

**PRE-WAR AND WAR-TIME CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES OF
THE NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR**

BY

BASIL OKWUOMA IDEGWU

B. A. (Hons) English (Nzuka), M. A. PCS (Ibadan)

Matric. No.: 125327

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CERTIFICATION

I certify that this work was carried out under my supervision by Basil Okwuoma IDEGWU, **Matric. No.: 125327** in the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria.

Supervisor
Dr. Victor Osaro Edo
B. A., M. A., PhD (Ibadan)
PGDE (OAU)
Reader
Department of History
University of Ibadan, Ibadan
Nigeria

Date

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my father, late Chief Julius O. Idegwu, who believed so much in me, but did not live long to see his dream come true.

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I want to first and foremost, express my deep and sincere gratitude to the Almighty God who has kept me alive, hale and hearty and has given me the wherewithal to complete this project. TO HIM BE ALL THE GLORY!

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria experienced a civil war between 1967 and 1970 which claimed millions of lives on the Federal and Biafran sides. Studies exist on trend, execution and termination of the war but the pre-war and war time conflict management strategies have not been fully explored. This study therefore, examined the strengths and weaknesses of the various management strategies adopted by the conflict parties prior to the outbreak of hostilities as well as those employed during the war with a few to identifying lessons derived from the management strategies.

The study adopted a qualitative approach, utilising a combination of descriptive and case study research designs. Data were obtained from primary and secondary sources. A total of six in-dept interviews were conducted with surviving war-time key actors and stakeholders from the Federal and Biafran sides. Two Focus Group Discussions were held in Enugu and Kaduna with war veterans. Archival materials were also consulted. Secondary data were collected from war-time memoirs, minutes of the Aburi accord, decrees, edicts and newspaper publications. A combination of content and descriptive mode of data analysis was employed.

A mix of joint-problem solving and third party intervention strategies such as conciliation and mediation were adopted before the war commenced. The failure of these strategies to transform the conflict accounted for the optional strategy of confrontation and strategic withdrawal as the last resort. The leaders and parties to the conflict did not adopt compromise, cooperation and avoidance, but opted for competition as an alternative to joint problem solving. The inability to strike a balance between the cooperative and competitive orientation by the Biafran leader was fundamental to the failure of local and international concerted efforts to transform the conflict peacefully. This attitude made the 30 months war not only inevitable, but also

unduly prolonged with devastating impact on both human and material resources. These were further complicated by the disposition of some of the mediators which created distrust between the disputing parties. The lessons from the conflict management strategies of the war are that the parties to the conflict were invariably not very experienced in understanding that the cost of war is enormous and more devastating than peace, which creates room for accommodation and joint problem solving. Also, strategic scenario analysis should include best, middle and worst case scenarios before making violent confrontation an option in any conflict.

The pre-war and war-time conflict management strategies of the Nigerian civil war failed to achieve the desired result mainly because of the attitude and disposition of parties to the conflict. Leaders, therefore, need to be skilled in conflict management while dealing with intractable conflicts, so as to prevent its escalation. Efforts at peaceful management of conflicts should include compromise, accommodation, open-mindedness, trust and respect for human dignity.

Keywords: Conflict management strategies, Biafra, Nigerian civil war, Joint-problem solving.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Conflict is an inevitable reality in every human society. It is a persistent feature of any human community. As long as human beings exist and live together, conflict is bound to occur. In other words, it is an inevitable dilemma that lies in the geometry of the human society. Their causes and effects are numerous and varied and their management and resolution are even more challenging. However, what is of much essence is how it is conscientiously managed.

Conflict management is essentially aimed at intervention to change the course of a conflict. It performs a healing function in societies and provides opportunities for the examination of alternative means for social cooperation and human growth (Adejo, 2005:5). Accordingly, management of violent conflicts provides more avenues for social unity, stability, cohesion and development. On the other hand, mismanagement of violent conflicts results in social and economic disintegration, destruction of human capital and consequently distortion of human development. An attempt to provide strategies for management of violent conflicts, whether ethnic or national has been the preoccupation of nation states and international organisations, irrespective of the political inclinations. This is precisely because humanity has grown to accept conflict as part of its nature and is indeed getting convinced that growth and development are predicated on conflicts (Adejo, 2004:1). Thus, peaceful and stable polity is necessary for nation-building, economic and socio-political growth and development.

However, just like any other region of the world, violent conflicts present one of the most urgent challenges to contemporary Africa, as the continent has witnessed some of the worst cases of such conflicts in recent times. Such conflicts have threatened

security and order in the continent. Since independence, Nigeria, as well as some other African countries, Somalia, Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, etc, have been confronted with realities of crises and violent conflicts in their quest for peace, security, national integration and nation building. Understandably, conflicts between ethnic groups or states do not occur suddenly. Their virulence rather gradually develops from a mixture of border conflicts, historical animosities, economic disputes, differences in political systems, arms races and the influence of big powers (Grabendorff, 1982:269). Violent conflicts also gradually develop from the exhibition of injustice and the quest for self determination and security. This is very true of the Nigerian crises and conflicts. From 1960 through 1963, political and economic integration gave way to a mixture of ethnic and regional cooperation and conflicts. In such regional and ethnic conflicts, the political interests and economic capacities of the individuals and groups in the state present an ever-increasing threat. Such threat culminated into a more violent and bloody crises in 1966, which claimed thousands of lives of the citizens. According to Uwuchue (1970:14), Nigerian Civil War was born out of long-standing socio-political problems. However, the most acute among these, was the question of security for the Igbo within the Nigerian federation.

The 1967-1970 civil war was the peak of this conflict. It was a genocidal, sporadic, horrible and bloody conflict between the federal military government of Nigeria and the Eastern region (Biafra) that attempted to secede from the mother state, Nigeria. The war claimed about two million lives, rendered thousands orphans and widows, and internally displaced and equally generated thousands of refugees both within the country and in the neighborhood regions (Perham, 1970, Orjinta, 2000, Forsight, 1982, Uwechue, 1970). It created new situations, as well as political and social relations. The civil war ended on 12 January, 1970, but the end of the war appears not to

have assuaged the feelings of disillusionment, distrust and suspicion amongst the various ethnic groups that make up Nigeria. This is mainly due to the fact that the causes of the conflict have not been fully laid to rest. This has raised series of questions on the efficacy or otherwise of the conflict management strategies of the war. The socio-political problem remains to be solved. Therefore, the political future of Nigeria would depend largely on the effective application of the lessons learnt from the war. The intransigent nature of the war has made proper reconciliation and reconstruction of the Nigerian nation more difficult (Zartman, 2000:137).

The major problem, therefore, lies on the question of adequate and effective capacity and strategy to manage the fundamental crises and conflict in Nigeria. Quite well, there were various conflict management strategies- negotiations, mediation attempts, third party interventions- that were employed to manage these violent and intractable conflicts before the outbreak of hostilities and during the war. The institutional framework or conflict management strategies were grossly inadequate in terms of expertise, required material resources and other logistics. Again, the interests of the leading actors were incongruent, obstinate and impervious to the strategies employed. Accordingly, the fundamental question that agitates the mind of an interested person is: What were the pre-war and war-time conflict management strategies employed to address the Nigerian fratricidal war? To what extent did these strategies work? What were the obstacles to these strategies? Thus, this study sets out to examine the pre-war and war-time conflict management strategies employed during the Nigerian civil war.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Most studies on the Nigerian civil war (1967-1970) are confronted by the problem of identifying the reasons why the pre-war conflict management strategies

failed to prevent the escalation of the civil conflict, and why the war-time conflict management efforts could not bring about an early cessation of hostilities between the warring parties. The reasons why these management strategies failed have not been completely identified. This is a gap in the context of proffering solutions for future challenges in similar circumstances. Nigeria continues to grapple with varying degrees of conflicts and how to effectively resolve same; towards achieving sustainable peace. The remote causes of some of these conflicts, corruption among the leaders, the controversial census of 1963 to 1964 and political instability and violence, unlawful massacre of the Igbos and military coup of 10th January, 1966, are still traceable to the earlier unresolved challenges and neglects in nation building.

The outbreak of civil war in Nigeria was neither a sudden outburst of violence nor pre-planned attempt by the Igbo to secede from the federation. Further still, it was not as a result of a premeditated attempt of the federal military government to wage a war against the Igbo. Some of the early warning signs were the inability of the first republic politicians to get the nation on a smooth sail, resulting in political instability. This lack of direction in the polity necessitated the first military coup on the 15th of January, 1966 by a group of young officers led by Major Kaduna Nzeogwu; the installation of the Major-General Aguiy-Ironsi administration; the counter coup of 29th July, 1966, leading to the elimination of Ironsi. This whole gambit of instability in the polity depicted a nation adrift, in quest of control, which was rather elusive. Furthermore, following the pogrom in the North and mass exodus of Igbo people and other ethnic minorities from the East back to their homeland, it became difficult if a unity government could still accommodate all the ethnic nationalities in the Federal structure of Nigeria. This crisis escalated as a result of long-standing political divide and ethnic bitterness borne out of misunderstanding and the inability of the federal

government to discover or to accentuate an effective conflict management strategy to resolve the perceived discrimination, needs, and fears of all the ethnic nationalities in Nigeria. Such inability heightened the quest for security by the citizens, especially those of the Eastern region.

This quest for security arose from the endemic and unsavory political squabbles that characterised the political-power play in the six years of Nigeria's interdependence. The eve of this political instability, among others, was the census rumpus of 1962-1963, which shook the nation and sowed the seed of distrust in our body polity; the seriously disputed elections to the federal House of Representatives in 1964 under the leadership of Sir Tafawa Balewa that brought the country to the verge of anarchy and disintegration (Uwuchue 1971:28). Such political chicanery, instability and the corrupt political situation led to the bloody coup d'état of 15th January 1966, carried out by young military officers led by Major Kaduna Nzeogwu, in which the country's Prime Minister, Tafawa Balewa, and other prominent politicians, especially of Northern extraction, were killed. The coup failed and the Nigerian army was invited to take over the government. Accordingly, Major-General Aguiyi Ironsi, the then Head of the Nigerian army, became the head of the Federal Military Government.

On 24th May 1966, he promulgated the Decree 34, which set aside regional arrangements in preference to a unitary system of governance. The reason was to foster peace and unity in the country that was at the verge of disintegration due to various ethnic conflicts. His intention was construed by the rest of the regions as an attempt by the Igbo to dominate the country (Orjinta 2000:59, 54). It brought violent reactions and killing of the Igbo in which about 3000 Igbo indigenes were killed. In the process of attempting to explain his genuine intention, Ironsi was killed in a counter coup on 29th July 1966, which again brought Nigeria under military leadership of Lt. Col. Yakubu

Gowon, who immediately reverted to the federal system. This coup led to the renewal of the killing of Igbo citizens, both officers and civilians all over the Northern and Western parts of the country. This trend continued in greater intensity and barbarity in almost all places in the Northern region all through the month of September, 1966. In consequence, more than 30,000 Igbo indigenes were killed, thousands dispossessed of their belongings and made homeless.

Such socio-political scenario raised some basic questions about the effective protection and security of the lives of the Igbo in the federal state and the question of rehabilitation of the displaced Igbo. As a consequence, an ad hoc constitutional conference with representatives from the four regions and Lagos, was convened in Mid-September 1966 to find solution to the existing constitutional and administrative chaos. This development yielded no positive result. The Federal Government declined from funding the rehabilitation of the displaced Igbo refugees (Orjinta, 200). After abortive attempts to meet locally to resolve the flagging conflicts, Nigerian Military leaders went to Aburi, in Ghana, in January 1967 under the chairmanship of Lt. General Ankrah, the then chairman of Ghana's Liberation Committee. Aburi provided unanimous agreement on decentralisation, which gave more powers to the regions vis-à-vis those of the Federal Government. Instead of the implementation of the Aburi Accord, the Federal Government, under Gowon, split the nation into twelve states without informing the military governor of the Eastern region, Lt. Col. Odumegwu Ojukwu. This act precipitated the secession of the Eastern region and consequently instituted the war through which Gowon set out to assert the integrity of the Nigerian nation.

Various attempts were made to resolve the violent conflict between the federal government of Nigeria and Biafra. The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) embarked on the principle of settlement for one Nigeria. It appointed a consultative peace

committee of six headed by Emperor Haile Selassie to examine the issue, but nothing came out of their negotiations. In October, 1967, the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Mr. Arnold Smith sought to open negotiations with a view to finding a solution. The preliminary meeting took place in London, in April 1968. His move succeeded in laying the principle of settlement by negotiation.

Similarly, a peace conference was held in Addis Ababa starting from 29th July 1968. Other peace conferences were convened but they proved to be abortive, such as that of August 1968 in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, April 1969 in Monrovia, and December 1969 in Addis Ababa (Uwuchue 1971: 12-13, Foresight 1982:98:99).

From the foregoing accounts, it is evident that there were various pre-war attempts to manage the conflicts through joint-problem solving and third-party intervention such as conciliation and mediation. However, the failure of these measures accounted for the resort to the optional strategy of confrontation and strategic withdrawal, which characterised the war. The war overtly ended when at the absence of General Ojukwu, Major General Effiong – sued for peace and signed the formal act of surrender and accepted the existing, administrative and political structure of the Federation of Nigeria. This study, therefore, set out to interrogate and examine the interplay of the various conflict management strategies adopted before and during the war and to answer these related questions:

- What specific issues served to escalate the underlying causal factors of the civil war in Nigeria?
- What were the preventive conflict management strategies employed before and during the civil war?
- Why were these conflict management strategies unable to resolve the crisis?
- What are the lessons learnt and what prospects for the future?

1.3 Aims and Objectives of the Study

The Nigerian nation was embroiled in a bitter war between 1967 and 1970. The civil conflict was between the Federal Government on the one hand and inhabitants of the Eastern region otherwise regarded as the sub-region of Biafra on the other. The Federal Government was set to assert for national integrity, not minding its consequences on the Eastern region. On the other hand, the Eastern region that was experiencing serious insecurity and loss of lives of the inhabitants set out to seek for self actualisation and ensure maximum security for her citizens from the federal state. Meanwhile, steps taken by the federal government to address the situation of the people in the Eastern region was deemed inadequate. Thus, there was clash of values, interests and ideas which resulted into protracted and intractable violent conflict.

Furthermore, repeated attempts were made to check the escalation of the civil unrest, failure of which resulted in the outbreak of the war. These attempts came both from within the nation and outside the nation. Some of the measures aggravated the conflict. Thus, the strategies that were employed by the government to address the long-standing conflict and grievances were met with failure. Due to the failure of the measures used to manage the conflict, violence continued, which led to loss of lives and property.

Accordingly, the general objective of the study is to identify, examine and analyse the pre-war and war-time conflict management strategies employed in resolving the Nigerian civil war. In consequence, the study attempts to identify the causes of the conflict and the policies and measures on both sides that precipitated the ensuing conflict. It analysed the characteristics of the alternative measures and the more efficient resolution strategies that could help to create new polity out of conflict for more human and political security. Thus, the specific objectives of the study are:

- To examine the specific factors that led to the escalation of the civil war.
- To assess the various pre-war and war-time conflict management strategies employed in resolving the conflict,
- To identify the strengths and shortcomings of the strategies, and why they failed to achieve the desired result
- To articulate and highlight the lessons learnt, prospects and way forward.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The study focuses on the examination of the pre-war and war-time conflict management strategies employed for the termination of the Nigerian civil war. Although the war was officially declared in 1967, it was actually precipitated by series of events that reared their ugly heads shortly after the attainment of independence and the failure of the government to put the right measures in place to curb the conflicts. The study, therefore, examines such relevant conflict management measures within this period.

The study is limited to the examination of the conflict management strategies that were employed before the outbreak of the civil war and in the course of the war. Various conflict management strategies were initiated to resolve the ensuing conflict. These ranged from various governmental policies before the outbreak of hostilities, such as the introduction of unitary system of government by Gen. Aguiyi-Ironsi; introduction of Federal structure by Gen. Gowon; dialogic negotiations, mediation, third party interventions, etc. The O.A.U, Common Wealth agents and specific African heads of states played some mediating roles in bringing peace between the warring factions. Conferences were held in Kinshasa, Kampala, Niamey, Addis Ababa, Ghana, Monrovia to provide negotiations and settlement of the crises. These strategies are properly examined with a view to situating the causes of the failure.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is considered significant for various valued reasons. It is significant when one considers the fact that violent conflict, as exemplified in the Nigerian civil war foreshadows great danger to the continued existence of the Nigerian nation. Thus, this study goes beyond historicising the Nigerian civil war to examining the conflict management strategies used prior to the war and during the war. Accordingly, it provides substantive knowledge for adequate conflict management measures for a more humane society. Thus, this study would be a blueprint for proper governance and avoidance of national calamity.

The study is also very significant because it presents an additional documentation of a yet available data on the Nigerian civil war. Basic to this documentation is the management strategies, which makes it much important when we consider the fact that Nigeria up till today is a conflict and suspicion-ridden conglomeration of disparate groups (*Guardian* 6 Feb. 1992, Ifidon 199:145). An adequate management strategy would be an added document for referencing in the quest to maintain a cohesive social existence in Nigeria

The study brings to the fore the most generalised human condition that would be necessary in any consideration of conflict management strategies in terms of cooperative dialogue, negotiation, mediation and third party intervention. The work forms a good and useful material for devising policies necessary for peace-building in Nigeria, for national integration, adequate ethnic cohabitation and national development.

1.6 Contribution to Knowledge

The society we live in today is replete with conflicts and wars; and this study is primarily focused on conflict management strategies adopted shortly before and during

the civil war witnessed in Nigeria from 1967-1970. While contending that existing literature on the war mainly focused on the trends and dynamics of its outbreak, execution and surrender, little attention is directed to why the conflict management strategies failed to resolve the crisis. This study therefore, is an attempt to interrogate what worked, what did not work, why and what belongs to the future. The lessons discernible from the studies show that there is the need for dialogue, accommodation and joint problem solving in a multi-ethnic and diverse religious nation like Nigeria having conflict minds planted in more than three hundred and seventy ethnic nationalities in a federal system. It suggests practical methods for managing any conflicts of that nature in the future.

This study further deepens our knowledge of Nigerian-Biafran war and the fundamental problem of healing, forgiveness and reintegration into the mainstream federation. It shows that war could have been avoided if both parties have shown some restraints and taken proactive measures to cause brain crises before its escalation. Furthermore, the study provides policy makers and citizens the capacity to heed to early warning, do analysis of conflict trends and plan and intervention as a response mechanism to the emerging challenges to the survival of Nigeria.

The study equally suggests that in conflict management the parties should be willing to compromise their initial position for peaceful resolution and safety of life and property. It also teaches that the successful management of any conflict does not solely depend on the parties, the mediators play vital roles.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

Lots of difficulties were encountered in the course of the realisation of this research work, more especially during the field trip. In the first instance, the war took place long time ago. Locating the significant and active personnel, stakeholders and

groups and organisation that were very much involved in the management of the conflict was not an easy task. It was, therefore, difficult to track down the stakeholders for interviews, not minding the fact that the contact persons had personal matters to attend to.

There was the problem of general mistrust about the motive of the researchers. The reason is due to the sensitive nature of the study. It is not overstating the fact to say that a work of this nature could generate some negative sentiments. The work is about the Nigerian civil war. It is a phenomenon that raises some passion at its mention. So, due to the sensitive nature of the work, the field work posed a great challenge, in the sense that the motives of the researchers were greeted with general suspicion, carefulness and mistrust. Thus, the contact persons were very skeptical and meticulous in what they would say. Some were expressing their personal sentiments, while some others were struggling to be careful about expressing their views. That implies that most people were very careful in what they were saying, at least, at the beginning of their interview.

Furthermore, due to the sentiment the Nigeria civil war still generates till date, some stakeholders found it difficult to release some sensitive documents to the researchers. In some cases, researchers were only allowed after much stress to have access to some significant documents embodying some measures that were put in place for the management of the civil war, while some respondents preferred to speak on phone, rather than being interviewed in person

The numerous field trips and the general research were cost intensive. Travelling to distant places to locate the interviewees took a lot of money, time and energy. Trips to various places took several hours considering the condition of Nigerian roads. For instance, travelling to the Eastern part of the country by road is a day's journey on bad

roads. The same goes for the Northern part of the country. All these challenges made the field work last longer than was estimated, and this meant additional financial cost.

Notwithstanding, these limitations were not insurmountable. As such, they did not in any way affect the quality of the research or result of the study. To complement efforts and enhance the validity and reliability of the research, the researcher endeavored to obtain data from reliable sources, such as the Archives in the Universities, such as the Universities of Ibadan and Nigeria, Nsukka, Museums, Internet retrieval system, newspapers, Journals and some other secondary sources.

The Nigerian civil war was not a palatable phenomenon to all the parties that were participants to the ugly event. It is, therefore, a necessary effort to examine the pre-war and war-time conflict management efforts so as to identify the reasons why it was difficult to resolve the conflict before the escalation. In effect, the identification and definition of the root causes of the Nigerian civil conflicts, the management strategies employed to resolve the conflict and the failure of such strategies form the basic concerns of the study. More precisely, the motivation for seeking to provide alternative means for adequate conflict management provides a logical basis for the analysis of the conflict management strategies employed in the Nigerian civil conflict. This is considered necessary not only to provide measures to obliterate the hidden grievances that lie latent in the minds of Nigerians, but to have a working strategy to manage any such anticipated conflict. As such, the section has put the discourse in the proper perspective, by highlighting the problems, the scope, limitations and significance of the study. The next chapter attempts to properly situate the Nigerian civil conflict in a more detailed analysis.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section attempts to provide a conceptual understanding of some basic concepts and phenomena that underline this study. It defines and conceptually analyses the relevant terms. The second section exposes some relevant literature and discussions on the major issues on the Nigerian civil war. The third section provides the theoretical framework on which the analyses of the adequate conflict management strategies are informed and directed.

2.1 Conceptual Discourse

An adequate understanding and appreciation of the research of this nature requires a comprehensive conceptual analysis. This is because such conceptual clarification would help to place the study within a proper understanding. Thus, the conceptual frame of this study offers insights into the different concepts and their implications for social integration in Nigeria. In view of this, the study finds it important to highlight the following concepts: civil war, conflict, conflict management and some conflict management strategies. This is necessary for clearer understanding of these concepts and also to show how they collectively interact to define the conflict spiral in the area of this study.

2.1.1 Civil War

War is a state of open and declared armed conflict between states or nations. It is a state of hostility, conflict, forceful and violent antagonism. Also it is a state of open, armed and prolonged civil conflict. Therefore, it is a war between opposing groups of citizens of the same country (*Webster's Ninth Collegiate Dictionary*, 1989: 244). Civil war is an intractable, violent and armed conflict between opponents or groups of citizens of the same country.

According to Sheedy (1949) war is a struggle by force and arms between two or more nations, undertaken by public authority. A mere quarrel is not war, nor is a duel, nor a rebellion, nor a conflict. It is usually confrontation involving the use of arms and destructive weapons to fight the opposing parties. He makes distinction between offensive war and defensive war. War is offensive if it is undertaken to right an alleged wrong done by another nation. It is defensive if undertaken to repel an unjust aggression. In which case, the opponents use all the means possible to bring about the defeat of the other. In this sense, it is believed that through war, peace which deludes a nation or group or community can be achieved. Thus, appealing to old Chinese dictum, if you want peace prepare for war. But is war usually the last and best option?

Basically, war is usually fought with different intentions. War is usually assumed to be undertaken to protect the rights of the greatest importance and then only as a last resort. And it is usually decided by the highest authority. In its general existential scenario, war is usually caused by unjust aggression, safeguarding of national rights of the gravest moment, intervention of a nation in favour of a neighbour unjustly oppressed, imposition of a culture, to expand empire, to preserve a balance of power, etc. Whatever is the cause of war, the progenitors usually make recourse to common good as the reason and aim for their art of war.

Studies have shown that war is usually caused by a deep-rooted bitterness and long standing conflict that has endured over time. When these aggressions are not managed over time, they usually lead to violent conflict or war. According to Orjinta (2000), wars are fought for different motives. But the right to self-determination appears to have gained great currency in recent wars. Nevertheless, perceived injustice is at the root of every conflict. He goes further to state that people of diverse origins, race, colour, creed and language could cohabit where there is justice and fair play. But when

the contrary becomes the case, the centre can no longer hold since the issue of autonomy would come in (Orjinta 200:5).

What Orjinta tries to state here is that justice is important in the harmonious functioning of a social system and the quest for self-determination, self-identity. When justice is thwarted, it gives room for all forms of violation. Such injustice could lead to aggression, violent conflict and worse still, war. This is exemplified in the Nigerian-Biafran civil war. As Orjinta (2000) noted, when in 1967 the Igbo encountered what was perceived to be injustice from one section of the country and cried for help, this was given diverse interpretations until the lingering crisis was allowed to degenerate to a catastrophic dimension. In the bid to seek for justice and assert their identity, they seceded from Nigeria, which eventually led to “total war” (cf. Uwuchue 1971).

Scholars make distinctions between just war and injustice and equally highlight procedure through which wars would be justly fought, however, war is immensely productive of great physical evil: the killing of great numbers of the world’s best youth; and the vast waste of productive goods, the immense suffering of wives and mothers, the death of thousands of non-combatants, women, children, and old people. Our effort as members of the world community would be to solve our problems, manage our conflicts and live harmoniously and happily without war.

2.1.2 Conflict

Etymologically, the term conflict is from a Latin verb *confligere* meaning to clash, engage in a fight, contention, confrontation, controversy or quarrel (Schmid, 2000). The term is derived from the Latin verb. Ordinarily, it refers to a confrontation between individuals or a group resulting from opposite or incompatible means or ends. Unlike the way it is now understood in peace literature, the word originally had a physical rather than a moral connotation. Technically, the word concept refers to a state

of disharmony, disagreement or incompatibility (Yarn, 199:113-114). It is a period of danger, difficulty or uncertainty or a violent collision, struggle or contest (Adejo, 2004:3). It connotes an opposition among social entities directed against one another. There are numerous definitions of conflict.

Conflict as a concept can help explain many aspects of social life such as social disagreement, conflicts of interests, and fights between individuals, groups, or organisations. However, the absence of overt violence does not necessarily mean peace, because some parties could seem to be in peace, meanwhile they are undergoing covert conflict. Nevertheless, conflict is a struggle over values, claims to status, power and scarce resources in which the aims of the opposing parties are not only to gain the desired values, but also to neutralise, injure or eliminate rivals (Coser, 1956:8). It is actual or perceived opposition of needs, values and interests. In other words, conflict refers to existence of hostility or tension between persons, groups, organisations or nations. It is an antagonistic situation or adversarial process between at least two individuals or collective actors over means or ends such as resources, power, status, values, goals, relations, position or interest.

In other words, conflict is propelled by unfilled needs of the people, either in terms of autonomy, sense of justice, identity, interests, etc. Most of the needs are provoked by official neglect, persecution, denial of human rights and insensitivity of some leaders. As a result, conflict consists in themselves as political, social economic religious, territorial conflicts, or conflicts over resources or national interests. This implies that there is a state of conflict if there is conflict interaction between at least two individuals or groups whose objectives differ (Ncholson, 1972). Conflict, therefore, refers to contradictions arising from differences in the interests, ideas, ideologies, orientations and precipitous tendencies of the people concerned. These contradictions

are inherent at all levels of social and political and economic interactions of the human race. It may exist at the individual, group, institutional, regional, national and international levels. Thus, conflict is a pervasive phenomenon in human relationships and has been seen as the 'basic unit for understanding social existence' (Nnoli, 1998:3-5). It underlies every human social interaction.

There is a general agreement among scholars that conflict is inevitable in human relationships. It is an undeniable essence and integral part of human social existence. This is because, according to Isaac Albert (1999), human goals and aspirations will always clash. Conflict will always occur in any environment where there is more than one person or group. It is a natural and inevitable human experience. It is a critical mechanism by which goals and aspiration of individuals and groups are articulated, it is a channel for the definition of creative solution to human problem and a means to the development of a collective identity. David Weeks cited in Imobighe (1998) opines that conflict is an inevitable outcome of human diversity, and that a world without conflict is not desirable, because it would mean a world without diversity. John Burton (1987) contends that conflict is an essential creative element in human relations, the means to "change" and the means by which our social values or welfare, security, justice and opportunities for personal development can be achieved. He believed that without conflict society will be static.

Thus, social conflict is an inevitable condition for social change. Karl Marx's interpretation of the laws of change ties conflict with societal progress. According to Marx's philosophy, progress occurs through conflict and struggle between opposing forces characterised in the admixture of thesis and antithesis which produces synthesis (Cf. Imobighe, 2003). To Donohue and Knolt (1992), conflict involves situations in

which preferences are expressed by interdependent people in the process of achieving their needs.

Max Weber conceptualises conflict from the wider perspective of power and authority. According to him, conflict refers to any action that is organised “intentionally towards carrying out the actor’s own will against the resistance of the other party or parties” (Abubakar, 2000). He further proceeds to identify what he calls peaceful conflict which involves competition peacefully conducted to gain control, or for some advantages and positions which others want

For Albert (2004), conflict is a channel through which goals and aspiration of individuals and groups are defined and articulated. It is a channel for defining creative solutions to human problems and a means to the development of a collective identity. He, however, went on to lament the fact that what we should fear is destructive conflict; that is, conflicts that produce negative results rather than conflict itself (Albert, 2001). It means that conflict becomes a problem when it is allowed to produce destructive effect.

The implication here is that there are productive and destructive conflicts. A conflict is positive, productive or creative when its actions facilitate the process of sustainable growth. When it is constructively discussed by the parties involved and amicable terms for the settlement reached, which result in mutual understanding and development. Alluding to this kind of conflict, Burton (1972) notes that:

Conflict like sex is an essential creative element in human relationships. it is the means to change the means by which our social values of welfare, security, justice and opportunities for personal development can be achieved... indeed conflict like sex is to be enjoyed.

A destructive or negative conflict on the other hand, is usually characterised by violence whether in its physical, psychological or structural connotation (Albert, 2001). This kind

of conflict manifests as disorderly show of power, which threatens the process of peace and mutual relationship between the parties. Within this framework, a destructive conflict threatens rather than consolidate a governance process. Thus, while conflict is an inevitable aspect of human interaction, if it is not properly managed, it can lead to violence, when conflict between group or states becomes violent, it transformed into war which Clausewitz observes as a duel on an extensive scale, an act of violence pushed to its utmost bounds directed upon the destruction of the enemy power (Nwolise, 2004).

Most of the conflicts we have in Africa today definitely cannot be said to be examples of productive conflicts, but always end up with destructive consequences. The range of outcome includes victory, defeat, domination, surrender. Zartman (19985), while deliberating on Africa, asserts that “conflict arise out of conflicting interests and policies of African states”. He notes that conflicts in African states emanate from incoherent and developing nature of the states. Thus, he links conflicts in African states to the influence of internal and external powers that exacerbate domestic conflicts. In the same vein, Tamuno (1991) contends that conflict is a function of resource allocation, which has generated constant struggle amongst people or groups for scarce resources in the society. This clash of opposing interests has consequently resulted in conflicts. Abraham (1992), however, emphasises the issue of inequalities and unjust sharing of resources owned collectively as a great source of conflict in societies.

