

Scholars such as Alubo (2003), Best (2006), and Ayua (2007) studying conflicts in the Benue Valley or what some scholars refer to as the Middle Belt where the Tiv are in the majority have contended with considerable strength of persuasion, conflict is an undeniable fact of all human societies. Collaborating Alubo and Best, then, Gambo (2008) affirms that, conflict eventually is not an aberration but an inescapable and hard reality of life. It can therefore be argued in line with them that, human nature is naturally egoistic, acquisitive, aggressive and in most cases wicked and as such, conflicts become inevitable as each person struggles to achieve personal goals. Chris and Stuart (2004) earlier alluded to this situation when they posited that, in all of human history, social existence is characterized by acute competition over scarce allocatable resources.

The term Tiv carries multiple meanings; it is used to refer to an ethnic group (Ityo I Tiv), the language spoken by the people (DzwaTiv) and the man (Tiv) who is regarded as the progenitor of the Tiv People. The Tiv regard themselves as one indivisible family with a single or common progenitor. The Tiv people are an ethno-linguistic group in Nigeria with the largest population in Benue State but also originally found in large numbers in created states of Nasarawa, Taraba, Plateau and the Federal Capital Territory (Tsuwa 2014) as a result of irregular and circumvented border demarcation. Hembe (2005) had earlier mentioned that the Tiv are also found in other states such as Cross River, Niger, and Kwara. Torkula (2021) also adds that they are found in great numbers in the Republic of Cameroun. Due to the widespread population, the Tiv have many neighbours both within the Benue state and other places they inhabit. In Benue State which is home to majority of the Tiv people, Tiv share borders and co-exist with the Jukun, Idoma, Igede, Etulo, Abakpa, Akweya, and Nyifon, among others. They also share inter-state boundary lines with the Iyala, Gakem, Obudu and Bekwara local governments of Cross River state and the Igala of Kogi state, the Alago, Azara, Mighili, Hausa - Fulani, Beri-Beri, Jukun, Kutep and many other ethnic groups of Nasarawa and Taraba states. The Tiv

also share an international border with Bakinjaw, who are indigenous to the Akwaya sub-division of the Republic of Cameroon.

The Tiv people have long engaged in both mutually beneficial and conflictual relationship with other ethnic nationalities along their borders. Most of the peaceful and mutual relations between Tiv and other groups in the Benue Valley, such as intermarriages, cultural and traditional exchange, business and commerce, and political and military alliance, have continued up to date. For instance, it is argued that the Tor-Agbande (drum chief) in Tiv was borrowed from the Jukun or Etulo ethnic groups. Indeed, there were hardly any wars fought between the Tiv and Jukun and Etulo before the 1960s; rather, the Tiv fought alongside Jukun against the latter's enemies who tried to invade their territories (Avav, 1993).

However, in recent times, particularly with the practice of liberal democracy in Nigeria, the long-existing social, economic and cultural ties between the Tiv and their neighbours have been strained due to inter - group rivalry which, in most cases, result in bloody conflicts. Along the Taraba, Cross River and Nasarawa state border areas, the Tiv have been involved in conflicts with the Jukun, Alago, Azara, Mighili, Udum (a corrupt word used by the Tiv to describe the people of Cross River), Hausa and the Beri-Beri. Indeed, the Tiv - Jukun conflict is one of the notable conflicts in Central Nigeria that has become a recurrent event. The 2001 Tiv - Jukun conflict represents one of the most violent and bloodiest strands in the history of the Tiv - Jukun conflict (Aluaigba, 2011). This came alongside the Tiv-Alago bloody conflicts of the same period bringing it to what Tsuwa (2014) described as a coordinated conflict of extermination. These coordinated conflicts culminated in the military invasion of Tiv communities in Benue state, such as Zaki-Biam, Gbeji, Vaase, Ayilamo, Kyado and Katsina-Ala. The conflicts on the Tiv border with Cross River particularly on the Obudu axis have also remained recurrent.

These bloody conflicts have grave consequences on virtually all aspects of social,

economic and political intergroup relations of the Tiv and their neighbours. The conflicts have caused great devastation as a result of killings, burning of houses and destruction of properties as well as displacement of large human population. Although it is difficult to ascertain the extent of the damage and loss of human lives, the conflicts between Tiv and their neighbours have greatly contributed to the underdevelopment and poverty in the areas affected.

The lingering bloody conflicts between the Tiv and their neighbours have made it imperative to interrogate these conflicts and the dynamics involved. This will help identify the causality factors, the primary and secondary actors and their interests. In proffering solutions that will mitigate these conflicts and their devastating consequences.

