Article

Does Governance Matter? Community-Participatory Governance and Conflict Management as Instruments for Administering Development in Sub-Saharan Africa

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Abstract: This study provides an insightful overview of community-participatory governance and conflict management as instruments for utilizing resources for development in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). SSA is a region rich in natural resources but prone to conflict. The study is conceptual and critically engages the application of community governance and conflict management strategies that SSA countries need to adopt. The study praises the notion that community governance is characterized by recognizing and accepting intercultural diversity and creating a democratic institution for promoting good governance and conflict management in SSA. The study recommends that good community governance is required to drive local communities' development, growth, and transformation into a sturdy, innovative, and productive society capitalizing on opportunities. The study voice for the amalgamation of appropriate models and theories of governance cogently in the context of SSA due to the heterogeneity of communities. Therefore, to resolve conflict, conflict management, resolution, and transformation strategies are necessarily needed to accomplish a viable peace to maintain and sustain development.

Keywords: community governance; conflict management; governance; peace; development; SSA

1. Introduction

Over the years, International Communities and entities like the United Nations (UN) have championed development concepts to enhance the global populace's socioeconomic and political paradigms efficaciously (UN, 2012). Within the context of Africa, the organization of African unity (OAU) initiated the preliminary system after some nations merged from colonialization to scheme the way for the complete independence of the African states. As such, the African Union (AU) advocated for the realization of continental development and the Africa agenda 2063 (AU, 2019). Yirga Ayele et al. (2022) argue that over many years, the people residing in sub-Saharan African countries have endured standing underdevelopment and pervasive living situations.

The circumstances are incessant because the government's incapacity to offer the needed services demanded by the growing population compounded by rising political instability, climate change, and Covid 19 in most fragile states (Baste & Watson, 2022; Leonardsson et al., 2021). The severe living conditions have contributed to conflicting competition over the communities' limited resources (Akwuebu, 2018), deep-seated suspicions, apathy toward civil responsibility, hostility against renowned business organizations, kidnapping, abduction, vandalism, and terrorism weakening the instituted institutions to govern. This occurrence translates into two levels, macro, and micro circumstances, from the perspective of Sub-Saharan Africa. The macro level depicts economic, social, and political status. Also, at the micro level, the symptoms include unemployment, unsustainable livelihood, disease, extreme poverty, poor health facilities, loss of confidence in the rulers, the superiority of instrumentalism, ethnicity sentiment, prejudice converged to the state of lawlessness and scepticism on the population (Duke II, 2011).

According to WB (2022) projection, the growth rate in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is predicted to sluggish to 3.7% in 2022, indicating estimation declines in over 60% of African economies. Consequently, prices continue to rise, exacerbated by the war in Ukraine, severely reducing food availability and accessibility. Per capita income growth in SSA remains much lower than in other parts of the world, at just over 1%. More people anticipated falling into extreme poverty in the SSA, especially in countries that rely on food and fuel imports (WB, 2022). Lundgren et al. (2013) state that during times of war, the monetary pace shrinks further when the governments increase spending on allowances, farmer assistance, and national security. Persistent food supply disruptions in SSA have drastically caused poverty, starvation, and malnourishment, simultaneously with continual inflation. Additionally, rising living costs also increase the chance of social upheaval, mainly in low-earnings countries.

Moreover, Lundgren et al. (2013) stated that in many countries in SSA, significant economic benefits derived from critical natural resources and extractions provide unprecedented economic growth and development opportunities. The study asserts that growth profits from natural resources should be to address human capital and infrastructure gaps and improve social performance that impedes sustainable pervasive, inclusive growth. However, empirical studies show that transforming the natural resource wealth into better economic effectiveness and enhancing one's level of living standard is difficult in most SSA countries. Therefore, adopting appropriate policies in managing natural resources can pay off lucratively, but poor governance and administration have contributed to the wasted potential for substantial economic progress and development.

Continuously, some SSA countries' characteristics include poor economic growth, poverty, and instability ravaged by conflict and poor governance; similarly, the effects are quite different. Studies carried out by Voors et al. (2012) confirmed that conflicts create negative impacts, destroy institutions, bring underdevelopment, distort social cohesion and hence weaken the nation's ability to stand and survive because the institutions are either destroyed or ramped during the conflict. They also make the state fragile and volatile (Stewart & Fitzgerald, 2000)

Considering the above evidence, expecting good governance, a low level of conflict, a peaceful society, and the fulfilment of people's potential in local communities is difficult. Nonetheless, Duke II (2011) argues that despite adversity, the genuine endurance and agility of a group or set of tenacious individuals united by a common identity and destiny who come together with a common purpose can overcome the prevalent predicament. As a result, the people of the SSA region must rethink their approach to their plight and problems. Therefore, this study's discussion begins with examining the realities of endorsing an approach from community-participatory governance and conflict management perspectives employing optimal techniques. The goal is to build a strategy to establish a relatively peaceful environment conducive to internally-driven community development.

The study considers the work of Duke II (2011) on community governance and conflict resolution in the Niger Delta of Nigeria. However, this paper goes beyond one country's perspective to the countries of SSA to analyze the imperatives of community-participatory governance and conflict management as an instrument for managing development in Sub-Saharan Africa. It presented an analytical discourse on control and conflict management as the fundamental elements in achieving social cohesion and peaceful coexistence at the grassroots level.

