

Conflict Resolution and Peace Building among the Gbagyi People of the Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

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Abstract- *The study assessed the indigenous conflict resolution strategies and peace building in the Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria. In contemporary times, there has been a growth in disputes and social vices in the Federal Capital and a mounting caseload with the formal litigation courts in the Federal Capital Territory. This resulted from the imperialist's divide and rule policy that weakened the traditional system and the backlash in the 1979 constitution that failed to uphold the administrative role of traditional rulers in society. In view of the foregoing, the study employed primary data sourced from 383 respondents using the questionnaire and interview instruments. The responses were analyzed in line with the research preposition that indigenous conflict resolution among the Gbagyi people does not have effect on peace building in the federal Capital Territory, Nigeria. Inferential statistics was employed to assess the casual relationship between the indigenous conflict resolution among the Gbagyi people and peace building in the Federal Capital Territory, while interview responses were subjected to the qualitative instrument of QDA Milner. The study is hinged on the conflict transformation theory. The result showed a weak effect of indigenous conflict resolution strategies ($\beta = 8.6\%$) on peace building in the Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria. This is collaborated by the interview responses which showed that the constitutional backlash of the administrative role of traditional seat and the influx of various ethnicities into the Federal Capital Territory have weakened the efficacies of the traditional system in mediating conflict in the Federal Capital Territory.*

Indexed Terms- *Ashan, Conflict Transformation Theory, Knunu; Peace Building, Traditional Chief.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Given the social nature of humans, no society lives in complete harmony with itself and others. This depicts

the concept of conflict as incompatible goals among people in society. While conflict is an inevitable social framework in society, it varies as negative conflict (injurious with the aim of eliminating the opposing party) and positive conflict (a medium to usher in a paradigm from existing societal norms). The end goal of positive conflict revolves around peace, which strives to resolve conflict from the root cause rather than the surface level. Peace rather requires a continuing engagement in the prevention and resolution of disputes giving rise to the craft of conflict prevention and resolution. In Africa, different societies continue to use various indigenous strategies than the Eurocentric approach that is punitive rather than reconciliatory to foster sustainable peace.

A classic example is the Committee of Eminent Chiefs (CEC) employed in a report by Debra, Owusu-Mensah and Gyampo (2014) to foster peace between the two feuding royal families in Dagbo, Northern Ghana. In Rwanda, the Gacaca court and the Abunzi framework were instrumental in the post-1994 genocide as effective peace building tools to enhance restitution, forgiveness, and healing process (Bonoh, 2022; Uwazie, 2011; Mutisi, 2011). In Ethiopia, notable indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms include the *Gada* framework among the Oromos, *Shimagelle* adjudication in Amhara, *Reda*, *Gogata*, and *Ilammo* in Kambata, *Ye tib dana*, *Shengo*, and *Yejoka* in Gurage (Tagel, 2022). Among the Me'en community in South-Western Ethiopia, three indigenous conflict resolution frameworks such as *Oneh*, *Tusha*, and *Asha* stand out as functionaries in mediating rape cases, conflict situations devoid of an eyewitness, and conflict with a casualty, respectively (Tagel, 2022). In Uganda, *Mato Oput* is the leading indigenous conflict mediation mechanism employed notably in Northern Uganda as the Acholi justice system (Ogora, 2008; Murithi, 2002). In addition, the *Kayo Kuk*, *Ailuc*, *Ajupe*, *Ajufe*, *Aja*, and *Tolu koka* abound as indigenous peace building mechanisms among the Langi, Iteso, Kakwa, Lugbara,

Alur, and Madi communities of Uganda, respectively (Ogora, 2008).