Conceptualizing Conflict

Conceptualizing conflict is contestable just as other concepts that are multidisciplinary in nature. Again, conflict is dynamic in nature, causes, dimensions, types and actors and as such arriving at one definition becomes even conflictual. Galtung (1996) takes off by arguing that, conflict is a triadic concept made up of contradiction, attitude and behaviour. He argues that conflict starts at the point of contradiction which arises from interactions which could be social, political, economic, cultural, and religious among others. This contradiction may create the attitude for conflict and will be expressed by a conflict behaviour. Coser (1965), Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff (1981) and Otite (1991) define conflict in terms of competition and struggle between two or more individuals or groups of individuals over incompatible goals. Although there are more recent conceptualizations of conflicts, Wright and Coser's argument still remain central in understanding conflicts particularly as it concerns this paper. Wright (1999) for instance conceptualized conflict as opposition among social entities directed against one another. This view of conflict he postulated centres on two mutually exclusive social forces pursuing incompatible goals. The import of this is that conflict is essentially about needs, interests, positions, and goals, which are

not only scarce but also often fiercely competed for by citizens in a society. Due to the scarce nature of these tangible and or intangible resources, competition becomes inevitable and tense. This tense competition usually degenerates into violent conflict especially when the contesting parties ignore the prescribed rules of engagement. This is why Coser's conceptualization of conflict becomes apt at this stage and reinforces Wright and Tsuwa's definitions. To Coser (1965) as cited by Tsuwa (2014), social conflict is a struggle over values or claim to status, power, and scarce, resource, in which the aims of the conflict group are not only to gain the desired values, but also neutralize, injure, and eliminate rivals. To him, conflict is inevitable but does not work only in one direction. He therefore viewed conflict as a process that, under certain conditions, functions to maintain the body social or some of its parts at social conflict, while divisive, also have an integrating and stabilizing effect. Although his definition shows that there are three stages of actions in a conflict and each of these stages show the potential of violence and inflicting pains, such as to neutralize, injure and eliminate, he insists that conflict also has positivity on society because it in most cases foster social cohesiveness by identifying social problems and opening gaps that need actions to be filled for collective survival and development.

Although Coser brought in the positivity of conflict, this paper also looks at Jinadu's perspective that considers conflict as a more damaging phenomenon. To Jinadu (1980), conflict is a form of physical violence which involves somatic injury inflicted on human beings, the most radical manifestation of which is the killing of an individual. Deducing from this conception, we can argue that conflict is beyond mere disagreement and competition over scarce resources and power. But as Coser himself had pointed out, it may lead to the elimination of the opponent. We can argue here that conflict if not well managed has an option of resulting in violent acts that are capable of leading to the destruction of lives and properties. It usually occurs when individuals or groups of individuals are involved in a violent struggle to cause injury or eliminate

their rivals. When applied in the study of inter-group relations, conflict is perceived to be a dislocation in human relations. This dislocation is variously expressed, either through the channels of quarrel or war or by silence or rather cold war.

The above scenario shows a type of conflict that Tsuwa and Adorowa (2023) observed that occurs between communities and is usually referred to as Communal or ethnic conflict. This type of conflict usually occurs between non-state groups that are organized along a shared communal and ethnic identity. They are products of social and intergroup relations and involves threat or action of one party directed against another community's possessions, rights, interest, privileges either real or perceived and centers around economic issues, power or authority, cultural values and beliefs or natural resources. As Akpabio (2021) pointed out, in this kind of situation, society needs to create institutions that help regulate social, political, economic, legal and other interactions and the environment they occur. This to will ensure that formal rules and guidelines are put in place to prevent conflict behaviour from occurring. This is the nature of conflict this paper is interrogating as occurring between the Tiv and their neighbours. A conflict over the environment that lacks the governance structure to regulate interactions that deal with the basic human needs of the people within their environment but rather nourishes an environment that accommodates bottled needs and its consequences in conflict behaviour.

Conceptualizing Borders

We live in "a very bordered world" (Diener and Hagen, 2012). These opening words from Diener and Hagen shows that boundaries are a central feature in most of the recent political debates and global issues. The reality of borders stretches from border - line to border - area, and to the frontier, as no universal definition exists (Rigg 2017). Unlike in the field of geo-politics where borders are simply defined as geographical barriers (Walters, 2002), it is difficult, if not impossible, to come across a precise and universally accepted definition of borders in the social sciences.

