

Ihyarev and Kparev Communal Violence and Agricultural Productivity in Agboughul and Tyo-Mu Community of Makurdi Metropolis of Benue State: An Assessment of the Peace Building Initiative

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ABSTRACT

The man knows that the peaceful world is far better than the violent world because development, which is a positive change and which enhances, promotes and advance his well being is a direct function of peace. The backwardness, which distorts, diminishes and impoverishes his well being, is a direct product of violent. Considerably, this study specifically looks at Ihyarev and Kparev communal violence and agricultural productivity in Agboughul and Tyo-Mu community of Makurdi Metropolis of Benue State, Nigeria. The study aims at identifying the nature and the cause of communal violence between the two communities, to ascertain the extent to which it has affected agricultural productivity and to assess the peacebuilding initiative adopted to manage the violence. Data for the study was sought from 400 respondents using a questionnaire and 14 key informants. The gathered data were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. The quantitative data was analysed using SPSS version 21, while qualitative data was analysed using the ethnographic method. The study revealed that land dispute (indigenes/settlers ownership) is the major cause of communal violence in the areas. The findings of the study also revealed that communal violence in the areas is plethora thereby thwarting and jeopardising agricultural productivity. It also resulted in the destruction of lives and property including farm produces. It has been revealed in the study that series of peacebuilding initiatives were applied; however, such initiatives like traditional, setting of committee of inquiry government, CAN peace building meetings among others yielded minimal result. It was revealed that the people were not satisfied with the role of government and traditional rulers in handling the violent. The study recommends among others that various social, religious and traditional institutions or groups in the affected areas and state at large should encourage their members or subject on attitudinal change and the possibility of leaving in peace with others.

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KEYWORDS: Communal violence, Agricultural productivity, Agboughul, Tyo-Mu, Peace building initiative

INTRODUCTION

One of the major challenges bedeviling sustainable agricultural development among the rural populace in Nigeria in general and Benue State, in particular, is the high and unending incidence of communal violence. The State has witnessed numerous episodes of violence across communal lines resulting in massive destruction of human and natural resources including agricultural products. According to Tadjoeiddin (2002), communal violence may be defined as violence that occurs between different communal groups. Groupings in the community based on religion, tribes, sect race and others. Suffice it to say they are all a manifestation of the heart of darkness (apologies to Joseph Conrad, he of maverick prose) that seems oozing from the smelly underbelly of contemporary Nigeria, thus echoing another

English great and Nobel Prize for Literature winner, William Golding and his Lord of the Flies. Indeed, in Tyo-Mu, and its denizens of Ihyarev and Kparev, present-day Makurdi, in Benue State, Nigeria relives the worst of Conrad's Heart of Darkness and Golding's Lord of the Flies. Tyo-Mu and Agboughul are yet another sorry proof of the Nigerian heart of darkness. It is worse than a dog eating dog (Uja, 2020).

The identity of communal conflict is rather fluid in nature (Alimba, 2014). This is because it occurs in divert forms, which can sometimes be misleading to identify. Albert (2001) posited that this form of conflict often manifests in terms of host-stranger face-offs in which a section of the community tags itself as the host (owners of the community)

and some other groups as strangers (that is, those who migrated into the community at a date later than the coming of the owners of the community like the case of Ihyarev Vs Kparev of Tyo-Mu of Makurdi LGA of Benue state). Oruonye, (2012) asserted that while democracy has not been economically kind to many Nigerians, the prevalence of communal violence since 1999 when Obasanjo was sworn in as civilian president ranks among its most bitter disappointments. Communal conflict exists in all the geopolitical zones of the country (Alimba, 2014).

Land dispute is one of the communal violence that is commonly erupting in Nigeria society today. The communal conflict has adopted the posture of intractability and in most cases, highly violent in nature in Nigeria. In the North, communal conflicts are reoccurring decimal to the extent that their occurrences have imposed insecurity in communities where they exist. Examples of communal conflicts abound in Northern Nigeria. In Tiv area of Benue State in various local government areas between 1988 and 2004, 29 communal conflicts were recorded by the Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs as having occurred in the state. Within the periods, some of the conflicts reoccurred two to three times. Varvar (2000), Avav (2002), Bur (2002) indicated that increased demand for land for agriculture, unemployment, rural hunger, poverty, impoverishment as communal conflict triggers. Competitions for land and chieftaincy tussle are the major causes of communal conflict in the North.

According to Akpehe (2018), Iorkosu, (2007) the jeremiad of communal violence lies in its precarious nature of undermining human well-being, social capital, institutions and sustainable development of the affected communities thereby resulting to extreme poverty and acute underdevelopment that endure even when the violence subsides. It is sad to note that protracted violence among communities in the area is an enemy of agricultural productivity. There is a well-established correlation between the exposure of countries to communal violence and the deterioration and long term stagnation of their agricultural productivity. The violence disrupts food production through physical destruction and plundering of crops and livestock, harvest and food reserves. Communal violence also prevents and discourages farming and also interrupts the lives of transportation through which food exchanges and even humanitarians relief takes place. It destroys, farm capital, conscript young and able-bodied males and females, taking them away from the farm work and suppresses income earnings occupation. The impact of communal violence on agricultural productivity often last long after the violence has subsided because assets and farm crops have been destroyed, people killed more especially women and children and maimed and populations displaced, and more painfully deter women from taking part in farming activities that could lessen the poverty trap. According to the Food and Agricultural Organization (2004), communal violence costs Africa over \$120 billion worth of agricultural production during the last third of the 20th century, given the importance of agricultural livelihood to overall economic wellbeing, especially in violence-prone areas of Africa. Bur (2000) averred that communal violence is enemies of agricultural productivity. There is a well-established correlation between the exposure of countries to communal violence and the deterioration and long term stagnation of their agricultural productivity.