In Nigeria, Uwa and Aisedion (2021) posited that these culturally effective methods built on customs and traditions were evident among the pre-colonial Esan communities in Edo State, Nigeria, with a well-established mechanism to mediate conflicting situations until the advent of the colonial era. Among the Yorubas are the *Bale* (head of the family), *Mogaji* (eldest person in the family), *Baale* (Chiefs), *Ile-ejo ijoye Adugbo* (ward-chief), *Igbimo Ilu* (chief-in-council), *Ile-ejo Oba* (court of the king), and the *Ogboni* court which is famous among the Egba and Ijebu people (Ajayi & Buhari, 2014). Among the Igbos with a decentralized system of governance in the pre-colonial era, conflict mediation functionaries such as *Umunna* (clan), *Umuada* (females born in a clan), *Oha-ne-Eze* (king's meeting with the people), *Ndimmanwu* (masquerade group), and *Agbara* (oracles), among others were employed to mediate disputes. In addition, potent mechanisms involving the use of spirit mediums such as *Amadioha* of *Ozuzu*, *Ibinukpabi* of *Arochukwu*, *Urashi* of *Okija*, and *Igwekala* of *Umonnoha* among others, are employed as jurisprudence to foster peace and sustainable living in pre and post-colonial Igbo societies (Olowolafe, Olonade & Adetunde, 2020; Nwabara, 1977).

Among the Gbagyi people, despite the assertion by Ayuba (2016b) that the Gbagyi people, notably the Christians and Muslim proselytes have emphatically denied the relevance of the *Knunu* practice in their everyday living, recent episode of the peace building between the feuding families in Dutse (A sub-urb in Bwari Area Council) over the death of a chieftain and in foiling a kidnap attempt in Nyanya in 2022 and 2023, respectively, (Shawo, 2023; Sagaza, 2023) uphold the relevance of indigenous conflict resolution among the Gbagyi people in the Federal Capital Territory.

Despite the relevance of indigenous conflict resolution strategies in fostering peace among the Gbagyi people, the growing drawbacks of human rights abuse and transfer of punishment to friends and family of perpetrators of crimes have hindered their efficacies in

contemporary society. In view of these drawbacks, the study seeks to assess the research question so as to advance a hybrid peace-building processes such as the Gacaca Court and Abunzi in Rwanda and the Ubuntu framework in South Africa.

1.2 Research Question

- i. What is the effect of indigenous conflict resolution strategies on peace building in the Federal Capital Territory

II. CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

2.1.1 Gbagyi

Gbagyi is a cover term for all the Gbagyi-speaking-people. It can mean the tribal name of the people or the language of this specific people we are dealing with. The study of Gbagyi community requires some familiarization of certain concepts.

In the FCT Abuja, the Gbagyi etymology is devoid of peace as Gbagyi societies strive for a deeper state of harmony and Nirvana in line with Gandhi's concept of *satyagraha*. Conceptualizing the Gbagyi notion of peace denotes *Gbugba*, which literally means (the coolness of mind) (J, Wuye, Personal Interview, 23/06/2023). Stressing further, the interview reviewed, "A Gbagyi man is an advocate of peace and honesty up to the point that if you leave a coin with a Gbagyi, you will meet the coin in the same state, ten years after." Also, he submitted that "a Gbagyi is honest to the point of saying, you want the truth about what happened? —my father did it". Validating the claim is a common Hausa adage *mu yishi Gwari Gwari* in FCT which literally translates "let's do it the Gwari way" as the Gwari way depicts honesty and scrupulousness. These virtues are fast becoming myths in contemporary Nigerian societies. A traditional Gbagyi community revolves around peace, social harmony, and collectiveness. This shared collective nature and social harmony of a Gbagyi society can be seen during festivities such as the *ZhiBaje* ritual festival among the Gbagyi community in Gonin Gora, Kaduna State, where spoils from hunting, locally brewed beer, and victuals are distributed freely regardless of tribe, ethnicity, and religion (Sarki and Jeremiah, 2021). In addendum, Sarki and Jeremiah (2021) submitted that the collective nature of Gbagyi people and social

harmony engenders the quest for oneness embedded in *ZhiBaje* rituals as the Gbagyis are dissonant with an environment bereft of peace and cooperation. Finally, the notion of peace building in Gbagyi communities is framed within the concept of *Knunu*, which represents the totality, culture, and way of life of Gbagyi people. This is assessed comprehensively in the following subsection to infer peace building in pre-modern Gbagyi societies and contemporary times.