These views of Zartman, Tamuno and Abraham capture the Nigerian experience as far as the causes of conflicts that culminated into the civil war are concerned. There were conflicts of interests, allocation, sharing of the national proceeds so as to respond to the people in need, corruption based on selfishness, neglect of certain regions of the country and so on.

Conflicts may have negative or positive effect. However, what determines the role it plays, in terms of positivity and negativity, is the management (Imobighe). That is the reason why Albert (2004) states that conflict constitutes a problem when it is allowed to produce negative effect. However, what makes conflict management effective or ineffective in achieving social cohesion is dependent on how the causes are understood and interpreted. While adequate management results into cohesive progress, inadequate management and improper coordination of the values in the conflict impels the contradictions inherent in the conflict to linger and explode into violence and further develop into an uncontrollable menace. Therefore, violent conflict is mostly as a result of failure or improper harmonisation of the contradictions in the society through management procedure, so as to eliminate the negative effect and promote the positive effect of conflict. Such improper management or failure may, according to Nnoli (1998) result from the inability of conflicting units to accept the arrangements and procedures that have been adopted to resolve the conflict. Nigerian-Biafran civil conflicts are a good example of such a scenario. The improper management of the civil conflict that started in 1966 gradually developed into a violent civil war that claimed millions of lives of the citizens.

2.1.3 Typologies and Causes of Conflict

Most prevalent kinds of conflict are internal, resulting within a group, or state or among groups. A distinction should be made between the various types of internal conflict that generally result in or cause serious or fierce hostilities and violence. Repesinghe (1994) provides a 5-level typology of internal conflict, which helps to focus our issues of interest. A typology is derived from theories and it is a way of grouping instance of conflict so that common characteristics and systematics are revealed. This 5-level typology includes:

- Ideological conflict between the state and non-state movement where the social inequality between classes is dominant.
- Governance and authority conflict concerning the distribution of power and authority in a given society. Demand from the opposition are usually for regimes changes and popular participation
- Racial conflict, evident in South Africa, the USA, Western Europe and elsewhere.
- Identity conflicts were the dominant aspect is ethnic, religious, tribal or linguistic difference. Often, these conflicts involve a mixture of identity and the search for security. In the latter case, the main contention often concerns the devolution of power and such conflicts are likely to increase. Identity conflicts can be sub-divided into territorial conflict, ethnic and minority conflict, religious dissertations and struggle for self-determination and
- Inter-state conflicts which are typically cases of traditional inter-state wars.

He goes further to argue that rather than see any given conflict as the result of a given cause, the truth is that a variety of linkages may exist between the conflict or there may be a concoction of several. Though the above typology is not singularly sufficient, choosing a conflict typology as we have done here enables us to have a way of looking at the world of conflict that, however, does not exclude other ways. It does rather provide a stand point from which we look at conflict as it relates to other aspects. We may, therefore, state that in the case of Nigeria, there are several types of conflict which are waged simultaneously. In other words, Nigeria faces two or more types of conflict, which are also interconnected.

Obviously, it can be stated that the catalyst for violent conflict and instability in Nigeria is a combination of identity, ideology and governance conflicts. In the case of

this paper, the problem of governance as it causes conflict is highlighted. The emphasis is specifically the infringement on the human rights and freedom, in the execution of laws or security by the government agencies, such as the police or other armed forces who detain suspects for long time without trial, even as against the law.

What are the basic causes of conflicts? Violent conflict is usually caused by interconnected factors. As Repesinghe (1994) has shown above, conflict and the form of violence that result from them are rarely triggered by one factor in isolation. That is by way of stating that individuals and groups usually enter into conflict as a result of several factors acting together to produce such outcome. Brown's (1996) work is outstanding in the way it identified a number of 'causes', which he grouped under two broad headings - *underlying causes* and *proximate causes* of conflict. According to him, *underlying causes* are things we do not usually see. They include: structural (weak states, intra-state security concerns, ethnic geography); political (discriminatory political institutions, exclusionary national ideology, inter-group politics, elite-politics); economic/social (economic problems, discriminatory economic systems, economic development and modernization); and cultural/perceptual (patterns of cultural discrimination, problems of group histories). *Proximate causes*, on the other hand, include such manifest evident factors as collapsing states, changing demographic patterns (structural), political transitions, increasing influential exclusionary ideologies, intensifying leadership struggles (political), growing economic), intensifying pattern of cultural discrimination, and ethnic-bashing and propagandising (cultural/perceptual). Other scholars like Serif, Aronson, Galtung, Marcia and Rubio tend to concentrate on group behaviour and collective violence. Brown, for instance, insist that *bad leaders* (elite politics and rivalries, coupled with the nature and personality of the political leadership, lust for power, greed for wealth) and what he termed *bas neighbours*, largely

explain internal conflict. In consonance with Repesinghe and Brown (1996), Frederick Cuny (1991) argues that while conflict within a society may be created by many different factors, competitions over resources wield bigger influence over conflict outcomes and that in the advanced stage of conflict it is often difficult to identify the underlying causes or motivation of the parties involved. In his words:

Most conflicts are rooted in economic disparities. Later they may be cloaked in ideological racial or even religious overtones but at the most fundamental level; they represent a context for control of economic assets, resources or systems.

This is what has been described as resource-based conflict in a number of literatures. However, Nwolise (2004) argues that conflict emanates generally from socio-economic and political injustices in society either at the level of person-person, group or state-state interaction. These injustices may border on sharing of resources (including leadership positions), the way human rights and freedoms are handled or in the handling of demands and jointly owned assets. These leaders' attitude results in clash of interest, values and opinions. This view was further emphasised by Stedman when he states that conflict arises from problems basic to all populations, the tugs and pulls of different identities, the differential distribution of resources and access to power, and competing definitions of what is right, fair and just.

It can be said, therefore, that conflict should be expected where injustice is. Whoever perpetrates injustice or violate human rights should expect conflict because justice and human rights are more valued than peace by human beings. People in leadership positions should always make sure that justice and fairness, transparency and accountability remain significant stars guiding their paths. This is probably why Julius Nyerere, former President of Tanzania, holds that injustice and peace are in the long run incompatible stability in a changing world, such that progress must mean ordered

change towards justice not mechanical respect for the status quo. That means, injustice instigates conflict and when not well managed, it could lead to war.

2.1.4 Conflict Management

The positive or negative consequence of conflict depends largely on the management procedures that are employed to harness its inherent contradictions. It shows that conflict management plays a very important and decisive role in the society. Thus, what is conflict management? An attempt to understand what conflict management entails requires an understanding of what management entails. Management implies the ability to control a particular situation or phenomenon and the effects through either individual skill or institutional organisation. Conflict management, therefore, could be referred to as the process of controlling, directing or articulating conflict or class of conflicts and the effects to achieve maximum positive result. It is a study and practice of means by which to end incompatibilities of interests and behaviours that constitute conflict (Yarn, 1999:118-119). Conflict management is aimed at the intervention to change or facilitate the course of a conflict. It performs a healing function in societies and it provides opportunity for examination of alternative pay-offs (Adejo, 2004:5, Otite 1999:6). It involves the use of a variety of dispute processes and conflict resolution mechanisms.

However, conflict management is broader than conflict resolution; it is an arrangement involving institutionalised provisions and regulative procedures for dealing with conflicts (Otite, 1999:11). Conflict resolution, on the other hand, is a process of removing antagonism among individuals, groups, organizations, or nations (Walker, 1991:41). It is, according to Miller (2001), a variety of approaches aimed at terminating conflicts through the constructive solving of problems, distinct from management or transformation of conflict. By conflict resolution, it is expected that the deep rooted

sources of conflict are addressed and resolved, and behaviour is no longer violent, nor are attitudes hostile any longer, while the structure of the conflict has been changed. For Mitchel and Banks (1996), conflict resolution refers to an outcome in which the issues in an existing conflict are satisfactorily dealt with through resolution that is mutually acceptable to the parties, self-sustaining in the long run and productive of a new, positive relationship between parties that were previously hostile adversaries. The analysis of the foregoing indicates that in principle, conflict resolution connotes a sense of finality, where the parties to a conflict are mutually satisfied with the outcome of a settlement and the conflict is resolved in a true sense. Some conflicts, especially those over resources, are permanently resolved. From the point of view of needs, a conflict is resolved when the basic needs of parties have been met with necessary satisfiers, and their fears have been allayed. Others, like those over values, may be non-solvable and can at best be transformed, regulated or managed (Best, 2006). This is the more reason why conflict management becomes a more pragmatic measure for handling conflict.

Conflict management was evolved because it is believed that conflict is difficult to either settle or resolve. It is, therefore, more reasonable to talk about managing or controlling conflict. Conflict management refers to intervention in a conflict situation in such a way as to contain and if possible:

- Reduce its violent or destructive consequences
- Check its escalation towards the use of destructive weapons and
- Prevent its horizontal expansion into other theatres.

On the same note, Thomas (1976) asserts that our basic conceptualisation of conflict influences how we manage it. When we feel that conflict is never productive, we ignore it, but ignoring conflict can lead to anger, resentment, laxity and more complexity of the existing conflict.

Shedrack Gaya Best (2006), in analysing the methods of conflict resolution and transformation holds that conflict management is used to reduce the negative and destructive capacity of conflict through a number of measures and by working with and through the parties involved in that conflict. He believes that conflict management covers the entire area of handling conflicts positively at different stages, including those efforts made to prevent conflict, by being proactive. It implies that conflict management encompasses conflict limitation, containment and litigation. For Burton (1990), conflict management includes “conflict prevention”, which represents steps that are introduced to promote conditions in which collaborative and valued relationships control the behaviour of conflict parties.

Conflict management, therefore, is a process in which two or more players, holding dissimilar perceptions of a central issue in a dispute, employ strategies consonant with the resources they hold to obtain their goals in the conflict. Conflict management includes any form of intervention in a dispute by an actor who is not a party to it, with the aim of altering the party’s perception of the situation, in order to facilitate a solution by inquiry, mediation, reconciliation, arbitration or adjudication (Raczmany, 1998). This implies that there are various conflict management strategies. It is necessary at this juncture to examine some of these strategies that are important for this study.

2.1.5 Conflict Management Strategies

A strategy simply refers to a general plan of action worked out in great detail. This plan takes care of all possible eventualities, including the expectations of others with respect to one’s own behaviour (Akindele, 1987:5). Thus, conflict management strategy is, therefore, the strategy or measures through which conflicts are resolved or reduced or managed so as to ensure security and peace among the warring parties. It

includes various methods that are employed to prevent, abate, control or resolve conflict and to promote peace and consolidate brotherhood. There are various conflict management strategies. Most of these strategies were employed to curb the conflict before and during the Nigerian civil war. The major conflict management strategies include Negotiation, conciliation, Mediation, confrontation and strategic withdrawal.

2.1.6 Negotiation

Negotiation is a strategy for management of conflict. It is one method that was employed before and during the Nigerian civil conflict and war. Basically, negotiation is a strategy through which conflict or war can be resolved by engaging the parties in conflict to come to reasonable compromise. The *Dictionary of Conflict Resolution* (-1999) conceives the process of negotiation as a “bilateral or multilateral process in which parties that differ over a particular issue attempt to reach agreement or compromise over that issue through communication”. It is a non-violent, and out of court mechanism for enhancing the communication flows between the conflicting parties in a bid to resolve differences by mutual consent. It identifies with *alternative dispute resolution (ADR)* means (Akpuru-Aja, 2007:38). Negotiation generally refers to the process of conferring with another party for the purpose of securing agreement on some matters of common interest (Morley and Stephenson, 1977:19). It is, therefore, a conciliatory process in which participants engage in continual communication and dialogue. Nevertheless, negotiation can be held through different styles, such as, conflict avoidance, collaboration, accommodation, compromise, problem-solving and even confrontation (Akanji, 2005:244, Akpuru-Aja, 2007:38).

Haydock and Mitchell (1984) see negotiation as the “process of engaging in good-faith efforts to reach an agreement or resolve a dispute, through the confidential exchange of factual statements and representations”. For Fisher and Ury, “negotiation is

a basic means of getting what you want from others. It is back-and-forth communication designed to reach an agreement when you and the other side have some interests that are shared and others that are opposed” (Fisher and Ury, 1981:xii). It is a problem-solving process in which people attempt to reach a joint decision on matters of common concern in situations where they are in disagreement and conflict (Gulliver, 1979:xiii).

From the foregoing definitions, it shows that, negotiation is a bargaining relationship, a discussion among parties who are in conflict. And those negotiators are involved in a process of joint decision making, communications, dialogue and that certain level of compromise is required to reach a desired or required agreement. It is a process of reaching an agreement between parties in conflict. Negotiation is conciliatory. This means that the parties determine the outcome rather than a third party. However, third parties can be involved in negotiation.

Negotiation can vary depending on the kind of dispute. Best (2006:106) makes a distinction between two types of negotiation. – positional negotiation and corroborative disputation. The positional negotiation is based on the aggressive pursuit of interest by parties, and is typically adversarial and competitive. In this sense, parties make demands that are inconsiderate of the interests and needs of others, and this makes it difficult for these interests to be met. Parties also perceive themselves to be in competition. The desire of the parties in this context will be to win. Everyone will like to carry the flag. One problem with this sort of negotiation is that there is a quest for mutual beneficial outcome. The demands of one party can be met only at the detriment of the other. One party usually dominates positional negotiation. It has the consequence of making negotiation to break down easily. On the other hand, corroborative negotiation is a process where parties try to educate each other about their needs and concerns, and both search for the best ways to solve their needs and concerns, and both search for the best

ways to solve their problems in ways that interests and fears of all parties are met. The emphasis of collaborative negotiation is mutual understanding and feeling, all aimed at building a sustainable relationship (Best, 2006:106).

Negotiation has a universal application as conflict management based on dialogue. It provides a medium through which people assess and harness their conflicting interests. There were various negotiations to manage the Nigerian civil conflicts. The meeting and formation of Ad Hoc Constitutional conference with representatives from the four regions and Lagos in Mid- September 1966 set up a negotiation which attempted to provide lasting solution to the existing constitutional and administrative chaos that was bedeviling the Nigerian nation. Also, the meeting of the Nigerian military leaders at Aburi (Ghana) in January 1967 provided a good forum for a conducive negotiation. There was an assembly in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, in May 1968 where the two warring parties sent delegates to negotiate for peaceful settlement. The Lagos delegate was headed by Chief Anthony Enahoro, Nigeria's commissioner for Information, while the Biafrans were led by Sir Louis Mbanefo. The two parties appointed President Obote of Uganda to head the deliberation, precisely because he has the dual attribute of being a commonwealth and an African head of state.

Though these negotiations did not bring the conflict to a harmonious level, negotiation is a key approach to peaceful resolution or more accurately adequate management of conflicts or disputes that might arise between parties.

2.1.7 Conciliation

What does conciliation entail? To conciliate means 'to bring together', 'to placate', and 'to mollify'. Conciliation, therefore, is an act of bringing together. Usually, conciliation is facilitated by a third party who may or may not be neutral to the disputants, but encourages the parties to settle their differences. It is a generic term that

is used to describe various conflict management strategies. Conciliation is a strategy for the management of conflict. It is a process or an attempt to bring the parties in conflict together. It is a process that is initiated by the disputing parties with the involvement of the intervening third part. Thus, conciliation is a process that is employed by the disputing parties to enable them to reach a mutually acceptable settlement of their dispute.

Conciliation involves third parties; however, in some cases an intervening third party may not be required. (Lauer, 1930) noted this fact by stating that, it is “any process by which differences of the parties are eliminated by agreement of the parties themselves and the parties brought into harmony” (Lauer, 1930:2). *Black’s Law Dictionary (1979:262)* depicts conciliation as “the adjustment and settlement of a dispute in a friendly, unantagonistic manner”. Though most processes that are expressed as conciliation process involve third party, yet no authoritative source equates conciliation as adjudication. This is precisely because a conciliator is without the power to decide for the parties and is focused on encouraging their resolution (Yarn, 1999:102).

While conciliation involves third-party intervention, it should be distinguished from mediation. In U.S domestic practice, conciliation is distinguished as a more passive, less structured form of intervention than mediation (See Yarn, 1999). This is because, conciliators are focused on encouraging the parties to negotiate and reach agreement of their own. In other words, they act as go-betweens to improve communication or reduce hostilities as a necessary prelude to negotiation (Sander, 1976:115; Riskin and Westbrook, 1987:5). Unlike mediators, conciliators exercise little control over the dialogue process and are not involved in the actual substantive bargaining. Mediator can offer little suggestion, while conciliator may not. Mediator can

act as a conciliator at various points in the overall negotiation. A conciliator is not fully empowered or authorised to intervene as a mediator. Conciliator attempts to create an atmosphere of trust and cooperation for a peaceful negotiation. Thus, Maggiolo (1971:10) sees it as an act of “gaining good will, to render concordant, or to mollify”. That means conciliation is distinguished by the less authoritative characteristic to make substantive proposals or adjudication.

Simkin (1971:25-26) presents conciliation as a mild form of intervention that is limited to scheduling conferences, trying to keep the disputants talking, facilitating other procedural niceties, carrying messages back and forth between the parties, and generally being a good fellow who tries to keep things calm and forward-looking in a tense situation. That means a conciliator plays a role of encouragement of negotiation.

In the Nigerian civil conflict, there were conciliatory attempts to bring the disputing parties to resolve their differences. These conciliatory attempts were made in divergent forms and at both the pre-war and war-time stages. For instance, Mr. Arnold smith, the Commonwealth Secretary began in October 1967 to urge the Biafran leaders and the Federal government leaders to negotiate and come to a compromise. Another example of conciliation is the attempt made by a British Journalist, Perham. She engaged Gowon and Ojukwu (the leaders of the warring parties) in an effort to settle their divergent interests and cooperatively bring the country to harmony is another example of conciliation process, (Parham, 1970). There were also earlier reconciliatory attempts to prevent the escalation of the civil conflicts into civil war. For instance, in 1966, after the death of Ironsi, Gowon assumed office and claimed the Supreme commander of the Supreme Military Council. However, there were continued systematic killing of the Eastern soldiers. Realizing the consequences of such fracas if it is allowed to continue, Ojukwu called on Gowon to issue a command to stop the killing.

However, this did not happen and on the long run, in August 1966, Ojukwu proposed that representatives of the four Military Governors meet urgently to seek at least a temporary association of the regional military power blocks now created by the coup of July 1966. This was agreed and the representatives met on 9 August. This was good reconciliatory process, even though it did not put an end to the conflict due to the fact that the seed of discord had been deeply ingrained into the system. Reconciliation, therefore, is negotiation strategy employed in an attempt to manage the Nigeria-Biafran civil conflict.

2.1.8 Mediation

Etymologically, the term mediation has a Latin origin, *medi* or *medio*, which means *middle*; *mediates* which is a form of a verb *mediare* meaning *to be in the middle*. Technically, it means to intervene or mediate. Mediation is an important instrument for the peaceful settlement of disputes. It is a very significant process due to its increased application in the management of conflict situations at different levels beginning from the inter personal to the international. Mediation is a special form of negotiation in which neutral third parties in conflict achieve a mutually acceptable settlement (Godongs, 2006). It is assistance by a third party where parties to a conflict admit that they have a problem which they are both committed to solve. According to Miall, Ramsbottom and Woodhouse (1999:22), mediation is “the intervention of a third party, a voluntary process in which the parties retain the control of the outcome of the mediation. It is presented by the United Nations University for peace as the voluntary, informal, non-binding process undertaken by an external party that fosters the settlement of differences or invested parties (Miller, 2002:23).

Mediation is negotiation by reliance on the third-party (Akpuru-Aja, 2007:44). Mediation is a strategy of resolving conflict through third party intervention. It employs

significant orders in the dialogue for mutual compromise, peace and security in the society. In other words, mediation is a conflict management strategy that involves intervention by a third party that is not involved in the dispute (Yarn, 1991:272). It is simply a facilitated negotiation.

It is noteworthy that for the ideal of mediation to be achieved, the mediator or facilitator must command certain level of mutual respect, authority or recognition by the warring parties. The facilitator should not be seen to be partisan or partial by any of the disputing parties. Leopold Sedar Senghor, the then President of the Republic of Senegal mediated in the conflict between the Federal Government and Biafra. The two warring parties visited him during the crises to present their own part of the story so as to seek intervention. For instance, in 1964, on the occasion of his last visit to Nigeria, the president, Nnamdi Azikiwe and Prime Minister, Sir Abubaka Tafawa Belewa, confided their fears and anxiety to him and requested that he should preach the necessity for maintaining the Federation. This he did both in Lagos and in all the four regions. Senghor also noted that from the secession of Biafra on 30th May 1967, he received at Dakar, several emissaries from both parties coming to explain their respective stands on the conflict. However, the major concern of the facilitator or mediator is to bridge the gap between the disputing parties and break the indifference of each party so that they could resume their discussion on building relationship among them. This is exemplified in the intervention of Senghor. He noted that during his intervention, he refused to take sides with either party, and rather recommended an immediate cease-fire, followed by negotiations with no other pre-condition than integrity (See Senghor, 1969:xiv).

Mediators play vital functions in initiating discussions or facilitating their continuation between disputing parties. Mediators provide framework and procedure for discussions and negotiations and in most cases head the negotiation session. The

negotiation at Aburi was under the Chairmanship of Lt. General Ankrah, the then chairman of Ghana's Liberation committee. O.A. U mediated in the conflict to resolve the conflicting interests of the disputing parties.

2.1.9 Arbitration

Arbitration is a strategy for conflict management process which involves the referral of a dispute to an impartial third party who, after giving the parties an opportunity to present their evidence and arguments, renders a determination in settlement of the dispute (Yarn, 1991:28). It is, therefore, a variant of third party involvement in resolving a conflict situation between parties. However, an arbiter is an authoritative mediator. An arbitrator is vested with confidence and trust. His decisions are quite binding on the warring parties (Best, 2006:108-109). Arbitration is a third party intervention; however, it is different from mediation in certain senses. Mediator reframes from making certain binding decision. But the decision of the arbitrator is binding on the disputants.

Those who are sympathetic to arbitration contend that it grants the disputing parties the opportunity to choose their arbiter they would wish to sit over their case. The arbiters accomplish this role of arbitration by virtue of the position they hold in the society. Usually, the arbiter gives the disputing parties the opportunity to air their view and explain their situation in the conflict. In some cases, the perspective of the witnesses is listened to. Based on the available positions and views, impartial decision is made about who is right and who is wrong, followed by what is to be done. The arbitrators endeavour to make fair decisions for the disputing parties. What makes arbitration efficacious is the voluntary selection of the arbiter by the disputing parties as well as an express consent that its decisions will be accepted as binding. The authoritative decision is called an *award*.

In the traditional African society, most third party intervention were don through arbitration. Most arbiters were heads of families, traditional leaders, clans, villages, communities, ethnic groups, religious groups and so on. Usually, the views of the personalities occupying these posts were considered binding on the disputing parties. The aim of arbitration is to aid the disputing parties to quit their disputing positions and accept the medium of compromise.

It is instructive to note that arbitration can be in and out of court. Yet, there is a distinction between arbitration and adjudication. Both could involve a judicial setting. However,

Arbitration goes by the consent of the parties to abide by the decisions as awards; Adjudication on the other hand, hands out its rulings based on evidence before the court of law and of a competent jurisdiction. What is binding in the court of law is no appeal to consent, but completely legal (Akpuru-aja, 2007:48-49).

Aburi Accord could be regarded as award of which its neglect by the disputing parties and its non implementation resulted into fatal suicidal violence that claimed lives of the millions of Nigerian and Biafran citizens.

2.2 Review of Related Literature

A review of literature on a given field of discusses undoubtedly maps out the context for the study and shows the importance of the study. It also shows why the study at the given time is necessary. Thus, it is a process of going through some previous works in a particular field so as to determine what can be added to an existing knowledge. Accordingly, literature review could be conceived as a systematic analysis of documents such as journals or periodicals, books, abstract, reviews and other research reports, which contain information about the problem being, studied (Ojo, 1994). It is an established fact that various scholars have written so much on the

Nigerian civil war, concentrating mostly on the speculative and conjectural aspects of the war; while paying a great deal of attention to the trend, execution and termination of the war. One aspect of the war that has not received enough attention of the intellectual and academic world is the close examination of the pre-war and war-time conflict management strategies adopted with a view to checkmating the outbreak of violent confrontation between the Federal government of Nigeria and the Eastern region, which later became known as the Republic of Biafra.

In *The untold story of The Nigeria-Biafra War*, Dr. Luke Aneke presents one of the most reliable history books on the Nigerian civil war. He gives account of a four – year period of events that have been meticulously and painstakingly tied to actual and specific dates, as well as days of the week. He has successfully created the greatest one-volume diary on the civil war, with verifiable referenced sources. The contents of this book reflect accounts of the Nigerian civil war and international reactions, woven together into a simultaneous and situational sequence that creates a real and actual experience to the reader as an on-the-spot account. One of the key factors that enhances the reliability of the book is the fact that the contents are free of bias and shackles of government control on both sides of the war. In this book, the author presents the Nigerian civil war in a different and unique form- a combination of eye witness accounts from journalists, relief workers, mercenaries, arms dealers, pilots and other personalities who were actively involved in the events of the civil war, as recorded by independent news sources, which were not under the control of the warring groups. From the accounts recorded in this book, it becomes glaring that the Nigerian civil war was not a deliberate scheming of one person, but rather, a by- product of events crystallising at a rate beyond the control of the major actors and forming into a major national crisis.

In his book- *There Was a Country: A personal history of Biafra*, Chinua Achebe saw the Nigerian civil war as having a profound effect that transcended the territorial borders of Nigeria, describing it as “a cataclysmic event which changed the course of Africa”. The *dramatis personae* of the era, their backgrounds, their motivations and his critique of their respective roles at this most critical period are laid out: The rival colonels Yakubu Gowon and Odumegwu-Ojukwu; the leader of the Yoruba, Obafemi Awolowo, as well as key military and political figures on the Nigeria and the Biafran sides. Achebe equally considers the role of the international community in a conflict which in his view was influenced by the necessities of *realpolitik* and not by the objective application of moral standards. But for all the moral weight behind it and sympathy that the plight of the Igbo engendered, one of the key criticisms of the Biafran enterprise was that its leaders did not provide a clear and distinct ideal platform to serve as a template for the rest of Nigeria and the African continent other than one which was dominated by a tribal group seeking self-determination. Achebe tries to address this by x-raying the motivation behind the Ahiara Declaration of 1967, which he describes as an attempt aimed at expressing the “intellectual foundation” of the new nation of Biafra. The book is an extremely readable personal history in which Achebe provides a masterful series of narration of events that greatly sensitise the reader to the struggles, the triumphs and the tragedy of the artist and his people during an era of rapid change and great turbulence. He equally dwelt on some of the pre-war and war-time efforts to change the course of the conflict from a bitter and disastrous outcome:

The first part of May, 1967 saw the visit of the National Reconciliation Commission (NRC) to Enugu, the capital of the Eastern Region. It was led by chief Awolowo and billed as a last minute effort at peace as an attempt to encourage Ojukwu and Eastern leaders to attend peace talks at a venue suitable to the Easterners.

My Command by Olusegun Obasanjo is purely an account of the author's command of the three marine Commando Divisions in the campaign that brought the war to an end. The author gives a graphic narration of events after May 1969, he was put in command of 3 marine Commando Division and moved from an observer in Ibadan to being at the centre of action. By then two years of bloody and destructive war had reduced the rebels to a small enclave and dreams of a quick victory had evaporated. However, Ojukwu had gained considerable successes and the secessionist' morale was helped by the recapture of Owerri and thrust southward towards Port-Harcourt.

Giving his personal account, he described how within a space of six months "I turned a situation of low morale, desertion and distrust within 'my' division and within the army into one of high morale, confidence, co-operation and success". He sees the whole episode as a story.

It is the story of how a despondent and a threatened nation regained self-confidence and pride. It is also the story of how a nation also torn asunder and on the brink of total disintegration was reunited and the wound was healed. It is the story of how the arrogant and conceited Ojukwu, who wanted to rule an independent nation at all cost deceived the people he claimed to love and left them in the lurch at their desperate hour of need and fled 'Biafra' under the guise of seeking peace. It is the story of brother rising against brother in a family feud, aggravated by outside intervention which led to brother despising brother, brother killing brother and finally seeking out brother, binding his wounds and both settling their feud by themselves in a spirit of understanding, mutual respect, love and comradeship.

The work is a controversial piece in that it is brutally frank about the shortcoming of much of a Nigerian Military Organisation. Some senior officers will be embarrassed to recognise themselves as being absent, not known to their troops, taking

a course in law in the middle of the war, 'too frightened or stupid' not to know about the possibility about the ambush in which the author was wounded and so on. One particular part revealed that the author had reservation about the ability of the man who was to be his predecessor as head of state, General Murtala Mohammed. He writes about his early clash with Gowon, which caused Gowon's 'incessant suspicion' of Murtala; his 'bravado' in attempting an unsuccessful river crossing at Asaba and the unceremonious way in which he walked away from his division in 1968 and refused to return to it. Equally controversial is the author's bitterness towards Ojukwu and his usage of such harsh words as: arrogant, conceited, unashamedly, deceitful, unrelenting, and unremorseful to describe the rebel leader. He also had strong words against the BBC and the rest of the western media for the way in which they swallowed entirely the *Mark press Biafra line*. And he condemned the 'diplomatic double game' played by France (as so often in Africa), the treachery as he saw it, of Ivory Coast, and the criminal hesitations (again as he saw it) by Ghana and Sierra Leone. The author writes with understandable emotion about the surrender. He played a large part in negotiating, and the success of the reconciliation that followed as the greatest complement to his qualities.

The work whets the appetite for further Obasanjo memoir. However, Godwin Alabi-Isama in his book *The Tragedy of Victory: On-The-Spot Account of the Nigeria-Biafra War in the Atlantic*, deflated Obasanjo's claims of heroism. He discarded his claim of being a conqueror of rebels and the anchor-leg of victory. The book is essentially a chronological narrative of the war that lasted from July 6, 1967 to January 15, 1970. It has been acclaimed as a rich manual, a repository of invaluable information on the prosecution of the Nigerian civil war, it is a first-person account of the Nigerian civil war in the Atlantic theatre controlled by the third Marine Commandos. However,

the main thrust of this book is on giving a detailed account of the actual prosecution of the war from the perspective of an officer who fought on the personal history in which Achebe provides a masterful series of narration of events that greatly sensitise the reader to the struggles, the triumphs and the tragedy of the artist and his people during an era of rapid change and immense turbulence. However, the writer did not directly dwell on the pre-war and war- time conflict management strategies of the war.