However, most relevant in this study is the perspective that conceived the concept of borders beyond lines of separation or meeting points between two or more geographical entities (Rigg, 2017; Mogiani, 2023). They separate countries, states, provinces, counties, cities, and towns. A border outlines the area that a particular governing body controls borders are not simply "lines in the sand", that is to say, borders are not simply territorial demarcations, but sites of governance oriented around inclusion and exclusion, which are necessarily of selective permeability (Frowd, 2015).

The normative definition of the border-line has been challenged by the process of globalization. Since November 1989 when the East German border guards failed to prevent surging crowds from opening the Brandenburg gate, and the iconic Berlin Wall was broken, Dodds (2021) argues the foundation for the traditional lines of division had disappeared, and the changing level of openness of borders has become the criteria of analysis. The world oscillates between a borderless and a gated approach. Thus, borders can be defined both in the context of political, economic and natural borders. Political borders are imposed on the world through human agency, and they may or may not follow conspicuous physical features on the earth. Natural borders are geographical features that present natural obstacles to communication and transport. As Doods (2021) further argues, the tearing down of communist walls and 'red fences' and opening those borders and barriers, reflected post-Cold War optimism in the righteousness and robustness of liberal, democratic and Western countries. We can therefore observe that, with the pulling down of this wall, global mobility and trade were freed from pernicious geopolitical barriers to geo-economic liberalization of goods and finance, the transnationalisation of trade and investment and social freedom in the newly emerging world of technological liberalism brought out new issues that determined the boundaries of communities and nations.

Despite this scenario, the 9/11 terrorist attack on the United States of America changed the geopolitics and reverberated across both local

and international borders. At this point, open borders became security threats and in a bid to secure borders and close them against terrorism, some states such as Russia used that pretence to invade other nations and some used their military and strategic advantages to securitized borders in some places and as Dodds argues violent same in other places. Another important thing to notice in line with Dodds's presentation is that border configuration and issues surrounding them have changed in the last decade as a result of militarism, terrorism, climate change, migration and most recently pandemics such as Ebola and Covid 19. With these developments, hostile border environments are created in terms of constriction where racial, ethnic and cultural discrimination are cemented through citizenship and indigenship. Here residents take upon themselves to remind others that they are not citizens and indigenes of a particular community and as such, can participate in the mode of production and the social relations of production of such communities. If they are to do, they must be in a disadvantaged position as slaves without concrete privileges in a foreign community.

The case of border conflicts between the Tiv and their neighbours is situated within the above description, a struggle over the historical contest of circumvented border demarcation, migration and ownership from historical civilization as conceived by the colonial imperialist and re-enforced by the modern state.

Conceptualizing Migration

The concept of migration represents different things to different individuals, nations - states and societies. More so, the term migration has been complicated by its associated concepts, such as asylum seekers, refugees, migrant workers, settlers and so on. There are also many theories of migration such as the Cumulative Causation theory, Integration theory and system theory that try to justify the reasons for migration. As argued by Kok (1999):

at one end of the spectrum, migration is defined as the movement of people

over some distance or at least from one "migration-defining area" to another and from one "usual place of residence" to another. At the other end of the spectrum, the definition of migration discards the requirements that migration must involve a change of residence and amove across some distance.

From all the arguments concerning what is migration and its causes, the common view among scholars is that migration entails crossing of boundary of a predefined spatial unit by one or more persons involved in a change of residence. However, this study links its arguments with that of Tatura (2019) who argues that migration is not the mere act of crossing the border, but an important factor in the erosion of traditional boundaries between languages, cultures, ethnic groups and nation-states, affecting all those involved. We have also added that migration also involves searching and creating a new environment with its opportunities and seeking for acceptability and recognition with all its privileges in such a new environment. It is therefore apt to argue that, migration has been a crucial aspect of the history of the peoples living along side with the Tiv beginning from the migration of the various ethnic groups into the area and the movement of the colonialist into the area. It is worthy to note that, migration has therefore shaped inter-group relations of the various ethnic groups in the area especially as it affects conflicts and development.

Theoretical Framing

Human need theory which assumes that human behaviour is a combination of both genetics and social structural conditions becomes most suitable for our analysis. The theory was propounded by John Burton (1990) who believes that human beings have certain basic or universal needs and when those needs are not met or remain unsatisfied, it can lead to conflict. It implies that the primary cause of conflict is the people's unyielding drive to meet their unmet needs on the individual, group and societal levels. According to the theory, these needs which are salient to social conflicts are safety and security, belonging and love,

personal fulfilment, cultural security, freedom, distributive justice and participation.