2.1.2 Knunu an indigenous Conflict Resolution Mechanism among the Gbagyi People

Knunu, which is the worldview of the Gbagyi people, is a proxy of the indigenous conflict resolution mechanism and strategy among the Gbagyi people in the study. The concept of *Knunu* is contested among scholars (Filaba, 2007; Ayuba, 2016a; Shekwo, 1998). Shekwo (1998) restricted his view of *Knunu* to a simplified meaning as the culture of the Gbagyi people which undermines the totality of *Knunu* as the worldview of the Gbagyi people. Filaba (2007), in a more encompassing view of *Knunu*, posits that it encapsulates ancient religious practices and material aspects in the sustainable living of the Gbagyi people. Providing a holistic meaning to the concept of *Knunu*, Ayuba (2016a: 704) argues that “*Knunu* is a special way of portraying the Gbagyi way of life, rites of passage, rituals, religion, and indeed is a singular way of describing the entire personality of the Gbagyi.” While agreeing with the cultural view of *Knunu* by Shekwo (1998) and Filaba (2007), Ayuba (2016a:704) provided a comprehensive meaning to the concept of *Knunu* as “more than just a culture – it is intrinsic, pervasive and a necessary fabric of Gbagyi personality, existence and identity.” *Knunu* depicts the Gbagyi people.

While works of literature on the cosmic view of Gbagyi people are limited, empirical inquiries (Sarki & Jeremiah, 2021; Ayuba, 2016a; Ayuba, 2016b; Filaba, 2007; Shekwo, 1998) have buttressed the traditions and cultures that define the way of Gbagyi people which is anchored on social harmony, coolness of mind, and collectivism (J. Wuye, Personal Interview. 27/06/2023). Ayuba (2016b) stressed that despite the overwhelming influence and penetration of *Knunu* in Gbagyi societies, considerable portions of the Gbagyis, such as the Muslim and Christian proselytes, have emphatically denied the practice and

relevance of *Knunu* in their everyday living. These denials are superficial as even among the proselytes, *Knunu* practices such as *Fadobe* (communal farming), *ZhiBaje* festival, and the renaissance of Gbagyiness pre-occupy their existence. While empirical construct (Filaba, 2007; Ayuba, 2016a; Ayuba, 2016b; Shekwo, 1998) bother on *Knunu* as an embodiment of the Gbagyis; Sarki and Jeremiah (2021) delved into the nuance of *ZhiBaje* as a traditional tool in promoting peace and social cohesion among Gbagyis. The study avails that *ZhiBaje* ritual festival is *a form of a peace-builder or peace building process. The aura of celebration and jubilation that grips the whole town during the festival blurs all religious lines as some of the people who profess Christianity or Islam are soaked in the excitement of the festival.* In addition, the study submitted that Gbagyi people are not alienated from their cultural practices regardless of religious affiliation to Islam and Christianity. Based on the foregoing traditional attachment to indigenous practices among the Gbagyis, the study seeks to infer the influence of indigenous conflict resolution strategies such as *Ashan*, *Zoku*, and traditional chiefs as conflict resolution mechanisms within the *Knunu* cosmic view on peace in the FCT.

2.1.3 Gbagyi Ashan Strategy

Ashan, *Zoku*, and the use of traditional rulers are potent and revered pre-colonial conflict mediation tools among the Gbagyi people. *Ashan* is a shrine (a deity) used to mediate land disputes, communal and marital disputes, murder, and homicide, among others (J. Wuye, Personal Interview. 23/06/2023). Its application varies across communities. Notably, among the Gbagyis, the indigenous conflict resolution strategy seeks to establish rights from wrongs and foster peaceful resolution of a conflict that revolves mainly around land. In administering *Ashan*, after a fact-finding process by elders, the elders come together to administer the oath to the conflicting parties. In land-related disputes, the disputants are made to swear by the *Ashan* deity and the elders by picking and munching a pinch of the soil from the disputed land. Categorically, the process states, “if you claim this land is yours, pick a pinch of it and swallow” (J. Wuye. Personal interview. 23/06/2023). The guilty party dies within three days, and the rightful owner of the land is ascertained.