Communal violence in Benue State and particularly the one between Ihyarev and Kparev in Agboughulr and Tyo-Mu of Makurdi LGA is an area known for crop production, poses a threat to Nigeria's agricultural productivity and ultimately the livelihood of its people. This ugly situation makes one of the community leaders to blame the Benue State government for the crisis, stating that it has failed to make a categorical statement on the matter. "The Nigeria constitution does not permit group persons to send another group packing but the political elites are shying away from saying the truth to those who tag themselves indigenes and that are sending fellow citizens away. They should categorically stand against this perception and tell them that their actions are wrong," Dogo (cited in The Nation, 2020). According to the community leader, (Chief Dogo, cited in The Nation, 2020) the security men also share in the blame, as the indigenes/settlers (Kparev/Ihyarev) crisis started in Agboughul community, moved to Logo 1 and 2, Makurdi and has now extended to Tyo-Mu, where people killed and set houses ablaze – yet no single person has been brought before a court of law. This is what is giving those sponsoring the crisis audacity to continue unleashing mayhem on innocent people. If the communal violence in the area is not properly managed, the consequence would be devastating to human existence, hence the need for effective peacebuilding initiative to curb the communal violence in the area (Chief Dogo, cited in The Nation, 2020).

This violence mostly intercommunal in nature has posed a great concern many development-oriented minds given its tendency to undermine the socio-economic activities of the affected communities and Makurdi the state headquarter. This is so because communal violence is correlated to agricultural productivity and under most circumstances depresses production and income from cash crops and livestock. This reduction in agricultural productivity and income has serious implication on agricultural productivity with the capacity to reduce the coping capacity of those depending on agriculture resources for their livelihood (Bur, 2000, Hembe, 2002, Avav, 2002).

In realisation of the effects of communal violence, several efforts are made to tackle the communal violence between the Ihyarev (they regarded are indigenous) and Kparev (settler). The traditional peacebuilding process requires that conflicts are to be resolved through the community justice system with the community leader(s) adjudicating in matters among parties (Ortserga, 2012). Many of the violence in these areas were related to land ownership (Tsuwa, Kwaghchimmin and Iyo, 2015, Ishor, Iorkosu & Apavigba, 2018).

Peacebuilding process is aimed to arrest the lingering violence among the parties in Benue state by the federal, state and community stakeholders have yielded few results. Tukur (2018), Adzande, (2018) reported several measures to curb the conflicts by the government to include the deployment of federal army, police, visitations by state and federal legislatures to interface with the community leaders in the communities, setting up a committee of inquiry, judicial commissions of inquiry to offer redress to victims, arbitration in courts of law and peacebuilding meetings with the violence groups. These measures, according to Adzande (2018) have yielded minimal results. Empirical evidence according to Adzande, (2018) generated from fieldwork in Benue state, brings to the fore the need to re-evaluate and

assess the current peacebuilding interventions, which have proved ineffective and unsustainable, in order to ensure the effective management of conflicts in the state. This necessitates the lucid research work of this kind.

Despite the multiplicity of works on the effects of communal violence in Nigeria and Benue state in particular by many scholars such as Sambe, Avange and Alakali (2013), Alimba, (2014), Dzurgba, (2013), Bur (2000), Hembe (2002), Iorkosu (2007), Alubo (2003), there is a scanty study on the effect of Ihyarev versus Kparev communal violence on agricultural productivity in Agboor and Tyo-Mu. Again, it was revealed, however, that the role of government and community leaders in conflict mediation as describe by Ishor, Iorkosu and Apavigba, (2018) as been bias. Similarly, according to the Sultan of Sokoto Committee Report on Tiv Farmers/Cattle Rearers Relationship (2014) was weakened while the leaders among them also collapsed with each group having its own leaders thereby making it difficult to negotiate and resolve disputes. Considerably, there is no empirical study on the assessment of peacebuilding initiative of the violence among these two Tiv sons (Ihyarev and Kparev groups). The thrust of this paper, therefore, is to fill and add to existed literature else were by exploring the nature and the extent to which Ihyarev versus Kparev communal violence have affected agricultural productivity of Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State, and the assessment of the peacebuilding initiative through survey and experimental data.

The Concept of Communal Violence

Communal violence as a concept has been defined and conceptualized by a plethora of scholars and researchers. To Tadjoeiddin (2002), communal violence may be defined as violence that occurs between different communal groups. Groupings in the community based on religion, tribes, sect race and others. In this broad meaning, Alubo (2003) argue that all communal violence are based on ascription (birth based) group identities including race, language, religion, tribe or caste, therefore, can be called ethnic violence. The above definitions and conceptualizations point to the fact that communal violence is a form of violence among the group with different interest and aspiration over resources such as land, political, economical and social resource (Tukur (2018; Iorkosu, 2007, Oruongo, 2012; Varvar, 2000, and Avav).

The concept of Agricultural productivity

The concept of agricultural productivity has seriously contended within the academic domain and that of the specialists within international organizations. According to World Food Forum (2001), "agricultural productivity refers to the people's right to define their own policies and strategies for sustainable production, distribution and consumption of food. This entails that agricultural productivity is not all about the deficiencies in production techniques but access to food resources. According to Kughur; Daudu and Iornenge, (2017) "agricultural productivity is the situation which exists when all people at all-time have affordable access to sufficient safe and nutritious food to meet their needs and food for an active and healthy living".

