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## ASSESSING THE RELEVANCE AND EFFICACY OF TRADITIONAL MODELS OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN MODERN AFRICAN STATES

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### ABSTRACT

The perception of pessimism arising from a sceptical gesture regarding the possibility of traditional models of conflict management attaining a prominent place in modern African societies has been a major concern for those who uphold that the indigenous model is still potent and relevant in contemporary times. Despite several efforts and application of diverse foreign strategies for conflict management and social control, most of the independent African states are far from witnessing durable peace. This article adopted a critical-analytical method to examine the dynamics of conflict management in pre-colonial days in Africa vis-a vis current trends in modern African states and the impacts of colonialism and foreign religions on African traditional methods of resolving conflicts. Relying on empirical evidence, this article argued that socio-economic and political factors such as family structure, poor economy, poverty, institutionalized corruption, disappointments in the modern model of conflict management and social control among others constitute the rationale for the relevance and sustainability of traditional models across the continent. This paper further accentuated the efficacy of traditional mechanisms in this present age and concluded by projecting a fusion of both indigenous and modern models of managing conflicts as a way of attaining socio-political stability, development and peace-building in modern African states.

**Keywords:** Indigenous, Colonialism, Social Control, Integration, Peace

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### INTRODUCTION

Traditional African society symbolizes the African indigenous or native society during the pre-colonial epoch. It denotes the social and political milieu of the African peoples

before the advent of colonialism. It is traditional because it emerged from the native environment and local experiences of its inhabitants and sustained the connection between the ancestors and their descendants

who lived in it. The word “*traditional*” is therefore appropriate because it distinguishes ancient but real African societies from the present-day African societies that have been altered by Western culture and civilization. Africans have their own culture, values and identity derived from a common heritage and different from European values and identity. Besides, the real African societal structure and orientations depended on indigenous socio-political philosophy of collectivism and communalism that enhanced neighbourliness and hospitality (Omoregbe, 2002).

African Traditional Religion is a polytheistic religious faith that is being transmitted from the older generations of African people to the younger ones. It is traditional because it was not imported or imposed on African people, neither were they converted into it but rather emanated from African soil and people were born into it. The five fundamental religious convictions of the traditional African people are beliefs in God, divinities, spirits, ancestors and the practice of magic and medicine (Awolalu and Dopamu, 1979; Ajah and Iwara, 2018). African traditional religion has a pantheon of gods that offer panaceas to conflict and peace related matters. Thus, the religion is polytheism and the deities do not only serve as an intermediary between God (the Supreme Being) and the people, but they are also a link between the people and their ancestors (Omoregbe, 2004). The aforementioned five religious beliefs of traditional Africans have significant impacts on the phenomena of conflict and peace in the pre-colonial age.

The socio-political institutions in Africa were highly structured. There were several levels of authorities, which performed spe-

cific functions in the daily governance of the pre-colonial communities. The indigenous political institutions were kings, council of chiefs, sectional chiefs, village chiefs, family or compound heads, age grades and secret societies. These institutions were known to have contributed immensely to the peaceful co-existence and stability of the societies (Eneyew & Ayalew, 2023). In the pre-colonial times, the traditional institutions were stable, orderly, effective and efficient. In most African states, indigenous methods of managing conflicts were entrenched in the various traditions, human and moral values, customs and native laws, which were kept by the highly esteemed political institutions (Ibrahim, 2010). The kinship system and leadership of traditional rulers were very strong and potent, actively responsible for the containment and settlement of both minor and major conflicts and disputes (Alade, 2015).

In line with global reality and based on their profound and diverse experiences, Africans from antiquity identified conflicts catalysts as, inequitable distribution of scarce resources, poor communication between parties or groups, erroneous ideas and beliefs about each other, past unresolved grievances and asymmetrical distribution of power in a society (Swanstrom and Weissmann, 2005). Other triggers of conflict in African societies were inordinate ambitions and contravention of rules guiding culturally required manners and social etiquette (Olaoba, 2002). The conception of conflict as the quest for irreconcilable interests and aims by diverse parties or groups often leads to clashes over standards, rights to position, control of resources in which the goal of the divergent individuals is to attain the anticipated values and injure or eliminate their opponents (Cosser, 1995; Francis, 2006). Traditional Africans recog-

nized the ubiquity and inevitability of conflict in human social context, which made them to devise various mechanisms to prevent, contain, manage or resolve conflicts with a view to evading or abating its dysfunctional effects.