Alternatively, the elders can initiate the *Ashan* mechanism by constituting a circle when the sun is vertically overhead. Appearing in white apparel to depict their purity and nakedness before the deity, a locally brewed beer is served with the disputants in the formed circle. After the priest administers the oath, the guilty party dies within three days. The *Ashan* mechanism, which is revered among the Gbagyis, is a potent measure in instilling truth and justice system in societies. The referential fear of *Ashan* oath taking and the questing to mitigate casualties from the process often necessitate families of the disputants to engage in fact-finding and the compelling of the disputants to confess and seek forgiveness as a way to avoid the wrath of *Ashan*. A classic case study of the referential fear of *Ashan* oath-taking is evident in a land dispute in 1991 in Chikun LGA of Kaduna State, where one of the disputants fearing the adverse effect of *Ashan* fetched the soil from the disputed land and munched it before the oath taken was applied to avert the death of the second disputant (J, Wuye, 23/06/2023. Personal Interview). His pragmatic and proactive action prevented the death of the guilty party, who would have died upon swearing to *the Ashan* deity.

2.1.4 Gbagyi Zoku Divination

Secondly, a revered conflict resolution strategy through consultations of the spirit medium in ascertaining justice and forgiveness and fostering sustainable peace is the use of *Zoku*. *Zoku* is a system of conflict resolution involving divination and consultation of the spirit medium through (palm reading) and the use of a hatchling or the use of cowries by a soothsayer to inquire or foretell the happenings in a third dimension (spiritual activities beyond the comprehension of mortal man).

Divination as an essential indigenous mechanism helps in rational choice-making, a peaceful society, and a less stressful society (Abukari, Issah & Adam, 2022). In congruence, Nukunya (1969) submitted that disasters and conflicting situations in African societies have a spiritual overtone that is beyond the comprehension of the Western and conventional systems. The use of divination in preventing disasters and unforeseen eventualities can be seen among pastoralists in Kenya who rely on the spirit medium to

foretell and prevents conflicting situations (Fratkin, 2004).

2.1.5 Traditional Chiefs in Gbagyi Land

In African societies, traditional chiefs (also seen as traditional rulers or kings) are revered as the custodians of laws, norms, traditions, and important mechanisms to uphold order and peace in society. In Sierra Leone, notably among the Mende, traditional rulers employed the interplay of negotiation, mediation, adjudication, and reconciliation embedded in the principles of *ngohutei* (hand heads) and *taemugalei* (begging fee) to maintain peace and social cohesion (Momoh, 2021). This is also true among the Gbagyi societies. In the Gbagyi societies, traditional chiefs command immense respect and it is evident and reflected in traditional ceremonies and festivals where obeisance and homage are dully accorded to traditional chiefs by the council of elders and members of society (Sarki & Jeremiah, 2021). Traditional chiefs are custodians and protectors of sacred laws, norms, ideologies and values in society, often at the grassroots level, as the interface with the community on daily activities. Wadma cited in Adulsalam, Olokooba, Okafor and Adika (2020), opines that traditional rulers are leaders or persons by virtue of hereditary or people with proven tracked records who are nominated, appointed and installed in line with the provisions of their native laws and customs. The rationale for the relative importance of traditional rulers in the process of conflict resolution in Nigeria is premised on the fact that they have vast knowledge of the acceptable traditional methods and procedures that have been passed from one generation to another (Abdusalam, 2020). The deep knowledge of the norms and values of the society and the sacred responsibility of chief custodian of the society incentivise traditional rulers to promote peaceful coexistence by mediating and reconciling disputants on social issues ranging from land disputes, farmers-herders conflict, family and clan related disputes, among others in society.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Theories are sets of ideas that are intended to explain facts or events. They are usually formulated to explain, predict and understand phenomena and in many cases to challenge and extend existing knowledge, within the limits of critical bounding assumptions. This paper

reviews some theories that aim at aiding the understanding of the indigenous conflict resolution approaches.

