THE IMPACT OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE ON POST-CONFLICT PEACE BUILDING PROCESS IN PLATEAU STATE*

Abstract

The concept of restorative justice is now being accepted as a concept of peace building. It involves remedying or repairing harm or crime committed by offenders against the victims through a collaborative system that is just to both parties. Post conflict peace building is a participatory process to bring the warring parties to round table in order to build a lasting peace within the community. This process is done in conjunction with the local people. The conflict has polarised the various communities on religious and ethnic line. However, after the conflict the government and the people have held several consultative meetings to find lasting solution to the conflict. Government did not impose dialogue rather it involved the local people to arrive at a solution. Using doctrinal approach, this paper looks at the matter from the perspective of participatory peace building which is a concept of restorative justice. The paper found that exclusion of certain group of people from participating in peacebuiling processes will not allow the people and community to proffer lasting solution to the conflict. Again, government cannot force people to come together except the people agreed to come together.

Keywords: Restorative justice, Post-conflict, Peace building, Criminal behaviour, Plateau State

1. Introduction

Aside laws and other forms of retributive system, if a community is to exist; it must be founded upon positive relationships between and among people. Based on the focus of the present study, restorative justice seeks to rebuild fractured relationships and to build trust between community members and if this must stand, trust must be the fulcrum. Trust can be formidable on the platform of participatory peace building process. When an individual or a community is harmed by the actions of another, it is hard to invest in trusting the other. Some action must be taken by the violator that shows a willingness to reconsider his or her actions. Some action must be taken by the violated persons that show a willingness to accept the reconsideration by the violator and his or her desire to become a part of the community again. Restorative justice as a concept is not totally new in the corridor of academia and other forms of criminal justice system. The present restorative justice is to serve as the alternative to the previous and conventions method of conflict resolution. It is not in every case that punishment can be effective means of curbing the crimes and violent in the society. Amnesty and forgiveness has it place in reducing crimes in the society especially when the offenders are ready to behave well and ready to be accepted into the society without stigmatisation.

Therefore, Restorative Justice brings together the offender, victim, their respective families, friends and community representatives, and attempt to engage them in a process of reconciliation and reparation. The aim is to allow offenders and victims to meet in a face-to-face context (although indirect contact is often employed), to voice their experiences and understandings, and to achieve a mutually agreeable resolution. This method is best practiced based on different approaches depending on the nature of the conflict and the environment putting into consideration the religion and cultural values of the environment. Restorative justice has its roots in a number of indigenous cultures, embracing traditions of 'spirituality' and holistic healing, and aiming to reconnect the offender with his/her environment and community.[1] Restorative justice also draws from the non-retributive responses to harm promoted by many faiths.[2] Again, Braithwaite and Pettit[3] have also promoted a secular foundation civic republican theory for Restorative Justice. Therefore, the crux of restorative justice in rooted in culture, norms and

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[1] Sharpe, S. *Restorative justice: A vision for healing and change*. Edmonton, Canada: Mediation and Restorative Justice Centre, 1998.

[2] Hadley, M. (ed), *The spiritual roots of restorative justice*. New York: Suny Press, 2001.

[3] Braithwaite, J. and Pettit, P. *Not just deserts: A republican theory of criminal justice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.

tradition of the people within the locality, that is why peace building process is not a 'one-size-fits all' kind of solution. Every environment has its own peculiarity.

There are several different modes of practice in Restorative Justice in both developed and developing countries like Nigeria. Victim-offender reconciliation, family-group conferencing, and sentencing circles are three popular models – and these vary in terms of the facilitator's role and the number and type of participants included.[4] Therefore, Restorative justice is viewed as a humanitarian approach that brings to the foreground ambitions of forgiveness, healing, reparation and reintegration.[5] This is expected to bring lasting peace building process in the society. This paper will examine the concepts of restorative justice. It will then engage participatory peace building as a form of restorative Justice. Finally, it will x-ray the Plateau experience in the practice of restorative justice and its benefits. In doing this, the study adopted doctrinal approach. This is divided into both primary and secondary. The primary sources made use of newspaper reports, magazine and experts voices. The secondary sources made use of published books, journals, articles, reports and internet sources.