In *The Nigeria Revolution and the Biafra war*, Madiebo, gives a vivid account of the events that led to the 1966 crisis up to the start of the war in 1967, in a narrative style that is remarkable both for its brevity and for the lively and dramatic organisation of its style. The dispassionate account of that process of national catharsis is one of the powerful and important strong points of the book. The real value of this work is the inside description of the build up to the Biafran struggle. In order to lay the foundation for this classic military chronicle of disaster, he gives facts about the betrayal of the truth that led to the breakdown of mutual confidence among the leadership of various interest groups and ethnic communities of the Nigerian society. The book also discussed the battles very clearly in chronological patterns in relation to the various commands under the author's leadership. Madiebo described the weapon position in Biafra as pathetic and the officer as incompetent. He did not, however, proffer solution to this problem. Though a work on military history, informed with an erudite sense of social history and political information that makes it a worthwhile venture, there is, however no major attention to the pre-war and war-time conflict management strategies.

Bernard Odogwu's *No Place to Hide: Crisis and Conflicts inside Biafra*, recalls the factors that led to the war which began on July 6, 1967, particularly the premeditated massacres of nearly 100,000 eastern Nigerians living in principal cities and towns of northern Nigeria. The horror and brutality of those dark months of May-

October 1966 ensured that the Biafran leadership had popular support when the federal military attacked Biafra. The author talks about the peace mission to Biafra which was made by playwright, Wole Soyinka, from Lagos but does not talk about the outcome of Soyinka's visit. He allocates sufficient space to discuss the contradiction among the various functions of the Biafran leadership, which was exhibited by the regime's failure to procure appropriate weapons to challenge the sophisticated federal military machine. The book gives an account of the crisis in Biafra which became very explosive within the first two months of the war when the Ifeajuna/Banjo faction (principally made up of survivors of the officers who overthrew Balewa government in the January, 1966 coup) attempted to overthrow Ojukwu's government. The revolt failed and most of its leaders were shot after a secret trial. There is, however, scarce evidence in the book as to what effort the various interest groups and intellectuals made to avert the catastrophic war and why the broad sectors of the people continued to support the struggle in spite of the harsh condition of deprivation which the author referred to.

Aspect of the Biafra Affairs, by George Knapp, is a document of Biafran argument against the British government's handling of the war. In this *pamphlet*, Knapp probably declares his interest as a partner in a consultant firm, External Development services, which advised the Eastern Nigerian Government and later the Government of Biafra on Economic and political matters. Intentionally, Knapp makes capital from some of the feebler performances of her Majesty's ministers on the subject, in particular MR William Whitcock. There is no part of the pamphlet that dealt with the conflict management strategies of the war

Written from an obviously pro-Biafran point of view, *Biafra AN II* by Franois Debre is a very interesting and illuminating work, especially for what it tells us about the French attitude to the Nigerian conflict, than the factual information it provides.

There was indeed a remarkable indifference in France to events in Anglophone Africa until the Nigerian War came along. Then with a certain instinct at the thought that an ex-British Colony might be coming unstuck, the French journalists Poured in, especially to Biafra.

The work gives a mixture of impressionistic, on the spot reporting with three full dress interview; with a mercenary; with Colonel Okwechime and with Colonel Ojukwu himself. There are also sections summarising the background to the events. The way Biafrans have played on French susceptibilities is obvious from the revealing interview with Ojukwu: 'even those among us who, like myself, spent greater part of our youth in Britain have never had an "English friend"'. One of the successes of French colonisation, on the human level is the establishment of relations of understanding and friendship between individuals. The work could be seen as more of an attempt to bolster the image of Ojukwu than an analysis of the conflict management strategies.

In his book, *The Tragic Years: Nigeria in Crisis, 1966-1970*, Ola Balogun, writing from the point of view of one who believes firmly in the unity of Nigeria, devotes two-thirds of his hundred and twenty-four page book to run-up to the war. He examined the background to the crisis with reasonable objectivity, though he himself confesses that pure historical objectivity, especially in a situation of which one is a part, is extremely difficult. The actual description of the course of the fighting was, however, not discussed. His main concern is more with the international aspect of the war; probably because he wrote from Paris where he was a press *attaché* at the Nigerian embassy. The most valuable aspect of this study are the chapters he drew on his first-hand experience of France media handling of the war and the effective use of propaganda as an effective tool for generating world attention and sympathy. Although he over-rated the infallible might of the Biafra propaganda machine, his conclusion that

“federal negligence of the vital role of publicity in modern warfare almost led to the triumph of the secessionist cause” is a sound and accurate observation. In spite of the fact that he was brief and very general, leaving out a great detail, his sense of history and indeed of nostalgia, stand him in good stead. In his words:

The Nigeria of the 1950's and early 1960's was a place in which youths could make merry freely and look forward to a bright future, where letters written in sheets of blue paper were the essential instrument for conducting innocent and not-innocent love affairs among the young, where men grew rich overnight by honest means....," but the eruption of violence was to destroy much of our innocence.

The book sets to show that Nigeria has been through a horrific but avoidable war and yet ready to forge ahead. It is simply an attempt to provide an honest analysis of the crisis by an apostle of Nigerian unity caught up in the tragic situation.

Nelson Ottah's *Rebels against Rebels*, is 'a serious documentation of a national aberration'. This book limits itself to the events that led up to the execution by firing squad on September 24, 1967, of Victor Banjo and three others who had been found guilty of plotting the overthrow of Ojukwu. It is a story that reflects little credit on anybody, but it makes an intensely interesting book. Lt. Colonel Victor Banjo is the complex personality who dominates the book. A Yoruba Army Officer, he found himself detained in Eastern Nigeria because of the part he played in the January 15, 1966 coup that brought General Ironsi to power. He subsequently became involved in the Biafran cause, largely through his friendship with Ojukwu, and burst upon the world head-lines by leading the dramatic Biafran incursion into the mid-west Region. He halted, for unexplainable reasons, after occupying the whole region and being within striking distance of Lagos, and was later forced back.

Lack of success of itself was enough to produce allegations to sabotage, as General Madiebo's memoirs made clear; in the popular view Biafra never simply lost battles – it was always betrayed. However, Banjo compounded his offence by holding an astonishing interview with fleeing military Government of the mid-west, Lt. Col David Ejoor, in which he explained his own "grand strategy", which involved overthrowing the Military Government and abolishing all states, among other things.

There was no place for Ojukwu in that plan. This was counted against him as treasonable. But the main charge against Colonel Banjo arose from meetings he had

with a group of young men earlier in September, 1967. They included three fellow-accused, Philip Alale, Emmanuel Ifeajuna and Samuel Agbam. The meeting concluded that the military situation for Biafra was hopeless. Some suggested negotiating for peace; some felt all could be saved if the United States could be involved on the Biafran side.

“The political base of our leadership must be broadened”, said a memorandum that was drawn up. Some defense claimed that all the group intended was to give some support to Ojukwu; there was certainly a plan to send a delegation to him. They tried to involve General Madiebo, but he kept his distance.

It was never made entirely clear what was to happen if Ojukwu did not agree to a “broader political base”, the implication was that he would be overthrown. With hindsight, it appears that the young men were entirely right in their analysis of their hopelessness of Biafra’s military position, and they were right in thinking that the important thing was to avoid further unnecessary bloodshed. They were seeking not to betray their country, but to save their countrymen. The Biafran leader was in the way. Emmanuel Ifeajuna told General Madiebo that Ojukwu “must be asked to step aside or be forced to do so. These were the words that led to firing squad.

Crisis and conflict in Nigeria;” A documentary source book, 1966-1970, vols by A.H.M Kirk-Greene has been variously described as “History Bricks-essential reference books” “the starting point of any greater research” and “the essential groundwork on which its (civil war) history can be reconstructed”. Formidable and unrivalled work; its continuing relevance all too aptly demonstrated by the unfolding political drama in Nigeria.

First published in 1971, the two-volume block-buster comprises over 200 primary documents on the Nigerian civil war set against 225 pages of scholarly and vivid analysis of its causes and courses. While not a full history per se, no scholar of the

Nigerian tragedy who has written authoritatively about it, has done so without the twin volumes either as companion, guide or both.

Kirk-Greene himself is typically more measured in the claims he makes for the volumes.

“In no way must the present sourcebook, within its consciously limited objectives, be consulted in isolation,” Evaluation and interpretation can wait; the systematic retrieval of the raw data on which alone these must be based cannot In a situation which seems destined to provoke attitudes for at least a general, the final understanding must be insured against distortion of the record through either the inevitable erosion of time or else the more subtle and pernicious processes of second hand repetition, revisionism, selective omission and historical hindsight... meticulous recording today can forestall the myths of tomorrow”.

Also, worthy of review is a book, titled *EMEKA*.

EMEKA is simply the life account of Ojukwu by his friend. It ranks as one of the greatest flattering portraits of one man by another. Ojukwu in the eyes of Frederick is the African who possesses “the capacity for leadership” and therefore qualifies for membership of the 20th century world league of leaders. Winston Churchill, John Kennedy Charles de Gaulle and Ben Gurion are the other members mentioned. On matters internal to Nigeria, Forsyth posits that “Emeka possesses an understanding and a grasp that no other Nigerian can match”.

He also stated that “Emeka is the only man” who can successfully in the following distinct settings:

- (1) The boardroom of a great city of London bank;
- (2) An evening with a group of army officers and
- (3) The hot darkness of a bush compound-with the village elders.

In a candid manner, Forsyth tells us the objective of all the eulogy in his book:

As Nigeria move towards the middle years of the ninth Decade of century her problems are great. She cannot easily discard any longer the talent of this. One of the brightest sons. It would be too great a waste, for her and for him. So for Nigeria's sake and indeed for Africa's this Remarkable man should take his place and devote His efforts to those tasks all agree simply have to be done. It must be if God wills it.

So the intention of Forsyth's enterprise is not hidden. From all that we know of Ojukwu it is probably correct to describe him as a "remarkable man", and regardless of one's view on the causes, course and aftermath of the Nigerian civil war, Ojukwu's involvement marked him out clearly as a remarkable man. President Shagari's decision in May 1982 to grant amnesty to Ojukwu was the last act of reconciliation with regard to the civil war, a wise and just decision. Since Emeka was conceived as a political manifesto, the interpretations of the events in Nigeria's political history put him in the best light. Starting with the elections problems in western Nigeria in 1963, Zdenek Cervenka in *The Nigeria war, 1967-1970*, gives a comprehensive account of the events that culminated into the Nigerian Civil War.

He traced the issue through 1967. He points out the mistakes of Aguiyi Ironsi who though was not part of the coup makers of 15 January, 1966, had power trusted on him as the highest ranked military officer. His introduction of decree 34 of May 24 1966 seemed a trigger to further catastrophes:

The demonstration of the students of Ahmadu Bello University at Zaria in the northern region against the decree, which culminated in a protest march of students to Zaria town and Kaduna on Sunday May 29, was the signal for serious disturbances with an ugly tribal undertone: the target of the mob was the Igbos living in the north. Hundreds of them were massacred, their property destroyed, murder, looting, arson and wanton destruction lasted for three days.

That decree and the disturbances that followed it acted as a clear rehearsal for the counter-coup of July, 29 1966 that resulted into the death of the Head of State, Aguiyi Ironsi and another round of Igbo massacre in the north. It was this action and another round of mayhem that followed it that eventually plunged the nation into a fratricidal war:

From the 18th to the 29th of September in the northern towns of Makurdi, Gboko, Zaria, Gombe, Jos, Sokoto and Kaduna, Ibo Men, women, and children were surprised and murdered. Others were slaughtered at their place of work or in the market places. At the Kano international airport the Ibo's waiting to be airlifted to the eastern region were surrounded by armed Northern soldiers and civilians and killed. Those who took trains ran into ambushes of northern soldiers and civilians who looted their belongings and maimed thousands.

Originally conceived as an introduction to a bibliography, and thus meant to provide guidance to further studies, the work is heavily loaded with materials and documents from other parts of the world and Nigeria, many of whom have appeared in Kirk-Greene's two volumes *Crisis Conflicts in Nigeria: A documentary source book, 1966-1970*.

In the narrative of the fighting Cervenka rightly observed that it is sometimes difficult to separate the wood from the tree; perhaps, the Nigeria civil war, was that kind of war and the author himself supplies an apt description: 'apart from some big battles and a few military surprises – the recapture of Owerri by the Biafrans, who surrounded it and cut off the garrison from its line of supplies, for example – the war was a series of skirmishes, slow cautious probes that lacked accuracy, heavy, long-distance bombardments of doubtful objects and of an incredible amount of aimless and wasteful shooting.

In Reflections On the Nigerian Civil War, Ralph Uwuchue explained his break with Ojukwu and the plea for a negotiated settlement to the crisis. A poignant statement of the Igbo dilemma, it is nonetheless more than a special pleading. Uwuchue denies that Igbo security was tied to Biafran sovereignty in a Gordian knot; and by arguing that compromise was essential in the face of mounting starving and military deaths; he suggests the artificiality of Biafran unity:

The Biafran masses enslaved by an extremely efficient propaganda network and cowed by the iron grip of a ruthless military machine, had neither the facts nor the liberty to form an independent opinion. The case of the elite was different..... Those who had access to the facts knew that the time had come to seek realistic way to end the war.... In private they expressed their view but proved too cowardly to take a stand and tell Ojukwu the truth.

As a consequence, says Uwuchue, Ojukwu relied solely upon his own judgment. Which, when combined with exaggerated personal ambition, blinded him to the political realities of Biafra's position.

In Biafran two wars were fought simultaneously. The first was survival of the Ibos as a race. The second was for the survival of Ojukwu's leadership. Ojukwu's error, which proved fatal for millions of Ibos, was that he put the latter first?

Another study which throws light on the dissensions in the Biafran camp is N.U Akpan's *The struggle for secession*. This Book is an insider's view, though from a different vintage point.

Akpan was chief secretary to the Biafran Government, Head of the Biafran Civil Service and, therefore, the linchpin that held together Biafra's amazing resilient wartime administration. The work is a sharp portrait of the Biafran camp under siege. Focusing on the mistrust which existed between the Igbo and the minorities, the favoritism Ojukwu accorded his Nnewi kinsmen, the civil servant against the intellectual, the

professional soldier against the mercenaries and the manipulation of the masses by their leaders. Akpan lays bare some of the forces that occasioned the defeat of Biafra. In the final analysis, however, Akpan blames Ojukwu because he and he alone occupied the seat of power.

Emeka is in the saddle, and holding firmly the reins of affairs affecting the fourteen million people of Eastern Nigeria, who must helplessly go where ever he leads them - through hills and dales over rough and smooth, towards life and death.

Suzanne Cronje's *The World and Nigeria*, focuses on external dimensions of the war. The book is a disavowal of the author's wartime polemic. Even when she claims that "this is not a history of the war at all" and that she was not attempting "to keep score of the rights and wrongs of the conflict" her sympathy for the Biafran cause is manifested in the work, "The people of the East were the injured party, and they had a good case; an equally good case has yet to be made for the Federal side in the war". Much of the book is concerned with British duplicity. Her thesis-that British arms were the mainstay of Nigeria's military and that the British government lied about the extent of its arms' sales to the Nigerian government. She maintained that the Nigerian Trade Summary Statistics of 1970, made nonsense of the repeated claims that the U.K was only supplying fifteen work percent by value, of Nigerian hardware.

The work unmasks the subterfuge of British neutrality: economic interests; especially the oil stakes, real *politic*, concerns about British influence in West Africa and sentimental attachment to Northern Nigeria, all combined to place Britain squarely in the federal camp.

Most intriguing in this work is the author's examination of the international observer team invited to Nigeria to disprove the Biafran charges of genocide. The work accused the British observers of bias and partial umpires; being first and foremost

propagandists, while occasionally serving as advisors to the Nigeria military, or as spies for the British foreign office. The work, therefore, impugns the veracity of the team's pronouncements.

In her assessment, given the nature of its composition, its mandate, and its positing, the group was not competent to render an impartial judgment. The study also shows considerable sophistication of the author's exploration of African French, and Soviet responses to the war, but less so for the Americans. John de St Jorre presents *The Nigerian Civil War* "neither as pure history nor pure journalism", but simply as "the story" Explaining his aims more fully, he writes:

In this story I floated in and out as a working journalist: an observer, an outsider, a white man. However, like many in a similar peripheral position, I was drawn deeper and deeper into the human and political complexities, tragedies and heroics presented by a nation at war with itself. Most civil wars generate more heat than light. Long after the guns are silent. It is certainly too soon to know the whole truth about the Nigerian war..... nevertheless this book is an attempt to put to record as straight as possible: to cut through the choking fog of myth and propaganda that obscured the conflict, and to clarify the causes and course of the war while highlighting its rights and wrong.

His narrative captures the drama of the war: its pathos, its tensions its thrusts and its pivotal points. With a keen eye and a sensitive touch for details, St. Jorre makes the war come alive:

The Biafran "stormed" through the mid-west not in the usual massive impedimenta of modern warfare but in a bizarre collection of private cars, "mammy" wagons, cattle and vegetable trucks. The whole operation was not carried out by an 'army' or even a brigade.....but by at most 1,000 men, the majority poorly trained and armed and many wearing civilian clothes because they had not been issued with uniforms.

Among the fascinating highlights of the book are St. Jore treatment of the hired gun; he is of the view that Uli was not bombed out because Nigeria's mercenary pilot would have been forced to fire on brother mercenaries flying for Biafra. This is apart from the fact they would have put themselves out of lucrative jobs. His description of the mid-western invasion written up as a three – act play and his war notebook of the two months he spent on the federal line, conclude his account of the war.

In *Nigeria in conflict*, Robert Collis doubted the possibility of Nigeria to evolve into a modern state due to their diverse nature and group.

It did not seem possible that Nigeria had enough know how or capability to apply knowledge that would enable them to produce a modern nation out of the geographical demarcations which was defined in the days of Luggard that was really not a nation either racially or geographical but a conglomeration of ethnic groups, with three pre dominating.

On the civil war proper, the work started and limited itself to the event that led to war. Emphasis was placed on the population census of 1964 and the massive corrupt syndrome of the political class factors that led to the Nigerian civil war. In his words, 'if a country's political class is unworthy, it therefore means that the country finds itself leaderless, or at worse led by bad men. In Nigeria, in the regional government and the federal government, many of the politicians are indescribably corrupt. The consequence of this was the first and second coups which ultimately brought about the Nigerian civil war'. John Oyinbo's *Nigeria crisis and beyond* gives a narrative account of the event that led to the war. The work discusses the massacre that resulted in May 1966 after the coup of 15 January. It is also an elaborate dissection if the event of political event notwithstanding the impetus for secession was place of oil in the calculation of Biafran leaders. He stated;

In 1965, oil revenue had for the first time become the largest single item of government revenue the long time prospect for development were excellent, and the short term revenue alone would make the east, going it alone, not only a viable state but a wealthy one; compared to most other independent African countries the east with such wealth, matched by a population of 12,000,000 better prepared for industrialization than other African people potentially be one of the richest nations.

In *The making of a nation Biafra*, Nwankwo and Ifejika traced the events that led to the war and the concept of Nigeria as a nation which was an entirely British creation, which lacked any basis for unity. In this vein they blamed Britain for the problem of Nigeria. They situated the problem of Nigeria in the division by Britain of Nigeria into three parts, with the north dominating the east and west as the foundation for the tragic events of 1967. The post-independence crises were based on the struggle by each ethnic group to capture the Centre and dominate the others. tribalism has always been a potent factor in Nigeria's history but in 1951 it came to be actively exploited by Nigerian politicians .

The election crisis was also mentioned as a factor in the events that led to the war. In his words, the events of the federal election of 1964 and the western regional election of 1965 had thoroughly shaken the faith of Nigerians in the future of democracy in their country. The forces of disintegration thus set into operation by the fraud of the federal election, and the tyranny of the Western Nigerian election stimulated these exertions into higher tempo.

The consequence of all these was the intervention of the military into Nigerian politics. The January 15, 1966, coup in Nigeria was a revolution inspired by Nigerians themselves' and motivated by a desire to push the country permanently away from the precipice of destruction over which it was then alarmingly hovering. The unfortunate outcome of that coup was to further push Nigeria into the path of war. It led to a

countercoup; massacres of Igbo in the north; the exodus back to the eastern region and the disagreement between Gowon and Ojukwu.

In *Never again*, Flora Nwapa, takes a quick but profound venture into the rich field of her society in a time of war. Written as a first hand narrative, the book is also from a woman's point of view, and different ways repeatedly affirms the importance of Biafra's women in sustaining their fighting men and the rudiments of their society. Although it is not a highly developed piece of writing, there is a theme that lends this short novel with some importance. War makes extreme demands on people, whether in a wider social settings such as the village, or the nascent nation. Survival can, therefore, have a broader meaning than merely on the personal individual level, for the simple reason that the person will still be forced to relate to other members of the society, however, distorted the country may become.

As a result of this, Flora Nwapa takes a severe glance at relations between the ordinary people who find themselves as the unarmed majority of Biafra-at-war and its soldiers, war propaganda, suspicion and deprivation. In conclusion, she posited that, these in turn provoked glimpses of both the poisoning of social relations as the re-affirmation of an indelible fact, the attachment of people to the land of their birth and their basic impulse to recreate the conditions for simple survival.

In *Destination Biafra*, Buchi Emecheta, attempted to weave together many important themes into a single novel. This efforts shows a vision that is missing in much of Nigerian fiction that has emerged on the subject of the war. In addition, she has a passionate conviction which even though it breaks and confuses the mound of the novel, is touching to a point of poignancy. The novel opens with a sentence which gives the feeling that one is about to be treated to a story of high places: the Governor's residence stood majestic in its Georgian elegance..... Macdonald and the Ubiquitous Alna

Grey.’’ The setting is Nigeria in the 1960’s and the drama that slowly unfold is the historic election of the first Nigerian civil government. The English man and the Scotsman represents the attitudes and opinion of top diplomatic circles; and through them we learn of the mounting tensions and fear of elections.

Recognizable names of political parties enter the scene and so does a certain quality of delight at the entrance of politically familiar personalities who were major figures in the event of that era. The image of politics as a theatrical game is introduced and the nature of this game gradually and insidiously involves the fate of a nation.

Characteristics of Nigerian politics unfold; political manipulation; election rigging-in mind – boggling ways and the bribing of the electorate. With the growing dissatisfaction of the military hierarchy at the flabbiness and corruption of the political class, the inevitable military coup takes place. The coup turned on itself as it failed to carry out its various specific missions: a counter-coup occurs and the nation is plunged into uncertainty and finally into chaos. *Destination Biafra*, is a hotchpotch of a novel. It is, on the one hand, an account of the political events that led to the war, and on the other hand, a description of management.

Oluleye’s *Military Leadership In Nigeria, 1966-1979*, sets out to answer the question of whether the military has achieved justice, merit, unity and the ideals of solidarity for the nation. The purpose of this book, says the introduction, “is to examine the concepts of leadership as a preamble to the Nigerian situation; where military leaders were unwillingly and deliberately called in to assume a wider role than military leadership, It centers on weather leaders and leadership qualities are born or made. Circumstances decide the opportunities for leadership. Whether born or made, a leader needs training. The author supplies the syllabus: decision, courage, will power, magnetism, management, knowledge, moderate living, fitness, tact, diplomacy and

honesty. But then the author is not asking that all leaders must have these traits before they can become leaders. The narration of events which led to the military intervention in Nigerian politics and the civil war that resulted is then highlighted.

It is out of this Narration that the General produces 'the end of result reports' for each of our military heads of state, beginning with General Ironsi and ending with General Obasanjo. How many of these men, asks the author, can have their portraits hung in the Nigerian hall of fame as successful leaders? One question which is going to be discussed endlessly because of this book is the author's claim that the Yoruba officers of the army saved the nation at a critical time in the history of the country. The truth, however, is that what happened in Nigeria was a process not an event. In a process, many people and many collaborative happenings contribute to the ultimate outcome.

If all those who played subordinate role claim all the credit, what can we expect from the memoirs of General Gowon and Chief Ojukwu? It is essential that each writer must write, but with awareness of his place in the process of what took place in Nigeria.

The value of the book is to be placed on the examples which should not be followed in leadership. Mr. Miner's book, *The Nigeria Army 1956 – 1966* relates to the growth of Nigerianisation and the composition of the officers corps of the Nigerian Army during the period under discussion. He held the conventional view that the army was the most "national" of all Nigerian institutions and was incorrupt and incorruptible. It has to be noted that this cannot be said of the army in the contemporary time.

In a post script to the book, he offers very valuable comments on such views. For example, there were about 180 officers from the North and West who got commissioned before 1966. While in March 1967 a further 40 officers came from the first intake of the Kaduna military Academy. But the federal army suffered a serious shortage of senior officers of whom there were only five, while on the Ojukwu side

there were 18 majors and Colonels who had been commissioned before independence, quite apart from eight Igbo Lieutenant Colonel in the Mid-West. Indeed, in some ways, Mr. Miners post-script is the most valuable part of his book since he gives the sort of information that is not easy to come by such as the fact that all the Federal Divisional Commanders were commissioned from Sandhurst in July 1961, namely, Colonel Shuwa Mohammed Murtala, Haruna and Bisalla.

Nevertheless, the main importance of Mr. Miner's book is to re-assert the role of the Army in Nigeria's nation building. He had served in the Congo where he had been proud to be member of the largest contingent from any African state in the U.N. force. When on training courses abroad he had participated as a representative of Nigeria, not as an Igbo or a Hausa. He could contrast this working example of unity in the army with the antics of a politician whose principal tactic for gathering votes was to play on tribal prejudices and divide-and-rule mechanism

2.2.1 Historical Background of the Nigerian Nation

Nigeria is situated in the western part of Africa with a large population and multi ethnic differences. As a country, Nigeria is a creation of the British colonialists. It is an amalgam of ancient Kingdoms, Caliphates, Empires and City-states with a long history of organised societies. Its boundaries were drawn as a result of trade (from slavery to pepper or ivory) and overseas territorial ambitions of Western European powers in the 19th century. The name Nigeria was adopted in 1898 to designate the British Protectorates on the River Niger. According to Eghosa Osaghae (2002:1), "before the advent of colonial conquest and rule, there was no Nigeria". In the words of Karl Maier, "for Nigeria, like the other modern African states with the exception of Ethiopia, was the bastard child of imperialism, its rich mosaic of peoples locked into a nation-state they had had no part in designing. Before the European conquest, Nigeria was home to

an estimated three hundred ethnic groups of sometimes widely differing languages and systems of internal rule” (Maier 200:6). J. Isawa Elaigwu states that:

The present unity of Nigeria, as well as its disunity, is in part a reflection of the form and character of the common government – the British superstructure – and changes it has undergone since 1900. By 1900, what later came to be known as Nigeria was three colonial territories under the umbrella of British colonialism, but administered separately, receiving orders direct from London (Elaigwu 1976: 8).

Thus Nigeria has a convoluted history characterised by colonial distortion, which created strong foundation for the country’s later protracted conflicts. Noteworthy is that Nigeria’s pre-independent history, especially the political development is well covered in the literature, such as Coleman (1958), Crowder (1962) Schwarz (1965), Macintosh (1966), Arikpo (1967), Okonjo (1974), Ikime (1977, 1980), Nicolson (1977).

However, before the advent of European conquest and the establishment of colonial rule in the shore of what is today called Nigeria, it was never a political unit. What existed were diverse groups or multi-ethnic nationalities estimated to be about three hundred ethnic groups of differing languages and systems of internal rule. These myriad of groups had “histories and interactions, interlaced as they were by external influences – principally trade with Europeans and with the Arab world – had nevertheless crystallised in three clearly discernible regional formations by the end of the nineteenth century”(Osaghae 2002:2). In other words, for over about a thousand, before the British occupation, the territory was divided roughly by the three regions that have largely defined later independent Nigeria, that is, North, East and West.

In the North, the main ethnic groups were the Hausa, the Fulani and the Kanuri. They were linked to North Africa. (particularly after the Arabs conquered the Berbers in the seventh century), the Mediterranean and the rest of the Arab world (Adamu 1978,

Dusgate 1985, Takaya 1987). The North had an Islamic influence. The initial landing point of Islam was Kanem-Borno, in the far North East near Lake Chad. In the North West were the ancient Hausa-city-states, such as Kano. In 1804, the Fulani launched a *Jihad*, Islamic holy war, which succeeded in bringing most part of Hausa land into centralised and hierarchical theocratic rule of the Sokoto Caliphate (Usman, Ed. 1079). Some portions of 'so-called' pagan ethnic groups that lived in Jos plateau in what later became known as middle belt were also brought into the Sokoto caliphate. The Islamic influence in the North was received and heightened by the colonial rule, which later shaped the inter-group relations in Nigeria. This establishment of the Muslim group had serious consequences in Nigeria. Osaghae emphasised the two major consequences of these actions. Firstly, by establishing Muslim groups and adherents as the core of an emergent Northern formation, it pushed to the periphery the non-Islamic segments who were also numerically inferior. Not even the influence of important non-Islamic empires like Igala, whose Niger-Benue confluence formations some historians regard as the fulcrum of modern-day Nigerian groups, could counteract this peripheralisation. This internal colonialist' pattern was more visible after the *jihad*, when attempts to subjugate the so-called pagan groups of the Middle Belt were pursued more vigorously. Thus, under the British rule, the appointees of the Caliphate and Emirates were imposed as rulers on the non-Muslim groups in pursuance of the indirect rule policy (Osaghae 2002:2). Secondly, by attaining the most advanced form of political, administrative and military organisation in the Sokoto Caliphate including its Emirates, which for the British were the hallmarks of African civilization, the 'core' North was easily accepted by the colonisers as the model whose superior civilisation was to be extended, if possible by force, over the rest of what later became Nigeria.

The West harbored a group of closely related empires and kingdoms. The most notable and preeminent were Oyo and Benin (Smith, 1988). These groups controlled the region. The majority of the group in the West spoke Yoruba language. They trace their origin to Ile Ife and lay claim of ancestry origin to the legendary *Oduduwa*. The non-Yoruba speaking groups, including the Edo sub-groups, such as Urhobo, Isoko and some part of Igbo nation were mostly subjugated by Benin empire. By the end of the nineteenth century, Oyo and Benin started declining. They witnessed internecine wars that led to the emergence of other political alliances of units like Ijebu, Ibadan, the Egba confederation and Ekiti. These were instigated both by the Fulani jihadists who were spreading their religion to the West and the manipulative influence of the British colonisers who were interested in their slave trade and in gaining control of the political and military power of the region. The West was next to the North in having centralised theocratic rulership.

The East was not a centralised region like the North or the West. The East was made up of segments and autonomous city-states and villages of various ethnic groups ranging from the majority Igbo, the Ijaw, Efik, Annang, and the Calabari. However, the old Calabar and the Opobo rose to some level of prominence due to their involvement in the trade in slaves and other commodities with the Europeans and proximate to the category of centralised states in the North and the West. There were also the Arochukwu who attempted to exert some political and religious overlordship to the rest of the Igbo sub-groups. Nevertheless, they had a proliferation of segmented, non-centralised autonomous city-states. The predominant Igbo sub-group spoke the Igbo dialect and had the potential large-scale political organisation, yet they failed to evolve any major centralised political system (Osaghae, 2002).