Concept of peacebuilding

The concept of peacebuilding is thus, the process of reducing the negative and destructive capacity of conflict through a

number of measures, and by working with and through the parties involved in that conflict (Shedrack, 2006). This term is often used synonymously with conflict resolution, conflict regulation, and conflict transformation. However, peacebuilding covers the entire area of handling conflicts positively at different stages including those efforts made to prevent conflict by being proactive. It encompasses conflict limitation, containment and litigation. In the words of John Burton, this may include conflict prevention and transformation (Burton, 1990).

Ihyarev and Kparev communal violence in Agboughul and Tyo-Mu community of Makurdi metropolis, Benue state.

Agboughul settlement is located on kilometre 3 behind modern Market, while Tyo-Mu settlement is located on Kilometer 12 along Makurdi-Gboko federal highway. The Ihyarev are a group of Tiv people found in Makurdi, Gwer-West and Guma local government areas, while Kparev (settlers) are alleged to have migrated from Vande- Ikya, Kwande, Konshisha and Ushongo local government areas etc). Agboughul and Tyo-Mu is the suburb of Makurdi, the Benue State capital, Tyo- Mu is "a rich stretch of land", on the bank of River Benue, choice arable land "suitable for fadama farming, yielding bountiful harvests of yam, cassava and rice in the wet season." Entrenched in this agricultural trove were the Kparev (Tiv for settlers), said to have been moulding bricks, at Tyo-Mu, for no less than a century. But another group, the Ihyarev (Tiv for indigenes), are not quite comfy with the so-called settlers but the question is the settlers of 100 years! And therefore want them (Kparev) out of the places. The inhabitants are 100 per cent Tiv-speaking people and predominantly farmers. Because they live on the bank of River Benue, they are noted for massive rice farming, cassava, potatoes, sonata beans, groundnut and yams. The people thus live on large farmland that spreads to about 15 Kilometres with a large Fadama that spread to River Benue.

The violent started like a neighbourly argument, but soon snowballed into a full-blown communal crisis. It was revealed by Uja, (2020) that the contention in these community that let to this crisis was over who is an indigene, who has more right of ownership and who is a settler. The recent trouble in Tyo-Mu started on 29/1/2020 when some Kparev (settlers) people who were moulding local burn bricks at the Bank of River Benue were accosted by Ihyarev (indigenes) youths who were armed with knives and axes and demanded that the Kparev should stop moulding blocks and vacate the area. On what could be the real cause of the prolonged crisis, Tachia (cited in Uja, 2020) said the Ihyarev youths first demanded that the Kparev paid them money for moulding burnt bricks at the bank of River Benue because the land originally belonged to them. He revealed that after paying them, the Ihyarev changed their mind and said the Kparev should still vacate the entire area because they are settlers (Tachia, cited in Uja, 2020).

Arising for the above, despite the significance of these communities in terms of socio-economic and agricultural sustainability to Makurdi metropolis and Benue state at large, no work was carried out in these areas to ascertain and assess the cause, effect of the violence on agricultural productivity and the peacebuilding initiatives adopted to prevent the violence, hence this study set to load the void.

Methodology

Random sampling procedures were applied in the selection of sample for this study. A total of 400 respondents using Taro Yamane formula for sample size determination was selected to answer relevance questions under investigation. Therefore, a structured questionnaire was used to elicit information from 400 respondents (people affected by communal conflicts). In addition, the key informants including leaders of the two groups, government officials as well as youth and women leaders of the groups were interviewed. This is because they are opinion leaders of their respective wards. The descriptive statistics using SPSS version 21 as well as quantitatively analyzed using ethnographic methods were used for data analysis.

Results and Discussions

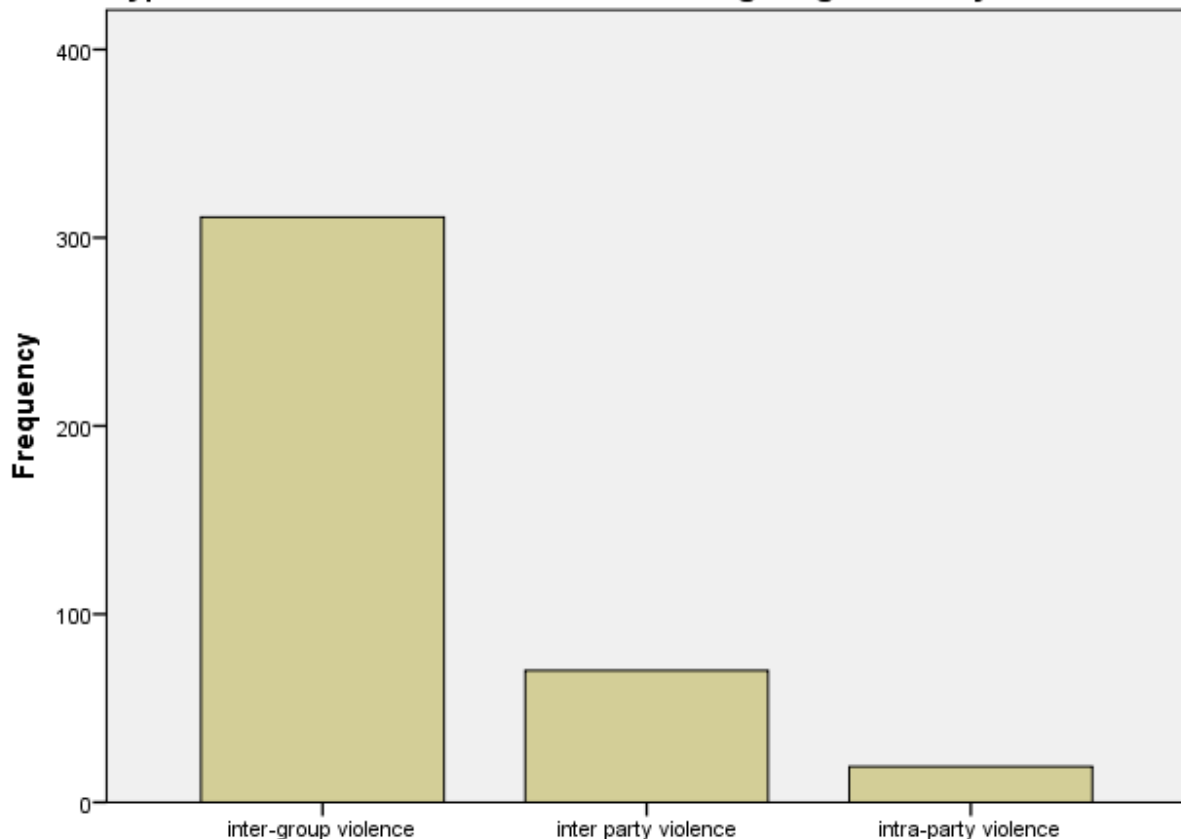
Table1: Socio Demographic distribution of the respondents