2. Conceptual Definitions

Restorative Justice

Restorative justice generally refers to a paradigm that is a major alternative to retributive justice. It seeks to use peaceful approaches to disagreements, conflicts and violations of the social order. According to Braithwaite,[6] restorative justice is:

> ...a process where all stakeholders affected by an injustice have an opportunity to discuss how they have been affected by the injustice and to decide what should be done to repair the harm. With crime, restorative justice is about the idea that because crime hurts, justice should heal. It follows that conversations with those who have been hurt and with those who have inflicted the harm must be central to the process.[7]

Most restorative justice theories explicitly or implicitly use crime as the primary point of reference. And, in most such theories the targets for the application of restorative justice are properties and white-collar crime or violent offenses. However, there have been instances where communities have employed restorative justice to deal with what some call 'minor crimes' such as truancy, loitering, bullying and vandalism or anti-social behavior. It is not based on an adversary system, but rather focuses on reconciliation among the parties and restores individuals and communities to the center of any controversies, rather than the state. Boyes-Watson[8] while defining restorative justice also gave instances of the various ways through which it may manifest in a society. According to him, restorative justice is:

> ...a growing social movement to institutionalize peaceful approaches to harm, problem-solving and violations of legal and human rights. These range from international peacemaking tribunals such as the South Africa Truth and Reconciliation Commission to innovations within the criminal and juvenile justice systems, schools, social services and communities. Rather than privileging the law, professionals and the state, restorative resolutions engage those who are harmed, wrongdoers and their affected communities in search of solutions that promote repair, reconciliation and the rebuilding of relationships. Restorative justice seeks to build partnerships to re-establish mutual responsibility for constructive responses to wrongdoing within our communities. Restorative approaches seek a balanced approach to the needs of the victim, wrongdoer and community through processes that preserve the safety and dignity of all.[9]

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4 Sharpe, Op Cit
5 Zehr, H. *Changing Lenses: A New Focus for Crime and Justice.* Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1990; Zehr, H. and Mika, H. Fundamental concepts of restorative justice. *Contemporary Justice Review* 1, 1998. 47-55.
6 Braithwaite, J. *'Restorative Justice and De-Professionalization,'* The Good Society. 13 (1):2004 28–31.
7 Ibid
8 Boyes-Watson, C. Suffolk University, College of Arts & Sciences, Center for Restorative Justice, 2014.
9 Ibid

Restorative justice is not concerned only with just and balanced processes but with effective outcomes and consequences for those involved. It does not necessarily conform to predominant perspectives on the administration of law. If there are cultural differences within a nation or a community, or when the administration of law or the law itself is inconsistent with internationally recognized human rights, it can be a useful adjunct to other legal philosophies. This makes Restorative justice and peace building to be closely knitted.

Peace Building

The concept of 'peace building' was coined by Johan Galtung in 1975 with the publication of 'Three Approaches to Peace: peacekeeping, peacemaking and peace building'. Galtung developed many of the core concepts that continue to be applied in peace building work and definitions today, including in the UN's 2007 definition'.[10] The former UN Secretary General Boutrous Boutrous-Ghali introduced the concept of peace building to the UN and indeed the international domain in 1992 defining it as '*Action to solidify peace and avoid relapse into conflict*. The 2000 Report of the panel on United Nations Peace Operations (also known as the Brahimi Report) defined it as 'Activities undertaken on the far side of conflict to reassemble the foundations of peace and provide the tools for building on those foundations something that is more than just the absence of war'(un.org). In light of these definitions, the UN Secretary General described peace building as:

> A range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundation for sustainable peace and development. Peace building strategies must be coherent and tailored to the specific needs of the country concerned, based on national ownership, and should comprise a carefully prioritized sequence, and relatively narrow set of activities aimed at achieving the above objectives.(un.org).[11]