The foregoing shows that the region of what is today referred to as Nigeria was a conglomeration of distinct and different regions that had relationships, trade, wars, political associations, and myth that were limited to geographical regions. Based on these disparities, it has been argued that it could not have been possible to have all of these brought into one nation without an external intervention (Osaghae, 2002). Some other scholars have provided a contrary view to this. Dudley (1982), for instance, contends that these ties could still have provided the basis for a state like Nigeria. Another differing view is that of Ahmadu Bello, who contends that if the colonisers had not intervened, the southern extension of the *jihad* could have brought into being a state with approximately the present shape of Nigeria (1962). Nevertheless, this cannot be substantiated by mere rhetorics. The issue in question is more existential.

What is more realistic and existential is that Nigeria was born from these myriad of mixture of groups, regions, religion, trades, political disparities, and so on. It was born through a “piecemeal and combined process of trade monopoly, military superiority, ‘divide and rule’ and outright conquest” (Osaghae, 2002:4), that brought together all the empires and disparate groups under the aegis of colonial authority. Nevertheless, the way this was accomplished had serious plactions for national questions and myriad of conflicts that culminated into the Nigerian civil war.

George Dashwood Goldie Taubman who came to be known as the founder of the modern Nigeria set out to establish a British controlled commercial empire stretching from Niger River delta to the Nile and to resuscitate a company owned by his sister-in-law’s family that brought palm oil in the Niger Delta. By mid-nineteenth century, palm oil, needed to manufacture soap and candles and to grease the machines became a central commodity between Africa and the West. In exchange for all these, the British imported into Nigeria millions of gallons of cheap gin. Goldie banded together

the various English companions operating in the Niger Delta used gunboat diplomacy to subdue the African chiefs in the area and kept out the French and Germans and obtained a royal charter from London. At the Berlin conference of 1884-1885, the Europeans drew their arbitrary lines across the map of Africa, the British assumed control of the Niger River Basin. Thus, Goldie enlisted Lord Frederick Lugard who arrived and with the group of African soldiers referred to as West African Frontier Force, moved up the Niger and conquered the interior.

Basically, British Acquisition of Nigeria had three different stands. In time, there were the colony of Lagos and hinterland (Western) protectorate, the oil rivers and later Niger Delta protectorate (Eastern), and the Northern protectorate. In 1906, the colony Niger Delta protectorates were brought together as southern protectorate, which existed alongside Northern protectorate.

In 1914, the Southern and Northern protectorates were amalgamated in the name of British crown. The reason for the amalgamation is less for the purpose for nation building than for the purpose of serving the British motive. Among the purposes are for enriching the British wealth, easy control of the colonies and to use the fund generated in the South to subsidise the needed subsidy for running the North from which no fund was generated. Accordingly, the name Nigeria, coined years back by the future wife of Lugard, Flora Shaw, was adopted to designate the amalgamated territories.

The amalgamation brought changes in the activities, such as impartial abolition of custom frontiers existing between the two countries, the unification of the railway system, adoption of a standard of currency, unification of a system of taxation, unification of judicial system and integrated bureaucracy, extension of indirect rule to the south, abolition of separate northern and southern regiments (Ngu, 1989:81).

However, amalgamation, according to Elaigwu, was not meant for national unity or for the good of the indigenous people. He states that:

If the amalgamation of 1914 was aimed at creating a political fusion of the north and the south, it did not have the objective of building a unified state, for the purpose of indigenous government (Elaigwu, 1996:8).

The two parts of the new Nigerian state continued to develop along different lines. This is precisely because of the British administrators in the north. They were determined to keep the region of the north from being infiltrated by the southerners. They also shielded the western influence from the north such as education and Christian missionary activities. Since the north was shielded from western education, there were more primary, secondary and tertiary institutions in the west and consequently more educated graduates and professionals with university degrees. There was wide gap between the two parts in terms of western education because schools were built by Christian missionaries. For instance, while graduates and professionals with university degrees ran into scores of hundreds in the south, there were only one northern university graduate. This gap had grave consequences for political competition as well as socio-economic goods like employment in the public service and admission to government-owned secondary and tertiary institutions in the latter part of colonial rule and the post-independent period (Osaghae, 2002:5).

It gave the southern politicians and nationalists more prominence being members of the legislative council. Their northern counterparts did not sit in this council until 1947 when the principle of regional representation was introduced by the Richard's constitution. That was when northern and southern politicians met for the first time as citizens of the same country which had been amalgamated in 1914 (Osaghae, 2002). Besides, this shows that there were no much integration between the north and the south. According to Elaigwu, between 1914 and 1946 very little effort was made to

integrate northern and southern provinces. They were administered separately and the colonial officials in these administrations zealously fought to keep each group of provinces separately (Elaigwu, 1990:8). So when they met in the legislative council of 1947, they met as strangers. As we shall see later, this north-south separation had serious implication for post-independent Nigeria.

However, the Richards's constitution provided the opportunity for the interplay of disparate and separate groups to meet officially at the council level. Richards's constitution had legally established three regions – the North, the East and the West. It also provided for a central legislature and regional legislatures (Richards 1945). The constitution took into account Nigeria's heterogeneity. However, it was basically unitary in nature. Recognising this fact, the intense nationalist activities pressed for greater devolution of power in Nigeria. This resulted in Macpherson Constitution of 1951. Under this constitution, the new regions required more autonomy. They were empowered to send representatives to the central legislature. At the centre, twelve Nigerians were elected members of the council of Ministers from 1951 to 1954. However, greater pressure was mounted by the 1954 Lyttleton constitution. Thus, regional Assemblies sprung up. Regional bureaucracies were also established. Even the Marketing Board became regionalised (Elaigwu, 1990).

Consequently, regional groups started protecting their own interests against the inversion by other groups and of course to take over the government from the colonial masters so as to be in control of the dispensation of allocation of resources. Nigerian nationalists began to withdraw into their ethnic and regional cocoons which gave them a sense of greater security as they competed with one another. Even the ethnic minorities started seeking for recognition resulting into intra-regional ethnic quest for identity and

recognition. The basic expression of the distinct ethnic sentiments that built up within this period is generally recognised as regionalism (see Osagahae, 2002, Elaigwu, 1996).

The clamour for regional autonomy led to the collapse of Macpherson Constitution which gave the central government veto power over regional legislation and was therefore considered too unitarist by regional leaders. The agitations were championed by regional political parties which emerged in 1940-50 to contest the regional seats provided for in the Macpherson Constitution and ultimately control the regions (see Sklar 1963). This was the origin of regionalised political party system which later resulted in one-party state and (states later)(Osagahae, 2006). For instance, in 1949-50 there were three major ethnic parties that emerged along this regionalised sentiments, such as, Action Group (AG) of western union; the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons, which later became the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC). This party was the most nationalist party, but it was later forced to become Eastern regional party after its leader, Nnamdi Azikiwe who had won the seat in the western regional assembly; and the Northern People's Congress (NPC), the dominant party in the north.

The extent of these regional tendencies in the system was illustrated by the threats during the constitutional conferences. The northern region had threatened to secede from Nigeria in 1950, if it was not granted an equal number of representatives in the Central Legislature to the Southern Region. In 1953 the Western delegation threatened to opt out of Nigeria if Lagos capital territory and the Colony were not merged with the Western Region (Tamono, 1970:187-180, Elaigwu, 1996). Thus, by 1956, the three regions had become the centre of power with the three major leaders grafted onto the three regions. Nnamdi Azikiwe was the premier of the Eastern Region, Awolowo was the Premier of the Western Region, while Ahmadu Bello took on the title

of the Chief Minister of Northern Nigeria. The leaders jealously guided their regions, Though Nnamdi Azikiwe had more sentiment for the strong centre.

In 1957, the role of colonial administrators became increasingly supervisory as Nigeria passed through the terminal colonial period. The central legislature became the parliament. The regional representatives were now directly elected by the regional legislatures. In this same year, the western and eastern regions attained self-government, while self-government in the North was delayed until 1959.

In 1957, the office of Prime Minister was created at the centre, and predictably went to the NPC, whose deputy leader, Tafawa Balewa, occupied the office from the inception until the fall of the First Republic in 1966. After this election of 1959, Alhaji Tafawa Balewa formed his cabinet. His political executive became heads of the various departments and ministries. October 1, 1960 marked Nigeria's emergence as a sovereign nation within the Commonwealth. In 1963, Nigeria became a Republic with Nnamdi Azikiwe as the first President of the country. While this post was more ceremonial, his function was simply to maximise the symbolic capability of the state, while Balewa remained the functional head of government. Thus, Nigeria entered a new era as independent federal state.

Though Nigeria became a federal state, many questions were and are still yet to be responded to such as, the question of the imbalance in the federal structure, the question of the minority ethnic groups (Willink Report, 1957, Osaghae, 1996, Elaigwu, 1986) and the question of national unity.

2.2.2 The Nigerian Federal Government and Biafran Nation: A War of Brothers

The Nigerian civil war was one of the worst humanitarian crises in the continent. 'Biafran War' as it was called recalls account of ethnic conflict, starving children, and humanitarian intervention. Within Africa, it resonates with the restating consequences

of failed nationalism, but also with tenacious demand for genuine citizenship and self-determination (Okonta et al, 2009) .It was a tragedy that befell the human neighbours. It was not a war between strangers or distant nations. It was a war between brothers, neighbours, friends and relations. It was a war that claimed hundreds or thousands of human lives. It was a war that destroyed lives and property, common rituals and customs, villages and towns, inter-group relations and the quest for national unity.

Notwithstanding humanitarian, social, political and economic consequences, on 6 July, 1967, the Federal government launched what was then described as a “police action” (Uwuchue, 1971) to discipline the Easterners. On this day, “the first shells from Nigerian artillery fell on the small border town of Gake”(Forsyth, 1982). The so called police action was expected to last for few weeks or perhaps few months considering the overwhelming number of Federal military army with their armored tankers, jet fighters, Russian made bomber planes and long-range guns. The belief is that they were fighting for the union or unity of Nigeria and to maintain national integration.

Surprisingly, the war went into months and years despite the few military personnel that had no combat experience, no artillery, no armour, but few short guns, rifles and homemade grenades and bare footed and boundless enthusiastic youths who crammed the recruiting booths with conviction to fight with the last drop of their blood. With such conviction in the quest for justice, they “astound Nigeria, Africa and the world, and earned the respect even of their enemies” (Forsyth, 1982:84). According to Perham, “their close-knit family and clan system gave them a ready-made instrument of mutual support and co-operation” (Perham, 1970:235). According to Uwuchue, the Biafran army at the beginning of the war was estimated at twenty-thousand troops hurriedly organised around the nucleus of the two thousand surviving Eastern Nigerian officers and men. They had little training that took place in secret makeshift camps. The

bulk of recruitment came initially from the abundant supply of angry refugee youths itching for the opportunity to fight. The Biafran army was relatively lightly armed, relying on clandestine shipments of weapons many of which came initially from Czechoslovakia. It had not artillery and very few ant-tank weapons. Nevertheless, Biafran morale, spurred by the burning desire to avenge themselves for the 1966 massacres, was very high (Uwuchue, 1971). According to Orjita (2000: 139) “the willpower of Biafra whether in the streets or in starvation was indomitable”.

The war was sporadic and destructive. Millions lives were lost, mostly of Igbo descent. The Federal army was merciless in their attack. They did not spare the old and young, harmless women and children. Gowon used all the possible means to fight the Easterners. By August-September 1967, he had declared total war on Biafra, using all the possible means both intervention aid. And more so, he used the instrument of starvation by blocking all the foreign aids, food supplies from the Red Cross. These food supplies were coming from time to time, through air-lift to provide food for skeletal children dying of starvation. As Orjinta observed, on 8th July, Gowon warned that planes without proper authorisation would be shot down. On 8th July, two days later a super constellation of the Red Cross was shot by federal Migs. It crashed at kilometers of the landing road. Ten tons of antibiotics and the crew of four-men burnt away in the bush. A week later three other planes were shot and they crashed on the bad road (Orjinta, 2000). This development made any further attempt to provide relief to Biafrans to be halted. These left the women, children and the youth to die of starvation in millions.

Thus, the war and the enormity of civilian suffering which it produced attracted increasing world attention and sympathy for Biafrans (Orjinta 2000, Forsyth, 1982, Uwuchue, 1971). This development attracted indirect support from several charitable

organisations such as International Red Cross, Joint church Aid, Caritas, and a number of national Red Cross organizations. Some African countries recognised Biafra. They include Tanzania in 13 April 1968, Gabon on 18 May 1968, Ivory Coast in 14 May 1968, Zambia in 20 May 1968 and Haiti on 23 May 1969. This is mainly due to, according to Uwuchue (1971), the failure of the Federal Military Government to respond to appeals to settle the conflict other than by, the force of arms led.

These recognitions were a boost to the moral of the Biafrans who were deadly committed to their cause. On the other hand, it infuriated more the federal government who redoubled their commitment to wage total war with Biafra. Yet, the war did not end till 1970.

The Nigerian side, federal powers enjoyed the direct involvement of the big powers, especially that of Britain and Russia. These two big powers had their motives for their own interest. Britain wanted to retain the privileged place she had in Nigeria, while for Russia the move was as a means to a golden opportunity to obtain a foothold in West Africa. They supplied light and heavy weapons, such as Russian Mig-fighters and Illyushin bombers, to the federal government. Perham captured the dramatic scenario of the activities of the Big powers' involvement in the Nigerian-Biafran war when she states that, it was a "situation in which British weapons, including Saladin armored cars, were destroying Biafran lives, while British food and medical supplies were being dangerously flown in to preserve them (Perham, 1970:241).

The war continued, claiming lives and property. One thing seems to be obvious and sure, it is that the insistence on the continuation of the total war by Nigeria and the tenacity of the Biafran resistance and the duration of the unresolved could only hurt both sides so badly. Which means, for the interests of both parties, the issue demands settlement by a negotiated peace and not by a continual genocide and bloodshed.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

Theoretical frameworks or theories are generalisations for logical explanation of specific problems that arise in the society. They are principles from which explanation for existential occurrences are derived. Accordingly, there are conflict management theories. The theories, according to David J. Francis (2006:22), are largely derived from ontologically-derived basic human needs as the source of conflict. The psychological interpretation of conflict focuses on the psychology of inter-group relations and the subjective aspect of conflict. The conflict management theories further consider the behaviour of the persons involved in the conflict along two basic responsive dimensions, *assertiveness*, which implies that the individual may have high concern for himself and less concern for others and *cooperativeness*, which implies that the individual has high concern for himself and others. These bifocal behavioural conceptions feature in the following theories that we consider relevant in the examination of the pre-war and war-time conflict management strategies of the Nigerian civil war.

The study, therefore, reviews the following theories in order to provide a theoretical explanation for the work:

1. Theory of Cooperative Conflict Behaviour
2. The Constructive Confrontation Theory

2.3.1 Theory of Cooperative Conflict Behaviour

This is a model of a theory that provides theoretical insights into the nature and sources of conflicts and how conflicts can be managed successfully. One of the first to develop insight into the contents and beneficial consequences of cooperation as an academic enquiry was Morton Deutsch. In his view, a number of factors like the nature of the dispute and the goals each party aims at are pivotal in determining the kind of

orientation a party would bring to the negotiating table in its attempt to solve the conflict. There are two basic orientations. These are competitive and cooperative. Deutsch further predicts the type of interaction which would occur between negotiating parties as a result of their disputing style. Cooperative disposition of the party has the tendency to evoke an atmosphere of trust and eventually lead to mutually beneficial options for the settlement (Deutsch, 2002). In the Nigeria-Biafra war, the parties who engaged in different negotiations were not cooperative. This made it impossible for them to develop an attitude of trust and shared interest as none of the contending parties was ready to shift grounds for the other. The competitive approach to conflict management has a tendency to produce a win-lose outcome. This approach is believed to have the inclination to intensifying animosity and distrust between parties. It is generally considered destructive. In the Nigerian-Biafran conflict, the disputing parties were more competitive than cooperative. This made the parties unable to arrive at appreciable solution, which would have helped in averting the resultant war and all its attendant devastating consequences.

It has been argued by some critics that the two orientations -cooperation and competition - are essential to some extent to effectuate proper management of conflicts, since negotiating a desirable agreement always includes common and diverse goals. This issue also arose in the settlement of the conflict in the Nigerian-Biafran war. The parties to the conflict could not respond positively to the conflict management strategies employed during the settlement to strike a balance between the two orientations. There was more tilt towards competitiveness. Thus, finding a balance between these two approaches is the key to successful negotiation.

The theorists, Roger Fisher and William Ury attempted to provide the balance through their idea of “principled negotiation”. They advocated cooperative conflict

behaviour by putting forward four principles for effective negotiation. These four principles are:

- **Separate people from their problems.** This principle, according to Fisher and Ury (2002), helps to get a clearer picture of the substantive problem.

- **Focus on interest rather than position.** This principle helps the disputant to re-assess the issue and focus on the common interest rather than their own selfish position. Obasanjo, (1978) accused the Biafran leader, Ojukwu, of being beclouded by a selfish ambition, which made him obstinate and unreceptive of the various well-intended conflict management approaches by individuals and organisations and thereby plunging the entire nation into a needless war.

- **Generate a variety of options before settling on an agreement.** This principle creates room for wider examination of issues and possible solutions before settling on a particular one. The essence of conflict management is to create a variety of options for settlement of disputes in order to generate a positive outcome that will be acceptable to the parties. Questions have been raised as to whether the Nigeria-Biafra war was an inevitable reality and why Ojukwu allowed the war to linger for so long in the face of mass starvation and loss of precious lives of his people whose interest he claimed to be the mainspring of the struggle.

- **Insist that the agreement be based on objective criteria.** This is an important criterion. Most times, disputing parties are subjective in their examination of issues. It is very vital to have an objective assessment for a peaceful management of a conflict. The theorists believe that at each stage of the negotiation process, the above principles should be observed. Developing a method for reaching good agreements is central to this model. One limitation of the theory is that it asserts that “separate people from their problem”. However, this could make matters worse if human needs of the people are the

problem. Moreover, conflicts between ethnic groups are mostly need-based conflicts since one group feels that its basic needs of identity, security, recognition or equal participation are being neglected. Here, human needs model can be more useful than interest-based model.

John Burton's work is of immense significance in the field of human needs model. He argues that when an individual or group is denied its fundamental need for security, recognition or equal participation within the society, protracted conflict is inevitable. To manage such conflict, it is essential that needs that are threatened be identified and subsequently restructuring of relationships or the social system take place in a way that needs of all individuals and groups are accommodated. For instance, this model could have been useful in the Nigeria-Biafra scenario. The needs of the people were identified, but systemic restructuring were not carried out to settle the problem.

2.3.2 Constructive Confrontation Theory

Confrontation is an attempt to unilaterally address the source of conflict through the use of force by the aggrieved party (Ogbogbo, 2005:170). Constructive confrontation is a theory of conflict resolution developed by **Guy Burgess**, and **Heidi Burgess** to better deal with intractable conflicts. This approach is based on the assumption that intense, long-term confrontations over important and difficult issues are inevitable. When communication ceases between contending parties, the situation can get much worse, especially when one considers the common bias that people tend to have toward their opponents. In addition to a lack of basic communication skills, the parties can fall victim to a number of pathologies that contribute to misunderstandings. These misunderstandings not only lead to misinformed decisions, they also contribute to even more destructive processes of escalation and polarisation (Burgess *et. al*, 1996). This explains the gravity of the intractable conflicts in the case of the Biafran-Nigerian war

arising from bitterness borne out of misunderstanding, which marred communication between parties and obstructed various attempts at its resolution.

One goal of constructive confrontation is to help disputants develop a clear understanding of the dimensions of the problem—both from their own perspective and from their opponents. A second goal of constructive confrontation is to enable people to separate the core conflict from what could be called the conflict overlay—the unnecessary and confounding aspects of the conflict that divert attention from the core issues; just like in the Nigerian-Biafran war, where the core issues were circumvented in various negotiations. The final goal of constructive confrontation is the development of a conflict resolution strategy that will best serve the party's interests. Unlike principled negotiation, which calls for the parties to consider all sides' interests simultaneously and to develop win-win solutions, constructive confrontation recognises that this is often not a realistic request.

Therefore, it demands that people avoid considering the interests and needs of the other parties, but to design their confrontation strategy primarily with their own interests and needs in mind. This works best if it can be accompanied by recognition of commonly accepted principles of fairness and justice. Since it is almost always in the interest of both parties to act in a way which limits destructive outcomes (e.g., violence, escalating hatred, and distrust), this strategy seldom makes a conflict worse, and it usually encourages constructive results - improved relationships, better understanding of the issues from all points of view, and a better understanding of the confrontation and resolution options and the likely results of both.

The ultimate goal of constructive confrontation is the constructive transformation of conflictual relationships. Such a transformation allows individuals, organisations, and the society as a whole to realize the benefits of conflict. It helps

people, organisations, and societies to learn, grow, and change. It helps people identify problems and challenges and develops ways to meet those challenges and become stronger in the process. Without successful transformation, destructive conflicts just drag people down. They consume resources, time, energy, and morale—all to no avail. They destroy relationships, undermine productivity, and often lead to violations of basic human rights. It is, therefore, like the experiences of the Nigerian civil war, essential that better techniques be developed to transform destructive intractable conflicts into constructive ones, though often still conflictual relationships (Burgess, *et. Al*, 1996)

From the foregoing reviews, it can be seen that the works attempted elaborate analyses of Nigerian-Biafra civil war. The works identified various strategies employed to quell the conflict before and after the outbreak of the war. However, they did not provide clear articulation of the reasons why these conflict management strategies failed to prevent the outbreak of war or to stop the armed conflict. This project, therefore, sets out to examine the strategies so as to ferret out the reasons why failed to manage

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This chapter presents a concise introduction of the area the study is concerned with. It underlines the format, technique and modalities for data collection and the analysis employed to establish the research findings.

3.1 Study Area

The study focuses on the conflict management strategies employed before and during the Nigerian-Biafran civil war. Nigerian-Biafran civil war was a war that was fought between the Nigerian federal government and its subordinate, the Eastern region of the country. Nigeria has an area of 923,768.00 sq kilometres. Nigeria is a country in West Africa. It shares land borders with the Republic of Benin in the west, Chad and Cameroon in the east, and Niger in the north. Its coast lies on the Gulf of Guinea in the south and it borders Lake Chad to the northeast.

On the South, the Nigerian coast- line is bathed by the Atlantic Ocean. Nigeria, basically was made up of three parts, the North, West and East. Sir Ahamadu Bello, Sarduna of Sokoto was the Northern premier, Chief Awolowo was the Western Leader, and Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe was the Eastern leader. However, before May 1967, the country was divided into four regions, Northern region comprising Sokoto, Kano, Kaduna, Jos and Maidugri, Western region comprising Lagos and Ibadan, Mid-western region with Benin as the capital, Eastern regions comprising Enugu, Port-Harcourt, and Calabar (Owuchie 1971). Below is the map describing this division along the regions?



Figure 1: The four Regions before May 1967

Source: internet

In May, 1967, these three regions were further divided into 12 states which precipitated into the civil conflict. The states include North-Western state (Sokoto), Kano state (Kano), North-Eastern state (Bauchi), North-Central Kaduna), Benue - Plateau state (Jos), West-Central state (Ilorin), Western state (Ibadan), Mid-West state (Benin), East-Central state (Enugu) South-Eastern state (Calabar)

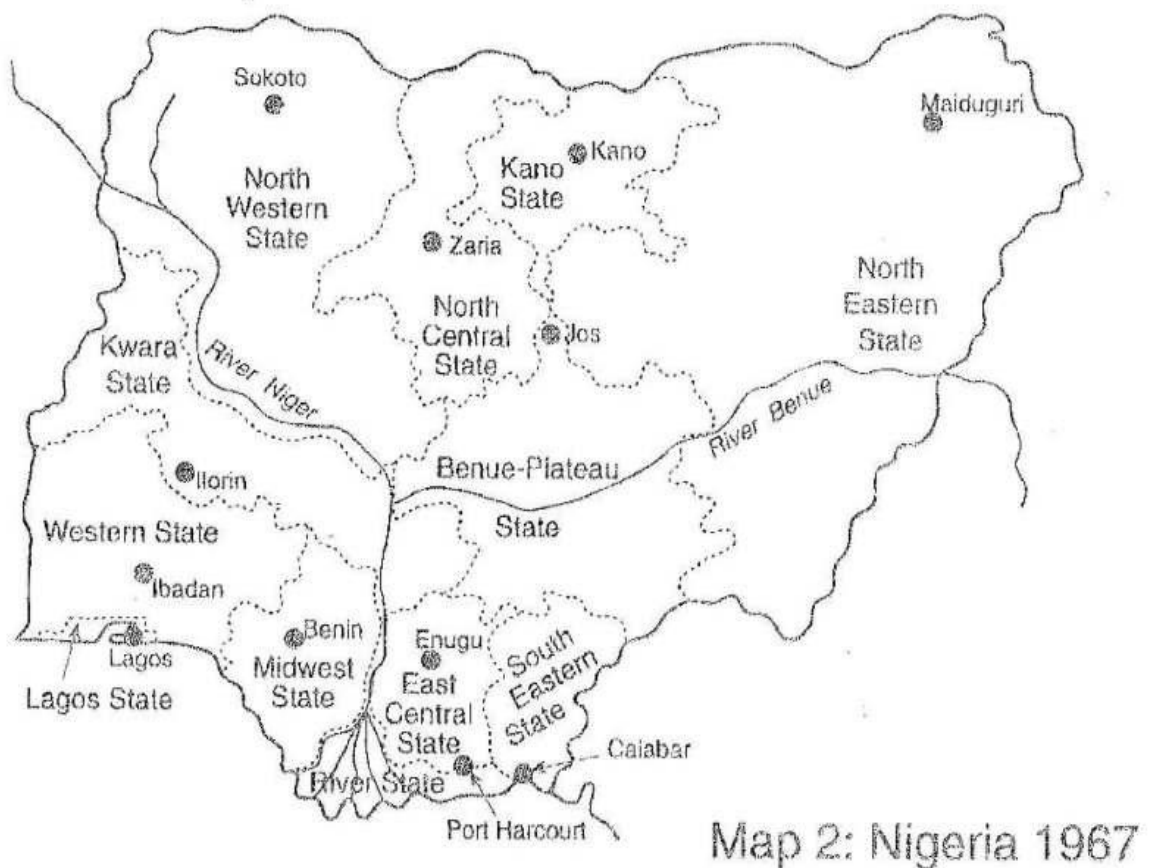


Figure 2: The Twelve States Created in May 1967

Source: internet

The controversial census of 1963 put Nigerian population 55.66 million. It was actually announced on 24 February, 1964. The first post independent Nigerian head count occurred in 1962 that put Nigeria population at 45.26 million. At the end of the exercise, northern Nigeria was 22.01 million, while the south was 23.25 million. Southern hopes for reapportionment of legislative seats were buoyed by the results. When this result was presented to Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the Prime Minister, who was a northerner, he rejected the result outright.

Abubakar saw no reason why southern Nigeria should have been more populated than the north. He promptly fired the British representative, J. J. Warren, who was in charge of the census and usurped the position. He then called for a 1963 census. Following the recount, he announced that northerners were undercounted by a whopping 8.5 million! The nation's population was reported to be 60.5 million, a figure which the census officials believed to be impossibly high. The figure was scaled down to 55.66 million. With this new addition, the northern figure ballooned to 31 million and this result was deemed acceptable by the Prime Minister, Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa-Balewa. The itinerary of the result is follows:

Northern Region	29,777,986
Eastern Region	12,388,646
Western Region	10,278,500
Mid-West Region	2,533,337
Lagos	675,352
Total	55,653,821

The Prime Minister had gone ahead to say that on the basis of these figures, the Federal government and the Regional governments can now review their plans for economic and social development. As soon as the announcement was made, there were sporadic reactions across the country, especially from the south where people condemned the results. On 26 February, 1963, students of Universities of Ibadan and Ife came out to condemn the results. President of the University of Ife Student Union, Mr J.A. Majasan described the results as shocking and declared: we are lost if the figures are accepted. On the same date, students of the University of Ibadan staged a protest across the city of Ibadan even as they boycotted classes.

The students later commandeered six lorries and travelled to Lagos, where they hoped to meet the Prime Minister. They were, however, stopped at Maryland by the police and a bloody confrontation ensued. One of the leaflets of the students read: In 1952 we were 32 million. Now we are 55.6 million. The North cannot be 17 million in 1952 and 29 million in 1964. A population rise of 70 per cent is not possible in Nigeria. In the East, the same thing happened about the same time. Students of University of Nigeria, Nsukka, marched on the capital where they were addressed by the Premier, Dr Michael Okpara. In the protest letter they handed to the premier, the students said: While the rate of increase in the population in Nigeria cannot be underrated, it is inconceivable that the population figure of this country should have risen from 40 million to 55 million within 16 months. The Action Group in its reaction condemned the figures. It said: No head of government that is interested in the welfare of his people would fail to see the suspicious nature of the census figures. The leader of Northern Elements Peoples Union (NEPU) Mallam Aminu Kano also reacted from the North. The South did not waste time disputing the new figures. This controversy entered into the military of 1966 that consequently led to subsequent socio-political altercations. There were different attempts to resolve the ensuing crises, but it still materialised into the civil war.

3.2 Research Design

Research design refers to how a researcher puts a research study together to answer a question or a set of questions. It refers to the speculative framework within which an investigation is carried out and accomplished. It provides an outline or useful compass for investigating among the web of variables of the study, prior to the actual study. Alternatively, it aids the research to distinguish what is the case and what is not. It works as a systematic plan outlining the study, the researchers' method of

compilation, details on how the study will arrive at its conclusions and the limitations of the research.

This study is an empirical research, which is designed to examine the conflict management resolution strategies employed in the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970. The objective of this examination is to identify the reasons why the strategies employed were unable to achieve their set objectives. An empirical research involves the actual interaction with experience and data that are founded in causal relations. The issue on hand has taken place and the causes and independent variables cannot be manipulated by the researcher. However, since the objective of this study trades on the existing phenomena to make its theoretical prediction, qualitative research design is employed to achieve its set objective of identifying the reasons why the conflict management strategy that were employed failed to resolve the conflict.

The research design is, therefore, most suitable for studies of this nature because the aim is to study reasons why certain strategies did not achieve its objectives.

3.3 Sources of Data Collection

There was a consistent search to carry out library and field search for information on the Nigerian civil war. Thus, data for the research was carried out from two main sources: primary and secondary sources. Primary data were gathered from the participant to different peace talks where conflict resolution strategies were stipulated. Gowon, Obasanjo, and others were interviewed. Some other significant figures were also interviewed. Secondary data consisted of information gathered from books, journals, and unpublished works in the area of study. Information was also gathered from newspapers, magazines, archives, tapes, and Ojukwu's bunka at Umuahia. Official documents like reports on different meetings to stipulate conflict resolution strategies such as Aburi Accord were examined.

The result of the survey has been supported with information from in-depth interviews, group discussions and personal experience and observation of the research while on field work.

3.4 Methodology

In other to realise its goal, this study employed the qualitative and descriptive methodologies. It attempts to describe and interpret some documented materials on the conflict management strategies employed during the Nigerian civil war. It equally describes and interprets some human phenomena in the words or observations of selected individuals. This method is very appropriate, precisely because, the focus of the study is to find out how actually the events happened, why it happened and what better alternative measures or strategies could be more congruent to eschew future occurrences.