Variable	Frequency N = 400	Percentage % = 100
Age		
14-30	89	22.3
31-64	200	50.0
65 and above	111	27.8
Education		
Non-formal	60	15.0
Primary	100	25.0
Secondary	160	40.0
Tertiary	80	20
Occupation		
Farmer	243	60.8
Business	108	27.0
Civil Servant	49	12.2

Source: Field work, March, 2019.

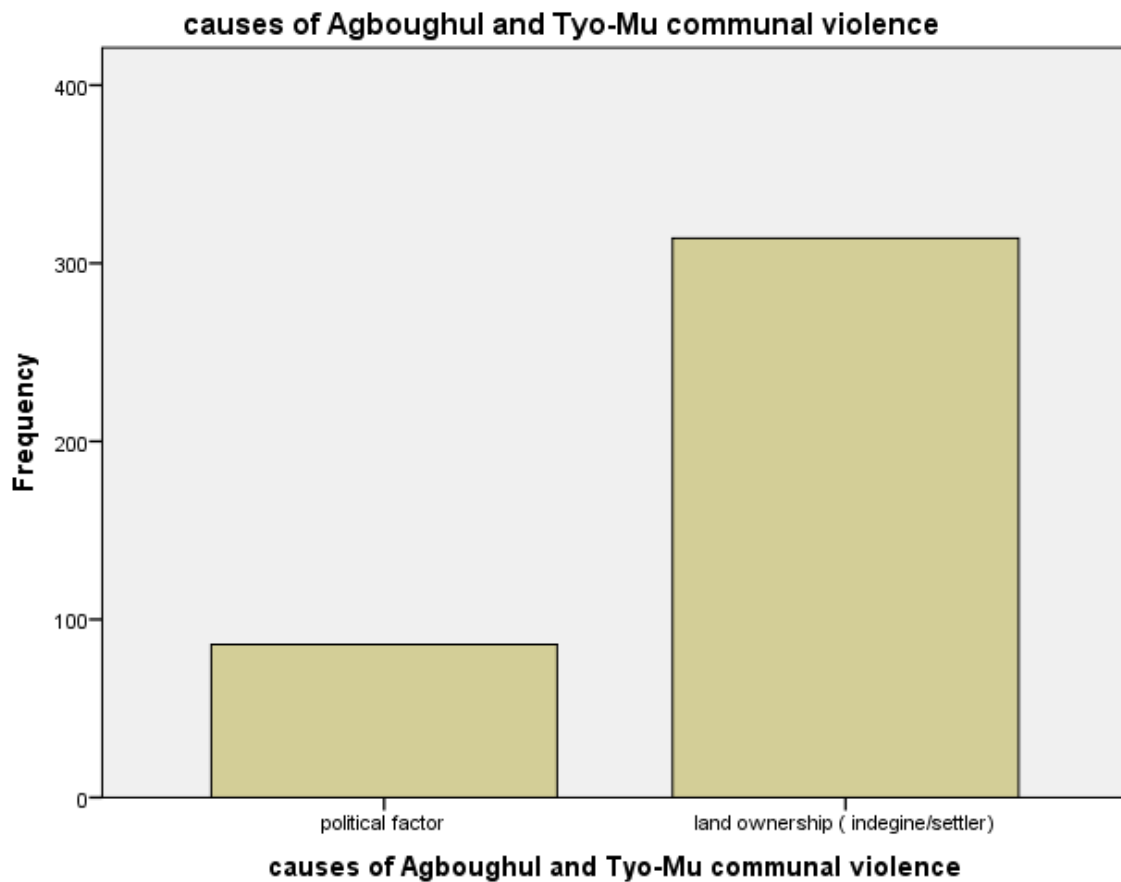
The table indicates that 22.3% of the respondents belong to the age range of 14-30, 50.0% belong to 31-64, and 27.8% belong to 65 and above. The result of sex shows that 41.5% of the respondents are male, while 58.5% are female. In addition, the result on education attainment indicates that 15.0% of the respondents have non- formal education, 25.0% have primary school qualification, 40% have secondary school certificate and 20% have a higher qualification. The result on marital status shows that 38.5% of the respondents are single, 36.5% are married, and 20.5% are widows. The result on occupation shows that 60.8% are farmers, 27% were business people, and 12.2% are civil servants.