Oral traditions were means of ensuring the preservation and transmission of relics of ancestral philosophical reflections, ideas, and worldview through the methods of wise sayings, proverbs, mythology, stories, religious doctrine and practices, which were useful, instrumental and indispensable in conflict resolution and management (Omoregbe, 2004). The African family encompasses a whole range of complex blood and ancestral relationship, which is diametrically opposed to the Western system. Thus, peace was conceived as socio-culturally inclusive for the achievement and sustainability of harmonious relationships. The consensus that all parties involved must be interested in contributing to its maintenance authenticates the fact that building holistic and positive relationship requires the acceptance of peace as a 'relationship resource' that must continually be nurtured and protected as an integral part of African traditions and belief systems (Olarinde, 2010).

#### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on sociologist Edward Shils' theory of tradition in his work published in 1981. Shils observes that the word tradition comes from *traditio*, which is derived from the verb *tradere*, a combination of *trans* and *dare* meaning to surrender, deliver or hand over. According to him, tradition refers to whatever that is transmitted or handed over from past to present. He postulates that tradition encompasses physical objects, belief systems, events, cultural prac-

tices, institutions, cenotaphs, images, books and all that a society possesses at a particular time, which is already existed when its present possessions came upon it and which is neither mainly dependent on physical procedures in the external world nor absolutely the outcome of ecological and physiological necessity. Thus, the word tradition centres on the handing over of something in time by deliberate process of preservation, replication, or reminiscence with a view to ensuring that the heritage is not lost in the past. He argues that traditions make the inheritance of things from the ancestors possible and necessitate the handing over of those things to successive generations (Shils, 1981, Alexander, 2016).

#### CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN PRE-COLONIAL AFRICA

Culture is the epistemological determinant of the process, principles and methods of conflict management and legal system in any social context. The pre-colonial idea of dispute prevention and settlement as well as management and resolution of skirmishes in Africa emanated from the cultural ethos and civilizations of the indigenous people. This is because culture is the factor that regulates how a people consider issues of life and understand their experiences. The Western cultural ideologies were diametrically opposed to indigenous African cultural values, legal and conflict management systems, which explains why their perceptions and interpretations of reality are dissimilar in nature. Thus, different societies have different conceptions of conflict management based on diverse cultural worldviews and notions of reality. African culture is the foundation of African religious and philosophical systems and both the indigenous culture and its intrinsic religio-philosophical structures constituted the mainstay of traditional conflict

management strategies all over the continent prior to colonial rule.

Many African scholars upheld the assertion of Mbiti (1969) that African people live in a religious cosmos where every issue of life is associated with God (Idowu, 1962; Busia, 1954; Awolalu and Dopamu, 1979, Ayantayo, 2005, Shittu and Raji, 2022). In pre-colonial period, Africans were profoundly and incurably religious because they gave primacy to spiritual dimension in their insights on diverse issues of life (Omoregbe, 2004). Traditional African peoples believed that God regulates all societal institutions because of the obvious influence of religion on man. The government of the societies was seen as religious affairs and the whole society was organized and maintained by the spiritual forces that pervaded it. The African people were responsible to the Supreme Being who was the cohesive factor of the society. In Africa culture and societies, most of the beliefs and customs were derived from African belief in God and other deities and those things that were forbidden by them were usually stated in form of rules for regulating human conduct (Makinde, 1988). Thus, African ethical systems and methods of conflict management that were founded on the cultural realities of the indigenous African people also had religious underpinnings.

The concept of Supreme Being is fundamental to religion. The notion of God in any religion gives a picture of the cultural worldview from which it is derived. Empirical evidence shows that all world religions are offshoot of different cultures and part of those cultures from which they emerged. As Islam emanated from Arabic culture and Christianity originated from interconnected Jewish-Hellenistic-Roman culture, the same

way the traditional religion of African people came from and remain a vital part of African culture as no religion can stand aloof from the culture that produced it (Omoregbe, 2004). Although philosophically speaking, the existence of God is not empirically verifiable and cannot be conclusively established by human reasoning, traditional African people had a strong conviction in the existence of God and other supernatural beings. They equally believed that these supernatural forces were not only in control of the affairs of humanity and the world but also in charge of reward and punishment (Shittu and Raji, 2022).