2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

This section discusses relevant empirical studies to provide insightful arguments for community governance and conflict management to manage development in sub-Saharan Africa. This study considered the concept of governance, models, and theories of governance, community, community governance, conflict, and peace.

2.1. Governance

The concept of governance has generic implications for the evolution and essence of human existence in society. Scholars have advanced many theories and concepts to justify these assumptions that the first discussion date about 400 BC Anghie, (2000); postulates the pillars of governance as the art of governing that emphasizes justice, ethics, and anti-autocratic dispositions. Various authors and organizations have created definitions of everything, such as "rules, enforcement mechanisms and organizations"(Kaufmann et al., 2003)

According to Farazmand (2013), the concept, art, and act of governance are "as old as a civilization or human history" in the same way as Tiihonen (2004) argues that governance is associated with a "very long history of governance,   structures of authority and domination." Farazmand (2013) defined governance as good governance, ugly governance, and bad governance. The author concluded that none of these classifications offers comprehensive insights into the concept of governance, hence the "existing confusion over the conceptualization of the concept" (Blauberger & Rittberger, 2015; Kohler-Koch & Rittberger, 2006). It means that, from time immemorial, governance has played a controlling role in managing the affairs of human society. Each stage of human civilization has its unique systems and models of governance.

Blauberger & Rittberger (2015) argue that governance plays a crucial role in the formulation and deliberation of programs in the context of the European Union (EU) to ensure interconnectivity of the system in the network, hence (Kohler-Koch & Rittberger, 2006) postulate that governance has played a conventional role in regulating and providing normative principles to manage the affairs of the state.

Moreover, in associated perspectives since the fourth century, governance had been viewed as "an act, technique, and function of authority in a given government" (Asaduzzaman & Virtanen, 2017). Accordingly, Landell-Mills & Serageldin (1991) opined that governance is obsessed with how to govern people, run a country's obligations and public programs, and how the constitutional network operates the legal system." Also, Hemmer et al. (2006) stress governance as the interactions of affiliated agencies aim at collective deliberation of the legislation and execution of policies that enhance the engagement of all stakeholders. From this premise, governance from the perspective of the authority apparatus becomes interdependent and answerable, tackling phenomenal interrogation of the impact of state policies.

Therefore, the elements of governance comprise the systems, techniques, tools, and approaches for orchestrating an organization and entrepreneurial conduct. It is an essential detail that ensures the system's stability and protects the pursuits of diverse stakeholders connected to it. Therefore, the elements of governance are made up of structures that create, distribute power and assign duties and authority within the system for specific people to make decisions and manage resources appropriately in a responsible and accountable manner (Carrington et al., 2008).

2.1.1. Governance Theories

There are numerous governance theories. The theories reflect the different theoretical lenses used by scholars to examine what happens within the sectors of public management and society over time. Peters and Pierre (2006) acknowledged the development of various perspectives with mutually contradictory assumptions about governance. Therefore, Sorenson (2006) and Sørensen & Torfing (2007) recommend focusing on theories associated with new institutionalism and the concern on how institutions influence governance. These assumptions are reflections of the variants of the concern expressed by scholars about the rule. Some of the most popular theories of governance identified for this study are the network management theory, delegation theory, social interpretative theory, bounded rationality theory, and cultural and institutional theory.

The network management theory is the reflection of the argumental theses works of Rhodes (2007), Stoker (2004), Ratinger et al. (2021), Salamon (2001), and Sorenson (2006),

among others. The theory assumes that the government is concerned with the activities of networks of complex actors and organizations. From its generic perspective, Rhodes (1997) argued that initial works on policy networks and program designing in economics and society led to a broader realization of the central role of systems as an element of governing and its implementation. Hence the consensus that governance is essentially concerned with managing networks.

Similarly, Kickert's (1999) and Klijn et al. (1995) reflections on what constitutes a network increased two classifications of the network management approach; game and network structuring. Game management involves the control of relations in the existing system. The study consists of the search by the government for accommodation to create the conditions for collective or consensual decision-making. It involves a change in relations between actors, resource distribution patterns, and changes in policy direction. The new actors join the network and acquire membership, resources, and opportunities to influence decision-making processes with divergently anticipated outcomes.

Bell and Park (2006) submit that the interest in meta-governance is central to how government provides the ground governance rules and its context. Similarly, Sorenson (2006) argued that meta-governance described the direct ways of governing by impacting the various self-governance procedures and fragmented toolkits for regulating networks. Additionally, Salamon (2001)) recommends the desire to acquire technical competency as a replacement for traditional bureaucratic management skills. Such skills include activation skills, orchestration skills, diplomatic skills, communication and bargaining skills, and modulation skills. On this consideration, Goldsmith & Eggers (2004) concluded that the skills with which an agency manages networks and its employees according to favourable or unfavourable outcomes of public institutions. The network management theory provides a new direction for managing public administration business through networks or partnerships; hence, the emergence of Public-Private associations and state-civil society organizations (CSO) engagement in governance relationships.

