Yes. It was the government. She asked us not to engage in conflict again. We should put our weapons down. Soldiers also were mobilized to Cross River state and asked everyone to leave the battle field. When the soldiers came, they said they don't want war again. But when we retreated from battle, Udam went and shot someone in Mbaaji while the real war was in Mbazerem. This led to fresh war the next day. It was at last that there was an intervention for all to retreat from the battle.

On the other hand, do Udam wants this war to come to an end? More answers were given:

They said, we have killed many of their people, so they can't stop the war completely though their

The two communities have recorded series of killings over time, they youths are trained to fight for the land believing that the land belongs to their forefathers. That has being the struggle for the land. In as such as both communities claims the land, the blood of many have been shed on the said land as they fight for ownership. Both the Tiv and the Udam historically and presently, they inter-marry yet the conflict has not ended in as much as they are seen as in-laws (N-ue, & Awortu, 2020). Marriages do bring a people together to become in as much as they may be from different origin, different community, or different socio-cultural background. Historically, both the Tiv and the Udam people are known to be very hospitable and welcoming to their strangers and visitors. However, in spite of the fact that they are hospitable, they do not resist the temptation to fight as long as the issue of the disputed land comes in between them. In view of the role of the district heads for peace and resolution of the said conflict, a response to the instructions of the District Head of Mbaduku:

We do obey our traditional rulers. When they tell us war is evil and do bring set back in development, we do agree to stop, but Udam will be strategizing, and it could still get back to us. Even in this recent war, they said when they finish celebrating their 'Afotan' (New Yam Festival), they will still resume war. I don't know whether they have not finished celebrating their festival. We are expecting that when they finish their festival and resume war, we will also engage them. When the Benue State and Cross River State Governments' asked for a cease fire, we obey. When they ask us to cease fire, we do. We don't have power to resist them.

The real challenge now is for the government to set boundaries for both parties, the Tiv people are willing not to go to war against the Udam people from Obudu, in Cross River State as opined by their response:

There should be a boundary. If there is boundary, we will obey; we are not more than the government. We can't trespass boundary, neither would Udam. Without the beacons on boundary, the government has not done anything yet to resolve the conflict. Once the beacons are put in place at the boundaries, we will know our boundary with them. We will not trespass again. They will also not trespass. This is all we want.

Müller (2019) supports the role of boundary demarcation as an answer to land disputes which it could possibly resolve conflicts that may last for many decades. This has been the situation between these two communities as researched in this work. The case of Tiv farmers and Udam farmers has lingered for too long and the desired peace is needed for a peaceful resolution.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In view of resolving the conflict between the Obudu and Vandeikya communities over the land disputes which has lingered over decades, this has inspired the conduct of this research work. It has been researched on how the conflict between Tiv and Udam started long ago over the Tsar market, however, this research work further studied why the persistent conflict between the Tiv from Vandeikya and Udam from Obudu especially the last fight in July/August, 2019. The work revealed that, the failure of the Federal Government through the National Boundary Commission to establish the boundary legally as exemplified above by the use of beacons between Obudu and Vandeikya clearly has caused the continuous conflict periodically.

The research work opined that, demarcating the disputed land between the Obudu and Vandeikya communities would solve the problem in between the two communities that could further restore peace between them. As long as the conflict continues, there is going to

be absence of peace between both parties. Today, Nigeria is going through difficult times where there are conflicts in other parts of the country such as the farmers-herders conflict, Boko Haram conflict, and farmers-banditry conflict that need sustainable peace and security in Nigeria. We therefore, need lasting peace between the two communities and not to add to the other conflicts that are troubling the country.

This research work therefore recommends the following:

- 1) There is need for urgent demarcation on the disputed land by the Federal Government through the National Boundary commission. Since this conflict is triggered mostly because of the boundary issue, demarcating becomes very timely in ending the conflict and this has been corroborated by some of our respondents.
- 2) The Federal Government should compensate the two communities whose properties have been destroyed as a result of the disputed land. Communities on both sides of the divide have often lost properties and lively hoods as such compensating them will help alleviate the frustrating and aggression as explain in the theoretical framing of this study.
- 3) Both Cross River State and Benue State Governments should be actively involved in the boundary demarcation process in the said disputed land. The governments on the two states must step up to their responsibilities of protecting lives and properties of her citizens especially as regards demarcating the disputed land.
- 4) The traditional rulers should also be involved since they have been involved in fueling and resolving the same conflict. The traditional rulers play a very important role in this conflict, for example they are known to sanction the conflict and they also put a stop to it by addressing their people especially as they are the custodians of the customary laws that govern them.
- 5) The Federal Government should grant amnesty to the foot soldiers on both sides of the divide so as to disarm them. The foot soldiers of this conflict are still armed and waiting for another episode, the federal government through her security and her other relevant agencies should propose

disarmament and amnesty programme to curb the proliferation of arms in the conflict zones.

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