2.2.1 Conflict Transformation Theory

Conflict transformation theory by Lederach was advanced based on a religious framework developed by Anabaptist-Mennonite that stressed the need for peace and sustainable living engrossed in justice, establishing right relationships, and social structures embedded in radical respect for human rights and non-violence as a way of social cohesion in society (Lederach & Maiese, 2009). Despite being modeled in the framework by Anabaptist-Mennonite, conflict transformation theory has been a concept frequently employed by Lederach on the heels of intensive experience in Central America in the late 1980s. The theory sees conflict as a necessary social framework through which structures and norms are transformed to usher in a desired society, economy, and political system. The paradigm of a new social process through the conflicting process is attained by combining and using different lenses to assess conflicting societal situations. Lederach and Maiese (2009) assert that conflict transformation is a way of looking and seeing, and it provides a set of lenses through which we make sense of social conflict. These lenses draw our attention to certain aspects of conflict and help us to bring the overall meaning of the conflict into sharper focus. Going further, Lederach gave a hypothetical example of a set of glasses with three progressive lenses that aided in bringing into focus things at a distance, projecting a clearer view of the object at mid-range, and with the third, aiding in reading and threading a fish line through a hook.

Conflict transformation theory provides a framework that holds different views of a conflicting situation, as using a single lens undermines the vision of other lenses. The preceding avails the need to understand conflicts particularly conflicts in Africa with lenses and from different perspectives to provide a lasting solution and sustainable peace. Adopting only the Western conflict resolution style will blur our sight from seeing the underlying norms and cultural practices that detect social functioning and conflict in African societies. On the other hand, employing only the indigenous approach to peace building might be counterproductive in the long run owing to the

increasing shortfall in using indigenous peace building mechanisms. Leading drawbacks in the use of indigenous peace building are evident in the human rights violation and the violation of the principle of double jeopardy embedded in the use of the Chalo framework among the Mems of Ethiopia (Nigatu & Jobir, 2022). In addition, the use of *Mbiam* among the Ibibios of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, is heavily criticized as a framework that violates human rights, and it is subject to manipulation by the custodians to pervert justice and inflict harm on innocent people.

The theory is relevant to this article in providing different perspectives to resolving conflict. A synergy between the Western court litigation and the indigenous peace building mechanisms will provide a framework for seeing African conflicts from different perspectives to create a lasting solution to African conflicts and sustainable peace in African societies. In congruence, Lederach & Maiese (2009: 2) deduced that:

...we need a lens that helps us envision a framework that holds these together and creates a platform to address the content, the context, and the structure of the relationship. From this platform, parties can begin to find creative responses and solutions.

2.2.2 The Law-Jobs Theory

The law-job theory is a dispute mediation theory hypothesized by Llewellyn in pursuit of dispute prevention and amicable settlement of conflicts, usually outside court litigation. Twining (1993) summarized the theory as all of us are members of groups, such as a family, a club, a teenage gang, a school or commercial organization, a trade union, a political party, a nation-state, and the world community with specific objectives and aims. Certain jobs need to be carried out to achieve these objectives and aims in society. The first of these jobs is to build a negative peace society where conflict and dispute are prevented and curtailed to zero. The first objective is hardly attainable. When conflicts arise, the second job is to engage in a peaceful resolution framework that mediates and reconciles the disputing parties to prevent disintegration. The third job is to derive adaptation measures to changing behavior and environment. Conflict prevention and resolution are feasible in an environment where measures and adaptations enable society to adapt to the changing

environment. Indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms are devoid of these changing dynamics as they are characterized by rigid and static adherence to lay down principles and laws by deities and supernatural forces bestowed on humanity.

The fourth job is specifying authority and power by the constitution to regulate and check against abuse of power by decision-making groups. The last job is the 'job of juristic method', which connote dispute resolution, making reforms and changes due to changing human behavior and environment, and creating an enabling environment for resolution and decision. This stage entails constitution and amendment to inculcate the interest of varying cultures, tribes, clans, and ethnicity in a state. This brings the relevance of the theory in the study, which strives to sieve the drawbacks in indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms and incorporates the positive elements with Western jurisprudence. A hybrid jurisprudence will mitigate the mounting litigations and caseload in the modern court system in FCT, Nigeria, and brings justice closer to the grassroots.