According to Bertelli (2006), delegation matters in the reformatory process of effective governance. The author noted that power and responsibilities are supposed to be shared between entities, and comprehending how delegation functions enhance the understanding of the operation of management. This theory assumes that governance can be effective if suitable delegation structures are in place. The idea is on the assumption that the superior (principal) is engaged in a non-cooperative game with the inferior (subordinate); hence, the superior officer may choose to either delegate or not, and the subordinate may choose to either comply with the directives of the superior officer or not (Castelfranchi & Falcone, 1998). Bendor et al. (2001) believe that delegation presupposes that the boss expects the subordinate to work toward achieving the objectives set for the organization. Conversely, according to Bendor et al. (2001), the subordinates are placed under a superior officer's control and unconditionally expected to comply with the manager's directives.

Moreover, Venton (1997) states that the authority can manage delegation through sanction, monitoring, and oversight when the subordinate oversteps his bounds. Delegation is enhanced by the ally principle, i.e., the boss delegates responsibilities to subordinates who share the same ideological principles (Castelfranchi & Falcone, 1998). Administrative rules set broad rules of the game of governance and recall made to redirect the decision of subordinates to the directives of the superior officer. For example, a delegation exists in the relationship between politicians and bureaucrats (Fox & Jordan, 2009).

The social interpretative theory assumes that society perceives the world divergence lenses because of politics and social interaction that happen throughout life; it poses significant governance challenges. Accordingly, Newman (2001) argued that understanding governance requires an emphasis on social arrangements construction that assigned meanings and the subjugation, subservience, or synchronization and options interpretation. Gintis et al. (2008) argued that human action is assessed from the points of belief and desired action. It submits that to describe the societal reactions; it is crucial to understand their traditional customs, moral values, cultural activities, and where they live that impact

their way of doing things. The author noted that people could not have pure experiences because contingent experiences pervade their beliefs.

Traditionally, Kułakowska (2020) states that human beings dwell and operate within the setting of tradition, which prompts them to adopt particular meanings. Nevertheless, when a dilemma occurs, they modify their customs and beliefs. According to Bevir & Rhodes (2002), governance is a political contest that relies on competing hypotheses, underscored by reference to practice and dilemma. On another premise, Bevir & Rhodes (2002) view governance as a communicative relationship driven by the open, developed, and flexible exchange process between the governors and the governed. Also, since the relationship between the state and the citizens is full of ambiguities, creating inclusive and responsive styles of governance becomes necessary. Hence, according to these theorists, all forms of social life, including governance, are negotiable. Therefore, compelling and legitimate governance is navigable, interactive, dialogical, and facilitative and helps people govern themselves (Rabinow & Sullivan, 1988)

The bounded rationality theory is associated with the works of Klaes & Sent (2005) and Simon (1985), which emphasize decision-making in organizations and governance in all aspects. Simon (1985) identified decision-making models such as the incremental, comprehensive, rational, and mixed scanning models. While Tversky & Kahneman's (1986) study focused on how human beings cope with the challenges of decision-making, Tversky & Kahneman (1986) emphasized the systematic flaws in human judgment. Similarly, Jones's (2002) study throws psychological insight into decision-making and how social institutions correctly and direct the decision-making processes of human beings.

The theorists assumed that the processes that lead individuals to choose what action to take are inter-linked to the sin qua-non people issues associated with communication, comprehending the circumstances, and ascertaining the outcomes due to the limitations imposed by their creative thinking and the convolution of the planet they lived on Earth. Indeed, human beings are goal-oriented; as such, they understand their environment and adjust to the dynamic circumstances that confront them. The bounded rationality draws attention to three basic facts; the challenge of communication, the need to address the practice of processing information, and the need to remind individuals to cooperate. The theory sees individuals as imperfect-judgmental; hence they create and construct organizations with balances of authority and a minimal span of control.

The cultural institution theory provides further insights into the philosophy and dialectics of governance. The prominent theorists associated with the cultural institution theory are Hood & Peters (2004), (Kehoe & Perri, 2002), (Douglas & Wildavsky, 1983), (Verweij, 2004), Thompson et al. (2006), and Grendstad & Selle (1995) among others. The theory assumes that individuals are active and their creative reasoning is affected mainly by social context. The authors contended that individuals construct communally infused fundamental values that allow or preclude their preferences, and as such, they use these to evaluate others and justify their behaviour (Douglas & Wildavsky, 1983). That is to say, social relations and justifying worldview are central to understanding the context of the decisions made by individuals. To this end, societal interactions deeply rooted in the collectivity dictum influence people's interest in a particular issue.

The study by Hood & Peters (2004), Mishler & Rose (2005), and Thompson et al. (2006) stressed that the most intelligent individuals are seldom simply conscious of how racial beliefs influence them. Basic assumptions, similar convictions, ethical symbols, imperceptible incentives, and individual judgments are consistently affected by penalties and demands similar to a style of life. Within the context of African politics, cultural biases have fueled ethnic and religious alienation, exclusion, and marginalization, which are responsible for civil wars in many African countries (Kemp & Fry, 2004). Ironically, people voted in elections based on cultural biases and preferences at the expense of quality, capability, principles, personality, and leadership integrity. It partly informed the crisis of governance, leadership succession, democratic transition, leadership failure, and government in many African countries today.

