

INTER-COMMUNAL CONFLICTS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN AKWA IBOM STATE, NIGERIA

By

Eshiet, Victoria Enyinnah,

Dr. Ekong E. Daniel (Assoc. Prof.),

Dr. Unwana-Abasi S. Udoh  
Department of Public Administration,  
Faculty of Management Sciences,  
Akwa Ibom State University, Obio Akpa, Oruk Anam

ABSTRACT

*Overtime, socio-economic development has always been marred by inter-communal conflicts, having a negative effect on employment generation, education and small scale businesses. This study focused on inter-communal conflicts and socio-economic development in Iwuochang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial district, Akwa Ibom State. The study set out three research objectives which were to examine the effect of inter-communal conflicts on employment generation, education and small scale enterprises in the affected communities. The study was based on Relative Deprivation theory. Survey research design and descriptive method was adopted as the research design while a sample size of 400 was determined using Taro Yamani formula, the study adopted the Pearson product moment correlation as a method of data analysis. It was discovered among others that there is a significant negative relationship between inter-communal conflict and employment generation, indicating that the more the conflict the greater the number of persons that will remain unemployed. Other findings revealed that the conflict between the two communities has led to the destructions of both primary and secondary schools, hospitals, churches, farmlands. A continuous increase in the conflict will lead to the destruction of properties leading to underdevelopment of the area. Other findings revealed that the conflict had a significant negative impacts on small and medium scale enterprises in both regions as the business owners could not go about their normal businesses with corresponding negative impact on the socio-economic development of Akwa Ibom State at large. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that the Akwa Ibom State Government should come up with security measures and strategies to put an end to the inter-communal conflicts. The strategies will ameliorate the sufferings of persons who have lost their jobs and businesses as a result of the conflicts.*

**KEYWORDS:** Communal Conflict, Socioeconomic Development, Employment Opportunities, Educational Development and Small Scale Enterprises

---

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Conflict, generally is a reality of social relations. Communal Conflicts at any level arise from divergences of interests, desires, goals and values aspirations in the competition for resources to meet imposing demands on social life in a defined socio-physical environment

(Oтите, 2001). As a matter of fact, Man in a socio-physical environment lives in continuous process of dependence and interdependence which often produces contradictions and conflicts. Communal conflicts constitute one of the major recurring problems bedeviling the sociopolitical landscape of Africa. To be sure, communal conflicts are not new, particularly in socio cultural complex societies defined by a high number of ethnic nationalities and language groups such as Nigeria, it is interesting to note that pre-colonial and colonial Nigeria experienced inter-kingdom dynastic feuds, and inter-community conflicts (Ogban-Iyam, 2005). This research work major emphasis is within Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District particularly Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State, one of the common features of these conflicts has to do with their confrontational and violent dimension which led to the loss of lives and property of people who hitherto lived together in relative harmony. The communal conflicts that took place in the case study Areas have shown how communal co-existence could be ruptured with attendant disastrous consequences on the social, cultural and political life of the people. In some regions, communal conflicts lead to only a few deaths or are solved before they have caused any fatalities. In others, however, these conflicts become very violent and dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of people are killed. The communal conflict between Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State have led to the killings of thousands in this region. In other parts of areas however, such conflicts occur with a much lower level of violence despite the fact that they share several structural characteristics with other villages (ICG 2003). Communal conflicts have killed thousands, Communal conflicts pose a severe threat to human security and kill thousands of people each year

Again, the conflict in Iwuochang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State is considered as inter-communal because it takes into consideration between communities which is a complex subject that has attracted much attention in the development literature. The causes of conflict within Iwuochang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket, Eket Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State range from a diverse mix of environmental, social, political, ethnic and cultural factors (Thomas, 2006). The state of many rural areas in Iwuochang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State is nothing to write home about; many are underdeveloped and stricken by poverty. One major reason for this is the presence of communal conflicts in these areas. Developmental projects often come to a standstill, leading to major decline in the progress of such places. (Awogbade, (1983). This research thus seeks to investigate the root causes as well as the impact of communal conflict on socioeconomic development in Iwuochang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket, Eket Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Overtime, socio-economic development has been said to be marred by inter-communal conflicts, (Awogbade, 1983). Assumptions are that they have a negative effect on employment generation, education and small scale businesses. Observably, most developing countries are faced with the problem of rural under-development and Nigeria of which Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State is no

exception. Resources are channeled to the urban areas and other places where the government can recoup the cost of public investment through taxation and rates. Another reason for rural under-development is the idea of seeing cities as engine for economic growth.

Most developing countries including Nigeria have lost most of their resources as a result of inter-communal conflict as there exist no enabling environment for businesses, in the Iwuochang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State which is purely rural, has suffered as a consequence of this inter-communal conflict. The situation in the area is exacerbated by the presence of the violent conflict which has seemingly hampered subsistent fishing and farming – the very source of livelihood of the people of Iwuochang in Ibeno. There is thus food insecurity in the area as observed by World Bank Report (2006).