2.2.3 Bentham's Theory of Judicial Organization and Adjective Law

Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) was an English jurist and utilitarian, famous for his central theme of welfarism and the greater good of the majority. Adjective law theory posits that the object of adjudication is the implementation and application of positive law made by the legislator to promote utility. The direct end of adjective law is the rectitude of decision, that is, the correct application of substantive law to true facts" and that "the court system should be organized to promote cheap, simple, accessible, local, public justice (Twining, 1993). Bentham's theory of adjective law was primarily built on experiences and experiments from Danish and French proceedings on reconciliation in cases where the disputants are both aggrieved and wronged.

Adjective law theory advocates adequate remuneration of lawyers and legal personnel to avoid indecision and partial judgment or manipulation of judgment due to financial inducement. The theory also advocates for complete and truthful testimonies during proceedings to avoid unfair judgment. Despite being a theory of litigation, adjective law theory is relevant to

the study in hypothesizing a dispute resolution framework and a mechanism that is fair, cheap, accessible to all, and with the central message of promoting utility and wellness in a society that encompasses the central message in indigenous conflict resolution and peace building.

2.3 Empirical Review

Ayuba (2016a) employed the ethnographic research design and intensive thematic review of existing works of literature on the Gbagyi people to examine the Gbagyi: Origin, identity and impact of *Knunu* (Tradition/Culture). Primary and secondary sources of participant observation, semi-structured interviews conducted on thirty (30) Gbagyi natives, and literature on the origin, identity, and impact of *Knunu* were used in the study. The study avails that despite the denial of *Knunu* practices by respondents in the study, notable *Knunu* practices such as the use of *pari* (a traditional piece of white cloth) during the birth of a first child and marriages for protection, *ayinbesisi* (proverbs), *azakwoyi* (ancestors), *tokunye* (ancestral names), *yeyi fa* (betrothal farming), and *fadobe* (communal farming) are prevalent even among Christian and Islamic Gbagyi proselytes. In addition, wearing of *agbagyiye* and the renaissance of Gbagyiness in the FCT point to the relevance of the *Knunu* tradition in modern-day communities in the FCT. More also, the result from content and thematic analysis revealed that the origins, identity, and language are important socio-cultural distinctions embedded in *Knunu*, which gives the Gbagyi people relevance and uniqueness in the country's North-Central Region. The study recommends commissioned inquiries on the Gbagyi tribe to enhance the literature arising from the study.

Ayuba (2016b) assessed the Gbagyi and some aspects of their *Knunu* (tradition/culture). The objective was to critic the prevailing argument that once a Gbagyi becomes a proselyte in a foreign religion, he jettisons the indigenous *Knunu* practices. Adopting Hiebert, Shaw, and Tienou (1999) perspective of culture, the study used the variables of marriage, child naming, and burial to ascertain whether *Knunu* practices are embedded in the lives of Gbagyi people, even among the proselytes. From the ethnographic research design, the study avails that despite the continued denial of *Knunu* practices by proselytes, it remains an integral part of the Gbagyi people. The study concluded that

Gbagyi people are conscious of their lives' legitimate superordinate identity that appears inborn even though they struggle to accept it.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study is hinged on the survey research design, which is relevant in addressing the research problem through observation, interaction with participants, and administering of questionnaires and interviews. The design is useful due to the limited secondary information on indigenous conflict resolution strategies among the Gbagyi people in the FCT. The limited secondary information is augmented with field information elicited from respondents in the FCT (through questionnaires) and participants with in-depth knowledge of the effects of indigenous conflict resolution strategies on peace building in the FCT (through interviews). Eliciting the field information involved multiple sampling techniques to select the optimum sample size for information retrieval. Purposive sampling was used to select Gwagwalada, Bwari, and Kuje Area Councils, which have a population of 485,125 from the 2006 NPC figures. A sample size of 400 respondents was determined through the Taro Yamane (1967) sampling formula. Simple random sampling, a non-judgmental sampling, was used to select 400 respondents using the Hart method to reduce bias in the selection process. In addition, three interviews were conducted with participants with deep knowledge of indigenous conflict resolution strategies in the FCT.