The strict enforcement of traditional laws, preservation of social order and decorum were guaranteed in traditional African societies. African societies made use of judgement and justice to resolve conflicts and disputes and this was because the principles employed by Africans in the resolution and management of conflicts were dependent on customary system of administration and justice (Ibrahim, 2010, Igwe, *et al*, 2020). The principles and practices of indigenous legal processes, respect for age and seniority as well as display of cultural values aimed at ensuring peace and harmony in African milieu were based on the ancestral influence on human activities. The ancestors safeguarded law and order with a view to achieving peaceful co-existence in their earthly communities (Olaoba, 2005). Among the traditional African peoples, various traditional beliefs and practices emanating from African culture, religion and philosophy regulated how humans relate with their physical and social environments.

All over Africa, the belief in the deities and ancestral cult was rooted in the traditional religion and both the living and the dead col-

laborated in finding solutions to conflicting issues in the society. The belief in these ancestors and the fear of their wrath provided a vital force for regulating the conduct of individuals in the communities as the sole responsibility of African ancestors was to ensure fairness and social symmetry (Olaoba, 2005). The authority and wisdom of living elders in judgement could be inadvertently incorrect and subject to change but those of the ancestors were pervasive, perfect and absolute. The deities and ancestors, therefore, were superior to the living in conflict resolution because they ensured that conflicts were permanently resolved in African societies through an open application of fairness, ethics and social sanctions (Olaoba, 2005). The essence of the various sanctions meted on erring individuals or group who contravened the societal norms and values was to prevent other people from engaging in atrocious activities that could be susceptible to conflicts (Ademowo, 2015).

The deities and ancestors were effective channels of managing conflicts with a view to promoting an enduring peace in African settings and because the traditional judicial system involved elements of supernatural power, hardly was any judgement disputed while deviants were easily caught and punished. Hence, these deities were held in awe and so much respected that people abstained from incurring their wrath in every sphere of life, including the one that bordered on societal peace and stability (Olaoye, 2010). Besides, the pre-colonial African political institutions comprised truthful and knowledgeable elders who also applied the methods of mediation, adjudication, reconciliation, arbitration and negotiation in managing and resolving different levels of conflicts and misunderstandings

for the attainment and maintenance of social harmony (Ajayi and Buhari, 2014; Ademowo, 2015, Ajayi and Issa, 2022).

Conflict management and resolution models are part of African cultural heritage closely connected to morality. In the worldview of Africans, peace is not just the absence of conflict or simply the consequence of a procedure of managing or resolving conflicts. Rather, peace in traditional African worldview was wide and associated with the prevalence of total cosmic harmony within which humans, nature, the elements and the entire divine order of things jointly function effectively (Olarinde, 2010). This explains why some pre-colonial Africans believed that their societies were chaotic when they experienced famine, drought, pestilence, strange deaths, poor harvest and mysterious occurrences. Moreover, the essence of traditional techniques of conflict management and resolution was to reconcile and restore peaceful co-existence among the conflicting parties. Thus, the focus of the traditional conflict management models was to eliminate the root causes of conflicts, reinstate severed relationships for the attainment of social harmony and peace (Anyacho and Ugal, 2010).

### **COLONIALISM AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA**

The colonial rule in Africa was formalised at the Berlin conference held in 1885 where the European nations met and shared African continent among themselves for socio-political domination and economic gains. Europeans became “controllers” of African territories and “possessors” of invaluable resources on African soil. Colonial masters hijacked the control of government from African leaders and political institutions and the indigenous people who were bold enough to challenge the obnoxious foreign

dominance and its attendant exploitation and subjugation they subjected Africans to were ruthlessly dealt with (Mbiti, 1969, Omoregbe, 2002). African culture was jettisoned and attempts were made to suppress it completely but for the rise of nationalism in Africa.

The entrance of transatlantic trades to African continent prompted the importation of two foreign religions (i.e. Islam and Christianity) through Africans' interactions with Sudanic Arabs and economic interface with European merchants, and later through missionary activities and colonialism (Kasfelt, 1994). The acceptance of these two religions evidently diminished the dominance of traditional African belief systems. Despite the fact that Africans accepted the new religions while upholding their African belief systems doggedly at the initial stage, the influences of these alien religions, Western literacy and the dynamics of imperialism later dwindled the impacts of indigenous mechanisms of maintaining social order (Anyacho and Ugal, 2010). This is because these foreign religions introduced different values at the expense of African cultural beliefs, which negatively affected the traditional methods of attaining peace and stability through indigenous strategies of conflict prevention and management (Falusi, *et al*, 2023).