Central to the argument of human needs theory is its emphasis on the failure of existing state systems to satisfy any of these needs as the primary source of modern ethno-nationalist struggles. This becomes relevant to explain the bloody conflicts between the Tiv and their neighbours in the context of the inability of the state to provide the basic human needs, especially security to the satisfaction of the individuals and groups involved. The argument being made is that the inability of government to provide security has provided the basis for the people to resort to self-help and other means of providing security for their lives and property. It is argued that, naturally, the needs that cannot be provided by the state are pursued in one way or another including violent conflicts. So, these needs which are inherent in human beings have to be satisfied in the social context and not outside it.

However, the subject matter of the conflicts between the Tiv and their neighbours in Central Nigeria is very vast and, therefore, cannot be reduced to a single theoretical perspective to understand all the actors and their interests in the conflicts. It can be argued that in some cases, the conflicts are instigated by the political elite or group of individuals to achieve their interests rather than human needs. Despite its shortcomings, the application of human needs theory in this paper is justifiable. The issues of identity and security as it concerns the opportunity of the various groups in meeting their needs particularly of access to natural resources and government patronage are central to understanding the bloody conflicts between the Tiv and their neighbours in Central Nigeria.

Tiv Migration and Conflicts in the Pre-Colonial Period

The history of mankind is replete with conflicts due to the different nature of mankind with their specific and ever-changing needs and interests. Baylis, et al, (1975) description of Hobbes hypothetical state of nature which emphasizes a restless struggle for power which ceases only in death. This situation is also not a new

phenomenon in pre- and post-colonial Nigeria. The Tiv have engaged in conflicts with their neighbours in Central Nigeria since the pre-colonial period. However, most of these conflicts were migratory related in their quest to secure a space for inhabitation. Tsuwa (2014) citing Falola (2004), argued that one important theme in the history of the Niger confluence but particularly the Benue Valley where the Tiv are dominant is migration. He argues that, it was in the area of large demographic shifts and movements that the Benue Valley came to the limelight of history quite early. He pointed out that, three major population movements could be associated with the Benue Valley. Two of these movements were based on linguistic conclusion. Within these two linguistic conclusions, one stream is associated with the forest-dwelling Kwa-speaking people of Nigeria such as the Igbo, Ijaw, Idoma, Igala, Edo and Yoruba who had occupied this place (Benue Valley) before moving to occupy the various places they now live.

The second stream is that of the Benue-Congo speaking peoples who are said to have had their primordial homeland in the area of the Benue-Cross River watershed, which sometimes is referred to as the Middle Belt. It is therefore argued that this watershed provided the Bantoid speaking groups the opportunity to spread to modern day Nigeria. Amongst them (the Bantoid) are the Tiv, Udam, Efik and Ibibio. The last form of migration within the Benue Valley is associated with the Kisra movements. According to this mythology, a Hamitic political wizard and magician swept across the land founding states wherever he passed. This he did by siting towns and empires such as kwararafa and others.

All these movements shaped the migratory or demographic movements of the different ethnic groups in the Benue Valley with their interest, attitude and strategies of achieving their goals. The Tiv also embarked on a migratory journey from the Swem (their imagined original abode) fraught with wars and adventures. On this journey, the Tiv encountered some ethnic groups such as Jukun, Ichen, Chamba and others that were also migrating from different parts into the area. The Tiv because of their war

strategy never believed in defeat. To this end, the following songs usually accompanied the Tiv on their march to attacking an ityotiev (a non Tivneighbour) or responding from atoatiev attack.

Mnyam chi-em Uke mile,
O O uke mile,
Mnyam chi-emo er Uke mile,
O O uke mile,
Ishima yam ngiaawambe! awambe!
hooonngiaawambe! awambe!
Ishima yam ngiaawambe! awambe!
Oonngiaawambeawambe.

This is literally translated thus; “I have dreamt that all the foreigners (non-Tiv) have drowned, yes, they have, my heart is filled with blood, and yes, it is filled with blood to make the foreigners drawn”. During this period, the Tiv either fought as an independent entity or formed alliances with other ethnic groups to fight others for the same purposes.