Wildavsky (1987) argued, "Peace is attainable when universal goals and the appropriate group dynamics with full integration since only when they humanly sustainable." In another dimension, Douglas & Wildavsky (1983) used the concept of the group and grid to justify the existence of many social structures. In the realms of governance in Africa, the group thesis is responsible for the crisis of identity, identity discrimination, indigene-settler dichotomy, and cases of political exclusion that have become an albatross to good governance, leadership choice, and democratic transition (Grendstad & Selle, 1995).

Wildavsky used the group thesis to conceptualize social identity thus: the response to the identification dilemma posed by individuals who are members of a dominant entity whose actions are enforceable on all of its participants is feeble since their decisions only have an impact on individuals. The central question regarding behaviour concerns whether the individual has an independent or severely confined spirit and is susceptible to several or few regulations. Culture is distinct by the power or weakness of class lines and the myriad of multifaceted or indistinguishable opioids adhering to or emancipating people.(Gintis et al., 2008)

However, the models and theories of governance discussed above presented the conceptual evidence of contextualizing techniques and concepts appropriate for all countries and global governments to adopt depending on the demanding situations. As Farazmand (2013) observed, local and cultural uniqueness needs the application of sound governance models suitable to the rising crisis. For instance, African traditions, customs, and colonial rule influence African societies' administrative systems. On this basis, the colonial administration, which significantly influenced modern-day public administrative rules, is incompatible with African societies' social, economic, political, and cultural contexts—the African countries present more challenges in development and governance (Mills & Hughes, 2002).

2.1.2. Governance models

This study has identified the relevant governance models to explain the governance concept. Accordingly, Mintzberg (1996) identified five distinctive governance models: the government-as-machine model, the government-as-network model, the performance manage model, the virtual-government model, and the normative control model.

The government-as-device model views government as a system with policies, guidelines, and many requirements. The model fits into Frederick Winslow Taylor's automatic assumption about the organization as captured in the scientific management philosophy of managing organizations and Max Weber's notion of an ideal bureaucracy (Bartels, 2009). This model is inflexible or irresponsive to individual initiatives. Therefore, everybody in the government must comply with the policies and directives without hesitation. Contrary to the assumption above, the government-as-community model assumes that government is an interconnected system with a composite web of transient interrelation designed to resolve emerging issues. It is associated with informal communication channels, connections, cooperation, and collaboration (Kim, 2006). However, the model is inappropriate because it views its parts as functioning as a whole as an individual's function in a network of interwoven projects.

The performance control model (Ingraham et al., 2003) sees government as almost a business outfit. It assumed that the entity composes commercial enterprise units that perform delegated tasks and that managers are held responsible and accountable for enhancing the individual's inventiveness and excellent execution of the duties. As the community consists of a group of people with distinct characteristics and expatriates, society's progress should align with result-driven performance. Similarly, since the people in the community purposely needs effective and efficient service delivery, the virtual government model advocate for privatization, contract, and entitlements negotiation. It is advisable to eliminate all misconstrued public domain structures and permit the non-public sector to provide the services. This model favours the public-private partnership model of governance (Brainard & McNutt, 2010).

The normative-control model is value-orientated and associated with selection, socialization, guidance, responsibility, and judgment (B. W. Husted & Sousa-Filho, 2017; E. Husted, 2021). A selection presupposes that values and attitudes, not credentials choose people-the members dedicated to an integrated social system in terms of socialization. On guidance, people are guided by accepted principles and not imposed plans and vision instead of targets. The element of responsibility means that each participant's share obligation is honoured and assisted by leaders who master management techniques primarily based on experience. Ultimately, judgment implies that appraisal is carryout by skilled people with vast knowledge on consultation and management committees (Gençtürk & Aulakh, 2007).

2.2. Community

Based on this article, a community is described as a syndicate of people from various backgrounds connected by social bonds that share mutual perceptions and participate in concerted action in a given location or environment shaped by the experience in distinct manners. Also, a community is a network of a group of people with cultural and political identities, shared traditions, and socioeconomic with a common ideology to pursue specific goals and objectives in a given situation. Tönnies & Loomis (2002) postulate that community members are connected by language, perceptions, and self-personhood and share a political and socioeconomic identity.

Consequently, a community is not just a physical arrangement; it may be a set of geographically distributed groups like the Bantu or Nilote tribes in Sub-Saharan African countries connected by common identity, tradition, and shared mutual issues. Moreover, Leonard & Memon   (2008) noted that the community plays a central role in facilitating the obligation of the authorities at the local level. Community adopts behaviours, norms, duties, functions, and coordination mechanisms due to relationships between constituent populations and neighbourhoods within a given region

2.2.1. Community-Participatory Governance

Community-participatory governance depicts the network processes and strategies employed in undertaking civil engagement in administering the affair of the society by the local indigenous communities' authority (Hunt & Smith, 2005). Community governance is bespeaking in many aspects: the organization of individuals, the recognition of the members in the society, management of the activities, symbolization, active participation, engagement, and dialogue in the pursuit of collective interest in the broader surroundings and choosing and holding leaders responsible as all should be accord to the traditions and attitudes of the people in a given geographical location. Nindyatmoko et al. (2020) community engagement plays a significant role in resolving conflict and linking the stakeholders through participation that cement the relationship and bond the social ties amongst the members of the society. Also, Wisman (2022) concurred that the capacity of the network of community-participatory governance to manage conflict is triggered or stricken by the perceptions and the environmental factors that impact the human being's subculture, norms, and customs.