3.4.1 Study Population

The population of the study includes the Nigerian citizens and foreigners who had active participation in the conflict management measures in the Nigerian civil war (1967-1970). Besides, it included those who were very much informed within this period of war. It included organisational bodies such as the OAU (AU), the Commonwealth and UN contingents.

3.4.2 Data Collection

Data have been collected through archival retrieval of documented facts. Most of the conflict resolution strategies employed during the communal civil war were documented and therefore retrieved. Thus, extracts from books, treaties, proceedings of various meetings aimed at the resolution of the civil war forms substantial data for this study. Furthermore, the study utilised qualitative data. To this end, primary sources of

data collection include interviewing in semi-structured pattern of a given group, organisations and individuals.

There were in-depth and critical interviews that furnished relevant data to the study. It included focus group discussion, most especially with the major actors and stakeholders in the resolution strategies. Such interview provided the researcher with varied opportunities of having direct contact with the key players involved in the conflict resolution strategies during the Nigerian Civil War.

3.5 Data Analysis

Data obtained through various sources were adequately and systematically analysed. Descriptive survey and narrative methods were employed in the data analysis. The study presents the data in textual format, explained, examined, analysed and discussed them. Such descriptive and systematic analysis provided an adequate understanding of the conflict management strategies that were employed and created room for adequate logical inferences.

The analysis of the primary data is complemented by the secondary information to form a holistic analysis, which gives credence to the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

EXAMINATION OF THE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

This chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of research data. It goes further to provide a systemic discussion of the findings. It is to be noted that the research is on the pre-war and war-time conflict management strategies of the Nigerian civil war. There were many conflict management institutions, strategies and peace talks that were used to attempt to address the ensuing ethnic and social conflict before and during the war. But unfortunately, none of these was able to change the course of the conflict. What follows is the presentation of the peace strategies, structures and methods of implementation. Before then, however, it is quite expedient to shed some light on the prevailing circumstances that produced the disaster known as the Nigeria-Biafra war

4.1 The Prologue to the Nigerian Civil War

From the brief overview of the history of Nigeria, it could be seen that the Nigerian civil war was not a sudden outburst of violence but a result of long standing political problems and ethnic bitterness. These political problems and ethnic bitterness developed in time and had an incremental transition from colonial to post-colonial era. Thus, the colonial administration had structural flaws. Among these flaws are the creation of a cleavage between the north and the south otherwise referred to as north-south dicotomy, the problem of regionalism, the question of minorities, the character of the state and the national question or the problem of unity or integration (Osaghae, 2002; Elaigwu, 1986). These problems had serious consequences for post independent Nigerian federation.

In the first instance, it is instructive to note that the federal constitution of 1954 conferred political advantages on the Northern region in the federation which emerged, and underlay the problem of Northern domination which was a major source of the

country's political problems after independence (Osaghae, 2002). However, it has been suggested by many Nigerians that it was not the constitution as much as the interpretation and the implementation of certain items in it by the regions, which guarded their autonomy jealously as they competed for the control of the central government, which confirmed the fragility of Nigeria's federalism (Elaigwu, 1986). The historical background of Nigerian Federalism can be seen in the works of Ezera (1964), Osuntunkun (1978), and Afigbo (1991). However, a look at the geographical, demographical and political structures could help to throw more light on the federal structure of the time so as to show its divisive credentials. The Northern Region accounted for 79% of the country's total area as compared to the Eastern Region's 8.3% and the Western Region's 8.5%. The North had a demographic leverage over the Southern Region; by the 1963 census figures it accounted for 53.5%, the Eastern Region 22.3%, the Western Region 18.4%, the Midwestern Region 4.6%, and Lagos Federal Territory 1.2% of the total population of 55.6 million. Politically, the Northern region was granted 50% percent of the seats in the House of Representatives (which was later increased to 52 per cent). The remaining was left to the rest of the regions put together. This implies that the Northern region could single-handedly obtain the dominant position under the majoritarian system that the country inherited at independence. The lop-sided nature of the federal structure generated the fear of political domination among the various groups that made up the country.

More precisely, the Southern regions feared the northern domination by virtue of that Region's large population. This is precisely because, the federal structure as it existed made it almost impossible for the South to control political power at the centre gives the ethno-regional politics in the country. On the other hand, the southern region had upper hand in the skills acquisition and the acquisition of western education. And

giving the fact that western education was a passport for job opportunities in the modern sector of the society such as bureaucracies, and parastatals the northern regions became afraid of the western domination. Again while political power lay in the north, the economic power lay deeply in the south. Nevertheless, all these official and unofficial divisions only created greater insecurity among the regions as they interacted with one another. As time went by, at least, between 1960 and 1965 federal adjustment went in the direction of further differentiations and autonomy of the component units. What Nigeria had was a federalism based on psychological fears of political and economic domination among the federal units (Where, 1964:50).

Given this fear, the political system witnessed the manifestation of centrifugal tendencies as each region demanded full autonomy to protect its interest. Accordingly, the nation witnessed various crises in various sectors and regions. There were crises over the census exercises of 1962 and 1963. There were political clashes in the western region to the point that in 1963, Awolowo and others were charged with treasonable felony. It was alleged that they had plans to overthrow the Belewa government. The trial judge, Mr. Justice Sowemimo sentenced the eighteen of them to various terms of imprisonment, ranging from two to ten years. Among them were Chief Awolowo and his notable aids like Alhaji L. K. Jakande, Chiefs Onitiri, Omisade, Olawoyin, and also Ayo Akinsani and Okotie-Yesin (Ademoyega, 1981:15). The federal election of 1964 constituted a serious problem precisely because it was believed to be a farce (Ademoyega, 1981), utterly manipulated. According to Maier, the election of 1964 was massively rigged and boycotted (Maier, 2000). In the Eastern regions, the government used its powers to make sure that no election was held. It was also partially boycotted in the Mid-west, North and in Lagos. Yet, in January, Belewa formed a new government while the problems and the causes of the crises were swept under the carpet (cf

Ademoyega, 1981). The year 1965 witnessed the worsening of the political situation in Nigeria. The Tiv people staged a massive demonstration against the oppressive Sarduana government. This crisis did not stop until Belewa dispatched the military to quell the riots. It was a year of political gloom. People felt disillusioned and disenchanted with the Belewa government and the rulership of Belewa, Akintola and Sarduana clique. Characterising the temper of the time, Ademoyega states that:

People had been disillusioned and disaffected with the Belewa Government and the rulership of the Belewa/Akintola/Sardauna clique of the NNA. Economic, social, educational and political problems were not solved. Corruption was rife and nepotism was the order of the day. The Safety valves of the nation were reposed in such institutions as the courts, the Census Commission, the Electoral commission, the Police and finally the Armed Forces. But the sanctity of those institutions was being politically assailed, assaulted and dragged in the mud, so that they were fast losing their credibility. It became obvious that the national leadership was nearing its collapse and that the ship of the nation was heading for the rocks...People sang war songs and fought on the streets. They invented the “wetic” (meaning ‘soak him up’) practice in which a political opponent and his house were sprayed with petrol and set ablaze... there was total breakdown of law and order in the west (Ademoyega 1981:20-21).

Corroborating Ademoyega’s description and summarising the Nigerian situation of the time, Karl Maier states that:

By 1964 cracks were appearing in the façade of Nigeria’s federal structure...disturbances erupted in the Western region as rival factions of Awolowo’s Action Group Party resorted to violence to resolve their struggles for regional power. Awolowo himself was jailed for treason. Two attempts to conduct a national census degenerated into a widespread manipulation organized by regional leaders seeking to use inflated population figures to buttress their cases for greater power at the federal level. Massive rigging and boycotts marred a new round of national elections in 1964. By the following year, the Western Region had degenerated into near anarchy, with the Action Group factions engaging each other in ‘Operation Wetic’ Nigeria’s version of “necklacing”, the murder of opponents by dousing them with fuel and setting them alight. Political

chaos and reports of corruption among government officials, known as the '10 percenters' for the amount of money they creamed off the top of contracts, further discredited the political class in the eyes of many Nigerians (Maier 2000:12).

In the same note, Elaigwu summarised the political situation of the Nigerian federal state. He states that the salient features of the political system by 1965 are as follows:

- 1) The blatant violation of the 'rule of the game' of politics, thus making politics dangerous for political actors and spectators alike; 2) the gross misuse of political power and lack of new opportunities for political failures; 3) imprudent political and economic decisions in allocation of scarce but allocable resources; 6) disenfranchisement of the populace through the blatant rigging of elections; and 7) conspicuous consumption of political leaders amidst the abject poverty of the threatened, especially in the Western Region where there were incidents of arson, thuggery and political homicide (Elaigwu 1985:12).

According to Ojukwu, "in January, 1965, Nigeria stood still and awaited with bated breath the resultant effect of this miraculous transmutation" (Emeka, 1989:11).

These views of different scholars and the crises described capture the situation of the period and illustrate the politics of insecurity and ethno-regional hostilities within the Nigerian federal structure before 1966. The crises so described demonstrate the federal government's inability to control the regions. In effect, by the end of 1965, the gross political instability had seen to the virtual extinction of the politics of participation, tolerance and compromise. The game of politics turned into the battle of politics. Accordingly, on January 15, 1966, some military officers, mainly of the Igbo ethnic group, attempted to take over government through a *coup d'état*. They promised radical reform of the nation and to purge the nation of political corruption and civil unrest.

Their coup attempt cost the lives of Prime Minister Tafawa Belewa, and some other regional premiers including the powerful Northern Leader, Ahmadu Bello. Though the coup eventually failed, the military, still took over the administration of the country. Major-General Aguiyi Ironsi, the then head of the Nigerian army, became the head of the Federal Military Government.

On 24th May, 1966, he promulgated the Decree No. 34 which set aside the regional arrangement in preference to a unitary system. Two months later, a counter coup was staged by some aggrieved Hausa military officers. Ironsi was assassinated along with other Igbo military officers. The coup was led by Major Murtala Mohammed and Major Kyari. Nigeria was at this point under the new military leadership of Lt. Col. Yakubu Gowon. He abrogated the decree which he considered offensive and reverted Nigeria to federal system. This counter coup was followed by protracted civil disturbances, massive killings mainly of the Igbo by the Hausa and fierce political disagreements among the military leaders themselves. This is precisely because the coup was ethnic in intent and execution. According to Fredric Forsyth, "it had no particular political philosophy and was extremely racial" (Forsyth, 1982:61). This can be illustrated by the fact that "all those taking part, senior officers, junior officers and soldiers, were northerners, and all the victims were Easterners, except Fajuyi, the only Yoruba" (Forsyth, 1982:61). The only political intent it had was to pull the North from Nigeria, which they illustrated by flying a northern flag in the Lagos barracks. However, the British High Commissioners, through Gowon, persuaded Murtala Mohammed and his accomplices to stay and take over the rulership of the country. Heeding to this advice, Gowon declared himself on 1 August, 1966 the Supreme Commander of the armed forces and Head of the National Military Government. The massacre of the Igbo military officers and civilians continued and never stopped.

Consequent upon these disturbances, there was a need for the four military governors representing the four blocks created by the coup to meet and provide a temporary measure to the crises. The representatives met on the 9th August. It was generally agreed that troops be returned to their Regions of origin to allow matters to cool down a bit. It was only the Eastern region that responded to this general agreement. The North and the West reneged.

In a further attempt to seek for a more practical resolution to the crises and continual killing of the Igbo, an Ad Hoc Constitutional Conference was constituted. The Ad Hoc Constitutional Conference was convened in mid- September. It was aimed at finding a lasting solution to the constitutional and administrative chaos. Nothing came out of the conference. It died in the cradle choked by an atmosphere heavily laden with distrust and bitterness (Uwechue, 1971:6; Forsyth, 1982). There were attempts to meet locally to negotiate and resolve Nigerian problems, but they proved abortive. Consequently, the Nigerian military leaders looked beyond Nigeria, to a neutral scene, to convene a conference for everyone's safety. Finally, General Ankrah of Ghana (the then chairman of Ghana's Liberation Committee) agreed to host a conference on his territory and the venue chosen was ex-president Nkrumah's country house in the hills above Accra, at a place called Aburi (Forsyth, 1982; Uwuchue, 1971). It took place in January 1967. The document for this meeting which proved to be the edge of war, is a document of fascinating but tragic interest and it is available and reproduced hereunder.

In spite of the heated disagreement between the Federal military government and the regional military government, there was a basic agreement among others to introduce a greater measure of decentralisation by increasing the powers of the regions vis-à-vis those of the Federal Government and to provide solution to East's refugee problem. It is stated that General Ankrah took Emeka's and Gowon's hands, placed

them on the document with his own hand on top, and asked both men, as brother African officers, to abide by what they had agreed. Both men promised to do so (Forsyth, 1982:79). However, back to Nigeria, there were endless haggling over the *Aburi Accord*.

Without heeding to the *Aburi Accord* and without any forewarning to the East, Yakubu Gowon, on 26th January, 1967, in Lagos, gave a press conference. Reading from a prepared text, he rejected point by point the four main points of the agreements of Aburi and split the country into twelve states. This move by Gowon precipitated the crises and secession of the Eastern Region. Furthermore, Gowon imposed his blockade early in May. He declared a state of emergency in the East, which according to the Aburi accord was unconstitutional, since only the unified military council could do that.

Accordingly, on 30 May, 1967, the Eastern Region formally pulled out of Nigeria and Lt. Col. Odumegwu- Ojukwu, the Military Governor of the East, named his new state Biafra and ascended to the post of Head of State. The federal government reacting to this declared it as act of rebellion. But the question that arises here is this: why was Aburi accord not implemented since it did not undermine the integrity of any of the parties? Is war which was to come the only option left to settle the conflicting interests of the major leaders between the federal government and the eastern region.

The Nigerian civil war was one of the worst humanitarian crises in the continent. 'Biafran War' as it was called recalls account of ethnic conflict, starving children, and humanitarian intervention. Within Africa, it resonates with the restating consequences of failed nationalism, but also with tenacious demand for genuine citizenship and self-determination (Okonta et al, 2009) .It was a tragedy that befell the human neighbours.

4.2 Pre-War and War Time Conflict Management Strategies

In conflict management, there are various strategies that are required to either prevent or de-escalate the occurrence of armed conflicts. They include, domination, avoidance, third party intervention, joint problem-solving, confrontation, strategic withdrawal (Ojiji, 2006). Various conflict management strategies were adopted to manage the socio-political problems that arose in the country before the outbreak and during the civil war, Unfortunately, parties were not patient enough to see the outcome of the intervention by stakeholders before adopting confrontation as the last resort. The high level of insensitivity, intensity and hostility with which the civil war was fought and ended, shows that most of those measures only yielded minimal result. The pre-war and war-time conflict management strategies that characterised the Nigeria-Biafra war include- joint-problem-solving, third-party intervention, confrontation and strategic withdrawal. Hopman (2001:459) stated that “Problem solving assumes that conflicts, especially those that lead to violence, usually involve more than just the clash of geo-political interest.” The war between Nigeria and Biafra was beyond geographical interest, considering the issues, context and actors’ goals.

Before the conflict escalated to civil war, the conflict management strategies used to address the conflict were- conciliation, joint problem solving and third party intervention, especially negotiation and mediation, which identify with Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). Strategic withdrawal was mainly adopted by the Biafran side with the aim of preventing more military and civilian casualties.

The conflict management strategies of the Nigerian civil war are in two stages. The first stage is the management strategies employed before the war, otherwise referred to as pre-war conflict management strategies. The second aspect is the war-time

conflict management strategies, that is, the strategies employed during the war of 1967-1970.

Some of the notable strategies

S/N	Pre-War Conflict Management strategies	War-Time Conflict Management Strategies
i	Unitary System of Govt. Gen. Aguyi-ironsi	Declaration of state of emergency and economic blockade
ii	Federal Structure – Gen. Gowon	Declaration of hostilities /confrontation
iii	Ad hoc Constitutional conference	Mediation – OAU/Commonwealth
iv	Third party meditation in Aburi, Ghana	Strategies withdrawal
v	Economic blockage/change of currency	Surrender and cessation of hostilities

4.2.1 The Adoption of Unitary System of Government by Aguiyi-Ironsi

The adoption of unitary system of government was an attempt to manage the existing conflict in the Nigerian state. In January, 1966, after the failed *coup* of 15th January, 1966, Major-General Ironsi, the then head of the Nigerian army, became the head of the Federal military government. On May 24, 1966, he promulgated the decree 34 which set aside the regional system of government. He equally abolished all political parties and decreed a unification of Nigerian civil service. He also downgraded each of the country's four regions to the status of provinces under tight control. This act was viewed as a way of keeping the highly polarised country under firm control (Aneke 2007). However, this was greeted by wild demonstration, especially in the Northern region. The Northern skepticism against this policy sprang from the fear that the Igbo intended to isolate the North.

This fear of domination was heightened by certain steps taken by Ironsi on assumption of office: he surrounded himself with mainly people of the Igbo ethnic group (Collis, 1970) to the extent that the state house was more of an ethnic setting; he

promoted mainly Igbo officers to fill vacancies created in the armed forces by the killing of non-Igbo during the coup of January; 1966. According to Collis, out of the twenty promotions made, only three were Northerners, while no officer was promoted from the West, despite the fact that there were five Yoruba officers higher in rank than most of the promoted Igbo and Hausa officers. By this action, there was the general impression that the coup of January, 1966 was hatched and executed by the Igbo to entrench their dominance of Nigeria in the scheme of things

However, while justifying the introduction of the unitary system of government in an interview in *Daily Times* (April 14,1966), Ironsi stated as follows:

I am convinced that the bulk of our people want a united Nigeria and that they want in future one government for Nigeria and not a multitude of governments. They want one government whose unit of legislative and administrative devolution would, on the one hand, be of such a size mostly likely to satisfy local needs, but of such limited powers as not to constitute a danger to the unity of Nigeria. This is the aim of the supreme Military Council, this is the frame of reference within which all our measures of internal reconstruction must be formulated.

However, on the 29th, May, just five days after the decree 34 was promulgated, there were wild demonstrations and riots in most of the major cities of the North, with Igbo as the main objects of attack. The Northern province governor, Colonel Hassan Katsina made concerted efforts to suppress these acts of lawlessness and there was momentary calm (Collis,1970). Even though there was a momentary restoration of calm, the clamour for secession became well pronounced amongst the Northerners, and the state of affairs formed the platform for the counter *coup* of 29 July, 1966, by Northern officers.

4.2.2 The Adoption of Federal System of Government by Gowon

The July, 1966, counter *coup* was planned and executed by soldiers and officers of Northern extraction. Due to the negative reaction in the Northern region elicited by the promulgation of unitary system of government, Ironsi embarked on a tour of the four regions aimed at intimating the regional governors and traditional rulers of the genuine intention of his administration in the adoption of unitary system of government. While on a tour of the Western region, there was, what was initially described as a mutiny, which culminated into a *coup d'état* that led to the overthrow of the Ironsi government. In the military coup led by Major Theophilus Danjuma, Ironsi, his host, Lt. colonel Adekunle Fajuyi and a host of officers from the East and the Igbo speaking part of the Mid- West region were eliminated (Ozigbo, 1999). After the dust of this tragic event had settled, a Northern officer in the person of Lt. Colonel Yakubu Gowon was installed as the Head of state and supreme commander of the armed forces.

On assumption of office as the supreme head of the government, Gowon started some conciliatory moves to de-escalate the conflict in the country. He started by abrogating the contentious decree 34 and instituted the federal system of government

This decision was taken with the conviction that in most multi-ethnic politics, federation with strong Centre had always been the preferred political system. A strong central government controlling the resources at the disposal of the various units that make up the federation would be in better position to maintain peace and order. In a situation where one of two units of a federation is more buoyant than the Centre, the tendency would be for that region to want to secede. Onyeoziri (2000). The decision of the east to break away from the larger Nigerian project was seen from this perspective because of the abundant oil resources prevalent in the region. To avoid such tendencies, therefore, diverse societies would normally concentrate resources to a strong Centre that

manages such for the good of all. That was what the Nigerian government hoped to achieve by adopting 'federalism'. It must be pointed out that such system of government operates well where the fear of domination does not exist, unlike what was prevalent in Nigeria. The political jargon called federalism or federation thus became a strategy of deterrence against the breakup of the country. This strategy could not, however, hold the country together for too long as the crisis did not abate.

4.2.3 Negotiation: *Ad-hoc* Constitutional Conference

As in most conflicts, the first major strategy adopted to resolve the Nigerian conflict from degenerating into a civil war was negotiated dialogue. Negotiation involves a process of conferring with another party for the purpose of securing agreement on some matters of common interest (Morley and Stephenson, 1977:19). It is a process of engaging in good-faith efforts to reach an agreement or resolve a dispute through the confidential exchange of factual statements and representations. According to Ademoyega, "between the months of August, 1966 and January, 1967, negotiations were instituted at various levels between Lagos and Enugu (Ademoyega, 1981:130)

Thus on 12 September, 1966 an ad-hoc constitutional conference made up of representatives from the four regions and Lagos, was called to search for a framework for a satisfactory constitution suitable for the nation. They were to deliberate on a political arrangement that will stabilise the country.

At the initial stage of the meeting, the East and the North favoured a non-federal arrangement of strong regions with its own army, Navy, police force, currency and freedom for secession. This system implied that the Centre would depend on the regions for its policies and actions. The west on its part opted for a true federation in which more states will be created with the powers to create its own armies and wealth on a commonwealth of autonomous four regions which will have wide powers delegating

only a few to the Centre. The air of discord already ravaging the country thus reared its ugly head once again. However, the mid-west opted for a federation of more states with a strong central government. This position of the mid-west has been described as the middle-ground-stand,, (Elaigwu 1986: 84). The federal Government opted for the Mid-west position and upheld federation as the system of government for Nigeria.

The meeting made the following recommendations:

1. Immediate steps should be taken to post military personnel to barracks within their respective regions of origin.
2. A meeting of this committee or an enlarged body should take place to recommend in a broad outline the form of political association which the country should adopt in the future
3. Immediate steps should be taken to nullify or modify any provisions of any decree which assumes extreme centralisation.
4. The Supreme Commander should make conditions suitable for a meeting of the Supreme Military Council urgently as a further means of lowering tension. (Obasanjo, 1980:7-8)

The first recommendation was implemented on 13 August 1966. Troops of Eastern Nigeria origin serving elsewhere in the country were officially and formally released and posted to Enugu, the capital of Eastern Region, while troops of non-Eastern origin in Enugu moved to Kaduna and Lagos. This marked the beginning of division and disunity within the rank and file of the Nigerian Armed Forces. "This simple and seemingly innocuous action broke the last thread and split the last institution symbolising Nigeria's nationhood and cohesion which had been regularly tampered with by the politicians since 1962. The rift between the Eastern Region and the rest of the country was total." Most of the civilians of Eastern Region origin who had never lived

in the East and would have continued to live elsewhere in the country lost confidence and moved to the East. Some of them when they arrived at their destination became refugees in their own country. None of the other recommendations was fully implemented except nullification of the unification decree. (Obasanjo, 1980:87)

However, as the conference was on, riot erupted in the north. This, once again, resulted in wide spread killing and destruction of the properties of the Igbo in the north. This time, the killing spread to other parts of northern Nigeria like Makurdi as against the major cities of Zaria and Kaduna during the May incident. The conference in Lagos began, but was soon postponed. The delegates came home to consult. Delegates from the North were warned against giving anything to the East, especially confederation. The Middle-Belt minorities too gave in to federalism (Forsyth, 1969). But the conference never had a chance to work out anything in the way of compromise or consensus. The last of the horrors of 1966 overtook it. What can only be fairly described as a massacre of the Igbo, and of other Easterners too, begun in the north at first slowly, the result of unruly military encouragement, it gathered a terrible momentum and ended in a final bloodbath in Kano in October.

According to Oyinbo (1980), earlier in September, there had been incidents of looting and killing in Kaduna, Minna, Makurdi, Jos and Gboko. On September 24, the Igbo chief warder in Kaduna prison was killed. Three days later, soldiers entered the barracks of the mobile police and killed an Igbo police officer and several Igbo policemen. The police had up to this point remained remarkably unaffected by the tensions in the country. The police headquarters decided to evacuate Igbo police from the North. On September 28, killings on a large scale began in Bauchi. The trouble spread to Jos, Zaria, Kaduna, Maiduguri and other towns in Bornu until most of the North were engulfed in it.

Apart from its size and intensity, the killing was different to that of May, in that it spread throughout the North except in the Yoruba areas of kabba and Ilorin provinces. The Middle-Belt may not have expressed their feelings in May, but they took revenge in September (Parrinton, 1980).

It must, however, be said that the Federal Government condemned the wanton Destruction of lives and properties of the igbo in its totality. The military Governor of the North, Lt-Colonel Hassan Katsina in particular was dismayed at the turn of events. This he affirmed in a meeting with northern leaders of thought on October 18, 1966.

The events of recent weeks in this region were indeed unprecedented both in their nature and their form. It is a matter of deep regret that the orderly progress of the Region should be disturbed on so large a scale in this way. (Jorre, 1972:92).

In spite of the feeble attempts made by the federal government to restore normalcy, the killing continued. In reaction, Lt. Colonel Ojukwu asked all easterners to return home. All non-easterners were ordered to vacate the region.

In view of the above highlighted scenario, the conference had to adjourn. When it resumed sitting in October, the East refused to be a part of any dialogue held outside the region. The reason for this was hinged on security and the safety of her citizens. All other effort made by the federal government in Nigeria to appease and conciliate Eastern region proved abortive. The East boycotted the October 23 constitutional conference. The efforts of the National Peace Committee to get Ojukwu to attend future meetings were not honored. The National Peace Committee, made up of eminent Nigerians, was established in April 1967 to help in finding solutions to the lingering problem. The Oba of Yoruba also visited the east as part of the effort to make peace. The outright refusal of the East to participate in any further deliberations signaled her readiness to seek for self- determination and the expected consequences. In a bid to

address the fear of insecurity expressed by the Easterners, a meeting was arranged by the Head of State of Ghana, Lt-General Ankrah for the Nigerian leaders. It was held in Aburi on the 4th and 5th of January, 1967.

4.2.4 The Aburi Meeting

The failure of dialogic and peaceful negotiations necessitated recourse to mediation through third party interventions. Mediation employs significant orders in the dialogue for mutual compromise, peace and security in the society. In other words, mediation was a conflict management strategy in the dispute (Yarn,1991:272). Obasanjo (1980) states that there were interventions by well-wishers of Nigeria. One of such interventions was the meeting at Aburi, Ghana. The Aburi meeting was intended to establish a basis of confidence necessary for the return of normalcy to the country. It was called to fill a deep political vacuum and to prevent the country from falling apart. it has been described as ‘a watershed in the Nigerian crises’ (Jorres, 1972). After deliberations in Aburi, it was agreed that the army would be reorganized and statics of existing strength prepared; that army personnel of Northern Nigeria origin stationed in the west and Mid-west would be returned to the north; that recruitment and training of soldiers of western Nigeria origin was also to begin; the announcement of the death of Major-General J.T.U. Aguiyi-ironsi and Lt-Col. Adekunle Fajuyi was also to be made; redefinition of the powers of the federal and regional government was also agreed to; it was also accepted that decrees tending towards centralisation would be abrogated; rehabilitation of displaced persons and recovery of their properties as well as the payment of salaries to fleeing workers from the east up to the 31st of March, 1967 was also endorsed .To have clearer and better understanding of the Aburi accord, a verbatim account of the proceedings is reproduced hereunder

The minutes of the meeting of the Supreme Military Council that was held in Ghana on the 4th-5th January, 1967 indicated that those who were at the Aburi meeting are:

Lt. Col. Yakubu Gowon: Head of the Federal Military Government.

Colonel Robert Adebayo: Military Governor (West).

Lt. Col. Odumegwu Ojukwu: Military Governor (East).

Lt. Col. David Ejoor: Military Governor (Mid-West).

Lt. Col. Hassan Katsina: Military Governor (North).

Commodore J. E. A. Wey: Head of the Navy.

Major Mobolaji Johnson: Military Administrator of Lagos.

Alhaji Kam Salem: Inspector General of Police.

Mr. J. Omo-Bare: Deputy Inspector General of Police.

Secretaries:

Mr. S. I. A. Akenzua: Permanent Under-Secretary, Federal.

Cabinet Office

Mr. P. T. Odumosu: Secretary to the Military Government, West.

Mr. N. U. Akpan: Secretary to the Military Government, East. Mr. D. P. Lawani: under-Secretary, Military Governor's Office, Mid-West.

Alhaji Ali Akilu: Secretary to the Military Government, North.

This supreme military council arrived at practical decisions on different issues that would have helped to resolve and stabilise the nation, such as the issues of importation of arms and resolution on the use of force, reorganisation of the army, non-recognition by the east of Lt. Col. Gowon as Supreme Commander, the powers of the Federal Military Government, vis-a-vis the Regional Governments, soldiers involved in disturbances on 15th January, 1966 and thereafter, and the problems of displaced persons. The following is a transcript of the meeting as it was opened by Lt. General J. A. Ankrah:



Figure:3 Lt. General Joseph A. Ankrah of Ghana
Source: Internet

Opening

1. The Chairman of the Ghana National Liberation Council, Lt. General J. A. Ankrah, declaring the meeting open, welcomed the visitors to Ghana and expressed delight that Ghana had been agreed upon by the Nigerian Military Leaders as the venue for this crucial meeting. He considered the whole matter to be the domestic affair of Nigeria, and as such, he refrained from dwelling on any specific points. The General, however, expressed the belief that the Nigerian problems were not such that cannot be easily resolved through patience, understanding and mutual respect. Throughout history, he said, there has been no failure of military statesmen and the eyes of the whole world were on the Nigerian army. He advised that soldiers are purely statesmen and not politicians and the Nigerian Military Leaders owe it as a responsibility to the fifty-six million people of Nigeria to successfully carry through their task of nation-building. Concluding, the General urged the Nigerian Leaders to bury their differences, forget the past and discuss their matter frankly, but patiently.
2. Lt. Col. Gowon invited the Nigerian Leaders to say a "joint thank you" to their host, and all said thank you in unison in response to Lt. General Ankrah's address. At this point, the General vacated the Conference table.

Importation of Arms and Resolution on the Use of Force

3. Lt. Col. Ojukwu spoke next. He said that the Agenda was acceptable to him subject to the comments he had made on some of the items. (A copy of the Agenda with Lt. Col. Ojukwu's comments is attached to these minutes as Annexure A.) Lt. Col. Ojukwu said that no useful purpose would be served by using the meeting as a cover for arms build-up and accused the Federal Military Government of having engaged in large-scale arms deals by sending Major

Apolo to negotiate for arms abroad. He alleged that the Federal Military Government recently paid £1 million for some arms bought from Italy and now stored up in Kaduna. Lt. Col. Ojukwu was reminded by the Military Governor, North and other members that the East was indulging in an arms build-up and that the plane carrying arms, which recently crashed on the Cameroons border was destined for Enugu. Lt. Col. Ojukwu denied both allegations. Concluding his remarks on arms build-up, Lt. Col. Ojukwu proposed that if the meeting was to make any progress, all the members must at the outset adopt a resolution to renounce the use of force in the settlement of Nigerian dispute.