Killed by the Lines: British Colonialism and Conflict between the Tiv and their Neighbour

The relationship between the Tiv and their neighbours began to change greatly towards group antagonism during colonial rule as a result of some policies that were introduced by the colonial imperialist in their bid to secure their interest. First, the Tiv socio-political setting was considered stateless by the colonial imperialist due to the lack of centralized authority which made it difficult for them to capture Tiv land and introduce indirect rule. Consequently, they created enemy images between the Tiv and their neighbours who were easily captured. For instance, Baikie in 1954 described the Tiv as; “An unfortunate tribe (whose) being against everyone, and every one against it, it has rendered it extremely suspicious of any visitor, their crude minds being unable to comprehend anything beyond war and raping... are wilder and less intelligent than any of the African race with whom we had intercourse with...” Tsuwa (2014) also cited Lugard's wife as describing the Tiv as, “an inhuman group of people, a salvage group that are intractable”. Based on this, colonial officers were not interested in enlisting Tiv cooperation

but rather mobilized and used other ethnic groups against the Tiv. An example of this was earlier expressed by Tseayo (1975) when he asserted that, due to the colonial dislike for the Tiv, non-Tiv rulers were imposed against Tiv in their communities even in the heart of Tivland. This was supported by Hembe (2005), who pointed out that, the colonialists deliberately used ethnic groups as competing units for scarce resources through the mechanism of divide and rule and the Tiv became the major victim of this policy. For instance, in 1914, Audu Dan Afoda, a Nupe-Hausa-Muslim who was a British interpreter was installed over the Tiv as Sarkin Makurdi and he appointed his messenger, Mallam Gamba as the District Head of Tarku in 1924. When Audu Dan Afoda died in 1945, an attempt by the British to appoint another Hausa person led to the Tiv-Hausa clash in Makurdi. After colonial rule, the consequences of this enemy image remained with the Tiv. As reported by the Leadership newspaper on 13th April 2001, Chief D.D. Dodo the former secretary of the Movement for the creation of Kwararafa state had insisted that “the Tiv and the Jukun will fight even in their grave, he argues further that, the Tiv have shown a passion for war and as their neighbours, you need to be alert to nip them in the bud if not, they will arbitrate you and your whole generation”.

Secondly, the British created what they called the “Munchi” walls to curtail the perceived Tiv Expansionist tendencies. The creation of this “Munchi” wall which was ill-motivated on a group that was resisting colonial “expansion” became a major driver of conflict between the Tiv and their neighbours especially those in present day Southern Nasarwas and Taraba, Quaan-Pan in Plateau State and those in Southern TivNeighbour in Cross River (Tsuwa 2014). The reason is that, the “walls” were arbitrary and haphazardly created. This was similar to what was known as “Gordon line policy”, later called “ring fence”, which was aimed at reducing, fragmenting and limiting the population of the Tiv in Wukari and Takum areas. It is noted that although with initial success, the move to create artificial boundary between the Tiv and their neighbours latter failed because it was a violation and radical

alteration of the pre-colonial history of the area. Therefore, the decision to accept Tiv in those areas as “settlers”, immigrants” or “guests” under the authority of the Jukun Native Authority generated friction, especially among the Tiv clans of Shitile and Ukum who refused to accept the political authority of the Aku of Wukari as well as believed that they were not settlers and that the land was Tivland through long use and occupation (Jacobs, 2004).

Boundary issues therefore became a major causality of conflict between the Tiv and their neighbours. This is because as Okpaga (2011) argued, the inconsistencies in some of the restructuring and reorganization policies of the colonial administration in terms of creation of the various political units, such as protectorates, provinces, native authorities and the likes, many communities found themselves in regions or areas where they were considered non-citizens or non-indigenes. In most cases, these boundaries were contested by all the parties involved. For instance, the demarcation of the Tiv-Obudu boundary gazetted on 25th April 1942 by the colonial government was one of those that was vehemently rejected by both sides. The demarcation was also described by the colonial officer in charge of Obudu H.E Rylands as “Vague and inaccurate”. Okpaga (2011). The vagueness in the borderline was based on the fact that those who drafted it never had any knowledge of the reality on ground. This vague and inaccurate demarcation of boarder line has continued to be a source of conflict between the two communities until date.

We can therefore argue that this colonial policy created and arouse ethnic consciousness and promoted one group over the other and created an environment that deprived the people their needs therefore laying the foundation for conflicts. The Tiv conflicts with their neighbours during the colonial period were therefore attributed to these policies and the failure of the British administration to recognize the Tiv as a dominant, independent and indigenous group with its sphere of influence. Instead, the colonial administration even tried to resuscitate collapsed empires and kingdoms to place them above the Tiv. For

instance, as Tsuwa (2014) argues in line with Jacobs, the colonial administration attempted to resuscitate the Kwararafa kingdom as a Jukun kingdom to set up the Tiv and Jukun against each other; and was determined to create Jukun territory with Tiv elements.