A bar Chart showing the nature of communal violence in Agboughul and Tyo-Mu of Makurdi Metropolis types and nature of comunal violence in Agboughul and Tyo-Mu



types and nature of comunal violence in Agboughul and Tyo-Mu

Bar chart showing the nature and type of communal violence in Agboughul and Tyo-Mu community of Makurdi town of Benue State, Nigeria. The bar chart indicates that the nature of communal violence in Agboughul and Tyo-Mu is inter groups (Tiv Groups). This is because 77.8 % (311) were in support of inter group violence, 17.5% (70) identified inter party violence, and 4.8% (19) identified intra-party communal violence.



Again, the chart on the cause of communal violence revealed that 78.5% (314) identified land ownership (indigenous/ settler dichotomy) as the major cause of the violence, while 21.5% (86) were in support of political factor as the cause of Ihyarev and Kparev violence in Agboughul and Tyo-Mu communities of Makurdi Town.

A respondent of Ihyarev group during interview in Agboughul community said in Tiv language that:
"Kparev ve ngohol se nya chicha, ka nahan man idoo se ga er. This literally means that, Kparev have collected all our land and that is why we are not happy.

Another respondent of Ihyarev group also said in Tiv language that:
Kparev mban yange ve va heen sha ayange aa tsuaa a nya lu agba kwagh ga la, nahan se na ve nya gbilin er ve tema, nahan inya kyi va taver ishe sha ciu geri u Makurdi va gbanger nyor hen Agboughul yo, inya hii utaver ishe, Kparev mban ve hii utoon se nya teen zua a liba kpishi, se mba orun ave er ve de u teen se nya yo, kera doo ve ga. Ka nahan ayaoosu ne yange hii er." This literally means that Kparev people came here in the past and during which the land was nothing, so we gave them our land to settle, so when the land become important profitable asset as a result of the expansion of development of Makurdi town, them Kparev people started selling the land with we gave them and getting the high profit. So when we started telling them to stop selling our land, they became angry and this escalated to violence.

A youth leader of Ihyarev in Tyo-Mu community in an interview also said that:
Kparev mban ve hii tu shi ve bugh ashe je gande, gadia ijighir ne ka ive ga, kpa yange ve va hembra se agee ve ngohol nya hen avese shien uter asev fa kwagh ka la, nahan se mba bughun ashe shi inya kyi va taver ishe sha ciu geri u Makurdi va gbanger nyor hen Tyo-Mu yo, inya hii utaver ishe, Kparev ve gba utoon se nya teen zua a liba kpishi, se mba orun ave er ve de u teen se nya yo, shi ve taghan kpadev sha nya ne yo, ve hii utesen ashe abughun shi kera doo ve ga. Ka nahan se kpa se kaa er iwua se shin sua u ngo wase er. This literally means that, this Kparev people are wicked and wise because this place is not theirs, they over powered our fore fathers and collected the land and now that our eyes are open coupled with the high cost and demand for land, we have seeing the Kparev people started selling the land with high amount, so when asked them to stop selling the land or at least start paying tax to us, they refused and stated showing us that they are wise and the became angry. That is why we say they should kill us in our land or we force them out of this place.

A woman leader of the Tyo-Mu form the Ihyarev group said:
An Kparev mban so se ga kpa mba se hen nya,yange ve venda u votuun or wase (Tarzor of PDP, 2015), shi ve va venda u votuun wan wase Bar. Jime (APC, 2019) Governor. Nahan ka dooshima lar?A aci u nahan yo se kpa se kera soo ve ga, ve yem

sha tar ve aa ashe a bugh kera. This can be translated as “ this Kpanrev mban (in a mockery manner) don't love us and they are staying in our land, they refused to vote for our son Tarzor (PDP governorship candidate, 2015) and Bar. Jime (APC governorship candidate, 2019) so we too don't need them in our land, let them go to their land with their wise behaviour.

The traditional ruler of Nyiev of Tyo-Mu alluded that:

I frankly asked the settler (predominantly Kparev) that are involved in brick burning to pay #25,000 and 10,000 bricks each to me for using our river bank. And the settlers refused that the money is too much by which they earn much money for the work. Now we want them settlers to vacate the river bank. My people particularly said they cannot allow the settlers (Kparev) to take over the river bank as they did over there. They should come to hire the land to us before they lay the burnt bricks. This is what generated to the violent act. I have to be frank, my son (referring to the researcher).

A traditional ruler of Mbawua of Tyo- Mu also opined that:

The settlers refused to abide by our instruction, by paying tax to me at the river bank. The settlers (Kparev) have been doing the work of burnt brick here over a decade without paying anything, and my people sold all their land because of the recent development of the place (along Gboko road). We, therefore, have no place to farm except at the river bank that was already occupied by the settlers. When we realized that we no longer have enough land to farm, we shifted our attention to the river bank and asked the settlers to vacate the place for us. We sold the other parts of our land to them for development, so we cannot surrender the river bank for them. The settlers are not comfortable with this decision and stated agitating and arguing that the land belongs to them. This heated argument resulted in the violence between groups. Again, the Kparev is selling the land that does not belong to them. They acquired the land to our forefathers free of charge, but are now selling the land without consulting us.