4. Lt. Col. Gowon explained that as a former Chief of Staff, Army, he was aware of the deficiency in the country's arms and ammunition which needed replacement. Since the Defence Industries Corporation could not produce these, the only choice was the order from overseas and order was accordingly placed to the tune of £1 million. He said to the best of his knowledge the actual amount that had been paid out was only £80,000 for which he signed a cheque on behalf of the General Officer Commanding. The £80 million about which so much noise has been made was nothing, but a typographical error in the Customs in recording the payment of £80,000. As to why these arms were sent up to the North, Lt. Col. Gowon referred to lack of storage facilities in Lagos and reminded his Military Colleagues of the number of times arms and ammunition had been dumped in the sea. This was why, he said, it became necessary to use the better storage facilities in Kaduna. The arms and ammunition had not been distributed because they arrived only two weeks previously and have not yet been taken on charge. After exhaustive discussion to which all members contributed and during which Lt. Col. Ejoor pointed out that it would be

necessary to determine what arms and ammunition had arrived and what each unit of the Army had before any further distribution would take place, the Supreme Military Council unanimously adopted a Declaration proposed by Lt. Col. Ojukwu, that all members:

- (a) Renounce the use of force as a means of settling the Nigerian crisis;
- (b) Reaffirm their faith in discussions and negotiation as the only peaceful way of resolving the Nigerian crisis; and
- (c) Agree to exchange information on the quantity of arms and ammunition available in each unit of the Army in each Region and in the unallocated stores, and to share out such arms equitably to the various Commands;
- (d) Agree that there should be no more importation of arms and ammunition until normalcy was restored.

The full text of the Declaration which was signed by all members is attached as Annexure B to these minutes.

Reorganization of the Army

6. The Supreme Military Council, having acknowledged the fact that the series of disturbances since January 15th, 1966, have caused disunity in the Army resulting in lack of discipline and loss of public confidence, turned their attention to the question of how best the Army should be reorganised in order to restore that discipline and confidence. There was a lengthy discussion of the subject and when the arguments became high members retired into secret session. On their return they announced that agreement had been reached by them on the reorganisation, administration and control of the Army on the following lines:

- (a) Army to be governed by the Supreme Military Council under a chairman to be known as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and Head of the Federal Military Government.
 - (b) Establishment of a Military Headquarters comprising equal representation from the Regions and headed by a Chief of Staff.
 - (c) Creation of Area Commands corresponding to existing Regions and under the charge of Area Commanders.
 - (d) Matters of policy, including appointments and promotion to top executive posts in the Armed Forces and the Police to be dealt with by the Supreme Military Council
 - (e) During the period of the Military Government, Military Governors will have control over Area Commands for internal security.
 - (f) Creation of a Lagos Garrison including Ikeja Barracks.
7. In connection with the re-organisation of the Army, the Council discussed the distribution of Military personnel with particular reference to the present recruitment drive. The view was held that general recruitment throughout the country in the present situation would cause great imbalance in the distribution of soldiers. After a lengthy discussion of the subject, the Council agreed to set up a Military Committee, on which each Region will be represented, to prepare statistics which will show:
- (a) Present strength of Nigerian Army;
 - (b) Deficiency in each sector of each unit;
 - (c) The size appropriate for the country and each Area Command;
 - (d) Additional requirement for the Country and each Area Command.

The Committee is to meet and report to Council within two weeks from the date of receipt of instructions.

8. The Council agreed that pending completion of the exercise in paragraph 7, further recruitment of soldiers should cease.
9. In respect of item 3 (b) of the Agenda implementation of the agreement reached on 9th August, 1966, it was agreed after a lengthy discussion, that it was necessary for the agreement reached on 9th August by the delegates of the Regional Governments to be fully implemented. In particular, it was accepted in principle that army personnel of Northern origin should return to the North from the West. It was therefore felt that a crash programme of recruitment and training, the details of which would be further examined after the Committee to look into the strength and distribution of army personnel had reported, would be necessary to constitute indigenous army personnel in the West to a majority there quickly.

Non-Recognition by the East of Lt. Col. Gowon as Supreme Commander

10. The question of the non-recognition by the East of Lt. Col. Gowon as Supreme Commander and Head of the Federal Military Government was also exhaustively discussed. Lt. Col. Ojukwu based his objection on the fact, inter alia, that no one can properly assume the position of Supreme Commander until the whereabouts of the former Supreme Commander, Major-General Aguiyi-Ironsi, was known. He, therefore, asked that the country be informed of the whereabouts of the Major-General and added that in his view, it was impossible, in the present circumstances, for anyone person to assume any effective central command of the Nigerian Army. Lt. Col. Ejoor enunciated four

principles to guide the meeting in formulating an answer to the question of who should be Supreme Commander. These were the:

- (a) Problem of effective leadership;
- (b) Crisis of confidence in the Army;
- (c) Disruption in the present chain of Command;
- (d) Inability of any soldier to serve effectively in any unit anywhere in the country.

Lt. Col. Gowon replied that he was quite prepared to make an announcement on the matter and regretted that a formal announcement had been delayed for so long, but the delay was originally intended to allow time for tempers to cool down. He reminded his colleagues that they already had the information in confidence. After further discussion and following the insistence by Lt. Col. Ojukwu that Lt. Col. Gowon should inform members of what happened to the former Supreme Commander, members retired into secret session and subsequently returned to continue with the meeting after having reached an agreement among themselves.

11. At this point, the meeting adjourned until Thursday, 5th January. The *Communique* issued at the end of the first day's sitting is attached as Annexure D.

The Powers of the Federal Military Government, Vis-A- Vis the Regional Governments

12. When the meeting resumed on the 5th January, it proceeded to consider the form of Government best suited to Nigeria in view of what the country has experienced in the past year (1966). Members agreed that the legislative and executive authority of the Federal Military Government should remain in the Supreme Military Council to which any decision affecting the whole country

shall be referred for determination provided that where it is not possible for a meeting to be held, the matter requiring determination must be referred to Military Governors for their comment and concurrence. Specifically, the Council agreed that appointments to senior ranks in the Police, Diplomatic and Consular Services as well as appointments to super-scale posts in the Federal Civil Service and the equivalent posts in Statutory Corporations must be approved by the Supreme Military Council.

The Regional members felt that all the Decrees or provisions of Decrees passed since 15th January, 1966, and which detracted from the previous powers and positions of Regional Governments should be repealed if mutual confidence is to be restored. After this issue had been discussed at some length, the Council took the following decisions:

The council decided that:

- i. On the reorganisation of the Army:
 - (a) Army to be governed by the Supreme Military Council under a Chairman to be known as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and Head of the Federal Military Government.
 - (b) Establishment of a Military Headquarters comprising equal representation from the Regions and headed by a Chief of Staff.
 - (c) Creation of Area Commands corresponding to existing Regions and under the charge of Area Commanders.
 - (d) Matters of policy, including appointments and promotion to top executive posts in the Armed Forces and, the Police to be dealt with by the Supreme Military Council.

- (e) During the period of the Military Government, Military Governors will have control over Area Commands for internal security.
- (f) Creation of a Lagos Garrison including Ikeja Barracks.
- (ii) On appointment to certain posts:
The following appointments must be approved by Supreme- Military Council:
 - (a) Diplomatic and Consular posts.
 - (b) Senior posts in the Armed Forces and the Police.
 - (c) Super-scale Federal Civil Service and Federal Corporation posts;
- (iii) On the functioning of the Supreme Military Council-Any decision affecting the whole country must be determined by the Supreme Military Council. Where a meeting is not possible, such a matter must be referred to Military Governors for comment and concurrence;
- (iv) That all the Law Officers of the Federation should meet in Benin on the 14th January and list out all the Decrees and provisions of Decrees concerned so that they may be repealed not later than 21st January if possible;
- (v) That for at least the next six months, there should be purely a Military Government, having nothing to do whatever with politicians

A statement on the Supreme Military Council is attached as Annexure C.

Soldiers Involved in Disturbances on 15th January, 1966 and Thereafter

13. Members expressed view about the future of those who have been detained in connection with all the disturbances since 15th January, 1966, and agreed that the fate of soldiers involved should be determined not later than end of January, 1967.

Ad Hoc Constitutional Conference

14. The Council next considered the question of the resumption of the Ad Hoc Constitution Committee and the acceptance of that Committee's recommendations of September, 1966. After some exchange of views, it was agreed that the Ad Hoc Committee should resume sitting as soon as practicable to begin from where they left off, and that the question of accepting the unanimous recommendations of September, 1966 be considered at a later meeting of the Supreme Military Council.

The Problems of Displaced Persons

15. The Council considered exhaustively the problems of displaced persons, with particular reference to their rehabilitation, employment and property. The view was expressed and generally accepted that the Federal Government ought to take the lead in establishing a National Body which will be responsible for raising and making appeal for funds. Lt. Col. Ojukwu made the point, which was accepted by Lt. Col. Katsina, that in the present situation, the intermingling of Easterners and Northerners was not feasible. After each Military Governor had discussed these problems as they affected his area, the Council agreed:

- (a) On rehabilitation, that Finance Permanent Secretaries should resume their meeting within two weeks and submit recommendations and that each Region should send three representatives to the meeting;
- (b) On employment and recovery of property, that civil servants and Corporation staff (including daily-paid employees) who have not been absorbed should come to be paid their full salaries until 31st March, 1967 provided they have not got alternative employment, and that the Military Governors of the East, West and Mid-West should send

representatives (Police Commissioners) to meet and discuss the problem of recovery of property left behind by displaced persons. Lt. Col. Ejoor disclosed that the employment situation in his Region was so acute that he had no alternative, but to ask non-Mid-Westerners working in the private sector in his Region to quit and make room for Mid-Westerners repatriated from elsewhere. Lt. Col. Ojukwu stated that, he fully appreciated the problem faced by both, the Military Governor, West and the Military Governor, Mid-West, in this matter and that if in the last resort, either of them had to send the Easterners concerned back to the East, he would understand, much as the action would further complicate the resettlement problem in the East. He assured Council that his order that non-Easterners should leave the Eastern Region would be kept under constant review with a view to its being lifted as soon as practicable.

16. On the question of future meetings of the Supreme Military Council, members agreed that future meetings will be held in Nigeria at a venue to be mutually agreed.
17. On the question of Government information media, the Council agreed that all Government information media should be restrained from making inflammatory statements and causing embarrassment to various Governments in the Federation.
18. There were other matters not on the Agenda which were also considered among which were the forms of Government for Nigeria (reported in paragraph 12 above) and the disruption of the country's economy by the lack of movement of rail and road transport, which the Regional Governors agreed to look into.

19. The meeting began and ended in a most cordial atmosphere and members unanimously issued a second and final *communiqué* a copy of which is attached to these minutes as Annexure E.
20. In his closing remarks, the Chairman of the Ghana National Liberation Council expressed his pleasure at the successful outcome of the meeting. The successful outcome of the meeting was then toasted with champagne and the Nigerians took leave of the Ghanaians.
21. The proceedings of the meeting were reported verbatim for each Regional Government and the Federal Government by their respective official reporters and tape-recorded versions were distributed to each Government. (Aburi Accord, 1967).

Whereas, it could be taken that the agreement reached in Aburi seemed laudable and a concrete step towards peace, the conflicting interpretations given to the content and context of the dotted lines by some of the federal government permanent secretaries when the delegates arrived Nigeria drove the country further away from peace and unity. In a pre-emptive move to forestall a distortion by the federal government, Ojukwu announced the verbatim agreements reached in Aburi on the 25th of February, 1967. He made clear his readiness to take a unilateral action to implement his own understanding of the decision reached at Aburi by 31st March, 1967, which was the end of the financial year, 1966. He threatened to carry out this action if the federal government was not willing to abide by the agreements. According to Kirk-Greene (1982), the federal government opposed this move by Ojukwu, insisting that it was never intended that any military governor should have the power to veto the decision of the supreme council. By this statement, Gowon was referring to the decision reached in

Benin on the 10th of March by the Supreme Military Council. Those decisions resulted in the promulgation of Decree 8 of 1967.

It is instructive to note that when the Nigerian leaders returned from Ghana, the supreme military council met in Benin to ratify the decision reached in Aburi, the East was not in the meeting having stated its intention earlier on to stay away from any such meetings held outside its region. In that meeting, according to Jorres, a clause was enshrined which restricted military governors from acting on the decisions reached at Aburi. The federal military government was also empowered to declare a state of emergency anywhere in the country if occasion warrants with the consent of at least three of the regions. This was decided in anticipation that Ojukwu would likely be absent from the meeting and any decision taken by the majority would be binding on him. The decree was, however, rejected by the eastern region. In fulfilment of its threat, on the 31st of March, the eastern region issued an edict appropriating all federal revenue in the East. Other edicts, which took the Railway Corporation, rolling stock, schools and courts followed (copy of edict attached). By this time, the East was rapidly drifting apart from the rest of the country. With its own armed forces and revenue, secession was eminent.

To maintain the status quo, the federal Government responded with economic blockade against the East (Aneke, 2007). Chief Obafemi Awolowo led a four man delegation to Enugu on the 7th of May to confer with Ojukwu on the need to attend a conciliation meeting. The mission failed because Ojukwu dismissed the proposal as ill-convinced (Awolowo, 1981:26-27). On the 27th of May, 1967, immediately after this pronouncement, the consultative Assembly of eastern region mandated the Administrator-Ojukwu-to declare the sovereign Republic of Biafra at any early practiceable date (Achuzia,1986). In his position as the supreme commander, Gowon

declared a state of emergency over the eastern region. He abrogated Decree No.8 and divided the nation into twelve states. Eliagwu (1986) calls this action Gowon's *coup*. The Eastern region was divided into three states, namely; the East Central, the South - Eastern and River States. The Igbo were cramped into the landlocked East Central State. Elaigwu argues that apart from severing any co-operation between the Igbo and Ijaw, Efik and Ibibio of the oil-rich territories of the former eastern region, the main reason for the creation of states was to deny the Igbo access to the sea in order to thwart any attempt at secession.

On 30th May, Ojukwu declared the Eastern Region an independent state with the title and name of THE REPUBLIC OF BIAFRA. In a broadcast to the people, Ojukwu declared that:

The Territory and Region known as Eastern Nigeria together with her continental shelves and territorial waters, shall henceforth be an independent sovereign State of the name and title, the Republic of Biafra

With the declaration of Biafra, the battle line was drawn. June was a quiet month with little contact between the two sides, except across the river Niger. The Mid-west, with its substantial Igbo population, kept up open trade with Biafra. However, on July 6, hostilities began, which were to last thirty months. Initially, the federal Government referred to the conflict as a 'police action' and played down the seriousness of the situation. It was after the mid-west invasion by the Biafran forces on the 9th of August that a full military action was initiated against Biafra. It was the invasion of the Mid-West that drove the Yoruba out of the fence and united her with the rest of Nigeria in the fight to keep Nigeria one (Aneke, 2007).

4.3 War-Time Conflict Management Strategies

4.3.1 Confrontation: The War Proper

The failure of the various negotiations and mediations through third party intervention left Ojukwu and Gowon with only one option, which is secession and consequently war or simply the use of violent confrontation to settle their dispute. Depending on the side of the author, there are different claims as to who fired the first shot that marked the beginning of hostilities in the Nigeria/Biafra war. One thing, however, was clear, that is, the direction of attack. The expected course of assault was dictated by such factors as the existing feud between the Igbo and Hausa, The sour relationship between these two became manifest in the first and second coups of 1966. Other factors included the neutrality of the mid-west region and the west's indecision. There was also the concentration of troops and logistic support in the North. Finally, the absence of major obstacles along the borders between the east and the north gave clue to a probable route of aggression (Ademoyega, 1981, Orjinta, 1968, Elaigwu, 1985, Obasanjo, 1980).

In anticipation of this, Biafra mobilised heavily along its border with the north. When military offensive against Biafra eventually started on the 6th of July, 1967, it took off from Garkem, a border town between the present day Benue and Enugu states. By this time, the secessionist bid of the Eastern region was seen by the federal government as a rebellion and an internal insurrection. It was also seen as a minor problem in the form of a misunderstanding between two brothers in a family. A strategy of limited offensive necessary for the maintenance of internal security was thus adopted to quell the revolt. The operation was regarded as a "police action" and code-named "UNICORD", which implied the mending of a broken cord. The aim of being to bound the nation together. At the early stages of the war, strict rules of

engagement was released to the armed forces directing them to seize Ojukwu and his supporters, while taking great care not to injure or embarrass the people of the area. The field commanders in turn ordered the troops to seek and arrest rebellious soldiers. They were mandated to protect and defend the civil population. If soldiers surrendered, they were not to be harmed. By this move, the Federal government gave the impression that she was not out to annihilate or exterminate the people of the eastern region (Aneke, 2007)

The federal government launched the police action believing that the conflict would be resolved in a matter of days. It was also intended to demonstrate the federal government's ability to subdue Biafra's military in the case of total outbreak of war. The police action thus became a dress rehearsal of what to expect should war eventually ensue between the two sides. The police action was launched on two fronts: from the south of Nigeria to the North of Biafra and from the North of Nigeria to the south of Biafra thereby creating an enclave. The objective was to capture Enugu, the capital of Biafra, and the University town of Nsukka and from there launch the economic aspect of the plan which was to deal with the capture of the Bonny oil terminal. It was assumed that the capture of the key towns, and the Bonny oil terminals which was the economic stronghold of the Biafra would bring the rebellion to an end. The operation order for the capture of Enugu was to be through Obollo-Eke-Okutu-Oturkpo road while the initiative against Nsukka moved along two fronts: Ankpa-Ogugu-Enugu Ezike and the Idah-Adoru-Okutu fronts (Madiebo, 1980)

According to Madiebo, the task of this operation fell on the 1 sector of the 1 Division of the Nigerian Army commanded by Lt. Col. Muhammadu Shuwa. The sector covered Benue-Plateau border with the East-Central state. It was the 2 sector that started the advance into Biafra from Ogoja and Obudu.

To accomplish the aim of the police action, six battalion federal troops advanced on two fronts into Biafra using artillery and heavy mortars. Bombardment was heavy and sustained. Federal troops rained bullets in all direction destroying whatever was on their way so as to enforce compliance by intimidation. As towns and villages fell to the federal troops, the people sought refuge in the bushes. While federal troops came with armored cars, artillery and heavy machine guns, Biafran troops lacked what was needed to halt the Nigerian soldiers. Biafran soldiers employed mainly short guns and machetes provided by the populace (Achebe, 2012). As federal forces intensified their efforts, Garkem, Obudu and Ogoja fell on the 11th of July, 1967. Nsukka fell on the 15th. The capture of Nsukka threatened the capital Enugu. The importance of Enugu informed the determination of Biafra to defend it.

Out of desperation to save Enugu and to release the tension in a shrinking Biafra, the mid-western Region was invaded by Biafran troops on 9 August, 1967. They got to as far as Ore where the advance was stalled. The essence of this move was to get to precipitate a war for all situations. The reason for the inability of Biafran troops to continue to Lagos has since become a subject of controversy. According to Ademoyega, “the disagreement between Banjo and Ojukwu over the appointment of the administrator of the newly created “Republic of Benin” was a significant cause of the delay”. However, in the opinion of Bola Ige (1995), it was as a result of a second thought by Banjo who wanted to plot another plan different from the Biafran motive. Whatever the *raison d’etre*, it brought about a great set back in Biafra’s fight for session. The interlude disorganised Biafra and its leadership and brought about the canker worm known as *sabotage*, which ultimately destroyed the Biafran fabric (Ottah, 1985).

The invasion of the mid-west by Biafra six weeks into hostilities led to a change of strategy by the Federal government and the declaration of total war. It also led to the re-organisation of the Nigerian army and the creation of the 2 Division of the Nigerian army, under the command of Colonel Murtala Muhammed. The creation of the 2 division brought about an additional sector – the western sector-into the grand strategy of the federal government which was to encircle the seceding Eastern Nigeria. The western sector was entirely the direct responsibility of the 2 Division which had the task of curtailing Biafra's advance into the west and Lagos, thus by August, 1967, the Nigerian army was made up of three divisions and the war fought on three sectors, namely:

- Division 1 commanded by Muhamadu Shuwa and fighting from the Northern sector.
- Division 2 commanded by Murtala Mohammed and fighting from the western sector.
- Division 3 also known as 3 marine commando commanded by Benjamin Adekunle and fighting from the southern sector.

The Mid-western invasion also awakened the West whose position had been that of indifference. The West now felt threatened and began to react. Lieutenant Colonel Obasanjo. Commander, 2 Area command in Ibadan, and the Governor of the west, Colonel R.A. Adebayo, began to resist the invasion. A company of western command led by Captain Olu Bajowa was deployed to Okitipupa to protect the border between the west and the Mid-west. The Western Regional Ministry of works in Ibadan was also sent to blow up the bridge at Ore to halt the Biafran advance (Momoh, 2000). A counter attack was initiated that made sure Biafran could not proceed beyond Ore. Biafran troops were eventually driven back to Onitsha.

The Nigerian Government had by this reorganisation ordered an all-out war against the rebels. Full scale war had started and Biafra must be subdued by all available means. Weapons of high destructive capacity were imported in large quantities and the army reorganised to meet the changing needs of the conflict. With the takeover of Benin by Banjo's "Liberation Army" and the invasion of the rest of the Mid-west which saw the occupation of Asaba and Abgor and the falling out of Biafran troops north-ward to Ubiaja, Auchi and Okpella, and west-wards towards Sapele, Ugheli and Warri as well as pushing to Ore and Ijebu-Ode, physical confrontation became the only available option if the territorial integrity of Nigeria was to be maintained.

The massive importation of weapons by the Nigerian government showed the difference between a country prepared for war and one not militarily ready for conflict. While federal troops marched on Biafran soil with modern arsenal, Madiebo noted that, "the Biafran troops depended much on what they could capture from the federal troops in areas where they had upper hand temporarily". He also pointed out that poor management of the meager resources, in terms of equipment, materials and cash by the Biafran leader, worsened the situation.

The willingness of Biafran youths to fight for the nation not minding all the inadequacies of their leaders were of tremendous value to the course of the war.

At the initial stage of hostilities, the operation was north/south bound undertaken mainly by troops of the 1 Division. The invasion of the mid-west necessitated the opening of the western front. The idea of a southern front came up when it became clear that there was a need to bottle up Biafra if Nigeria was to remain one. The blockade of the southern Atlantic coast line prevented Biafra from getting the much-needed supplies to sustain her war efforts and to secure Nigeria's oil installations

and shipping activities which was one of the strategies of the federal government. However, the blockade alone was not sufficient to secure the area and the economic life-line of the country. It was to physically dominate the main-land area to the south, particularly the strategic cities of Port-Harcourt, Calabar and indeed the southern coastal belt stretching to the Delta areas of the mid-west that the 3 Division otherwise called the 3 Marine Commando was established (Alabi-Isama, 2013)

Narrating further, Alabi-Isama contended that military activities in this sector started on 24 July, 1967 and by the 27 July, the entire Bonny Island had been taken and cleared. Strategically, Bonny was the most important town in the southern coastal belt, not only because of its access to Port-Harcourt, but also because of the numerous rivers and creeks that straddle the area. These factors underscored the necessity of the federal troops to dominate the Bonny area if Biafra was not to take over the area vis-à-vis Oron and Calabar, which also made Bonny the most attractive first staging post for the commencement of battle in the southern sector.

Throughout the operations, the Bonny community co-operated with the federal forces as was the case in all non-Igbo speaking areas of the former eastern region. This understanding between the non- Igbo speaking people of the Eastern region and federal troops, largely accounted for the success of the 3 Marine Commando under Benjamin Adekunle, in the same way it helped Murtala Mohammed in the mid-west before Asaba area, until the Division moved towards the core Igbo areas of Owerri, Aba and Umuahia where it met stiff resistance. With the capture of Bonny, the 3 Marine Commando was expanded to meet challenges of liberating Calabar and Port-Harcourt. On 18 October, 1967, Calabar was liberated. Port-Harcourt was captured 19 May 1968. The collapse of Port-Harcourt meant the loss of harbor facilities and the airport of the city. The capture of Port-Harcourt also coincided with

the fall of such towns as Azumini, Obigbo, Brass and Nembe. Okoloma Power House, Umuabyi fell before the end of June, 1968. By the end of July, Agwa, Rumji, Oloibiri and Ahoada had fallen. Thus, with the capture of Port-Harcourt, most of the southern coastal belt and the Mid-West Delta area had been liberated. At this stage, what was left of Biafra was the core Igbo area (Alabi-isama, 2013)

The period between November, 1967 and January, 1969 saw the massive expansion of the 3 Marine Commando in the hope of linking up with the 1 and 2 Divisions as part of the overall plan of bottling up Biafra. On 4 September, 1968, the 3 Marine Commando pushed to Aba and took the market city. Oguta was taken 12 September, 1968, it was eventually lost to federal troops on 8 January, 1970, few days before the end of the war. Umuahia was captured 31 December, 1969. Orlu and Ihialla were captured 8 January, 1970. The capture of Ihialla meant the closure of the Uli-Ihialla airstrip, which was the only link Biafra had with the rest of the world. It was through airstrip that most of the goods and amenities used by Biafra in the fight for secession were smuggled in (Madiebo, 1980)

In terms of combat operations, it must be stated that comparatively better equipped Nigerian army unleashed serious killing and maiming of the poorly armed Biafran soldiers. The Nigerian Air force also embarked on massive and persistent indiscriminate bombings on the population. Most of these raids were concentrated on civilian population including hospitals and markets. The result was the death of thousands of people, both soldiers and civilians.

However, in order to give some element of human face to the activities of the Nigerian armed forces, Gowon averred that:

Ojukwu is a very proud man and making peace with me is probably the last thing he will do. I hope he will save me that and do as Hitler did. I am as concerned about relieving the suffering of these innocent people as anyone. I was in

Congo and saw the suffering there and you can see why I am so against rebellion.(Agence France-Presse, August 27,1968)

4.3.2. Conflict Management Efforts During the War

In the course of the war, other efforts were made to bring the conflict to an early end and to keep Nigeria one. A number of meetings were held by various groups and associations geared towards bringing about peace in Nigeria. The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) formed a consultative peace committee in September, 1967 at the summit in Kinshasa, Congo. The committee was headed by Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia. Its mandate was to examine the issues in the Nigerian conflict. After its deliberation, the committee recommended the abnegation of secession and the incident of the 12 state structure of the federal government.

The commonwealth Secretariat also made an effort in bringing an end to the Nigerian crises. In his capacity as the secretary, Mr. Arnold smith organised a preliminary meeting on the Nigerian debacle in London in April 1968. At the end of deliberations, the idea of reconciliation by wheeling and dealings was accepted. It must be pointed out, however, that the Biafran government was not comfortable with the London position and did not see the possibility of fruitful armistice in the London chat. Biafra saw Britain as an unfriendly ally because of the support for Nigeria. On this ground, she objected to any talk holding in London. Kampala was thereafter adopted as the venue for the dialogue. On 31 May, 1968, following a request by Biafra, a meeting was held in Kampala. It had a joint chairmanship of the Commonwealth Secretary General and the Ugandan Foreign Minister. The gathering was marred by disagreement. While the federal government represented by the Commissioner for Information, Anthony Enahoro, wanted the renunciation of secession and acceptance of the twelve-state arrangement, Biafran spokesmen asked for a halt in hostility as a

condition for deliberations. In the words of Louis Mbannefo, leader of the Biafran delegation - “we have not come all the way from Biafra simply to sign an act of surrender in distant Kampala” (Kirk-Greene, 1970).

The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) held a conference in July, 1968. In that conference, two groups concurred to deliberate on the Nigerian-Biafran problem in Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia from 4th to 6th August. The leader of the warring parties in Nigeria were invited and mandated to lead their delegates. Unfortunately, the Nigerian leader, Yakubu Gowon was not able to attend. The Biafran leader, Ojukwu, who led the eastern delegations was disappointed at the absence of Gowon and refused to talk. The meeting ended without any meaningful resolution. In April, 1969, Gowon’s wedding celebration disrupted the peace meeting scheduled for that month. The Biafran leader equally boycotted the meeting. Several other peace initiatives by both government and non-government bodies failed. One significant factor in the collapse of these peace efforts was the stand of the belligerents. While Biafra canvassed for cessation of hostilities before negotiation, the federal government wanted a negotiation based on the recommendation of the O.A.U., which included the maintenance of the unity and territorial integrity of Nigeria within the framework of the twelve-state structure. This tough position by both parties wasted the efforts at peace.

Eminent individuals, both locally and internationally, also tried to bring about peace in Nigeria. Prominent among them was Mr. Maurice Foley, an officer of the Commonwealth in 1968. Lord Fenner Brockway, the British party member, contributed to the efforts. The Afro-Malagasy common Organisation (OCAM) also made an attempt. In February 1969, Obafemi Awolowo led a delegation to London to further seek ways of ending the Nigerian crises. In spite of all these, a peaceable resolution was never found to the Nigerian problem. Peace was eventually imposed by

the superiority of arms by one over the other. In the words of Obasanjo (1980), “the unconditional surrender of Biafra is not to be negotiated or we go back to the battlefield”

4.3.3 The Creation of States and Economic Blockade

The failure of the various efforts at keeping Nigeria one, which included the different peace meetings that ended with the Aburi Conference in April, 1967 necessitated the need for a lasting solution if Nigeria was to remain a united country. That trump card was the division of the country into twelve states. On May 27, 1967, in keeping with his earlier pronouncement, the head of the Nigerian government, General Yakubu Gowon, restructured the country into twelve states. In the new restructuring, eastern region was broken up into three states, namely, South-Eastern, Rivers and East Central states. The implication of this action is to be appreciated in the fact that it separated the Igbo of the East-Central state, who were seen as the core agitators for the secessionist state of Biafra from the Calabar and Ogoja of the south-Eastern state and the rivers which completed the C.O.R states. In this sense, the creation of states became parts of the general conflict management strategy of the Nigerian government for securing the territorial integrity and national unity of Nigeria. The consensus of opinion was that the creation of states would bring a real sense of belonging to the various people who make up the Nigerian community. As such, it became a significant milestone in the search for full nationhood and balanced development.

Historically, the issue of state creation in Nigeria dates back to 1952. With the adoption of a federal structure for Nigeria in 1952, it became quite logical for the non-Igbo peoples of the Eastern region to demand for a separate constitutional identity within the Nigerian federation. This desire turned into a burning political issue in 1953.