The argument being made is that the Tiv had lived and interacted with their neighbours in those areas they now occupy long before the arrival of the British colonialists. With emphasis on the Tiv - Alogo relationship, Avav (1993) argues that the Tiv who, as neighbours, fought hard to establish and sustain the Alogo chiefdoms at Doma and Keana as early as C. 1760 - 1787 suddenly became “visitors” to the land of their ancestors in the 1990s.

Post-Colonial Conflicts between the Tiv and their Neighbour

According to Okpaga (2011) the post-colonial state in Nigeria instead of resolving the contradictions created in the restructuring of states by the colonial administration, has rather aggravates the situation by the various exercises of the creation of states and local government council. Today, people who have lived in particular places for over nearly one hundred years are now regarded as non-indigenes and thus, non-citizens. For this reason, unhealthy relationship between the indigenes and non-indigenes have led to serious communal conflicts that have spread across the country.

It implies that the way and manner in which the country has been divided into states, local government and other sub - political units by the post-colonial Nigerian state without recourse to ethnic, cultural and economic composition of the ethnic groups can be partially blamed for the unceasing violent confrontations involving Tiv and their neighbours in recent years. This is because; this situation has created the fear of socio-economic and political domination. The fear of who control economic of land resource with its benefits and recently, the failure of the governance structure to meet the needs of the people, the high level of illiteracy and criminality and the escalation of the production and sale of Small Arms and Light Weapons has

exacerbated the menace of conflict between the Tiv and their neighbours.

For instance, the fear of political domination and marginalization has remained central in the conflict between the Tiv and Jukun in Taraba and between the Tiv and Alago and other smaller groups in Nasarawa. The intimidating numerical superiority of the Tiv, added up to their industry of the use of land, their educational and professional ability stand tall above their Jukunneighbours. Hamman (1989), Avav and Myegba (1992) all agree that by 1820, the Tiv in the present Wukari were a major linguistic group in the Muri Emirate. The 1921-1939 census of the Middle Belt attests to this fact. According to the census figures, the Tiv made up 100% of Tiv Division, 49.2% of Lafia Division (present day Nasarawa) and 38.8% of Wukari Division (present day Taraba state) (NAK Mak Prof (Fed) 4/24/AR/INT/W/2). The intimidating credentials of the Tiv rather than be converted for the advancement of the cause of human capita and development of the area; it has become a resented characteristic and a source of threat to the Tivneighbours hence the occurrence of conflicts.

It can also be argued that, the negative attitudes of the governing political elites towards governance to provide for the needs of the people in terms of education and other basic needs have also combined with many other factors to trigger and escalate conflicts between the Tiv and their neighbours. As Aluaigba (2011) rightly captured, members of the political elite in some of the states and local government areas who lost out in the political process especially during electoral competitions usually capitalized on existing ethnic divides in those areas to foment conflicts. The aim is to affect political decisions and, in the end, increase their share of the economic and political benefits. Some of the politically motivated conflicts between the Tiv and their neighbours, according to historical sources, include the Raav (Tiv) - Idoma (1964) in Benue state, Hausa-Fulani - Tiv (1964 - 1965) in Nasarawa state, Tiv -Jukun (1977 - 1978, 1990 -1993 and 2001 and 2021) in Taraba state, the TivAlago conflicts of 2001 among others. Below is Table 1 showing some of the conflicts between the Tiv and their neighbours.