An interview with acting Ter Makurdi (from Ihyarev group) said:

This land is for every citizen, I don't know why my people are complaining. The Kparev are our brother and they legally acquired this land from the people through government. So there is no way my people we raise up to send their brother away from this place. This action by my Ihyarev people is unacceptable and cannot be tolerated. Where on earth someone is send away from his/her legally owned land? Can this happen in Abuja, Lagos and other cities? The disgusted and useless youths who are hungry are the ones fueling the violent for their selfish interest and not for the interest of the Ihyarev people. I am not in support of what my Ihyarev people are doing to their Kparev brother. How can they ask Kparev to pay tax to them at the riverbank? How can Kparev pay them tax for moulding burnt bricks at the river bank and to the government? It was not right but they respected, yet Ihyarev youth are not satisfied. This is unacceptable. People pay tax to the government and not to the group. The government should arrest all persons behind this violent.

In a counter-reaction to these respondents from Kparev group in an interview also expressed their opinion on the cause of the violence. The youth leader of the Kparev people at Tyo-Mu explained with bitterness that:

Ihyarev youth are behaving as if they are God. We involve in moulding burnt brick for years without a problem, and we have been paying tax to the government and Ihyarev youth just to allow the peace to rain. They demanded that we increase the tax we respected and paid them money for moulding burnt bricks at the bank of River Benue because the land originally belonged to them. After paying them the requested money, the Ihyarev changed their mind and said we should still vacate the entire area because they are settlers. We tried to plead with them but the started using violence approach against us. But as far as we know, we are the majority here in Tyo-Mu. The government should address this before it gets out of hand.

An elder state man from Kparev people also said that:

We live in this place over 100 years. We acquired the land legally from our forefather. So when Ihyarev discovered that we are selling this land to people (visitors) with a high amount, they stated been jealous. They (Ihyarev) sold their portion of land to people when the land was a cheap asset, while we hold onto our land for our children. Now that the land is considered a lucrative venture, they started regretting why they sold their land cheaply. Their jealous against us (Kparev) with respect to the high value attached to the land is the cause of the violence. But the land legally belongs to us and we have the legal certificate of the land. This is a town and anybody can own the land provided such person have the certification.

A woman leader of the Kparev women association in an interview opined that:

The government is in support of this violent for political reason. This is because Tyo-Mu is a community in Makurdi town even closer to the Air force base. I think the present government headed by a governor who is from MINDA axis of Tiv Nation (MINDA means and comprises of; Masev, Ihyarev, Nogov Development association. Governor Ortom is from Nogov, and his wife from Ihyarev) also in support of what their Ihyarev people are doing to us. How can this violence continue when he is still the governor? The unending violent in Tyo-Mu is a clear indication that the present government is in support to what is happening to us. I am not happy with what I am seeing.

Another respondent from Kparev and a lecturer in Benue state University said that:

Kparev people acquired the land for more than 100 years ago. Some of us recently bought the land from the government and have relevance certificates. Why are they complaining now after we have legally had our land? In fact, I can say without fear that the role of government in this crisis is not encouraging at all. The Ihyarev people should be wise before the Governor (from, Nogov) will use this as a strong tool to win the senatorial election in 2023 that is supposed to be from Ihyarev people. Governor Ortom will surely use Ihyarev/Kparev violence the same way he used Tiv/Fulani tactic to win Governorship election and end up victorious during the senatorial election in 2023. This is because Kparev people that constitute the majority in Zone

B Senatorial district will be convinced that voting Ihyarev a senator will give them added strength to fight them (Kparev). So I think the political factor is another reason for the continuous violence of this nature in this community.

A lecturer from the University of Agriculture and from Idoma (non-Tiv) who also stayed in the place for more than 30 years said that:

I think what causes the violent is speedy development experience in this place as a result government recent survey and allocation of the plot to people. This recent development resulted to the high demand for land. But frankly speaking in this place (referring to Tyo-Mu) Kparev people occupied a bigger portion of the land. When the Ihyarev see that Kparev people are making a huge amount of money from the land that hitherto belongs to them, they became jealous. In fact, let me tell you, the Ihyarev sold their land to the settlers and have no other place to farm. How can people sell all their land to other people when they are agrarians? How can they cope with life? This is the genesis of the crisis my brother (referring to the researcher). The government needs to intervene into the matter before it does escalate to dangerous dimension.

Table 2: Effect of Agboughul and Tyo-Mu communal violence on agricultural productivity

	Frequency 400	Percent 100	Valid Percent
destruction of lives and property	20	5.0	5.0
destruction of farm produce	45	11.3	11.1
burning down of market	42	10.5	10.5
restriction of movement	21	5.3	5.3
displacement of people	35	8.6	8.6
severe hunger and famine	65	16.3	16.3
destruction of stored food	52	13.00	13.00
all of the above	120	30.0	30.0

Source: Field Work, March, 2019

The table on the effects of communal violence on agricultural productivity indicate that majority of the respondent 30% 9(120) said that communal violence destroyed lives and property 5.0%(20), destruction of farm produce 11.3% (45), burning of houses 42 (10.5), restriction of movement 5.3% (21), displacement of people 8.6%(35), severe hunger 16.3 % (65) and destruction of store food 13(13%).

In an Interview with one of the traditional rural in Agboughul community said in Tiv language that:

Num ne pande u eren ttom sule, shi uhihi akaa yam kpishi shishi, shi uhihi mlu u dedoo u yange Ihyarev man Kparev yange ve lu ker la. This can be translated as; this crisis has slowed down agricultural productivity, destroyed farm crops and has spoiled the previously good relationship between Ihyarev and Kparev people. There is no cordial relationship among the two groups again.