Again, Michelle Maiese,[12] sees 'Peace building as a process that facilitates the establishment of durable peace and tries to prevent the recurrence of violence by addressing root causes and effects of conflict through reconciliation, institution building, and political as well as economic transformation'. King on her part also contended that 'in general, the term peace building refers to policies and programmes to restore stability and effective social, political, and economic institutions after a war or serious upheaval. An extremely broad concept which encompasses democratisation, gender, human rights, and development, peace building can be thought of as a bridge from conflict resolution to 'positive peace' King.[13] Just like every other concept in the field of political science, peace building does not have any one generally accepted definition, rather various definitions abound. Therefore be no positive peace without the agreement and involvement of both the victim and the offenders. The choice of lasting peace lies in the hands of the people within the community. Sometimes, the community leaders' act as mediators and at other times they can belong to either side of the conflict and it behooves on them to facilitate peace building process through the instrumentality of restorative justice. Plateau state has devised means to manage its conflict without relapsing into conflict. The kind of method adopted is restorative justice.

Further to this, participatory peace building is a term that allows the actors in conflict to participate in the conflict resolution and peace building process. This type of conflict resolution is what gives lasting peace in the community. Participation enhances the feeling of ownership of the people in the conflict setting but also empowers them. Participation promotes both ownership and empowerment, and the links ownership and empowerment on the one hand and sustainability on the other. Participatory peace building means, first of all, that the local population is allowed to participate in the decision of peace building which eventually culminate into positive peace. They determine to a great extent how the process will look. It is not someone else's plan imposed upon them. Participation also means that it is

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[10] Alan S., Erin McCandless, Julia P. and Wendy W. (2011). The Role of Education in   Peace building; *Unicef. Literature Review*. [Online] Available: www.unicef.org/..../EEPCT_Peace building.....PDF (April 28, 2016).
[11]   United Nations Secretary General
[12] Maiese M. 'Peace building'. Beyond Intractability. In G. Burgess and H. Burgess. (Eds.) 2003 *Conflict information Consortium*. [Online] Available:http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/peacebuilding.(April 20, 2016)
[13] Op Cit

drawn from the local conflict handling potential, which is per definition homegrown. This approach generally enjoys a high level of legitimacy and credibility. No methods, concepts or models for resolving conflicts and building peace are imposed from outside. Rather they are based on the local understanding of conflict and resolving conflict and fit their ways of being and doing. All this will increase the feeling among the people in the conflict setting that they own the peace building process. Again, conflict can be identical in nature but the pattern of conflict resolution and peace building varies based on culture, tradition and religion.[14] The lack of local community consent and involvement in the recovery and reconstruction process can seriously compromise the outcome of otherwise successful peace missions. Failure to include indigenous participation is now recognised to create dependency on the one hand and reluctance of the host country, its elites and the local community to take responsibility for maintaining imposed forms of governance on the other, leading at best to the formation of a hybrid peace.[15] Of course, the indigenous community must be allowed to confront the recovery process and engage fully in the theatre of change making. According to Richmond[16] he contentiously labeled the hybrid peace that emerges from such interactions between local and international communities as a post-liberal peace. In this context, Africa has its form of dispute resolution before the coming of the colonial masters and suddenly abandoning their methods has not made peace building process excellent but rather it has sometimes further caused rancor.

Why ownership is so important for the sustainability of peace building processes is indicated by Nathan[17] when she stated 'when peace agreements are not shaped and embraced by the parties, in other words not owned by the parties, they have little chance to endure.' People want to be involved in the decisions that affect their lives and resent being treated as the object of someone else's plan. A further argument is that a participatory peace building process is less likely to elicit resistance from the people in the conflict setting. We believe that because of the ownership feature, support for the peace building process will be high and therefore success is very likely, since people are more willing to maintain its momentum. Peace building requires full participation of youth considering their population and economic potential at their disposal. Peace and development are closely-knitted. Peace has the potential of attracting development and if there is no peace the potential development can be halted. This is the more reason why peace in every community and society must be taken seriously. Investment can be attracted in a society where there is peace.