However, the recorded fact of African history revealed that the implication of the new forms of religious identities is the resurgence of old ethnicities and the creation as well as invention of new ones in the entire African continent (Danjibo, 2010). Scholars have traced the root of identity conflict, which is one of the grave challenges confronting modern African states in their quest for internal stability and cohe-

sion needed for ultimate development, to colonialism (Nwosu, 1999, Jinadu, 2007; Falusi, *et al*, 2023). This is because conflicts in such countries like Rwanda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan etc. attested to the fact that colonial legacies in Africa are largely responsible for the civil wars and incessant ethno-religious conflicts that have bedeviled the continent after the cessation of colonialism (Ekeh, 1983; Mamdani, 2003; Osaghae, 2003; Danjibo, 2010). Thus, the ethnic and geo-political disharmony, contemporary crises of social integration and cohesion of ethnic groups, and some other conflictual scenarios on the continent, are socio-political legacies of western imperialism.

Colonialism and western civilization did not reckon with the traditional strategies of conflict management and social control in Africa, which they perceived as primitive and barbaric in nature (Anyacho and Ugal, 2010). However, African communities had well established techniques for preventing and managing conflict as well as viable mechanisms for peace processes before the advent of colonialism (Familugba and Adebayo, 2020). The socio-political institutions in traditional African societies were saddled with the responsibility of ensuring that social conflicts were permanently resolved between individuals and groups attitudes. The ethical principles and virtues guiding conflict management and resolution, which included truth, neutrality, justice, empathy, temperance, give and take and genuine settlement, were upheld with a view to attaining durable peace.

Colonialism came with alien structures of governance, administration and conflict management and supplanted African traditional institutions and political culture. The

aftermath of the infiltration coupled with the obnoxious colonial ordinances given to colonial masters, which empowered them to appoint and remove African monarchs at will, was the relegation of Africans' political institutions and the weakening of the application of traditional mechanisms of conflict management and peace processes. The imposition of Western methods of managing conflicts on colonized African societies had negative impacts on the socio-political advancement of the post-colonial African states. In most of the modern African states, the major formal approaches to conflict management, which include the use of police, the military, courts, judicial panels etc. are adversarial in nature. These Western models have not been able to yield satisfactory results and stop the recurrence of preventable violence owing to their obvious deficiencies (Akinwale, 2010).

#### **RATIONALE FOR RELEVANCE AND EFFICACY OF TRADITIONAL MODELS**

Although some scholars have analyzed the traditional conflict management methods in the pre-colonial era with the concluding impression that they are hardly effective in contemporary time, the complex nature of modern African states and family structure have proven that the strategies are not waning or in oblivion but potent and still relevant. Some of the traditional methods of managing conflicts in Africa are persuasion, mediation, adjudication, reconciliation, arbitration and negotiation. The idea of preventing, managing and resolving of conflicts are also carried out through socialization, traditional institutions, ritual treaties and blood covenant, celebration of festivals, use of sanctions, intermarriages and the practice of oath-taking (Ajayi and Buhari, 2014; Ademowo, 2015).

Globally, Africa is known as the continent that records the topmost incidence of violent conflicts. The root cause of the numerous but preventable (violent) conflicts all over the continent of Africa is the desertion of indigenous approaches of managing and resolving conflicts that are loaded with values (Nwolise, 2005). Despite several efforts and application of diverse western paradigms of security strategies and conflict management methods, most of the modern African states are far from witnessing durable peace. It is pathetic that with the introduction and progressive practice of the modern police, foreign religions and judicial systems, there is high level of insecurity and incessant occurrence of unlawful happenings in many societies (Anyacho and Ugal, 2010). The present realities therefore suggest a revitalization of African indigenous models of managing conflicts with a view to attaining sustainable peace and development.