The call for separate state soon formed part of the general federalist movement that swept the entire country – a movement that sought to hold the nation together through the building of a true federalism in place of the unusual imbalance that characterised the first Republic. Thus, from its very early days, the state movement in the South-East contained two tendencies. One was isolation in terms of Nigeria and saw the creation of states as an end in itself. The other trend was nationalist and saw the creation of more states as a means to an end – the end being a stable nation in which ethnic harmony would prove the steady minds in the sails of progress. (New Nigeria Newspaper, July 11, 1969)

The earliest cry of the states' movement was for a C.O.R. state. These initials represent a former Calabar, Ogoja, and Rivers provinces, area wholly and largely inhabited by the non-Igbo people of the former Eastern region. It showed that the creation of more states within the Nigerian federation was not just a concern to the ethnic minorities alone, but also to the entire nation. Hence, it became a problem to be handled within the context of the policies of the country. Consequently, the matter featured prominently in the constitutional conferences held both in London and Lagos between 1953 and 1958. The climax came in the London constitutional conference of 1957 at which it was agreed that a commission be set up to study and report on the minorities' problem. Concomitant upon this decision, Mr. AT. Lennox-Boyd, the secretary of states for the colonies and chairman of the conference on the Nigerian constitution, set up Willinck Commission (Daily Times, April 28, 1969). This commission found out that ethnic minorities of Nigeria had genuine fears which needed to be allayed. However, it felt the problem was best dealt with by provision for fundamental human rights in the Nigerian Constitution. It also recommended the setting up of minority areas for the Calabar province and the Mid-West and a

Development Board for the Niger-Delta area. The commission did not, however, think that the United Belt Congress's (UMBC) demand for a Middle Belt State was strong enough to warrant any action.

The ethnic minorities of the former Eastern region had sought a distinct identity within the Nigerian federation because they see this as the only road to a fair rate of general development and a concrete step to the elimination of the domination by the majority Igbo. Self-determination was, therefore, seen as a means of self-realisation. It climaxed over fifteen years of protracted struggle by the ethnic minorities of the former Eastern region for self-determination to materialise. Whatever the precise reasons for the creation of states on the eve of war, Nigeria can never be the same again. For, the breakup of the great Northern Region and the division of the East permanently altered the political map. In fact, it changed everything and with one stroke conceded in effect what Eastern regional leaders had long wanted – the end of the inevitable political domination of the federation by North.

As a strategy of deterrence, therefore, by cramping the Igbo into one state, the federal government was able to create enmity between the Igbo and the minorities who had always wanted to be independent of a perceived Igbo domination of the region. This fear of domination was confirmed by the statement of one of the leading figures of the South-Eastern state after the creation of the twelve states by the Nigerian government. In the euphoria of freedom and liberty, Okoi Arikpo stated that:

As far as people are concerned, the creation of south-Eastern state which comprises the Ibibios, Efiks, Oron, Annangs, and Ekois, all non-Igbo ethnic groups, ... is the greatest achievement of the military government ... our demand for self-determination and a separate autonomous state was motivated by the discriminatory and selfish methods adopted by the Igbos in an outside Government against us and the other non-Igbo people of the former Eastern Region ... we do not want to be dominated or governed by the Igbo. Kirk-Greene (1971).

By the creation of the twelve states and the statements by prominent members of the newly created south-eastern state, it meant that Biafra had become an enclave; a state carved out specifically for the Igbo so that in the case of war, the Nigerian government would have a target for destruction. When Ojukwu made good his intension to pull the eastern region out of Nigeria on May 30, 1967, his action was seen as being against the wishes of the two new states who were in fact sympathetic to the federal government. It was, therefore, easy for the federal government to blockade the territory now known as Biafra by land, air and sea. As a matter of fact, the lines of these two new states formed the path of the physical isolation of Biafra. The lines of the two new states, River and south-Eastern, showed the route of the physical isolation of Biafra (Obasanjo, 1981).

It must be pointed out here that it was the belief of the supreme military council that the creation of states would help to stabilise the Nigerian polity, while reducing the powers of the regions that tended to encourage secession.

With the creation of the twelve states, and the support given to the federal government by the people of the South East and River states, and with the mass of the nation's oil potential in their domain, the "confidence that the federation can economically sustain a war indefinitely was heightened. It was probably the realisation that swelling oil revenues were the main reason for federal confidence that persuaded Biafra to adopt the policy of terrorising the oil companies, and to concentrate military on a drive to the oil areas of the south.

The import of the creation of the twelve states meant the repealing of decree No. 8 of 1966, which tended to "over centralize" the country. Meanwhile, the division of the eastern region into three viz: East-central state, South-Eastern and Rivers state

had separated the minorities from their Igbo speaking brothers who constituted the “majority” in the old Eastern region and who were seen as the ones clamouring for secession of the region. By bringing out Calabar and Ogoja to form the nucleus of the new South-Eastern state and port-Harcourt as the heart of the Rivers state, the federal government destroyed what would have been a corporate will of the people. By this act, the federal government set the minorities’ in the region against the ‘majority ‘; which paid off handsomely as shown in the cooperation the Nigerian government received from these eastern minorities before and during the war period. When Ogoja was liberated in July 1967, few days after the outbreak of war, the indigenes of the area became very hostile to Biafrans and also attacked those of their kinsmen suspected to be sympathetic to the Biafran cause (Alabi-Isama, 2013). Thus, the twelve states structure created division, distrust, and disunity among the people of eastern Nigeria, so that the concept of a sovereign Biafra would be, and was eventually defeated.

The most important consequence of the creation of the twelve states on Biafra was the loss of access to the seas and water-ways of the two newly created states as well as the fertile lands of the South-Eastern state. Biafra also lost the oil wells of the rivers states. It, therefore, implied that even before the outbreak of the war Biafra had been reduced to an impoverished, landlocked and over-populated domain, which, apart from the suffering imposed on the people, also limited its capacity to wage a successful war (Kirk-Greene,1971)

Apart from this, Kirk-Greene had observed that following an influx of refugees into Enugu in the early days of conflict, the demand for food became overstretched leading to ...villages... farms and barns completely looted. The situation was so serious that by June 1968, Leslie Kirly, the British Director of Oxfam had warned that:

‘... were food not supplied. Biafran children numbering 400,000 would die in six weeks’ (Nwolise, 1983). The issue of hunger as a result of the loss of the fertile lands of the South-Eastern state got to its climax in November, 1969, few months to the end of the war when; “the Biafran Armed forces were no longer able to feed themselves” (Forsyth, 1969). The physical isolation of Biafra was eventually and completely effected by a military operation at the outbreak of war, which sought to cut Biafra off along the lines of the newly created Rivers and South –East states. This also formed the basis of the economic isolation of Biafra with its own attendant problems. The physical isolation of Biafra ensured that the vital link between her and other Nigerians, as well as any relationship with other countries of the world was broken.

To further destroy the socio-economic activities and viability of the Republic of Biafra, the federal government stopped all allocation meant for the east. A devastating policy of sanctions and economic blockade was clamped down on the region as announced on 30 April, 1967. According to Uwechue (1969) before then, on 3rd March, 1967, the federal government withdrew Nigerian passports held by the Igbo people and several nations were induced not to permit them to enter their countries. This strategy compounded the economic woes of eastern Nigeria and her citizens. Many prominent citizens of the region who could have influenced things abroad were not allowed to travel out of Nigeria and where they managed to travel out, were refused entry by most countries of the world due to lack of adequate travel documents and the non-recognition of the state of Biafra. Apart from the ban, the Nigerian currency was changed consequent upon which Nigerian currency notes in banks operating in eastern Nigeria were made valueless and worthless. The result of this was that, aside the fact that it reduced to zero meaningful economic activities in Igboland, it also denied the East, the foreign exchange she needed to buy arms and

ammunitions when she eventually decided to secede (Nzimaro, 1984). Further sanctions were also imposed on the eastern region. They included the suspension of all postal and money order transactions between the eastern region and the rest of Nigeria. Also, bank deposits made in Eastern Nigeria after 31 March, 1967, were cancelled. Again, any withdrawal either on demand or by warrant affecting such deposits was not to be honoured at any post office in Nigeria. In addition to all these, was one that said, “no saving-stamp, certificates and premium bonds sold in eastern Nigeria from April 1, 1967, were to be honoured” (Jorres, 1971).

In continuation of sanctions against the East, Nigerian stamps, money and postal orders were banned from circulation in the East-central state now known as Biafra. In his reaction to the effect of the physical isolation of Biafra and the destruction of any link between her and other parts of Nigeria and the wider world, Ojukwu complained thus:

Gowon informed major world and African powers that his actions against us were an internal affair, and that their intervention would be regarded as a hostile act against Nigeria. He sealed off our border with the Republic of Cameroon and closed that republic's consulate in Enugu. Gowon cancelled the passports of all our people who transferred from the federal public service to our public service (Kirk-Greene, 1970)

On the effect of the economic sanctions and blockade on Biafra, Ojukwu further stated:

Gowon imposed a total economic blockade on us; suspended Nigeria Airways flight to our territory; closed all our Airports to traffic; froze all our assets in Nigeria; froze all the assets we jointly owned with Nigerians abroad, and withdraw all foreign exchange facilities from us, Gowon closed all our seaports to shipping, and banned all export Produce other than through the Nigeria produce Marketing Company in Lagos.

Igbo land was also cut off from the international community. The post and telecommunications (P AND T) department in Lagos ceased all cable, radio and telephone messages from the East. In order to get or send messages out of Eastern Nigeria, the government and people of the region had to use either Douala, capital of western Cameroon or the Spanish island of Fernando Po (Daily Times, April 21,1967). The attempt by the east to register with the international Telecommunication Union and the International Frequency Registration Board based in Geneva was not successful because she was not recognised as a sovereign state by most countries of the world, which was a prerequisite for such approval. The end of all these was to hinder the freedom to conduct financial dealings with the outside world. The effect of these sanctions on the Igbo man can only be imagined. Consequently, its fallout on the society is better felt than explained. It led to desperation among the population, caused acute shortage of drugs, raw materials, spare parts, food and other necessities of life for a people already traumatised. There is no doubt that the economic sanctions imposed on Eastern Nigeria depleted her treasury and greatly affected her capacity to prosecute the war.

Again, the federal government suspended and in some cases, cancelled outright all flights to and from airports in eastern Nigeria.(Daily Times, April 5, 1967). In the bid to raise capital to bolster her economy, the government in Eastern Nigeria ordered all revenue collected in the region to be paid into its treasury. It has been argued that the suspension and cancellation of flights to the East was to avoid the seizure of planes flying into Eastern Nigeria, since it has become clear that the east was ready for war. Part of the scheme was to deny the East of any opportunity of acquiring equipment, especially aircrafts and military hardware which was necessary for her bid to secede. The attempt by the East to counter this situation was the introduction of eastern

government's official stamps, Biafra postage began to appear on the world philatelic market in september 1968 (*West Africa* ,March 8,1969). Issues of stamps are commonplace devices by which countries augment their foreign exchange earnings. In philatelic market, if issues are too frequent, collectors ceased to take them seriously and the market for them shrinks rapidly. Amsterdam is one of the largest philatelic centres in Europe. In the postage stamps shops that cluster in and near Van Burgwal Street, the cheapest Biafran stamps were a set of four depicting butterflies which cost 14 shillings. According to the *West Africa* report, this set can also be obtained at the same price with the overprint "Olympic Games, Mexico, 1968". Another set of five stamps depicting flower cost 1.9s or with the addition of an insert " Help Biafran children " 1,16s.

The van Burgwal stamp dealer admitted that despite the comparatively high prices, the Biafran stamps out sold by many times the stamps of any other African country. It is understood that they sold equally well in other parts of the world. This was because Biafra was continually in the news and there was much pro-Biafran sentiment.

In summary, the target of the economic sanctions and its twin sister, the blockade, was to cripple the import trade of the east, since most Igbo businessmen were importers. Those policies were also intended to deny them essential exports, especially oil since a great chunk of it was located in the eastern region. While it might be argued that the purpose was to weaken substantially the ability of the east to wage war, it also paralysed completely all socio-economic activities in Igboland even before the start of hostilities Doxey (1971). These war like conditions in eastern Nigeria were compounded by the fact that she was not recognised as an independent country by majority of the countries of the world, especially the super powers.

4.3.4 Strategic Withdrawal

Circumstances surrounding the prosecution of the Nigerian-Biafran war showed that the option of strategic withdrawal was not in sight until Biafran armed forces became over stretched in 1969 to the extent that Federal Government troops captured most Biafran cities, including, Umuahia, the administrative capital. Within two years, Biafra moved from one capital to another until the last capital Umuahia fell to the federal troops.

In the case of Nigeria, adopting strategic withdrawal/avoidance was problematic and thus impossible, considering the threat to Nigeria's territorial integrity as posed by Biafra's secession. Evidence from field work suggests that Gowon was against a state of anarchy and wanted the crisis resolved by any means, fair or otherwise, an attitude which further aroused the suspicion of Biafra which described Nigeria's quest to sustain the unity of the nation as external aggression.

A notable scenario in the process of strategic withdrawal was the instruction given to the Biafran armed forces by Gen. Philip Effiong to orderly disengage the troops from battle at all fronts. He equally went ahead to dispatch emissaries to make contact with Nigerian field commanders in Onitsha, Owerri, Awka, Enugu and Calabar to arrange an armistice aimed at peaceful negotiation through Biafran delegation for total suspension of hostilities. This strategic withdrawal, to an extent, became the only option left to Biafra to save the already traumatised and impoverished masses. If not for this timely decision, the people would have risen up against the leaders of Biafra, either as conspirators or confront them to surrender to the Federal government of Nigeria. It was even obvious to the Biafran leader, Ojukwu, that the war had been lost, hence his departure to seek asylum in the then Ivory Coast (Achebe, 2012).

4.4 Structures and Methods of Implementation

One major negotiation that was made that would have aided to forestall the Nigerian-Biafran war was the Aburi accord. But the problem was its implementation. As Nedo Ajawara narrates, few days after Aburi, some permanent Secretaries in Lagos met to criticize the decisions reached by the supreme military council, the highest authority in the land. They set out to restructure the Aburi accord to suit their own interest. For instance, with regard to the reorganisation of the Army, they objected to the new title of

commander-in-Chief on the grounds that (a) it would be a subtle way of either abolishing the post of Supreme Commander or declaring it vacant to be filled by unanimous decision of the Supreme Military Council. (b) the Accra decision transfers the Executive Authority of the Federal Military Government from the Head of the Federal Military Government and Supreme Commander (in accordance with Degree No.1) to the Supreme Military Council. The implication of this is that the Commander-in-Chief would have no power of control or dismissal over the Regional Governors.

On the establishment of Military Headquarters, the permanent secretaries stated that “the establishment of Military Headquarters with equal representatives from the Regions headed by a Chief of Staff amounts to “confederation”...and so on as presented in Gowon’s decree 8 which is presented below

Chief Philip C. Asiodu, one of the central super permanent secretaries of the era, and prime actor of the day, recounts the details of the non- implementation of the Aburi accord and the implementation of Decree 8 in its stead. However, he avers that Decree 8 is not totally in disaccord with Aburi accord. In an interview, he stated that when they subjected the Aburi accord to simple analysis, it was simply saying Nigeria is no more practically. And as far as he was concerned, the civil war or no civil war, then chaos would have started sooner than later. All the same, he said:

look, ... if we still want to be a country....authority which deals with customs, currency, federal trunk roads, foreign and external defenses, that is more than enough for a government. But it must be able to act. You can not say that in the Ministry of Defence, you can not promote somebody a Lt Col, except you have a unanimity. You cannot move one plane to another place except through unanimity. Even when you have those limited powers, they must be able to function. And you cannot function in the context of those things they said. And then what you have is four countries.”

The permanent secretaries made analysis and said look, if you are really serious, if you say you are having Nigeria, you must have central function which must be fulfilled. There is no need saying this is central function and you cannot fulfill it. So, we analysed and said these were based on incorrect premises. People came with proper papers, well formulated. The other side just went thinking they were going to do initial breaking of the ice. Therefore, please try to reconcile this to ensure that we still have a country. Gowon in fairness, vetoed that approach, and still proceeded to have decree number 8 of 1967. If you go and read that decree, and if the East had accepted that decree, there would have been no need for secession. Nigeria would have disintegrated within three months. And you cannot move anybody without unanimity. You collect revenue, you cannot transfer it...

He goes on to say that Decree 8 was an affirmation of Aburi accord.

It was an affirmation of the Aburi accord which gave the East under Ojukwu, more than 95 per cent of what Aburi meant. But because there were maybe one or two phrases which they didn't like, if they read that thing and it is still there, they would have got what they wanted. But it was such, that hostilities would have broken out among four independent countries. Not one on one.



Figure 4: Chief Philip C. Asiodu

Source: Internet

Decree No. 8 which Implemented the Aburi Agreements

The full text of this important decree is published in supplement to Official Extraordinary Gazette No. 16; vol. 54 of 17th March, 1967. It is too long to be recited here in full. Below is a summary of its scope and import as published by the Federal Military Government:

1. The main feature of this Decree is the vesting in the Supreme Military Council of both the legislative and executive powers of the Government of the Federation. The Federal Executive Council which has hitherto exercised these powers has now been divested of them and it is henceforth to discharge those functions that are specifically delegated to it by the Supreme Military Council.
2. In the exercise of these legislative and executive powers, the concurrence of the Head of the Federal Military Government and of all the Military Governors is, for the first time, made essential in respect of certain matters which are set out in section 69(6) of the Constitution. These are, to mention a few matters affecting or relating to trade, commerce, industry transport, the Armed Forces, the Nigeria Police, Higher Education, and the territorial integrity of a Region and the provisions of the sections listed in the proviso to section 4(1) of the Constitution.
3. On the other hand, the legislative and executive powers of the Regions have been fully restored and vested in their respective Military Governors. But the provisions of section 86 of the Constitution of the Federation ensure that no Region shall exercise its executive authority so as to impede or prejudice the exercise of the executive authority of the

Federation or to endanger the continuance of federal government in Nigeria.

4. The provisions of section 70 of the Constitution of the Federation give powers to the Supreme Military Council to take over the executive and legislative functions of a Regional Government during any period of emergency which might be declared in respect of that Region by the Supreme Military Council, while those of section 71 give the Supreme Military Council power to take appropriate measures against a Region which attempts to secede from the rest of the Federation, or where the executive authority of the Region is being exercised in contravention of section 86 of the Constitution.
5. On the question of amendment to a Regional Constitution, section 5 of the Constitution of the Federation has been suitably modified to the effect that in respect of certain matters mentioned in the section, like the appointment, tenure of office and terms of service of High Court judges, the functions of the Public Service Commission, the establishment of a Consolidated Revenue Fund, etc., any Edict made shall come into operation only with the concurrence of the Supreme Military Council.
6. The Advisory Judicial Committee established under Decree No. 1 of 1966 and which before now tendered advice to the Supreme Military Council regarding appointment of judges all over the Federation has been abolished. Each Military Governor now controls appointment of judges of the High Court of his Region. But the appointment of the judges of both the Supreme Court of Nigeria and the High Court of Lagos is made the sole responsibility of the Supreme Military Council.

7. All appointments to posts in the super scale Group 6 and above in the Public Service of the Federation and appointments to posts of Deputy Commissioner of Police and above in the Nigeria Police Force are now to be made by the Supreme Military Council. The functions formerly discharged under sections 110 and 146 of the Constitution of the Federation by the Federal Public Service Commission and the Police Service Commission respectively are now to that extent limited.
8. Appointments to the offices of Ambassador, High Commissioner and other principal representatives of the Republic in countries other than Nigeria are now, under the Decree, to be made by the Supreme Military Council.

The introduction and implementation of this decree is fundamental to the outbreak of the war. The Eastern region stood on Aburi Accord. The different negotiations and conciliatory moves did not resolve the civil war that claimed millions of lives in Nigeria and Biafra. The question is why did all these attempts, peace talks and reconciliatory moves fail to achieve their purpose? The next chapter is set to analysis these reasons as discovered from the field work.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

The previous chapter presented different attempts that were made to resolve the protracted conflict. As it has already been stated that the strategies could not prevent or manage the conflict this chapter analyses these strategies so as to determine why they could not achieve their set objectives. It also attempts to underscore some possible lessons derivable from the conflict management strategies.

5.1 Examination of the Conflict Management Strategies

From the foregoing research, various conflict management strategies were employed so as to manage the burning conflict to ensure security and peace among warring parties. The conflict management strategies that were employed were meant to promote peace and consolidate brotherhood, mainly between the Northerners and the Easterners of Igbo origin. Yet, the federal government and Biafran government engaged in a protracted war that consumed about two million lives, including soldiers and civilians, women and children.

The warring groups in Nigeria embarked on negotiations to resolve the conflict. Negotiation, as noted in the conceptual part of this paper, involves a process of conferring with another party for the purpose of securing agreement on some matters of common interest (Morley and Stephenson, 1977:19). It is a process of engaging in good-faith efforts to reach an agreement or resolve a dispute, through the confidential exchange of factual statements and representations. The ad-hoc conference in August 1966 that brought all the representatives of the four regions and Lagos to discuss the issues of national interest and to find solution to the existing constitutional administrative chaos was an attempt at negotiation as a conflict management strategy. Some recommendations were made at the end of the negotiation in this conference.

Only one of the recommendations was implemented and inadequately so. The recommendation which was inadequately implemented demanded that “immediate steps should be taken to post military personnel to barracks within their respective regions of origin”. The analysis of this recommendation shows that it is a good recommendation, but it was made at the wrong time. This is because the country at this point did not have basic condition on ground to trade on such regionalisation. The country was in a bad political situation and ethnic hatred precipitated into pogrom of the Igbos. Such decision helped to create more divide along ethnic hatred. Again, it was not only the military that were being slaughtered; the civilians of the South-East origin were also being killed. What was needed then was a more systemic military strategy to stop the pogrom and not deionisation of the country.

The inadequate implementation of this recommendation arises from the fact that the governor of the South-East, Lt. Col Ojukwu, made every effort, as Orjinta and Forsyth noted, to escort the Northern and South-Western military officers to their regions under military protections and with their own arms, the South-Eastern military officers were relieved of their arms and slaughtered en mass. It is also noted that the Northern soldiers remained in the South-West, while the soldiers of the South-West who were in the Northern barracks such as Kaduna remained steadfast. For instance, Obasanjo (1980) noted that he (who was the highest ranking South Western officer) remained in his position in the North with South-Western officers. Again, the wrong implementation of this recommendation was heightened by non-implementation of other three recommendations that ought to go along with it.

Conflict management by mediation was also employed. As we can see in the presentation in Chapter four, Lt. General Ankrah acted as mediators to facilitate the peace talk and processes. Mediation as we noted is a negotiation by reliance on the

third-party (Akpuru-ajia, 2007:44). It is a strategy of resolving conflict through third party intervention. It employs significant orders in the dialogue for mutual compromise, peace and security in the society. In other words, mediation is a conflict resolution in the dispute (Yarn, 1991:272). The Aburi, Ghana peace talk was facilitated by Ankrah. In this peace talk, the two warring parties agreed and signed an accord to be implemented. From this research, it shows that Aburi accord would have been fundamental to contending with other causes of the conflict. The non implementation of Aburi accord has been largely agreed to be fundamental to the proximate cause of the civil war.

Though some persons, such as Chief Asiodu, one of the central permanent secretaries of the era and a major actor of the day believes that decree 8 of Gowon was an indirect affirmation of the Aburi accord. He believes that it was a 90 percent implementation of the accord, and if accepted, it would have achieved the same effect as Aburi accord. Asiodu puts his thought like thus:

Decree 8 was an affirmation of Aburi accord which gave the East under Ojukwu, more than 95 per cent of what Aburi meant. But because there were maybe one or two phrases which they didn't like, if they read that thing and it is still there, they have got what they wanted. If you go and read that decree, and if the East had accepted that decree, there would have been no need for secession. Nigeria would have disintegrated within three months. And you cannot move anybody without unanimity. You collect revenue, you cannot transfer it... I still believe that when you go and read it and see all the powers which had been conceded, and all the things which were subject to veto by just one person because it required unanimity, decree number 8 promulgated by Gowon had given 95 percent of the substance. And if it was taken, it was only a matter of three months for everybody to realize that there was no Nigeria.

However, Asiodu expressed the sentiment that non implementation of Aburi accord and non- acceptance of decree 8 was fundamental to the declaration of the secession by the

Eastern military governor in the person of Lt. Col. Odumegwu Ojukwu. This seem to be the general agreement, that is, the non- implementation of the Aburi accord, which stipulates lots of working constitutional principles of peace that led to declaration of Biafra. According to Major Abubakar A. Atofarati, the former Eastern Region under Lt. Col. Ojukwu saw the act of the creation of states by decree "without consultation" as the last straw, and declared the Region an independent state of "Biafra".(Atoforati 1992)

For instance, Forsyth stated that,

the agreement was signed, by all parties, quite freely, and at the end of the signing ceremony, General Ankrah took Emeka's and Gowon's hands, placed them on the document with his own on top, and asked both men, as brother African officers, to abide by what they had agreed. Both men promised. Then, on 26th January in Lagos, without any forewarning to the East, Yokubu Gowon gave a press conference. Reading from a prepared text he rejected point by point the four main points of the agreements of Aburi.(Forsyth, 198279-82).

The question that arises here, which Forsyth did not hesitate to ask is: why were the Aburi agreements not implemented, since they were not controversial and did not strike at the integrity of the North, the West or the East? Why did Gowon reject to serve in the collegiate leadership of the council and instead accorded himself with all the military power there is? Why did he dissolve the Ad Hoc constitutional conference? Was the splitting of the four regions into 12 states necessary at that point in time? Nevertheless, Gowon's decisions and non- implementation of the Aburi accord, no doubt led to Ojukwu's declaration of the Republic of Biafra. The declaration was as follows:

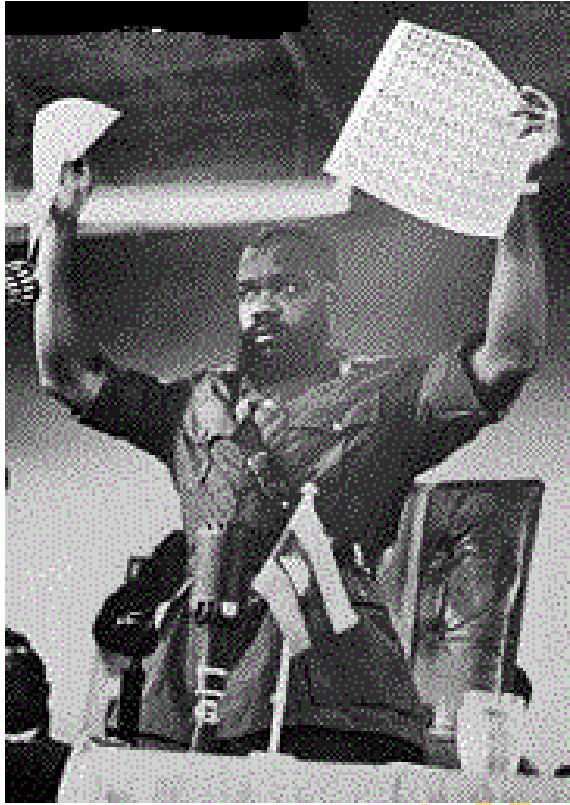


Figure:5 Lieutenant-Colonel Chukwuemeka Odumegwu-Ojukwu

Source: Internet

Fellow countrymen and women, you, the people of Eastern Nigeria: Conscious of the supreme authority of Almighty God over all mankind, of your duty to yourselves and prosperity; Aware that you can no longer be protected in your lives and in your property by any Government based outside eastern Nigeria; Believing that you are born free and have certain inalienable rights which can best be preserved by yourselves; Unwilling to be unfree partners in any association of a political or economic nature; Rejecting the authority of any person or persons other than the Military Government of eastern Nigeria to make any imposition of whatever kind or nature upon you; Determined to dissolve all political and other ties between you and the former Federal Republic of Nigeria; Prepared to enter into such association, treaty or alliance with any sovereign state within the former Federal Republic of Nigeria and elsewhere on such

terms and conditions as best to subserve your common good; Affirming your trust and confidence in me; Having mandated me to proclaim on your behalf, and in your name the Eastern Nigeria be a sovereign independent Republic. Now Therefore I, Lieutenant-Colonel Chukwuemeka Odumegwu-Ojukwu, Military Governor of Eastern Nigeria, by virtue of the authority, and pursuant to the principles recited above, do hereby solemnly proclaim that the territory and region known as and called Eastern Nigeria together with her continental shelf and territorial waters shall henceforth be an independent sovereign state of the name and title of The Republic of Biafra. And I Do Declare That:

- (i) All political ties between us and the Federal Republic of Nigeria are hereby totally dissolved.
- (ii) All subsisting contractual obligations entered into by the Government of the federal republic of Nigeria or by any person, authority, organization or government acting on its behalf, with any person, authority or organization operating, or relating to any matter or thing, within the Republic of Biafra, shall henceforth be deemed to be entered into with the Military Governor of the Republic of Biafra for and on behalf of the Government and people of the Republic of Biafra, and the covenants thereof shall, subject to this Declaration, be performed by the parties according to their tenor;
- (iii) All subsisting international treaties and obligations made on behalf of Eastern Nigeria by the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be honoured and respected;
- (iv) Eastern Nigeria's due share of all subsisting international debts and obligations entered into by the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be honoured and respected;

- (v) Steps will be taken to open discussions on the question of Eastern Nigeria's due share of the assets of the Federation of Nigeria and personal properties of the citizens of Biafra throughout the Federation of Nigeria.
- (vi) The rights, privileges, pensions, etc., of all personnel of the Public Services, the Armed Forces and the Police now serving in any capacity within the Republic of Biafra are hereby guaranteed;
- (vii) We shall keep the door open for association with, and would welcome, any sovereign unit or units in the former Federation of Nigeria or any other parts of Africa desirous of association with us for the purposes of running a common services organization and for the establishment of economic ties;
- (viii) We shall protect the lives and property of all foreigners residing in Biafra, we shall extend the hand of friendship to those nations who respect our sovereignty, and shall repel any interference in our internal affairs;
- (ix) We shall faithfully adhere to the charter of the Organization of African Unity and of the United Nations Organization;
- (x) It is our intention to remain a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations in our right as a sovereign, independent nation. Long live the Republic of Biafra! And may God protect all those who live in her.

From the foregoing, it could be argued that if the Aburi accord was implemented as agreed upon, in truth and in deed, there is higher possibility that the civil war could have been averted. It could have helped to reduce the tension, bitterness and ethnic rivalry that was at the ascendency.

As the war broke out, there were conciliatory measures to reconcile and resolve the conflict. The OAU, under the auspices of Emperor Haile Selassie has a six-man conciliation committee on Nigeria, and after the failure of the British organised Kampala talks, he contacted the other five heads of state on his committee who agreed to convene a conference in Niger's capital, Niamey, and subsequently in Haile Selassie's capital, Addis Ababa. The conciliatory moves took place, but they did not help in resolving the conflict. The different factions had the same agenda, to end the war, but held to different objectives and demands. The conciliatory moves collapsed and did not achieve their objectives.

Instead of the conflict management strategies to achieve the set objectives, the conflict ended in civil war. Thus, there was the use of military force to resolve the conflict. The military confrontation seemed to bring to an end the confrontation between the North and the East, but basic animosities and bitterness seem to be more heightened and incubated. These hatred and bitterness are let out at any possible opportunity as can be seen from different ethnic and religious conflicts that pups up in the Nigerian history since the end of the civil war. The question that resonates in this research is: what are the obstacles to these resolution strategies are?