3. Trends and Patterns of Violent Conflicts in Plateau State
Plateau State was generally acclaimed to be very peaceful for a long time. From its creation in 1976 up to 1993, the period passed in the history of Plateau State as a violent free period. However, regular occurrence of violent conflicts has erased the enviable record of tranquillity and social harmony the State used to enjoy in the past. The conflicts in Plateau State have been largely resource-related. They were all around the issues of land, market stalls and access to political and economic power. The struggle for power and resources has become more intensified since the economic crisis of the 1980s with ethnic and cultural associations as main players. At different times, the struggle has involved land access and use, creation and control of local government administration, and political appointments. Cultural and religious communities in Plateau usually organize to seek accommodation within the structures and institutions of the State to advance their narrow group interests. Expectedly the ensuing competition for space in the public realm through access to State resources has generated more of conflicts. Undue political patronage by government (especially Federal and State) has helped to aggravate ethnic division among the various nationalities in Plateau State. For instance the ethno-

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[14]See Ikenga K.E. Oraegbunam, 'Principles and Practice of Justice in Igbo Customary Jurisprudence', *Ogirisi Journal,* Vol. 6, 2009, pp.53-85. Available at http://www.ajol/index.php/og/article/viewFILE/52335/40960.; See also Ikenga K.E.Oraegbunam, 'Just War Theory and Global Peace: Jurisprudence of the Effects of Contemporary Armed Conflicts on Human Dignity', *Journal of Policy and Strategic Studies,* Vol. 2 No. 1, 2012, pp.99-113. Available at http://www.sachajournals.com/documents/SJPSS2012IKENGA001002.pdf.;

[15] Mac Ginty, R., *International Peacebuilding and Local Resistance: Hybrid Forms of Peace* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011)

[16] Richmond, O. P., 'Peace Formation and Local Infrastructures for Peace' *Alternatives* (online-before-print), (2013) pp. 1-17

[17] Nathan, L. , 'Undue Pressure: International Mediation in African Civil Wars', in Reychler, L. and Paffenholz, T.(eds), *Peacebuilding: A Field Guide.* London. Lynne Rienner, 2001, pp. 184-198.

religious clashes of 1994, 1997, 2001, and 2011 were all related with perceived imbalance in the allocation of resources and power by some groups that felt that certain groups were favoured with government appointment. The results were organized civic political actions around the subject of 'marginalization, which on many occasions have escalated into violent confrontations.

Ethnic patronage played very significant role in the conflicts in Plateau State. The desirability of ethnic and cultural distinctiveness by the various ethnic and cultural groups especially in the face of fierce electoral competition is easily noticed. Unfortunately, the efforts of the few broad-based multiethnic social networks in Jos have recorded limited success. Ethnic and cultural associations like Berom Educational and Cultural Organization, the various youth leagues of the 'indigene' organizations and Jassawa Development Association appear not ready for the greater task and challenges of organizations that will transcend narrow ethnic, cultural, and regional boundaries. They not only mobilized their members for active political participation, there are allegations of their use of provocative language and also advocating for outright use of violence in some occasions.

The remote cause of the violent conflicts that spread across Plateau State 'are diverse, dynamics and entrenched'. The absence of early warning system in the whole gamut of mechanism for mitigating conflicts in the Plateau State made in difficult to predict conflicts, and also manage them with no major escalation. The conflicts that started in the Jos metropolis in September 2001 later escalated to other parts of the State. The rural areas also were not left out of the fray. The suspicion and disaffection caused by the conflicts have redefined relationships among the various ethnic and cultural groups in the many towns and villages who sympathize with their kinsmen that suffered losses in the Jos conflicts. The reactions of many of these groups were to organize to replay and reproduce the experience of the Jos conflicts. Such was the case of Vom (near Kuru) when the Berom and the Hausa-Fulani clashed just a few weeks away from the 7 September 2001 violence in Jos. A cycle of revenge attacks between the identity and cultural groups engulfed the State. In many semi –urban and rural locations conflicts were over land between Fulani cattle herders and the 'indigenous' groups that are mainly farmers.