Ullah & Kim (2020) recommend that ethical and instrumental governance from the government and the community should work together with an integrated approach that articulates guiding principles and basic policies and procedures as essential exterior parameters to elicit strong and consistent dedication from the interaction of people who participated. Within a participatory process, trust-building, constructive, face-to-face meetings, and the generation of intermediate step results are considered crucial attributes in constructing dynamism for lucrative governance at the community stage. Consistent with (Hunt & Smith, 2005; Leonard & Memon, 2008), community-participatory administration has an intercultural facet to serve as a discipline to run the governing duties and control financial activities amongst manifolds and various institutions. The organizational

domains include traditional customs (community) and a nation; and are notable through distinctive governance styles and anticipations.

Ratinger et al. (2021) assert that a transformation toward community-based civic engagement is necessary to enhance the governance system but to do so, stakeholders must have a common goal. Equally, "sharing power" strengthens effective governance, which mitigates uncertainty regarding resource rights wrought by unpalatable socioeconomic status and institutional conditions. Furthermore, Ekundayo (2017) study classified community-based management into; good and poor; good management encompasses sustainable and inclusive development, mass participation, community empowerment, transparent policymaking, supremacy constitution, bureaucratic system imbued with ethics, and eradication of poverty and proper operation of the institutions in its political and socioeconomic sectors; while poor governance underscores the pervasiveness of poor service delivery, poor public management and public-complaints approaches, ineffective anti-corruption structures, lack of trust in the decency of government agencies,   intensified insecurity, widespread unemployment at all levels, high costs of living, inflationary pressures and skyrocketing prices, shortage of entrepreneurial funds and insufficient business financing, widespread and pernicious frauds at all thresholds, prevalent and abject poverty.

Moreover, UNWVLC (2011) advocates for an inclusive engagement of all stakeholders in enhancing service delivery and notes that equal representation of diverse groups and involvement of members contribute to full integration. Addition to, the stakeholders should conduct their business in line with the constitution, with truthfulness, openness, properly informed mechanisms, and respect for peoples' rights through empowering community-based organizations, faith-based groups, and civil society entities.

2.3. The Motive of Community-Participatory Governance

Governance exists for the regulatory oversight of network policies, modifying laws as required, resolving hostilities, transforming citizenship arrangement and credibility, and ensuring transparency in utilizing public resources. Ratinger et al. (2021), community-participatory governance is fundamental at the societal stage because it serves as the crucial precursor to effectively induce and uphold the performance outcomes of collective optimization aspirations. Also, it leads to a situation that orients implementation and administration and people's engagement.

Community participatory governance is upheld as a profound guiding philosophy. In assessing opportunity utilization, participatory community governance enables community involvement and commitment and the concerns of the plurality success by considering the minority in the decision-making process. Adopting supplementary governance structures such as intergovernmental advisory groups and civic engagement process reporting would enable minority interests to be recognized and articulated, in addition, to ensuring accountability by emphasizing various opinions on advantage profiteering (Haugh, 2021)

Carrington et al. (2008) prioritize five approaches to guaranteeing effective governance, which includes democratic strategies, results-based strategies, order-derived strategies, institutional strategies, and regulatory strategies. According to Lowenthal & Bitar (2015), the democratic approach emphasizes a governance model centred on democratic philosophy such as legal system, liberalization, civil engagement, honesty and integrity leadership, and regular free-fair elections.

The democratic strategy aims to ensure that leadership positions belong to the people whom members perceive as very educative and visionary to lead the community. Result-based management strategy involves all stakeholders, whether directly or indirectly, predisposing to the accomplishment of a set of outcomes guaranteeing that their procedures, products, and services facilitate the realization of the objective, output, impact, and results (UNDG, 2011). In essence, the stakeholders use information and facts on tangible outcomes to guide policymaking on planning and implementation, financing and delivery, accountability and report generation. It comprised of three fundamental principles:

accountability, national ownership, and equality and fairness to guarantee administrators obtain higher substantiate performance (Joyce, 2022).

Order-derived approach – based on establishing rules and regulations, guidelines, and laws that should be bestowed on chosen authority to ensure stability in the community or society. (Yarger, 2006) Designed to support the execution of the approach geared to national contexts, a pragmatic framework for framing and examining available information on both formal and informal facets of governance in a specific context. Numerous processes and tools like a strategy master plan create essential information to achieve the objective reinforce mechanisms, and strive to enhance the nation's comprehension of governance (Lopez et al., 2022).