The leader of Ihyarev women Association, Agboughul chapter voice out that:

This crisis has drastically affected agricultural productivity in the area. The farming activities were thwarted thereby causing severe hunger. Women and the children fled to other parts of Makurdi leaving their daily farming activity. Aside from the effect on farming activities, some individuals lost their lives as well as property worth millions of Naira.

A traditional ruler of Mbawua of Tyo-Mu said with dismay that:

This is the right time the farming activities reach the pick in the area, but this violence in the area distorted farming activity in all ramifications. Many people fled to other parts of the town for safety. Farm crops, houses burnt to ashes. This will lead to serious starvation in the area and Makurdi town at large. Many food items in Makurdi town come from our place. So this crisis resulted in a shortage of food if not well managed.

A popular farmer in Akile of Tyo-Mu community opines that:

This crisis affects farming activities and if not well managed, it will lead to total starvation in Makurdi and its environs. The youth that are supposed to be on the farm are busy planning violence. Therefore, we are tired of his violence.

Table3: Peace building initiative adopted to curb communal violence in Zone B senatorial district of Benue state.

What are the peace building initiatives/intervention adopted in the area?	Frequency	Valid Percent
Traditional method by involving the parties in a meeting	122	30.5
deployment of troop to prevent the violence	173	43.3
setting up committee of inquiry	85	21.3
litigation in the law court	20	5.0
Total	400	100.0

Source: Field work, 2020

The data concerning the peacebuilding initiative adopted to curb the communal violence shows that deployment of troop 43.3% (173) were that peacekeeping mission adopted to curb the violence, 30.5% (122) identified traditional method to avert the violence, 21.3% (85) align with setting up of committee of inquiry and 5.0% (20) identified litigation in the law court.

In an interview with the DPO of Zone E that is covering Tyo-Mu said:

When I heard of the violence, I quickly deployed police officers to control the violence. Some youth are arrested. That is all I can say.

The traditional ruler in Agboughul community said that:

The traditional rulers organized series of the meeting where the elders and representative from the two groups attended that meeting. But one of the challenges is that whenever we discuss in the meeting, youth reacted differently. One other day, after the meeting that lasted for 5 hours, the youth of both side resumed that fight. The government on their part deployed police or prevent the violence. The committee of inquiry was also set up.

A traditional ruler in Tyo-Mu also said in an interview that:

Frankly speaking, the government deployed the security to prevent the crisis, thereafter, the elders and the representatives of the two group had a meeting but the issue was not resolved. The commute of inquiry set up by the government has never a day organized the meeting since. However, the CAN (Christian Association of Nigeria) chairman with his officials organized that meeting. The representatives of the two groups were present. In the meeting, many issues were discussed, so there is a positive headway.

The respondent and prominent person in the area in an interview pointed out that:

The government deployed police but they came and stood at the main road heading to Gboko without knowing what was happening in the interior part of the place. People fled to the town because they lack confidence in security. Prior to the escalation of the violence, there are a series of meeting between Ihyarev and Kparegh people. But the meetings do not hold water and the violence escalated. After the escalation of the violence, the acting Ter Makurdi(acting First class chief in Makurdi) held a meeting with the elders and the representatives of the two groups. In fact, the meeting ended well but after 3 hours, the Ihyarev youth kills Kparev a young man of 27 years and the crisis resumed. Then the CAN chairman held a meeting and the negotiation is ongoing.

In an interview with the CAN chairman and the pastor of NKST Yina Akpehe in Makurdi metropolis, he said that:

I have organized the meeting to look over the matter. Both the representatives of the two groups were in attendance. Well, the only thing I can tell you now is that the first meeting yielded a positive result. The next meeting is coming up soon, but at the look of things, the two groups laid down their arms to give us more time to look for the lasting solution of the problem.

Table 3.1: Responses on the level of satisfaction of the peace building initiative

Are you satisfied with the role and peace initiative of both the traditional ruler and the government	Frequency	Valid Percent
yes	168	42.0
no	232	58.0
Total	400	100.0

Source: fieldwork, 2020.

The row data as presented above shows that majority of the people 58.0 (232) % were not satisfied with the role and peace initiative of the traditional rulers and the government, 42.0% (168) were satisfied. The implication of this data is that there are no people-oriented negotiation methods adopted by both the traditional ruler and the government.

A respondent and a lecturer of federal university of Agriculture Makurdi said:

It like the government is not interested in the crisis. They normally deployed police after the damage. And when police came, the youth of the other side was still burning houses, so I don't understand this kind of police. The Ortom government is taking a side in the crisis because his lovely wife if from Ihyarev group. Even the traditional rulers are also taking aside, this is because, after the meeting organized by acing Ter Makurdi, the Ihyarev youth kill someone of Karev group. This is nonsense! So they (referring to traditional rulers and government officials) hold a meeting to dramatized that they are working, but going back they pave way for violence. I can tell you that the government and the traditional rulers who are supposed to prevent and protect lives and property are rather fueling the violence. What kind of government is this?

A Rev father of the catholic mission in the place in an interview replied in bitterness that:

In most cases, some of us don't want to talk about this issue. But as a Rev. father, I am the agent of the truth. The behaviour of the government toward this crisis is suspicious. This is Makurdi town, so how can crisis continue unabated? In most cases, you can see youth heavily armed parading the place without any arrest. There is some youth from Ihyarev who were arrested but they returned the following day. The present government is a clear demonstration of a bad referee; they see someone committing an offence and they don't care to blow their whistle. Our traditional rulers are the agents of bad governance because they are the ones that have these youth, so in the public, they only pretend to be good but at the back, they give negative directives. It looks as if the government want this violence to continue so as a certain segment of people should be wiped away in the area. This is very bad and I hate what I am seeing.