Table 1: Selected list of conflicts between the Tiv and th

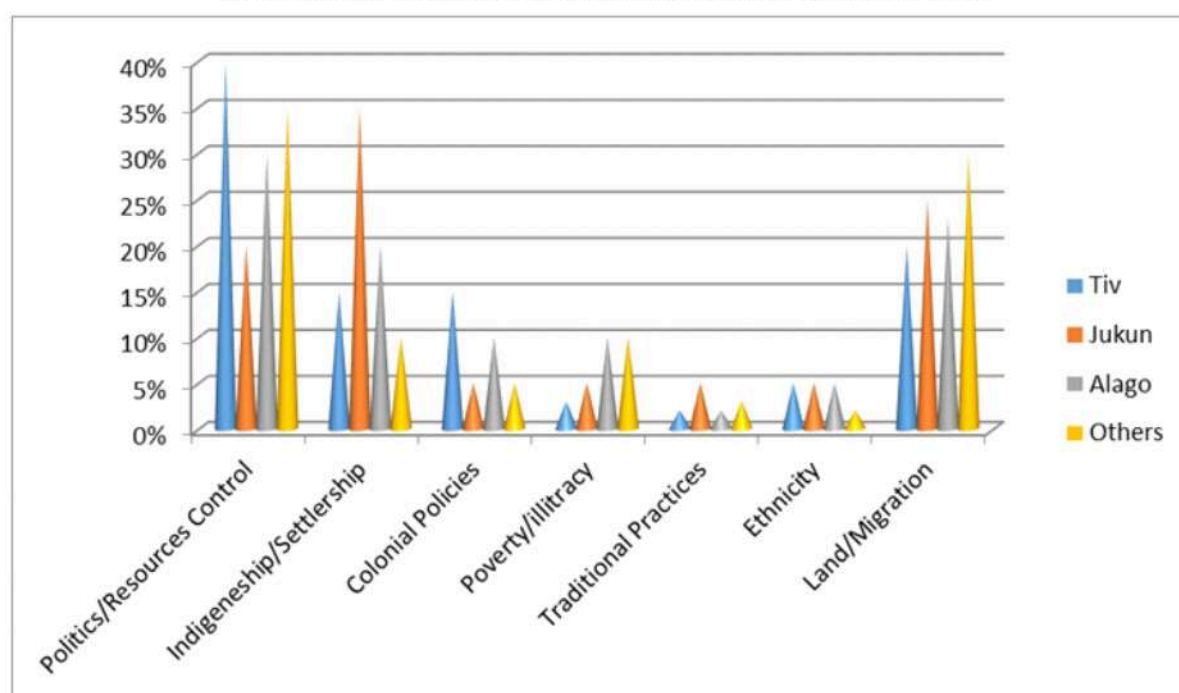
S/no	Location	Year	Parties to the Conflict	Nature of the conflict
1	Guma	1995	Tiv vs Jukun	Land disputes and chieftaincy
2	Gboko/Buruku	1989,1992	Tiv vs Etulo	Land Dispute
4	Gwer	1995,1996	Tiv vs Idoma	Land Dispute
5	Doma	1990	Tiv vs Alago	Criminality/ Land Dispute
6	Awe	1995, 2001(later involved Keana, Obi and Lafia).	Tiv vs Alago/Fulani/ Jukun /Hausa/Kanuri	Land dispute, politics
7	Quaan -Pan	2001	Tiv vs Kwalla, Alago, Hausa, /Fulani	Land Dispute/ Chieftaincy, politics
8	Wukari	1990,1993,2001	Tiv vs Jukun, Fulani	Land, Politics, chieftaincy
10	Takum	2007,2009	Tiv vs kuteb	Land and politics

Source: Tsuwa 2014 and updat

From the above, we can deduce that, the Tiv have actually fought with majority of their neighbours on reasons ranging from land to politics and acts of migration, culture /traditional practice, chieftaincy, poverty,

illiteracy and criminality. As shown in the table above, the summary of the causality factors of the conflicts as perceived by the Tiv, Jukun, Alago and other ethnic groups are presented in the chart below in figure 1.

Figure 1: Causes of conflict between the Tiv and their neighbours of Taraba, Plateau and Nasarawa States