The institutional approach indicates a decentralized governance shape that devolves power and obligation across the stakeholders to operate interdependently. (Lawrence, 1999) opined that the institutional strategy actions aimed at regulating the institutional arrangements in which organizations use and utilize resources, whether through reproduction or transformation of the rules and standardizations guidelines. The underlying concepts of the institutional approach lie in the devolution of power among the actors to orchestrate fairness and legality in their operation. Regulatory strategy – conveys how rulers gain credibility by concentrating on the system through which they carry out their duties and responsibilities. FRC (2009) stressed that the strategic aim of implementing long-term goals and objectives is to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery, robust performance, accountability, and monitoring, as well as the implications of technical capabilities for the quality of corporate governance.

Nuh (2019) stated that strategic management is one of the mechanisms that can be adapted within a sound governance framework, subject to the system's consistency with the various tiers of execution that must be delivered. Strategic control mechanisms are crucial for creating proper local governance. Additionally, to develop feasible democratic autonomy, strategic control techniques require the participation of both internal and external elements. On this basis, no sole approach of the various above is the order that could provide effective governance. Every situation requires a unique answer. Indeed, the amalgamation of those approaches may offer high-quality outcomes for enhancing management.

2.4. The Concept of Conflict

Conflict is prevalently the outcome of the interaction of political, economic, and social upheaval, which is regularly the result of disagreement, misunderstanding, poor governance, failed financial regulations, and irrelevant development programs that have aggravated ethnic or religious distinctions. Coker (1968) points toward the pressure exerted on the youth by the society they live as a powerful force, and conformists who undermine their interests and goals can lead to conflict. In the same vein, violence continued to disrupt Niger Delta due to tense relationships among the stakeholders, gas companies, the state, and the local community, the environmental hazard from extraction and fossil transportation, has resulted in a rift dispute among the parties (Ibeanu, 2016).

Moreover, conflict can still be expressed in cultural violence in the aspects of ideology, religion, language and art, instrumentalization, and primordial identity, directly or through structural means such as exclusion and deprivation (Galtung, 1990). Also, Galtung (1969) argues that conflict may lead to violence due to unequal distribution of resources and social injustice. Therefore, conflict is positive if it results in the structural adjustment and improvement of the parties' relations in dealing with each other, but it could be harmful if it causes harm, death, and destruction of property (Anheier & Isar, 2007; Deng, 1995) accounted that conflict could be structural, diffused, opportunistic, and constructed into the governance system.

2.4.1. Theoretical Aspect of Conflict

Karl Marx's works mainly draw the maximum influential conflict presupposition (Guclu, 2014). Marx pinpointed that society's lives whirl around economic prosperity and benefits. Marx argued that one group; "the bourgeoisie" (capitalist), own the means of production such as land, technology, and resources while mistreating another group ", the proletarians" (labourer), employed to work and produce goods and services in return for a wage which cannot enable them (labourer) to cater for all the needs; consequently, it led to dissatisfaction, acrimony, strike, and insurrection. Sedek (2018) explain that the manifestation of dispute and segregation between opposing classes may change over time, but the conflict remains. Also, Hirshleifer's (2001) economy is mainly concerned with producing valuable goods and services, but it has a "dark side" and conflict. Therefore, it is advisable to explore the causes and the consequences of conflict as an economic activity and delve deeply into the evolutionary sources of conflict. Hoeffler (2008) study depicted that 60 fragile states of about 1.2 billion people in the world are in flux by insecurity due to conflict and war. Hence, they faced severe food security and abject poverty.

Bartos & Wehr (2002) asserted that conflict and change are inherent within the social global, and each movement produces a reaction that has its counterpart to each person, group, and organization in society exert pressure whose motion stimulates many counterforces, either cooperation or conflict outcome. The interaction is probably to be extra costly and detrimental than when it comes to collaboration. Conflict can be pursued and controlled in much less expensive ways with the ultimate goal of managing conflict that constructively engages the society to redistribute scarce resources to follow incompatible values toward development.

Additionally, Moore (1994) highlighted that according to functionalists, the significance of collectivism in society is substantial, and any conflict that might arise is regarded as transient and counteracted as the community continues to improve. They believe conflict is minimal compared to the demand for better unanimous agreement and stability. Marxists acknowledged a fundamental conflict between one-of-a-kind groups in society; this conflict is ongoing and continual and no longer temporary, as claimed by functionalists. This perspective emphasizes the variations between interest groups and the use of principles like control, coercion, power constraint, and change; hence conflict is an inevitable reality.

Furthermore, the devices usually represented the glaring and diffused management and application of the government's apparatus and non-secular establishments to deliver the continuing appropriation of land ownership as a mechanism of exclusion and deprivation of communities in SSA countries. Bobbing up from this ascendancy is the aspersion and help of the prevalence of the dominating group on all sides of social existence.

2.4.2. The Concept of Peace

The study considers the absence of conflict or violence in the region as a wave of peace or state where every individual is free from harmful circumstances, and any dispute that might arise is resolved amicably without fear of others. Therefore, people must co-exist peacefully and be lively to create and preserve a stable society. However, various scholars lighten the concept of peace differently (Amadei, 2021; Bruch et al., 2016; Webel & Galtung, 2007).