5.2 Reasons for the Failure of the Conflict Management Strategies.

One of the major questions that preoccupy this study is: why did these preventive measures or diplomacy employed to resolve the conflict fail to achieve de-escalation of the conflict? In order to assess the level of success or failure of the measures, there is need to look at the factors that undermined the pre-war and war-time conflict management strategies. There are some basic reasons that can be adduced for the negative outcome of events.

The introduction of the unitary system of government by the Aguiyi-Ironsi led administration via decree 34, was one of the pre-war conciliatory strategies. The unitary system of government was a well-intended strategy to unify a country that was making a dangerous stride into disintegration brought about by deep-rooted disunity, distrust, bitterness and acrimony. In the words of Ironsi:

I am convinced that the bulk of our people want a united Nigeria and that they want in future one government for Nigeria and not a multitude of governments. They want one government whose unit of legislative and administrative devolution would on one hand, be nearer to the people than the old region was and on the other hand, be nearer to the people than the old region was and on the other hand, be of such a size most likely to satisfy local needs, but of such limited powers as not to construe a danger to the unity of Nigeria. This is the aim of the supreme military council. This is the frame of reference within which all our measures of national reconstruction must be formulated. (*Daily Times*, April 14, 1966)

As well intended as this might be, the timing of the institution of decree 34 was inappropriate. This is because it gave the impression of the Igbo's attempt to dominate the nation. The fear of domination heightened when Ironsi surrounded himself with Igbo advisers. This was worsened by his promotion of mainly Igbo officers to fill vacancies created due to the killing of non-Igbo officers during the *coup* of 15th January, 1966 (Collis, 1970:44). There was also the assumption that this was a deliberate plan by the Igbo to fill all key positions, not only in the public service but also in the regional service (*Morning Post*, January 22, 1968). This, therefore, made it impossible for the unitary system to achieve its set objective of uniting the nation and managing the conflict, as it was greeted with wild demonstration in the northern region.

The introduction of federal system of government by Gowon's administration was used as a strategy of deterrence against the breakup of the country. However, it is instructive to note that such a system of government operates better where the fear of

domination does not exist, which was contrary to the case of Nigeria. A country that has the fear of domination would be suspicious of a federal system with a strong centre. This suspicion further undermined the goals of the *ad-hoc* constitutional conference to achieve the desired effect as it came into place at a time when the system was already polarised along ethnic lines. For example, one of the recommendations made by the *ad-hoc* constitutional conference that army personnel should be posted to their various regions of origin, tended to divide the country further along ethnic lines as the armed forces were seen as the mantle of unity.

Furthermore, one can hardly do a complete analysis of what contributed to the failure of the pre-war and war-time conflict management strategies of the Nigerian civil war without dwelling intensely on the attitude and disposition of the principal parties to the conflict. According to Achebe (2012) “there was an obsessive tendency by both belligerents-Gowon and Ojukwu- to seek positions of strength and avoid looking weak throughout the conflict”. Pushing this line of thought further, Achebe had this to say:

There are a number who believed that neither Gowon nor Ojukwu were the right leaders for that desperate time, because they were blinded by ego, hindered by a lack of administrative experience, and obsessed with interpersonal competition and petty rivalries. As a consequence, according to this school of thought, these two men failed to make appropriate and wise decisions throughout the conflict and missed several opportunities when compromise would have saved the day. (Achebe,2012:123)

This rivalry reared its ugly head right from the Aburi meeting when it became obvious that both Ojukwu and Gowon were not favourably disposed to each other. Ojukwu made it plain at the meeting that the East would not accept the leadership of Gowon, while Gowon was determined to assert his authority. This situation was not helped by some of Ojukwu’s and Gowon’s civilian advisers who aggravated the crisis by transforming themselves into sycophants, telling the leaders what they wanted to hear, massaging their ego, rather than encouraging them to bring the conflict to an early end and avoid bloodshed.

Yet, another area that has received scathing criticism is the attitude of Ojukwu and his kind of leadership style made available to his people. Uwuchue (1969) had this to say about Ojukwu:

In Biafra two wars were fought simultaneously. The first was for the survival of the Igbo as a race. The second was for the survival of Ojukwu's leadership. Ojukwu's error which proved fatal for millions of Igbos was that he put the latter first.

In addition to this, Ojukwu's decision to decline accepting the sum of \$600,000 from the British for relief supplies, showed his commitment to ideological goals rather than compromise to save already vulnerable and traumatised Biafrans. (Achebe 2012). This led to undue suffering and massive wastage of precious lives of people he claimed to care so much about. Achebe further stated that Nnamdi Azikiwe's withdrawal of support for Biafra was predicated on the rejection of his peaceful strategy for resolving the conflict which Ojukwu described as "unworkable".

Also, Awolowo's effort to convince Ojukwu to participate in the National Conciliation committee meeting with the Federal government was described as "ill conceived" by Ojukwu, (Awolowo, 1981). Rather than exhausting peaceful alternatives at resolving the conflict, Ojukwu did not waste time to draw the battle line, and this situation made volatile confrontation inevitable. Even in the course of the war, Ojukwu was accused of not considering more peaceful strategies to end the intractable war.

One other basic reason why the conflict management strategies failed was pointed out by Uwuchie. According to him, the basic issue on which settlement itself revolved was consistently circumvented. In other words, there was a problem of compromise and lack of openness. Both sides repeatedly proclaimed their readiness to negotiate "without pre-conditions", but attached different interpretations to this term. For the Federal Government represented in the person of Gowon, it meant negotiating in

accordance with the OAU, that is, resolution aimed at preserving Nigeria's territorial integrity. For Biafra, it meant respecting the status quo which by implication involved a *de facto* acceptance of her sovereignty. Since there is a problem of compromise, then it became difficult to arrive at certain workable decisions. Mergery Perham (1970) states that "the organisation of African Unity, in the face of Biafra's uncompromising position, could achieve nothing in spite of the series of negotiations it arranged".

Commenting on the uncompromising attitude of Biafran negotiators, Achebe (2012) had this to say:

I think around March, 1968, when we were in a position to achieve a confederation, we should have accepted the chance or opportunity. When we were insisting that Biafran sovereignty was not negotiable as the government thought at the time, we ought to have considered the tragedy of the situation, because this country would have been much better if we had a confederation of four to six states, other than what we have now. Around the time of the Kampala talks there were definite signs that a confederation could be achieved. The Biafran side was adamant on the fact of sovereignty not being negotiable.

Another factor is the problem of insecurity. One basic demands by Biafrans, through the auspices of Ojukwu is security for the Igbo. It was obvious to everyone that the lives and property of the Igbo were no longer secured in the federal state under the leadership of Gowon. And Gowon appeared not to take any decisive step to stop the destruction of the lives and property of the Igbo. Thus, the Aburi Accord that attempted to provide that platform was rejected by Gowon. Again, Gowon also spoke about security of the Nigerian state, the analysis show that he only spoke in vague terms. This is because Gowon seemed to continuously stress the conflict's judicial aspect involving Nigeria's territorial integrity over and above securing the lives of her citizens.

Lack of trust was fundamental to undermining the efficacy of conflict resolution strategies. The two Leaders, Gowon and Ojukwu, lost trust in each other. Gowon was

suspicious of Ojukwu's astuteness and strategic skills. However, this suspicion seems to have ethnic bias heightened by his alignment with British connivance. On the other hand, Ojukwu lost trust in Gowon for aligning with Northern hatred and paying lip service to the plight of the Igbo. Ojukwu's lack of trust was also heightened by the fact that Gowon was not officially entitled to head the state after the murder of Ironsi by Major Danjuma and his accomplices. It was Brigadier Ogundipe that was the most senior officer in the Nigerian army, but the Northerners refused to take orders from him. Secondly, Ojukwu knew Gowon well enough and was sure that he lacked the political will to rule the nation. Ojukwu's fears and lack of trust were confirmed by Gowon's decree 8 proclamation.

Another factor that made it impossible for the working of the conflict management strategies were wrong foreign advisers and the British influence, through the British High Commission, on the Northern hemisphere under the tutelage of Gowon. The counter coup plotters, led by Major Murtala Mohammed and Major Kyari wanted to pull the Northern State out of Nigeria. Through the advice of the British High Commission in Lagos, after several meetings, Gowon convinced and advised the coup plotters to stay and control Lagos and the rest of Nigeria (Forsyth, 1982). Gowon then named himself Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and head of the national Military Government, a post that Ojukwu and the rest of the Igbo refused to accept due to what was perceived to be his incompetence and inhuman attitude and his aligning with the pogrom.

The implication is that the British played vital role heightening the protracted civil conflict due to their economic interest. According to Perham, "Britain's claims of pity and religious affiliation clashed with those of economic self-interest and of detached political judgment. Their links were educational, social and most realistic of

all, economic, with shell-B.P's huge investment in oil of excellent quality and much more accessible spatially and politically than that of the ambiguous Middle East. So they have had the strange situation in which British weapons, including Saladin armoured cars, were destroying Biafran lives, while British food and medical supplies were being dangerously flown in to preserve them" (Perham, 1970:241).

Thus, lack of trust, attitudes, insincerity, openness, strong will and insecurity were fundamental obstacles to conflict management strategies.

5.3 Lessons Derivable from the Conflict Management Strategies

The Nigerian-Biafran war ended due to the inability of one side to continue fighting, a situation that climaxed in the termination of the conflict in the battle field without proper resolution (Nwolise,2012). This is one of the challenges of adopting confrontation as a conflict management strategy. The military intervention that was used stopped the war, but it has not resolved the ethnic suspicions of divide and insecurity

While military intervention had a seeming advantage of stopping the violence at the time, it claimed more lives and led to massive destruction of property. It further heightened the ethnic hatred and bitterness that was prevalent on the eve of the war. It, cannot, therefore be regarded as having a sustainable outcome in the context of Nigeria. Victory through armed conflict cannot be said to be a sustainable approach to managing civil disorder or issues of self- determination. Peaceful approaches are more sustainable in the long run.

Therefore, the Nigerian civil war is an important lesson in the study of conflict management strategies and its application at the local level. The lessons discernible from the conduct of the war were that no single method of conflict management is sufficient in itself, but must be adapted to suit local specifics and conditions. The principal parties to the conflict - Gowon and Ojukwu - were invariably young and not

too experienced to understand that the cost of war is huge and more devastating than peace which creates room for accommodation and joint- problem-solving. In the calculation of both parties, no one predicted that the war could last up to thirty months and therefore, the tendencies were obviously right for positions to be hardened. The lesson derivable from the fact is that strategic scenario should include best, middle and worst case scenarios before war can be undertaken as an option of conflict management. Furthermore, the external stakeholders did not help matters by encouraging the Biafran side to embark on war, probably, because of the economic benefit from the oil wells that would be available to Biafra, if they succeeded.

Besides, the structure of the country made it almost impossible for any meaningful change to take place. The structure in which Gowon erected his government had imbued crises that made it difficult for him to manage the nation. With the crises on hand, which was heightened by Ironsi's good decision at the wrong time, and the further division of the four zones into twelve states was wrong timing and counterproductive. His assumption of the commander in chief of the supreme military council arbitrarily was uncalled for at the moment that the nation was very fragile. Thus, the existing structure of Gowon's government tilted in favour of one group, while putting the others at a disadvantage. And this, in the thought of Scarborough (1988), bred contempt, domination and instability.

Considering all these problems, the first step towards providing adequate and pragmatic conflict management method was through the basic assumption of the constructive confrontation theory as we conceptualised in the theoretical framework. We stated that, one goal of constructive confrontation is to help disputants develop a clear understanding of the dimensions of the problem - both from their own perspective and from their opponents. A second goal of constructive confrontation is to enable

people to separate the core conflict from what could be called the conflict overlay - the unnecessary and confounding aspects of the conflict that divert attention from the core issues; just like in the Nigerian-Biafran war, where the core issues were circumvented in various negotiations. The final goal of constructive confrontation is the development of a conflict resolution strategy that will best serve the party's interests. Therefore, it demands that people avoid considering the interests and needs of the other parties, but to design their confrontation strategy primarily with their own interests and needs in mind. The ultimate goal of constructive confrontation is the constructive transformation of conflictual relationships.

With this in mind, then, the focus of negotiations by the warring parties should be other- regarding and not just self-regarding. That means, there should be altruistic concern. The leaders of the warring parties were not others- regarding. Again, the focus should not be on power but service to the masses. Any decision taken should be human and people oriented. Based on these analyses, recommendations were made below.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary

This study basically focused on the pre-war and war-time conflict management strategies employed to forestall the outbreak of civil war in the 1960s. From the existential realities, the management strategies did not achieve their set objectives. Consequently, there was an outbreak of civil war from 1967 to 1970 between the Federal Government and Biafra, which claimed several lives.

The Nigerian civil war broke out on 6 July, 1967. The war was the culmination of an uneasy peace and instability that had plagued the Nation from independence in 1960. This situation had its genesis in the geography, history, culture and demography of Nigeria. The immediate cause of the civil war itself may be identified as the coup and the counter coup of 1966, which altered the political equation and destroyed the fragile trust existing among the major ethnic groups. As a means of holding the country together in the last result, the country was divided into twelve states from the original four regions in May 1967, against the agreement that was signed by the Nigerian leaders and the Biafran leader under the conciliatory moves of Ankrah. The former Eastern Region under Lt. Col. Ojukwu saw the act of the creation of states by decree "without consultation" as the last straw, and declared the Region an independent state of "Biafra". The Federal Government in Lagos saw this as an act of rebellion and illegal. Several meetings were held to resolve the issue peacefully without success. To avoid disintegration of the country, the central government set out to protect what they call the integrity of the nation by force. Many attempts were made to bring the war into control through various negotiations, but all to no avail.

Thus, why did the strategies not serve their useful purpose? The study examined these moves to see why they failed. The researcher carried out consistent and systematic field work through various interviews with significant figures to underscore the reasons for the failures of the strategies. Based on this, the researcher made revealing findings.

6.2 Findings

The examination and analysis of data obtained from the research reveals that the Nigerian 1967-70 civil war were borne out of ethnic rivalry, culture, hatred, corruption, insincerity and political instability. These plagued Nigeria from the onset of independence.

The study also reveals that the 15th January, 1966 coup and the counter-coup were fundamental to the civil war. The first coup was misinterpreted as the Igbo coup and an attempt for the Igbo to dominate the nation. However, this is not the case. It has been revealed that the coup of six majors had no sectional or regional intention. It was not meant to divide the country, but to reconstruct the country. Forsyth (1982) and Obasanjo (1980) attest to this fact.

The research reveals that the proximate cause to the war of 1967 was non implementation of Aburi Accord and the division of the country into twelve states instead. Simply put, it is the implementation of decree 8 instead of the Aburi accord.

The study also reveals that there were different conflict management strategies that were employed, such as conciliation, negotiations, mediations, military and forceful confrontation, as well as strategic withdrawal. The negotiations did not bring the conflict to a stop because the outcome of most of the negotiations were either not implemented or inadequately implemented. The attitude of the leaders of warring parties also contributed to the failure of the strategies.

The military intervention that was used stopped the war, but it did not resolve the ethnic hatred and bitterness. And consequently, the cause of the conflict has not been addressed. So, it was not the best means of managing the conflict.

6.3 Recommendation

The civil conflict in Nigeria, which gradually started after independence and degenerated into civil war of 1967-1970 claimed about two million lives from both sides, but more on the Biafran side. It would have been averted if certain critical and constructive conflict management measures were sincerely and truthfully employed and their outcome duly implemented, and if the principle of give and take in peaceful negotiation was adhered to by both parties.

Given this scenario, the study recommends that more constructive measures should be employed in any attempt to resolve social conflict in the nation so as to prevent its escalation. In that case, negotiations should be founded on the idea of brotherhood such that the conflicting parties should come to the negotiation table with open mind and attitude of trust.

The terms of agreement should be made obvious and unambiguous such that the parties would understand the terms clearly without doubt. That also means that they should cultivate the attitude of trust and respect of human dignity.

Furthermore, there should be no stereotype or rigid formula for addressing conflict situations as each conflict should be addressed on its own merit. The position of the then Organisation of African Unity (OAU) that no section of any country should be allowed to secede on the fear that others may follow suit is a fixed approach to social problems. It does not give room for a systemic assessment of individual issues in order to decipher their inherent merits and potentialities. It pretends to regard all socio-political conflicts as having the same ideological status

One of the conditions for successful mediation is neutrality and focus on the social good. The parties that are involved in mediation should be detached from the personal interests of the parties to the conflict. They should not seek any personal benefit from the conflict. The role played by Britain has been questioned along this line. Their mediating role is perceived to be biased and interest based against the social good of the people. They were accused of supplying arms to the Nigerian government and at the same time sending relief materials to the Biafrans (Perham,1970).

In addition to this, it has been discovered that the question that brought about the civil war remains unanswered, such as security of citizens and freedom to live in any part of the Federation without fear of molestation and evolving a workable system for peaceful coexistence of the various nationalities that make up Nigeria. Though the issue of Aburi Accord is long gone and appears to be forgotten, the study recommends that the country should be restructured in the line of true federalism or regional autonomy as was the case in the pre-independence era. This will put a check to the inordinate and destructive control of the power at the centre. According to Anyaoku, it is the destructive control of power at the centre that exacerbates the primordial instinct in our people and also fans religious and ethnic differences with the result that rather than being a source of strength, our pluralism has become a harbinger of discrimination and disunity.(Anyaoku,2012) In effect, the idea of the researcher is that the political, economic and judicial powers should be decentralised to form checks and balances to each other. It may also make it easier to embark on negotiation in managing national issues and adopt more workable principles for the good of the nation

The study recommends that the conflicting parties should be sincere and keep the terms of agreement. In order to be made to keep the terms of agreement, the study recommends the use of active oath as an alternative means of resolving conflicts.

Professor C.S. Momoh has argued consistently and systematically that active oath should be fundamental in political interactions in Nigeria. Active oath is the process where people are made to swear to the African Shrines and Gods in order to give certitude and sincerity to their decisions. If the conflicting parties are made to swear an active oath in order to keep to the terms of agreement, it will be difficult for any of the parties who are insincere to deviate. It has to be noted that the practice of active oath is secretly used in Nigeria, especially between the Godfathers and the political sons.

The use of military intervention in Nigeria stopped the war, disarmed the warring parties, but there was no reintegration. It has only heightened the ethnic hatred. Thus, with all these recommendations, future conflicts in Nigeria can be averted.

6.4 Conclusion

The study focused on the Nigerian-Biafran civil conflict of 1967-1970. It examined the conflict management strategies that were employed to manage the conflict before and after the outbreak of the war. The major objective is to discover the reasons why the pre-war strategies failed to de-escalate the conflict and the reasons why the war-time strategies were unable to stop the war at the earlier stage. From its discoveries, it provided pragmatic recommendations that would be necessary to engage any future similar occurrences. However, further researches can examine some contemporary conflict management institutions. The objective would be to examine current developments aimed at responding to the lapses of the previous conflict management strategies. Researches can also develop the recommendations of this research to workable policies for the state.

**PRE-WAR AND WAR-TIME CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES OF
THE NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR**

BY

**BASIL IDEGWU
Matric. No 125327**

**PEACE AND CONFLICT STUDIES PROGRAMME INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN
STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN**

**SUPERVISOR: DR. VICTOR Osaro. EDO
Department of History, University of Ibadan**

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What do you consider to be the cause(s) of the Nigerian Civil War?

- The remote causes
- The proximate causes
- Were the causes internal or external, personal, social, economic, etc?
- What are your personal views with regards to these causes
- What was the role of the military in the Nigerian civil war?

What preventive measures were employed to quell the hostilities that ensued between the two parties?

- The conflict management measures employed before the outbreak of the war
- The conflict management strategies employed after the outbreak of the war
- From the beginning of the crises, were there any concrete crises management strategies to stop the drift?

- Who initiated such moves and what do you consider to be their motivations or motives?
- Were there international diplomatic attempts to stop the escalation of the increasing hostilities?
- At what point did the personalities in the conflicting parties lose confidence in each other?

What role did the different international bodies play in the Nigerian civil war? On the whole, was their role negative or positive?

How do you assess the conflict management strategies employed during the Nigerian Civil War?

- Were the management strategies adequate or inadequate? Give reasons?
- Why were they unable to stop the escalation of the crises?
- What made the attempts to stop the crises fail to achieve the desired results?
- What role did personal interests play in preventing the conflict management strategies to fail?
- Did the personalities of the conflicting parties play a role in hampering the efficacy of the conflict management measures employed during the civil conflict?
- At what point did each conflicting parties lose confidence?

Do you think that military intervention or war is necessary for the resolution of the Nigerian War?

- Does military victory have any sustainable result?
- Can military intervention address the root causes of civil conflict?

What conflict management strategies do you consider to be more effective in the Nigerian Civil War?

- What do you consider to be an alternative and more adequate conflict management strategy that could yield better outcome?
- What diplomatic strategy do you think could have worked better under the circumstances?
- What sort of strategies could help to resolve the root cause(s) of such hostilities that would yield to an appreciable condition?
- Do you think that the fundamental causes of the hostilities in Nigeria have been resolved? What in your opinion is the way out?

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Abubakar Suleman	71	Ex. Nigerian Soldier	Kaduna	2010
Angus Dike	59	Chief Librarian, National War Museum	Umuahia	2011
Chief J. O. Achuzia, Rt Soldier	74	One of the leaders of Biafra	Asaba	2009
Chief Olusegun Obasanjo,	76	Ex-Commander, 3 rd Marine Commando, Ex-head of State, Ex-President, Federal Republic of Nigeria	Abeokuta	2013
Chief Philip Asiodu	70s	Former Permanent Secretary of the Federal Republic of Nigeria	Asaba	2011
Emmanuel Nnanna	58	Staff National Museum	Unuahia	2012
Gen. Yakubu Gowon	75	War-time Head of State and Commander-in-chief	Jos	2011
Henri Acholam	77	Ex Biafran Soldier	Enugu	2011
John Ucheng	72	Ex Nigerian soldier	Kaduna	2011
Kudu Chung	68	Ex Nigerian soldier	Kaduna	2010
Lamido Malam	73	Ex Nigerian soldier	Kaduna	2010
Madame Caroline Iwedi	74	Biafran Civil Defence	Enugu	2011
Major-Gen. Mamman Shua (RD)	78	Commander, First Division Nigerian Army	Abuja	2010
Nwosu Okafor	72	Ex Biafran Soldier	Enugu	2011
Ogbonaya Ibe	67	Ex Biafran Soldier	Enugu	2011
Onyebuchi Okoro	69	Ex Biafran Soldier	Enugu	2011
Prince Bob Onyema	64	Former ADC to Ojukwu	Lagos	2012
Ralph Uwechue	70s	Biafran Ambassador to UK during the war	Enugu	2009
Sani Madugu	81	Ex Nigerian soldier	Kaduna	2010
Staff Sergeant Ferdinand Ebiten	76	Rt. Biafra Soldier	Lagos	2009
Vincent Ache	72	Ex Biafran Soldier	Enugu	2011

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APPENDIX IV

Biafran Cote of Arm
Source: National Archive Umuahia



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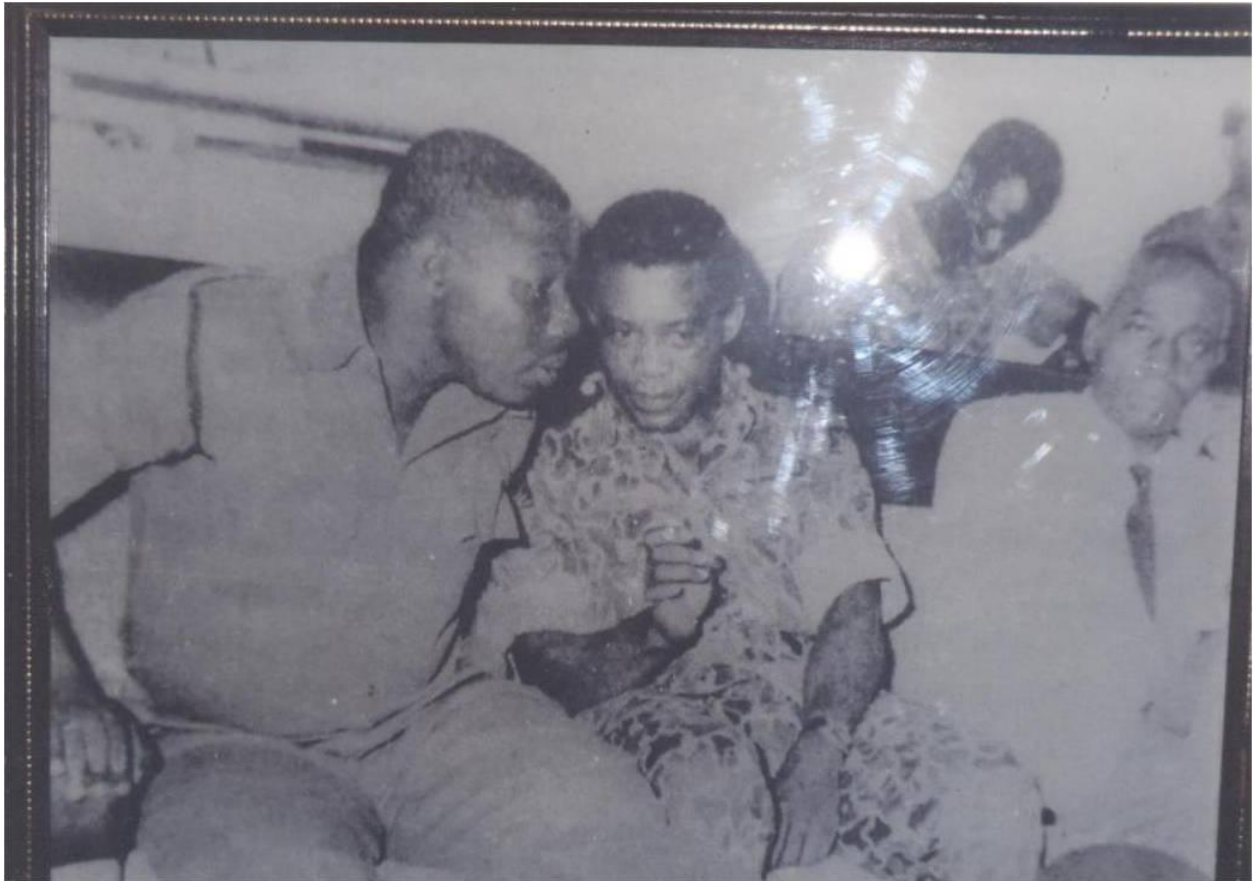
Lt. Col. Chukwuemeka Odimegwiu Ojukwu
Source: National Achieve Umuahia

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Ojukwu and members of his cabinet
Source: National Archive Umuahia

UNWV



Col. Olusegun Obasanjo and Major General Effion discussing the processes of ending the work

Source: National Musium, Umuahia

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Col. Yakubu Gowon, the Head of State during the civil war

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Medium wave transmitter used during the Nigerian civil war
Source: National Archive Umuahia

UNWV



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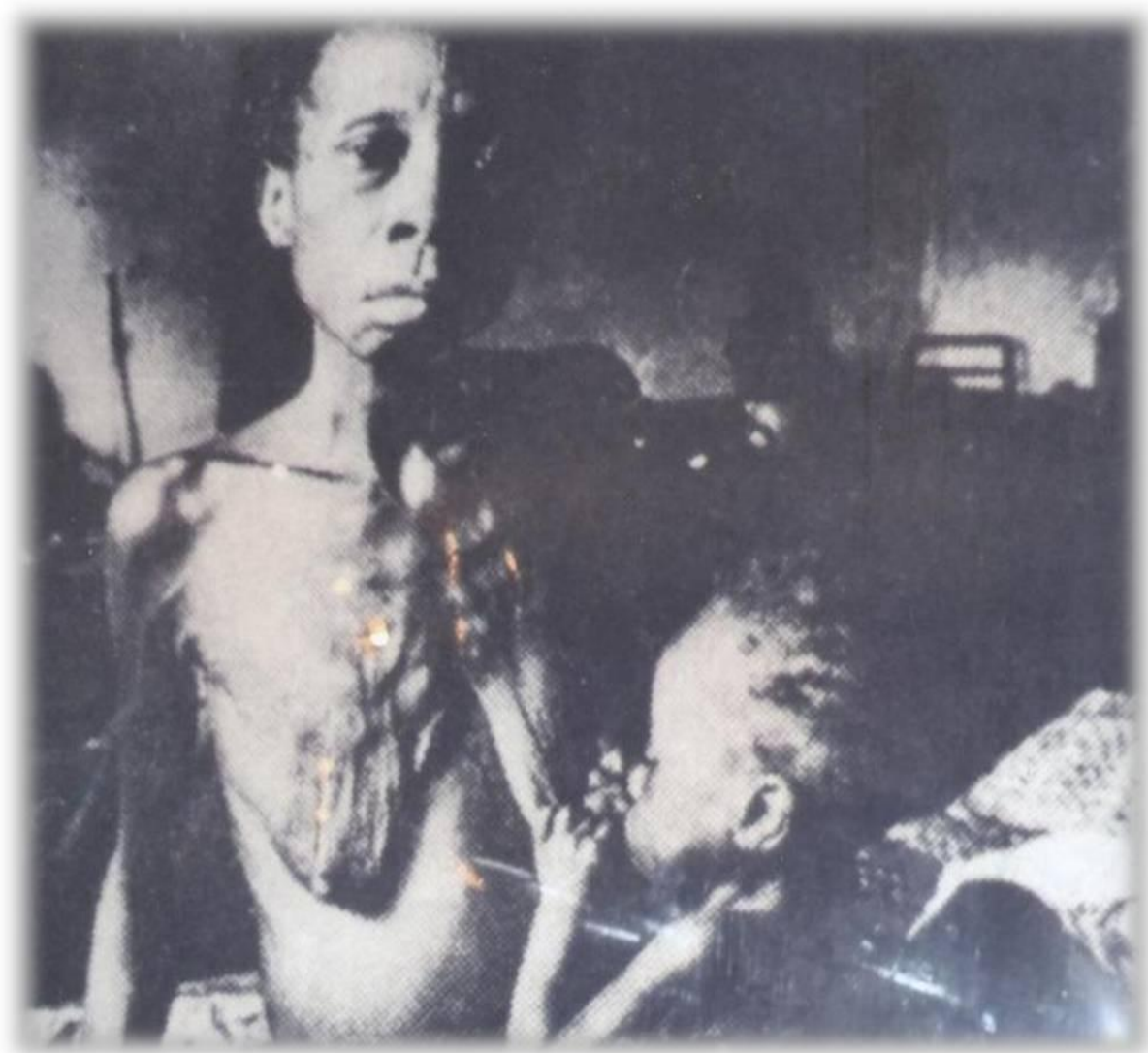
Biafran war plane
Source: National Archive Umuahia

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Focused group discussion at the National Library, Abeokuta Ota

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Victims of the war, 1976-1970
Source: National Archive Umuahia



Biafran war plane

Source: National Archive Umuahia

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Focused group discussion with Olusegun Obasanjo and other key players in Nigerian civil War at Ota, Abeokuta

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