Field responses through questionnaires were analyzed using regression analysis with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 to infer the effects of indigenous conflict resolution strategies on peace building in the FCT. The interview responses were content analyzed with QDA Milner 2023 by transcribing, coding, and identifying frequencies of relevant themes and concepts in addressing the study problem. A sample size of 50 questionnaires from a pilot study was analyzed using the Cronbach alpha to test the reliability of the instrument. The alpha result of 79% shows that the instrument is reliable and can be replicated by other researchers to deduce similar results.

3.2 Result and discussion of Findings

Questions in some sections of the questionnaire administered were specifically designed to infer the effect of Indigenous Conflict Resolution Strategies (independent variable) on Peacebuilding (dependent variable) in the Federal Capital Territory. This deals with a cause-effect relationship as it strives to investigate how variations in Indigenous Conflict Resolution Strategy (ICRS) affect Peacebuilding (PBD) in the FCT. Descriptive statistics and QDA Milner are inadequate in addressing a cause-effect relationship between the dependent and independent variables, as such, regression analysis was used to measure the effect of ICRS on PBD in the FCT. The resultant causal relationship between ICRS and PBD in the Federal Capital Territory is presented as follows;

Model Summary

The model summary shows the relationship between the dependent and independent variables and measures the model's goodness of fit. It measures how changes in the dependent variable (Peacebuilding) are accounted for by variations in an independent variable (Indigenous Conflict Resolution Strategies). Precisely, the model summary in Table 1 measures the relationship between ICRS and PBD in the Federal Capital Territory.

Table 1: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Durbin Watson
1	.262 ^a	.237	.215	1.343

a. Predictors: (Constant), ICRS

b. Dependent Variable: Peace

Source: SPSS 23 (Field Survey, 2024)

The result in Table 1 deduced that the R-value of .262 (26.2%) showed a weak relationship between ICRS and PBD in the FCT, which is an indication of a weak model. In addition, the R square value (.237) is an indication that Indigenous Conflict Resolution Strategies (ICRS) accounted for 23.7% of the total peace building in the Federal Capital Territory. The remaining 76.3% variations in PBD in the FCT are taken care of by the error term. This is an indication of a weak model, as ICRS accounted for a small portion of PBD in the FCT. The result of the Durbin-Watson

test statistics (1.343) is an indication of no presence of autocorrelation in the model. Similarly, the rule of thumb holds that a Durbin-Watson result greater than the R-square (1.343 is greater than .237) is an indication of no presence of autocorrelation in the model.

- Result of the Effects of ICRS on Peace in the Federal Capital Territory

Having established the fitness of the model (a weak model given the low R-square value), Table 2 is employed to measure the specific contribution of ICRS to peace building in the FCT. This is undertaken to assess whether a positive or negative relationship exists between the dependent and independent variables and if the relationship is significant or insignificant. The result will aid the study in accepting or rejecting the proposition that Indigenous Conflict Resolution Strategies have no significant effect on PBD in the FCT. The result is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Effect of ICRS on Peace building in the FCT

Independent Variables	Standard error	Standardized Coefficient (Beta)	p-value
ICRS	.082	.086	.081*

Legend: Significant @ 5% Level**, Insignificant @5% level *

Dependent Variable: PBD

Source: SPSS 23 (Field Survey, 2023).