Because of intense struggles and competition over scarce land resources among various cultural groups on the Jos Plateau, inter-ethnic relations have become more conflict-prone. Land disputes first became critical on the Jos Plateau under the British occupation when the 'natives' were dispossessed of their land and forced into resettlement camps, and local resistance became organised against mining, and also to expel Fulani settlers. The land question became dominant in the anti-colonial and post-independence struggles. After independence in 1960, the policy on land reclamation (in the 1970's) was introduced but it achieved little and was unpopular among the communities in the tin mining areas that had lost substantial parts of their farm and hunting lands to mining.[18] The declining economic opportunities in virtually all sectors since the 1980s intensified the competition among the various ethnic and nationality groups on the Jos Plateau over land and related resources. Population growth due to migration and influx of refugees from neighbouring states increased the pressure on land and other resources which in turn heightened sectarian conflicts. Because of the symbolic ascription of land as a source of origin and 'indigeneity', conflicts and struggles over economic and political power are associated often with the land question, while the political mobilization of identity by elites accentuates these conflicts.

The struggles for land and citizenship in the mining area of Jos Plateau is identified as central to the incessant conflicts in Plateau state today, and this is rooted in a historical process rather than on some immediate problems as being projected in the media. In this regard the pattern and processes of colonial domination in Nigeria and on the Jos Plateau in particular is an important contextual factor. Tensions in the relationship between the communities on the Jos Plateau date back to the colonial period when the settler-indigene problem was created by the British colonial administration through its policy of 'indirect rule', and the creation of ethnically segregated communities of natives and settlers. Today

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[18]Occasionally peasants would engage in protests such as the militant opposition of the Bakolori farmers in 1980 to the Bakolori Irrigation Project, while the state intervened on behalf of capital, using official violence and intimidation including the brutal massacre of the rebelling peasants.

these are in violent confrontation over resource allocation and power, making ethnicity in relation to access to and control of land a critical and dynamic variable. The role of the post-colonial state in the production/or management of land and resource conflicts in Nigeria is also important. The failure to resolve Nigeria's national question and the failure of official land policies, such as the Land Use Act (1978), and farming land reclamation programme, alongside the deterioration of the social conditions, underlie the increased incidence of violent conflicts in the urban and rural locations on the Jos Plateau.

For some years now Plateau State has been a centre of violent conflict. Over the past decade, at least 4,000 people have been killed in Jos and smaller cities and villages in Plateau State. There has been extensive damage of property, and violent conflicts in the state have taken toll on its developmental prospects. Jos, the state capital appears to be the epicenter of much of the insecurity and the worst site of violence in the state. Episode of mass killing and destruction of lives and property seems to have started from 2001 and continued to 2010, but after 2010 there have been quite a number of episodic violence till date in different communities of Plateau State which have claimed many lives. There have been reported cases of conflict between Fulani and Berom people over cattle drinking from the same source as the Berom people drink, and all affected tribes as indigenous people or settlers in Plateau. Also related, violent insurgency in north-east Nigeria prompted by the Islamist extremist group Boko Haram has led to widespread displacement, violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, protection risks and a growing humanitarian crisis. Internally displaced people from this crisis largely seek refuge among host communities in Bauchi and Plateau states, the latter reporting serious strains on already scarce resources. At the centre of these violent conflicts is poverty. Poverty has not only reduced the ability of the population in the people to live productive lives, it has also exacerbated identity conflicts along communal, ethnic, religious and regional lines. As the economic and living conditions of the majority of the citizens countries deteriorate, many have become more attached to primordial ties and less committed to supporting governments. For instance, poverty has continued to aggravate tension in the relationship among the various groups in some parts of Nigeria where the 'citizenship question' and 'nationality question' have degenerated into sectarian violence. Despite its vast natural resources, about half of the population in Nigeria lives in poverty.[19] A closer look at the trends reveals regional differences which partly explain the perception of inequalities and marginalization along regional lines.[20] The incessant violence in some parts of the country, notably the Niger Delta with the challenge of youth militancy, the central Nigeria where ethno-religious conflicts as well as violent conflicts between the herdsmen and farmers have become more pronounce, and the north eastern region where the activities of the Islamic insurgent groups are mostly concentrated, can be related to the horizontal inequalities in Nigeria.