Amadei (2021) indicated that the value proposition of promoting sustainable growth and peace in the twenty-first century is more fundamental than before. The change in mindset must recognize that sustainability and peace are two complementary states of dynamic balance. It is challenging to imagine a sustainable planet that is not nonviolent or a peaceful world that has never really endorsed viable strategies. As a result, the vision statement of applying a structures strategy to seize the interconnections between development sectors, such as SDGs, and peace sectors, such as positive, negative, and cultural, is enhanced. Leonardsson et al. (2021) advocate mitigating climate change by adopting and upholding the imperative of peace and stability in society. It calls for a transformative

governance framework that is pluralistic, inclusive, and result-oriented to ensure that community members participate freely in the fight against environmental change and variability.

Webel & Galtung (2007) noted that peace is a state of social tranquillity, equity, and fairness in distributing economic resources and providing just and free political justice, but wars and violent conflict constantly disrupt peace. Therefore, it is eminent to make a distinction; positive peace constitutes the coincidental of desirable psychological and social states, such as unity, justice, equity and fairness, whereas negative peace denotes the absence of destructive conflict and wars. Nnaemeka (2019) opined an excellent need for peace education. Though conflict is inevitable in human interactions, there is a high incidence or presence of factors that engender disharmony in Nigeria at interpersonal, inter-group, and inter-state levels. Best (2006) and Mbugua (2010) contended that political, religious, economic, social injustice and marginalization, poverty, and inequality spur conflict and concussion peace and security.

Furthermore, Nwadialor & Uzoigwe (2009) study reveals that the peculiarities of ethnicity in terms of language, culture, belief, traditions, and customs that are unique have resulted in being significant sources of instability in many African countries. These particularities and diverse cultures, as unique as they may be, offer a better platform for mutual trust and respect, peaceful co-existence, and national stability if adequately recognized and built to accommodate others. Krampe et al. (2021) underscore that sustaining peace in a prone-conflict arena needs better resource governance and can only be effectuated if the government provides equal service provision. Thus, facilitating intercultural collaboration reduces prejudice and biases and allows for the establishment of transnational norms.

Rogers et al. (2013) continuously proposed that practical governance norms bolster human empowerment and civil society. Access to public services addresses the instrumental needs of communities, strengthening their faith in the state. Alike, Egugbo(2016) study recommends that good governance is a vital prerequisite for achieving long-term peace in the community, which would ensure ethical and prudent management of the economy coupled with the observance of the rule of law. The study concludes that historical and psychological barriers among the conflict parties be managed to achieve a political solution to establish a lasting peace. Then through social integration, adoption of a blend of consensual and mandatory policies and legislations to enhance cohesion and help reduce cultural barriers.

2.4.3. Strategies for Managing and Resolving conflict

This article paper affirms the adoption of management approach, resolution, and transformation strategies as instruments to mitigate and resolve the conflict amicably without resorting to violence. There are predominant strategies to remedy the conflict between distributive (antagonistic) and cooperative (integrative) methods. The distributive technique implies that each party is attempting to win, as in a competition (Schelling, 1980). The coordinated approach emphasizes developing a cooperative atmosphere against a competitive and individualistic one. The parties see themselves as collaborative problem solvers and principled negotiators. Similarly, integrative bargaining emerged to symbolize the collective, collaborative win-win or problem solving and takes the parties' goals are not collectively exceptional but the ones which both sides can amicably achieve (Jeong, 2010).

Thus, Proksch (2016) emphasizes that the comprehensive technique to control conflict is to accept the divergent points of view as legitimate pursuits and reconcile the differing opposition to integrate them instead of taking a decision that separates them. Also, in a conflict circumstance, management is liable for deciding on the best approach to resolve it and for taking vital steps. Again, Hallirus (2012) study depicts that ethnicity-religion incompatibility, poor living conditions perpetuated by unemployment, embezzlement, fraud of public funds, illiteracy, economic bust, and imposter leadership are the

major hindrances to peace, unity, and political stability in Nigeria. The study calls for good governance to reconstruct the federation system and address the recurrence of conflict through stabilizing social, economic, and political problems to curtail violence.

2.4.3.1. Mediation Style in Resolving Conflict

Mediation is sake when parties want a brokered outcome to ensure anonymity to influence the result to achieve a swift peace deal and to keep and strengthen their relationships in the future. Mediation is not punitive, which tends to mean that the facilitator is not obliging the power to compel the factions to take action (Dworack et al., 2021). Hence, the principal objective of mediation is for the negotiators to reach a compromise so that they can all live. The goal is not to figure out where the truth lies or to determine any violated law but to solve a problem; this is a far different approach than arbitration in a court trial where the panel of arbitrators determines which party is correct, which one is wrong and delivered the court verdict about it.

Further, ACCORD (2014) accounts that conflict management processes can enhance the capabilities of indigenous stakeholders by giving them new sensitization and understanding of their goals, options, and resources. Bringing about structural empowerment in which underpriviledged social groups gain recognition of their rights requires fundamental policy reforms. It can be identified and understood through alternative conflict management (ACM), but solutions lie beyond what ACM alone can achieve.