The fundamental philosophies of conflict resolution in African traditional milieu, which ensure a sustainable conflict management, can be applied to resolve modern conflicts (Igwe, *et al*, 2020). The apparent incapability of the security forces in modern African states to guarantee the safety of human lives and property has led to the adoption of various informal traditional approaches such as regional policing, vigilantes, militias etc. by many modern African societies and governments for effective prevention and management of conflicts (Akinwale, 2010; Annang *et al*, 2023; Mou, 2023). The aftermath of the introduction of Eurocentric methods, which were in opposition to the cultural practices of African societies, is a disordered and conflict ravaging Africa exposed to external influence, disruption and exploitation (Nwolise, 2005). The resolve to return to these traditional strategies of conflict man-

agement, which are rooted in African traditional cultures, is because of their ability to prevent skirmishes and promote corporate indulgence (Lauer, 2007). Besides, the current socio-economic realities in various independent African nations and the prevalence of structural violence such as unemployment and poverty coupled with the institutionalized corruption in modern systems of social control and conflict management have made many contemporary African citizens to find solace in and prefer the adoption of traditional model of conflict management (Akinwale, 2010; Eneyew & Ayalew, 2023).

Although the supremacy and authority of the indigenous institutions have dwindled owing to the adverse effects of colonialism and its legacies that have limited their roles in contemporary peacemaking and conflict prevention, the traditional strategies of settling disputes and managing conflicts are still thriving. Many Africans in contemporary time both in rural and urban areas prefer informal or traditional mode of conflict resolution rather than the institutionalized formal methods in modern African states. The reasons advanced by Okafor (2007) for this reality include ineptitude of the alien and enforced Western legal system, pride in culture and craving for speedy and low-cost judgements. Other adduced reasons for the current shift to judgements of African elders are prevalence of disappointment from corrupt leaders of foreign religions and economic problems in most of modern African states. The fact that the modern means of social control are fraught with corruption and brutality has also made many Africans to look inwards for possible solutions to their conflicts with a view to achieving sustainable societal peace (Ojo-Ebenezer, 2023, Aboh, *et al*, 2023).

While a school of thought opines that the traditional institutions have outlived their usefulness and become a source of contradiction or division in our new democratic way of life, another school of thought emphasizes the need for continued relevance of the institution with the need to adapt to positive change. In reality, the traditional rulers enjoy considerable influence that should be channelled towards peacebuilding. This is particularly noticeable in the people's preference for the traditional judicial processes where the emphasis is on equity and reconciliation over the court or other formal methods that breed hatred and resentment (Etekpe, 2010). The developed and maintained mechanisms for conflict management in Africa were unique and suitable for African people because they produced amicable settlement, harmonious relationships and unpretentious peaceful co-existence. (Yousouph, 2010).

It is appalling that in spite of their co-existence, the formal institutions of conflict management and peace building on the continent fail to significantly incorporate element of traditional management strategies into the mainstream intervention practices in the African world (Olarinde, 2010). However, the traditional methods is wielding a strong influence because of its effectiveness in this age of modernity. For instance, the application of modern or formal adversarial conflict management strategies to Aguleri/Amuleri land dispute in South-east Nigeria, which lasted for five decades, was futile. It is remarkable to note that it was the intervention of the traditional conflict management mechanism of oath taking that eventually brought about the amicable settlement of the age long land dispute on April 6, 2000 (Nwolise, 2005). A recent study has also re-



vealed that the adoption of biblical or denominational models of conflict management alone in several local churches in sub-Saharan Africa could not resolve some church conflicts owing to the failure to incorporate or introduce African traditional principles in resolving them (Afolabi, 2023).

It is noteworthy that for over two decades, the electronic media have been very useful and instrumental to conflict management and resolution through traditional adjudicatory process in some parts of sub-Saharan Africa, by giving opportunity to people to channel their grievances through the electronic media traditional tribunals (Olaoba, 2002). In urban centres of South-west Nigeria for instance, indigenous tribunals are organized and aired on radio and television stations in virtually all the states in the geopolitical zone. These tribunals in the electronic media, which have the backing of the government sponsoring the media, adjudicate in cases involving land, theft, property sharing, market feud etc. People engage in legal suits under the umbrella of the electronic media because it is cheaper, affordable and easily accessible. The electronic media tribunals have the obligation and prerogative to assuage injured feelings, restore peace through amicable settlement and reach a compromise acceptable to both disputants (Olaoba, 2002).

The reality of persistent usefulness of indigenous models have therefore persuaded many African scholars in different climes to advocate for a collective return to Africa's traditional methods of minimizing conflicts and promoting peace. They argued that relevant aspects of these methods should be incorporated into modern frameworks for the realization of sustainable peace required for rapid socio-political and economic de-

velopment on the continent (Nwolise, 2005; Akinwale, 2010, Oladipo, 2022; Afolabi, 2023). Hence, the efficacy of traditional Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and the need for a holistic strategy for conflict management will encourage the blend of valuable aspects of both the traditional and modern conflict management strategies for the promotion of lasting peace in Africa (Akinwale, 2010, Omoyeni, *et al*, 2023).