Some of these conflicts are mostly protracted and intractable. The logic of 'conflict trap' partly explains why some areas that have experienced violent conflicts most of the times experience conflict relapse. The incessant conflicts on the Jos Plateau and illustrate the trend that the 'conflict trap' explains. In many cases, just few months after conflicts had been settled in these places they had resurged usually in other form. This has been attributed to the 'negative economic growth' that usually characterized post-conflict societies, and whose indicators include low GDP, widespread unemployment, a thriving dark economy, poor public health, a high level of inequality and insecurity.[21] The cyclic nature of many African conflicts has been blamed partly on weak political institutions structures generally including those responsible for conflict resolution whose ineffectiveness and inefficiency is already common knowledge. In this circumstance the operationalizion of the conflict management mechanisms does not yield positive and lasting outcomes and results as the interventions are mostly short-term. The peace

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[19]World Bank (2013) *Nigeria Economic Report* http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2013/05/14/000333037_20130514101211/Rendered/PDF/776840WP0Niger0Box0342041B00PUBLIC0.pdf   (Accessed on 20/01/14)

[20]The overall average poverty rate for Nigeria is 48.3 per cent (based on adult equivalent approach). The rate for north east is 59.7 per cent, North-West is 58 per cent, North- Central 48.8 per cent, south east 39 per cent, South-South 37.6 per cent, and South-West 30.6 per cent.

[21]Kreutz, J *Dismantling the conflict Trap: Essays on civil war resolution and relapse.* Uppsala: Department of Peace and Conflict Research Report, Uppsala University, No. 96, 2012

process in the Plateau state somehow exhibited these characteristics. The depths of antagonism between the parties in conflict, and the pronounced ethno-religious segregation of the towns and villages have been identified as key indicators of the failure of the peace process in Plateau State. Such situation creates daunting challenges for post-conflict recovery which has propensity to generate tensions with high prospect for new circle of conflicts.

Participatory peace building has an empowering effect for people in a conflict setting. First of all, because the people are fully involved in the peace building process, nothing is decided and applied above their heads, without their involvement. Furthermore, drawing from the local resources and skills for dealing with conflicts creates an awareness of the society's own conflict handling and peace potential, which has an empowering effect. The main argument to explain how empowerment may contribute to the sustainability of peace building processes is one of capacity-building. A participatory approach generates a greater awareness of the local population of their own conflict handling and peace potential. It also provides the basis for a long-term infrastructure for dealing with present and future conflicts. There is no policy or model that can replace the influence of local people on peace building. In Nigeria for instance, NGOs and Civil society Groups have engaged in advocacy by involving the local communities in their programmes and activities and it has yielded positive outcomes. These groups have engaged the people on the Plateau for dialogue, empowerment programmes and other advocacy programmes and this has made the peace building process on the Plateau to have a new face. Today relative peace is gradually being seen as a result of their decision to live together, accommodate one another and clearly define the dos and don'ts.

4. Participatory versus Restorative Justice: The Plateau Experience

Many of the communities in Plateau state where the incessant conflict has affected the people are closely related by a way of life such as language, culture and value system. The main contender in the relationship has to do with religion where they practice Christianity and Islam as the major religion. Aside religion, the actors have lived together for several decades and the culture of the on plateau has blended with other inhabitants on the plateau. In the local government where conflicts have been recorded such as Barki Ladi, Riyom and part of Jos South local government have lived together for long under the same community. Prior to this time, one could hardly notice any serious difference in the way of life of the people but the conflicts have suddenly demarcated the people both physically and psychologically. The various commission of enquiry set up by the Government has not actually worked as expected but with the involvement of Non-Governmental Organisations and Civil Society group things have taken a new dimension. The warring parties have been invited and trained by the NGOs/Civil Society and this is yielding positive result. Some of the inhabitants of the various communities have been trained as Peace Ambassadors. The peace camps were designed to help the youths to develop critical judgment about the conflict, change their attitudes towards others and work as Peace Ambassadors in their communities to re-orient their peers and advocate peace to other stakeholders in the communities.[22] These ambassadors were selected from various communities both Christians and Muslims, they were allowed to discuss the solution to the conflict on ground and truth/reconciliatory moves came out of the meeting which aided the idea of Peace Ambassador training in Jos Plateau State and other Local Government areas. Again, among the result of the participatory peace building are that the various community appointed security personnel (Vigilante group) who manned the community day and night to track any group that intend to foment trouble and other criminality in the community. These people are responsible for security of the community and they are quite effective since they have the knowledge of the people that live in the community and can easily track down any strange person within the community.