Nevertheless, as a result, Mason (2007), mediation plays an integral role in stimulating parties to the conflict to retract from the battlefield and combat over the table to accomplish their objectives through negotiation and compromise. As such, the warring parties intend to understand and explain systematic strategies for impacting consensus on the peace process and revive the nation's economy and judicial systems as well as governance and security in society. Kaye (2019) considers the role of business entities to participate substantively in community social dynamics by involving local business actors in mediation approaches to peace treaties and better facilitating the framework of post-conflict societies.

2.4.3.2 Conflict Transformation

Although there are various aspects to resolving conflicts, conflict transformation is regarded as the most viable strategy to settle disputes as it emphasizes peacebuilding. According to Abdul (2008), human security concerns must be pursued fastidiously from war-torn countries to post-conflict communities within countries for conflict transformation to achieve its intended goals. Therefore, the foundation for a wave of long-term peace and stability in the region is guaranteed.

Like-wisely, in any community or country ravaged by war or violent conflict, it is critical to prioritize human security issues to prevent a conflict relapse and empower the people to deal with future disputes constructively (Botes, 2009). O'Toole et al. (2009), the three fundamental goals of conflict transformation include community engagement, responsive governance, and a capability for fixing problems and resolving conflicts.

Community engagement centred at the grassroots level of leadership primarily considers a bottom-up approach through setting up a relevant institution to handle and discharge the affairs of the civil population in the community. It opposes authoritarian leadership and absolute power corruption by the elites in the society. Noagah (2013) asserted that the utmost mechanism to manage conflict is through the participatory engagement of community and civil society organizations with the directives from the government.

More responsive and consensus-oriented governance – aims to bridge the gap between the opposition parties and ensure the conflicting parties come to a consensus without causalities and detrimental repercussions in the state. Abbassi (2008) stated that conflict arises due to an imbalance of power, resources, and identity; as such, there is a need for a legal system to address the causes of the conflict, solve them, and build a stable society. Most importantly, the institutions must ensure the general public's broad participation in governing the state's affairs. It can be shown by how the public administrators

account to the public and ensure transparency and accountability in managing the economic resources and appointing public servants to serve in public offices. The appropriate procedures would attract the community to build trust and confidence in the state's leadership.

A capacity to resolve dispute mechanisms – that aim at settling differences orchestrated by identity, ethnicity, discrimination, deprivation, and social exclusion should be in the legal system that enhances equality and fairness before the law. Warnecke & Franke (2010) surmised that an appropriate transformation strategy is essential in ensuring the recognition and acceptance of all the tribes/ethnicity and empowerment of the minority and underprivileged in society. If there is no consideration in handling the issues, non-attention might be a rise in dissatisfaction, incompatibility, conflict, violence, and war—the devolution of power to all sectors to avoid power imbalance.

Besides, Senehi et al. (2010) emphasize the essence of empowering individuals and the members of the community to ensure that the post-conflict situation is transformed into the construction of positive relationships and a stable society to cultivate the fruit of togetherness and just and fair society for all, regardless of economic or political status; thus, new opportunities and perspectives adopted. Also, Rhodes (2008) study appeal for adopting the conflict transformation strategy to settle the dispute as it is based on long-term and provides a win-win situation that addresses the causes of the conflict in society. Then, the practitioners in the conflict field should use the undesignated tool. Dudouet (2006) agreed that utilizing a transformation strategy offers comprehensive attention to managing both direct and behavioural manifestations of conflict and uproots the internal structural sources. It advocates a solid focus on the empowerment of the local community peace constituencies through the gradual and persistent transition of the place over the life cycle of a conflict

5. Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

As discussed above, community-participatory governance is mandatory to drive local communities' development, growth, and transformation into a productive, sustainable and feasible society able to capitalize on opportunities while protecting itself from environmental threats and unpredictable occurrences. Therefore, appropriate leadership should be implemented to ensure abundant resources are utilized to realize an improved standard of living and achieve sustainable development in SSA. Conflicts need no longer be avoided in any way with expenses. As an alternative, conflicts are unavoidable. Conflicts ought to be managed to construct peace and improve relationships of belief and accommodation amongst community participants. Stability is paramount to society's progress in all aspects of life in the community, and effective leadership should facilitate harmonization by building trust and empowering community members.

As per the study of community-participatory governance and conflict management is concerned, there is a need for the adoption of an appropriate model and theory to explain the phenomena of socioeconomic or political instability and marginalization in the war-torn or post-conflict communities or states of the SSA countries as the desirable routes towards rebuilding and sustainment of growth and development. Also, the actors in governance should embrace the use of heterogeneous constitutionalism that reflects the customs, values, and norms of African tradition to govern diverse tribes or ethics in Africa. Similarly, to erase the notion of a resource curse in the SSA countries, to use resources for development, and ensure "good resources governance", there is a need to construct financial institutions that would manage resources effectively and efficiently and stand firm to account for any discrepancies in the financial sector.

Furthermore, encourage civil society organizations to participate in governance mechanisms by forming committees and other ad hoc opportunities on behalf of the general public. In the same vein, the SSA countries' governments should provide a conducive environment for civic engagement. The genuine engagement of the people through schooling goes beyond ordinary education to extra technical and technological know-

how. Providing high-quality, specialized training permits community members to become job creators and generate adequate affluence in their households.

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