Given the result in Table 2, a positive relationship exists between ICRS and PBD in the FCT, implying that an increase in indigenous conflict resolution strategies will lead to an 8.2% increase in PBD in the FCT. However, given that the p-value (.081) is greater than the threshold value of 0.05, which is a significant level selected for the study, the proposition that ICRS has no significant effect on PBD is accepted for the study. In other words, Indigenous Conflict Resolution Strategies have no significant effect on Peace Building in the Federal Capital Territory. The effect of ICRS is insignificant in that it inadequately results in peace-building in the FCT. In a nutshell, a percentage increase in ICRS will lead to an insignificant 8.2% increase in Peace building in the Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria. Thus, ICRS is an insignificant

positive predictor of peace building in the Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria.

To further support the outcome of the questionnaires, interview was conducted and questions such as how often these Indigenous conflict resolution strategies are employed in mediating conflicting situations in the Gbagyi community and their effectiveness in proffering solutions to conflicting situations in Gbagyi societies were put forward. The responses deduced that the dominance of the modern litigation system and the dwindling authority of traditional chiefs have significantly reduced the frequencies in application and efficacies of the traditional system in conflict resolution in the FCT.

Ashan, Zoku, and Traditional chiefs are not common and are underutilized in contemporary times, which is why conflict and civil crises are on the increase in the FCT. This is attributed to the growth of Western religion and the preference for the modern litigation system that has weakened traditional conflict resolution strategies. The modern litigation system is void of truth and skewed towards retribution (punitive) compared to the reconciliatory and restorative traditional peace-building mechanism. The decline in the application of the traditional justice system has an adverse effect on the efficacy of the Ashan, Zoku, and Traditional Chiefs, which, in a ripple effect, culminated in a deluge of conflict and social vices in the FCT.

Martins, academia, Gwagwalada, 20/10/2023.

Similarly, Jekwos, Ashan Priest in Kuje, in an interview on 31/11/2023, deduced that;

The traditional conflict mediation strategies (Ashan, Zoku, and Traditional Chiefs) were most effective and employed in pre-colonial times to resolve disputes and deter crimes and social vices in Gbagyi society. Ashan was revered as its consequences of swollen legs and bellies deter crimes such as theft, murder, and witchcraft. A perpetrator who refuses to confess his/her crime dies within three days. Similarly, perpetrators of crimes such as theft are often stereotyped with songs by children, which serves as a constant stigma and deterrent to crimes in Gbagyi society. The use of the medium (Ashan, Zoku, and Traditional Chiefs) has declined significantly owing to the rise of and preference for the modern justice

system, which is cost-ineffective and time-inefficient. This backlash and decadence in the traditional conflict resolution strategies have contributed significantly to the increasing land disputes, theft, kidnapping, and social vices in the FCT. In a ripple effect, the declining applications of Ashan, Zoku, and Traditional Chiefs adversely impact their effectiveness in mediating conflict in the FCT.

3.3 Conclusion and Recommendations

To sum up this section, empirical investigation on indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms among the Gbagyi people of FCT is limited. While literatures on conflict resolution does exist, conflict resolution strategies as it affects the indigenous people of the FCT are not much documented, one had to rely more on oral history. Though Ayuba (2013) submitted that the growing influence of Christianity, Islam, and globalization weigh on the potency and relevance of the cosmic *Knunu* view of the Gbagyis, the relevance of *Knunu* as peace building strategy in FCT is still effective as demonstrated in the inquiry. Among the Gbagyi community, Indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms manage almost all kinds. An empirical investigation by Sarki and Jeremiah (2021) on *Zhibaje* ritual festival and the Gbagyi worldview revealed the importance of the festival in fostering social cohesion and peace among the Gbagyi community particularly the Gbagyi in Gonin-Gora, Kaduna State. *Knunu* which is the essence and totality of the Gbagyi though on the decline has shown to be efficient where they are applied. Emphasis on other peace building measures embedded in *Knunu* practice was not addressed in the study while the scope differs from FCT which empirical attention to indigenous mediation resolution mechanisms is lacking.

Recommendations

- i. There is need to strengthen the indigenous conflict resolution strategies (particularly the use of traditional rulers) through appropriate legislation for conflict resolutions and peacebuilding.
- ii. Indigenous knowledge system among the Gbagyis including conflict resolution is oral in nature and not documented, there is need to document indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms to add to existing knowledge. Generation

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