Again, people are appointed to secure places of worship both on Friday during Jumm'at prayer and on Sundays during church services. This has help in reducing the trend of attacks during worship hours. In this context, people have decided to live together in peace and toe the path of lasting and positive peace within the various communities. All these were made possible with the help of NGOs and Civil Society

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[22] Institute for Governance and Social Research (IGSR, 2015)

Groups who stand as intermediary between the people and the government. Therefore, there is also an interface between the state and the civil society which has yielded positive results.

5. Nexus between Peace Building and Development

In order to have a sound peace in any environment, there must be a form of restorative justice that will suit the prevailing situation in such community not necessarily following the form of punitive measure. Conceptually we take conflict resolution and peace-building as 'development issues'. In the words of Tschirgi,[23] 'The concept of peace building - bridging security and development at the international and domestic levels-came to offer an integrated approach to understanding and dealing with the full range of issues that threatened peace and security.'[24] Within this framework, key considerations in any peace-building process include the prevention and resolution of violent conflicts, the consolidation of peace once violence has been reduced, and post conflict reconstruction with a view to avoiding lapses that lead to violent conflict. The remark by Tschirgi[25] on the connection between development and security is quite apt that we quote him in *ex tenso* here:

> Not all development impacts the security environment. Conversely, not all security concerns have ramifications for development. Where the two come together- to cause, perpetuate, reduce, prevent or manage violent conflicts- is the appropriate terrain for peacebuilding at the domestic or international levels. Lying at the nexus of development and security, peacebuilding requires a willingness to rethink the traditional boundaries between these two domains and to expand these boundaries to include other related issue areas such as defense budgets, international trade and finance, natural resource management and international governance, insofar as these may impact on the occurrence of violent conflicts. Peacebuilding also requires a readiness to change the operations and mandates of existing political, security, and development establishments. Most importantly, it requires the ability to make a difference on the ground in preventing violent conflicts or establishing the conditions for a return to sustainable peace.[26]

There are different levels in a conflict, and conflict resolution arrangement must consider all and align them towards the attainment of sustainable peace. Conceived in this way, interventions by donors and development partners should be designed to emphasize commitment to 'positive peace' which in addition to the absence of violence seeks for socio-economic security, equity, and participation in post-conflict situation. As an illustration, for instance, interventions as peace-building process should target the provision of basic services in conflict zones while they encourage the civil population to own the peace process.[27]

Conflict structures are the causal variables of conflicts that have institutional and structural foundations and understanding. It defines the different roots and sources of conflicts, and provides a multi-dimensional analytical framework for understanding conflict situations. Actors and stakeholders in conflicts are the combined categories of individuals and groups that are either involved in hostility, or are useful in facilitating peace process. They are conflict parties, conflict shadows, and victims or perpetrators of conflicts. In many instances sectarian conflicts in Nigeria are products of unresolved political differences, perceived social marginalization or alienation and unhealthy socio-economic relations. For instance, population increase due to influx of migrants from outside may generate tension in a community as the social actors become uncomfortable with the arrangements for the distribution or allocation of services. This may graduate into violent conflicts between existing actors especially where the society is divided along primordial lines and the administrative structure is weak, lacking

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[23] Tschirgi, N. *Peace building as the link between security and development: Is the window of opportunity closing?* New York: International Peace Academy, 2003.
[24] Ibid
[25] Ibid
[26] Ibid
[27] Adetula, V. *African Conflicts, Development, and Regional Organisations in the Post-Cold War International System* Current Issues 61, Afrikainstitut Uppsala, 2015.