### SYNTHESIS OF TRADITIONAL AND MODERN MODELS

The traditional leadership structure will continue to represent the moral authority within the prevailing extended family structure in Africa. Traditional institutions are the veritable mechanisms for social engineering by providing the framework for social stability and change (Hussain, 2007; Aboh, *et al*, 2023). These traditional social institutions established effective in-built methods to check misuse of power and influence, which led to suicide or banishment of some kings and prominent individuals who committed grave offence against their communities. The traditional models of managing conflicts, being carried out by these institutions, has not fizzled out in modern African societies but continued to co-exist with Western strategies and remains efficacious in different parts of Africa where they are successfully used informally from time to time (Eneyew & Ayalew, 2023, Ojo-Ebenezer, 2023).

The traditional African cultural conception of peace would remain a contextual methodological issue that must be promoted in any discussion on positive peace intervention on the continent. As long as peace intervention continues to rely on western models or its adaptations for approaching conflicts within African context, durable peace may continue to be elusive. This is because without tradi-

tional belief and practices incorporated into the contents and methods of peace interventions, such interventions will remain distant, alien, and therefore easier to recite than practice. The empirical evidence of huge financial, human and intellectual resources being committed to peace processes in African communities without results is a pointer to the fact that there is need for traditional peace solutions applicable to African conflict situations and realities for the rebirth of the sustainable peaceful relationship obtainable in pre-colonial African societies (Olarinde, 2010, Oladipo, 2022).

In most African societies, the traditional and modern systems play complementary roles in ensuring peace and social cohesion and the official adoption of the traditional methods will promote peace and development. Thus, the merger of both indigenous and modern models of conflict management is a categorical imperative in quest for durable peace, political stability and comprehensive advancement in modern African states. The fundamental elements of the amalgam is a combination of strategies, procedures, and ethical principles of western and traditional models of conflict intervention as well as changing from western to traditional strategies or even models and vice-versa as the need arises during an intervention (Atang, 2010). The continued recourse to traditional methods of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in modern societies has authenticated the relevance of traditional conflict management strategies. These indigenous ADR mechanisms, which are based on cultural hegemony and most times independent of the state, emphasize the importance of peaceful co-existence between conflicting parties or groups. Moreover, one of the benefits of indigenous ADR methods is prompt response towards

prevention of violence and immediate actions towards de-escalation of violence (Igwe, *et al*, 2020, Omoyeni *et al*, 2023).

The current acknowledgment of a huge influence of context on conflict resolution theory and practice and the fact that African conflict resolution practitioners are finding it difficult to make use of only Western models in any peace work is a pointer to the need for conflict resolution theory, practice and training to be driven by contextual characteristics and needs. Integration is the best way to achieve this, since both western and traditional models have useful strategies and principles (Atang, 2010). The procedures for the hybridization of both the traditional and modern conflict management strategies would require accurate recognition and exclusion of deficiencies in the existing conflict management strategies, resurgence of useful but abandoned indigenous values and a formation of security policies in accordance with the collaboration of the reviewed traditional and present-day strategies in modern African states (Akinwale, 2010).

## CONCLUSION

The traditional institutions and models of conflict management have not gone into extinction and there has been a revived consciousness, renewed passion and concerted efforts for the promotion of cultural renaissance and African identity. The traditional models of conflict management, which is an integral part of Africa value system should no longer be officially neglected, but be integrated into mainstream intervention practices. These traditional mechanisms officially abandoned by the modern governments of contemporary African states should be recognized and adopted as a potent strategy in building a lasting peace in Africa. This is because these traditional models are part of

African way of life and the African cultural heritage, which can be adopted to address African conflict issues.

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In the light of the present day realities in different climes on the continent, it is a fact that traditional models still carry out a vital and effective role in conflict management in Africa and it is less expensive than the formal/foreign models. It is therefore needless to continue to engage in a debate on the relevance of traditional model of conflict management in modern African states as its benefits are evident and impacts keep increasing. There is therefore an urgent need for Africans to consider the best way to include and use the traditional model more effectively in conflict management and peacebuilding. This is because the formal acceptance of indigenous models of conflict management will promote peace, socio-political stability and development in contemporary African states.

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