Another respondent and a woman leader in the area said:

The government is trying so much and we are satisfied with the way the government is handling the crisis. The government should try and make sure Kparev people vacate the place because they are the settlers. How can the settlers own more land than the indigene? This is bad my pikin

Discussion of the finding

Objective one: The finding on the objective revealed that inter-groups land communal violence is the major violence in Agboughul and Tyo-Mu of Makurdi Metropolis. This was arising from the indigene/ settlers dichotomy. This finding agreed with Bur (2002), Vaavar(2000), Anky and Doki (2006), Oboh and Hyande(2006), who observed that the nature of communal violence in Tiv communities is mostly inter-clan violence (between Tiv communities) and intra ethnic violence as well as land confrontation. This finding tally with Human Rights Watch Report (2011), the April 2011 land communal violence in Nigeria is among the fiercest and bloodiest in the nation's history, as it recorded at least 8000 deaths yearly. The study also agreed Varvar (2000), and Avav (2002) who indicated that increased demand for land for agriculture, unemployment, rural hunger, poverty impoverishment as communal conflict triggers. Similarly, deprivation, exploitation and domination of minority groups by major ethnic groups and leadership problem were highlighted by Angya and Doki (2006) as factors that can exert communal crisis. Competition for land is the major causes of communal conflict in Benue state. The study also aligned with Albert (2001) who posited that this form of conflict often manifests in terms of host-stranger face-offs in which a section of the community tags itself as the host (owners of the community) and some other groups as strangers (that is, those who migrated into the community at a date later than the coming of the owners of the community like the case of Ihyarev Vs Kparev of Tyo-Mu of Makurdi LGA of Benue state).

Furthermore, the finding revealed that the extent of destruction caused by communal violence is relatively high. This implies that, due to communal conflicts, there has been an increase in transportation costs which makes people not been able to transport their produce to market for sale. It also increases the prices of products which makes people not been able to have enough food for consumption to meet their dietary needs. Products/goods are supplied in small quantity to markets as well as disruption of agricultural extension activities/work. This finding agreed with many scholars such as Yecho,(2006), Varvar (2000), Lyam (2000), Iorkosu, (2007) who averred that violence tends to affect food security by creating food shortages, which disrupt both upstream input markets and downstream output markets, thus deterring food production, commercialization and stock management. Depending on the location of the fights in a country, crops cannot be planted, weeded or harvested, decreasing dramatically the levels of agricultural production. In conflict situations, food-producing regions experience seizing or destroying of food stocks, livestock and other assets, interrupting marketed supplies of food not only in these regions but also in neighbouring regions. These predatory activities diminish food availability and food access directly because both militias and regular armies in the field tend to subsist by extorting the unarmed populations for food and any other productive resources. Contributing to meeting the food needs of refugees' places an additional burden on recipient communities where food security is already marginal leading to sometimes acute food shortages.

The finding on the peacebuilding initiative adopted in managing Agboughul and Tyo-Mu communal violence in Makurdi metropolis revealed that the traditional method,

mediation process, NGO (CAN) peace building meeting, legal litigation and setting up of a committee of inquiry are the methods adopted in the area to prevent violence. However, these efforts yielded insignificance result. Both the government and the traditional rulers are not doing enough to curb the violence. The study is in tandem with Tukur (2018), Adzande, (2018) who reported several measures to curb the conflicts by the government to include the deployment of federal army, police, visitations by state and federal legislatures to interface with the community leaders in the communities, setting up a committee of inquiry, judicial commissions of inquiry to offer redress to victims, arbitration in courts of law and peacebuilding meetings with the violence groups. These measures, according to Adzande (2018) have yielded minimal results.

Conclusion

The dynamic nature of communal conflict in this democratic era is rather threatening and has exacerbated the state of insecurity in Benue State and the country at large. In 1999, when the baton of power was handed over to a democratically elected civilian leader in Nigeria by the military until this moment over 15,000 people have been consumed by communal violence. It has become the most visible conflict after ethnoreligious conflict in Nigeria. Communal violence occurs in a group and between groups in a community. This violence has become a serious issue of concern, plaguing the entire country into limbo. In this study, therefore, the nature and cause, effects of communal violence as well as peacebuilding initiative were elucidated with a particular reference to Ihyarev and Kparev communal violence in Agboughul and Tyo Mu communities of Makurdi metropolis of Benue State, Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on all that was discovered in this work, the following recommendations were made.

1. Various social, religious and traditional institutions in the state should encourage their members or subject on attitudinal change and the possibility of leaving in peace with others. This can be achieved through proper education, value re-orientation and enlightenment. Talented local singers should produce songs that demonstrate the harmonious relationship between the Ihyarev and the Kparev group.
2. There should be people oriented peacebuilding meeting. Regrettably youth and women of the two groups were not well involved in the peacebuilding meetings. Therefore they should be involved in peacebuilding initiative. This is because they are the ones that orchestrated the violence confrontation and must be part and parcel of the decision making.
3. The Benue state government, stakeholders of the two groups should stand on the fence. The certificate of land ownership should be allocated to the owners because the two areas are in Makurdi metropolis. This will help in no small way in averting this communal violence.
4. There should be court litigation to address the rightful owner of all the mark and survey parcel of land in the area. In doing that government should arrest and persecute the land intruders in the area.
5. A police station should be established in the two affected area to help address the security breaches. This will go a long way in preventing attack against any group in the area.

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