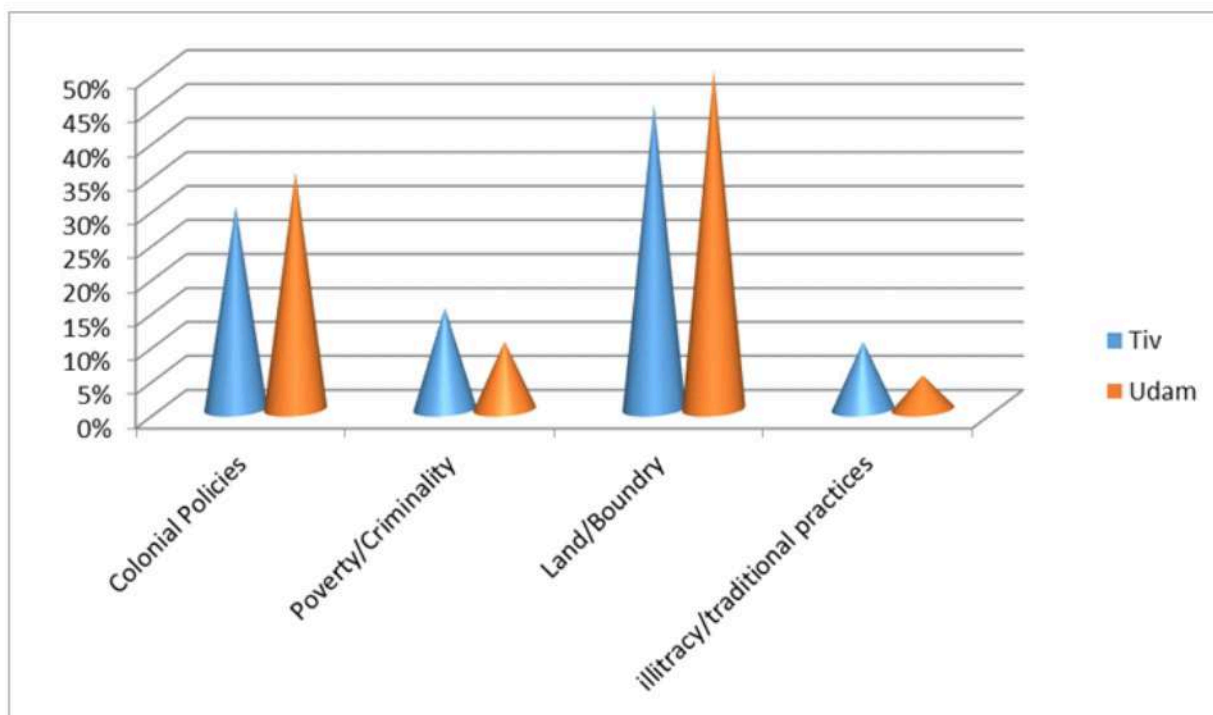


Source: Tsuwa 2014 as update

It is worthy to note that, there are no much differences between the causes of conflicts between the Tiv and their northern neighbours of Cross River state popularly referred to by the Tiv as *Udam*. However, in the case of the Tiv and Udam, traditional practice of the *Ogrinya* was another causality factor of conflict outside the ones earlier identified in the case of Taraba, Nasarawa and Plateau neighbours. The *Udam* practiced the *Ogrinya* and the adoption and practice of the *Ogrinya* dance was done with the usage of human parts usually harvested from their neighbours. According to Ogar (2006) the *Ogrinya* cult amongst the *Udam* people started about 1915 at the compound of Ohukwa, at Ibragidi and later spread to

Abuochichi and AboseOkuluku before spreading to all parts of Udam. According to him, to join the *Ogrinya* cult, a person must kill someone and produce the head as evidence. Since it was an abomination to kill one's own relatives, the people of neighbouring communities or passers-by were the major victims. The Tiv of Gaav and Kunav therefore became major victims of this practice. The Tiv after being victims for long also had to adopt the *Ogrinya* cult with its paraphrenia, a condition that created a hostile and conflictual environment between the two neighbours. Figure 2 below shows the causality conflicts between the Tiva and their *Udam* neighbours of Cross River state.

Figure 2: The Tiv/Udam Conflict Causality Factors



Source: Tsuwa 2014 and update

Conclusion and Recommendation

This article examined the nature and character of inter-group relations between the Tiv and their neighbours and how these relationships have been manipulated by the colonial imperialist, the post-colonial political elites to deny some of the groups their basic needs thereby creating an environment for conflicts. This article concludes that, colonial policies that created enemy images between the groups and designed borders that failed to take care of the socio-cultural, ethnic, economic and political settings as well as traditional practices, illiteracy and poverty amongst other factors sowed and nourished the seeds of conflicts between the Tiv and their neighbours. Based on these conclusions, this article wishes to recommend amongst others the following solutions to resolving the bloody conflicts between the Tiv and their neighbours;

1. Boundary Adjustment: The postcolonial Nigerian state and its ruling elites should improve the governance architecture to provide responsible governance that will take care of the needs of the people and also develop the

political will to change the circumvented nature of the boundaries and reconstruct boundaries that will take care of ethnic diversities and traditional borderlines instead of the present situation where people of the same family are divided into different States and local governments.

2. Inclusivity in Governance: Since issues of fear of domination and marginalization is central to the conflicts between the Tiv and their neighbours, this paper recommends that the ruling elites should consciously practice inclusive leadership that will erode the conception of indigene-settler dichotomy. This may involve an amendment to the Nigeria constitution to ensure that inclusive articles are included and provisions for early warning systems in conflict prevention are constituted and implemented.

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