effective conflict resolution mechanisms. In some other instances, the risk factor may be the emergence of newly organized actors with conflict behaviours. Therefore, the best method to use in settling conflict whenever it arises has to be drawn from the concept of restorative justice such as mediation, accommodating, compromise, mercy and forgiveness if they must continue to live together. In doing this, both parties must agree to device the type and nature of RJ to adopt by so doing it will reduce the risk of major conflict and inability to resolve it.

Participatory peace building is the ideal form of justice that will not bring further problem in the community since every actor will be involved in the conflict resolution and peace building process. An important aspect of the participatory has a lot to do with the involvement of youth in the community since they have the strength for violence than other age groups in the community, therefore they must not be left out of the arrangement. It is then not so much a case of increasing levels of self-confidence within communities, but rather levels of confidence in the establishment which is said to represent them.[28] Particularly where there is a history of institutional discrimination on ethnic or religious grounds, feelings of mistrust must be recognised in implementing community level peace building. By reinvesting power in the local population, this sense of alienation from the structures of power can be abated, and thus resistance to peace building avoided.

Again, participatory peace building is not simply about the involvement of the political sphere; a vital component of the approach which draws on local resources is the integration of peace building initiatives with other forms of community development. In 1995 for instance, the EU became involved in this broader agenda of peace building, instituting a Special Program for Peace and Reconciliation in order to promote the social inclusion of those at the margins of economic and social life and to exploit the opportunities and address the needs arising from the peace process in order to boost economic growth and stimulate social and economic regeneration. Thus, projects ranging from skills retraining for adults, to tourism development, to basic childcare fall under its remit. Within this context, it becomes necessary to adopt a broader concept of peace building as the promotion of social justice, drawing on the capacities of all in the community. Another way that the arts are being used in the peace process is by encouraging communities and individuals to rethink group identities at the base of social conflicts and inequalities. Drama workshops in which participants are asked to re-examine their perceptions of 'Catholic' and 'Protestant' provide an alternate forum for exploring entrenched discriminations. These positive transgressions allow people to articulate ideas about identity and diversity, (historically obscured by a 'Culture of Silence') and thus to contribute to the public discourse, in a depoliticized context which can nonetheless have political applications.

One aspect of multiple identities that has traditionally been overlooked is the role of gender in reconciliation. Women groups from different strata must be brought together from all socio-cultural backgrounds, sharing their common experience as women excluded from the peace process. This exemplifies how open dialogues about diversity and the recognition of untapped indigenous leadership can facilitate peace building. Women are key factor in peace building since they are the worst hit during conflict and war period.

6. Conclusion

We have seen that restorative justice though a recent phenomenon; it has been accepted as a norm of peace building globally. It has really worked in several societies including Plateau State where it has been a great revelation. It leads to true reconciliation and the holocaust of the 2000 is not only halted but confidence and trust building is emerging among the hitherto warring communities. Although, as pointed out in this work, the various commission of enquiry set up by the Government has not really achieved much but the involvement of Non-Governmental Organisations and Civil Society group things have been very useful in promoting restorative justice. The warring parties have been invited and trained by the NGOs/Civil Society and this is yielding positive result. Finally, we wish to highlight the belief that participation in sustainable peace building must be viewed in terms of multi-directional flows.

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[28]Gould, H, *The Arts Contribution to Peace in Northern Ireland European Platform for Conflict Prevention and Transformation,* Netherlands, 2000.

When we talk of capacity building, therefore, we may think in terms not only of developing capacities at the community level, but within supranational institutions themselves, as they learn to address the transformation of conflict and develop flexible systems for thinking about peace in shifting contexts and broader terms. In our understanding, effective participation and empowerment of the local population in any peace building context is no longer an option, it is a necessity. Therefore, in peace building process government is expected to play a sort of monitoring role to ensure the peace building process comes from the decision of the people and not imposing the peace process on them.