The regions-Iwuochang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State have suffered from the communal conflicts that have undermined the well-being of its people and the economy. There have been tribal wars in the area over the years. This has stalled most developmental projects from both government and non-governmental organizations. The area is one of the underdeveloped places in Nigeria. The communal conflicts in this area usually results in extreme brutality and violence against civilians which culminates in the death of many people. Health, education and social welfare services in the area have been devastated, the local economy has collapsed and many features of traditional life and the social structure have been destroyed. The two communities or local government clearly appears not to have benefited from its nodal location in the inter-regional trade, as unemployment, education, health and so on, are still major concerns among its people. This local government was therefore seen as an ideal place for this inquiry into the impacts of communal conflicts on socio-economic development, as the conflict appears to have adversely affected the development of the area.

This research thus seeks to investigate the negative effects of the conflict on employment generation, Education and finally, it effects on small scale enterprise which brings about declines in health and well-being hindering individual's capacity to work, thus constraining the ability to earn an income in both the short-term and long-term (Moore 2005).

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The main objective of this study was to investigate the impact of inter-communal conflicts on the socio-economic development in Akwa Ibom State, while the specific objectives are:

- (1) To determine the effect of inter-communal conflict on employment generation in Iwuochang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State
- (2) To assess the impact of inter-communal conflict on Educational development in Iwuochang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State.
- (3) To investigate the impact of inter-communal conflict on small scale enterprises In Iwuochang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of of Akwa Ibom State.

## **CONCEPT OF INTER-COMMUNAL CONFLICTS**

Inter-communal conflict is considered as human mechanisms that occur as a result of discrepancy or lack of enthusiasm which hampers or deters environmental peace, development and its transformation agenda all-over the world. Inter-communal conflict is also viewed as physical, mental and material tussle that arise between people of diverse ideology or class. Inter-communal conflict considers power tussle and competition over resource or political contest to prove supremacy. The phenomenon is always human initiative but varies from one locality to another while its consequences stand regrettable in nature and many factors are responsible for it especially in sub-Saharan African part of the world (Ubani, et al, (2022).

According to Alemika (1992), inter-communal conflict is a product of antagonistic interest between two or more opposing forces or groups within a society. In the same light, Oxford dictionary (2005) defined conflict as fight, struggle or quarrel, a bitter argument or disagreement between people or group of people. While communal conflict is defined as any struggle over economic lands, chieftaincy positions and political power in which the aim of the groups in conflicts are to gain the desired goal but also to eliminate, neutralized or injure their rival groups, (Ritzer, 2007). Lyman (2001) also sees inter-communal conflict as any disagreement or dispute between two or more inter-ethnic divisions. Coser (1956) postulates inter-communal conflict as a continuous tussle over lands, traditional status, political power and limited resources in which the aims of the opposing groups are to destroy and injure their enemies. Carmet (1993) supported this idea that, such conflicts are less amenable to diplomatic intervention as the methods of crisis management and peaceful settlement.

Inter-communal conflicts refer to tensions, disputes, or hostilities that arise between different communities or groups of people. These conflicts typically involve individuals from distinct cultural, ethnic, religious, or social backgrounds.

Conflict and development have had a unique relationship in which one births the other; in this case development births conflict. As already stated, development is all about change, progress or advancement and at any point in time when these take place there is disorder. Societal change most often requires structural change. While this may be true in any country, it is probably more often true in the developing world. Yet most development intervention is locally targeted and short-term. It does not try to implement structural change across the entire society. This disconnect creates something of a vicious cycle in which development leads to conflict, and the lack of conflict resolution practices interferes with further development. When conflict is not generating from the process of development; it comes as an element to stall or undermine the process of development from issues such as political or ethnic dispute this is the main cause of the conflict between Iwouchang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State. (Moore 2005)

## **CAUSES OF INTER-COMMUNAL CONFLICTS**

Julius, (2015), observed that Inter-communal conflicts can be triggered by various factors, including: Historical grievances as past conflicts, injustices, or perceived slights can create long-lasting tensions and resentment between communities. Again, the issue of Competition for resources arising from scarcity of resources like land, water, or economic opportunities can lead to competition and conflict between communities is also one the

causes of intercommoned conflict. The author also pointed out that political issues which arises from Political power struggles, electoral disputes, or disagreements over governance can exacerbate existing divisions and lead to conflict.

### **CONSEQUENCES OF INTER-COMMUNAL CONFLICTS**

Inter-communal conflicts have severe consequences, including: Loss of life and displacement emanating from violence and armed clashes which can result in deaths, injuries, and displacement of people from their homes. Also Destruction of property is another consequence faced as a result of the intercommoned conflict which leads to the destruction of homes, infrastructure, and livelihoods, causing economic hardship. Another aspect of it is the Social divisions as the conflicts can deepen existing social divisions, fostering mistrust and animosity between different groups within a society. The author also observed that inter-communal conflict also breads in Humanitarian crises as it create humanitarian crises, straining resources and hindering the delivery of essential services such as healthcare, education, and food. It also leads to Undermining development of which it impede social and economic development, hindering progress in areas such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure.

### **CONCEPT OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

It is important to realize that an apparently neutral and scientific word like development is no such thing. A definition of the concept of development unavoidably depends on the values of the person doing the definition, as well as on facts that are in principle falsifiable. This confirms that there is no absolute or accurate meaning to the term development. However one thing which theoreticians and practitioners in the field of development all agree is that there is no agreement about the meaning of development (Eyo, 2023).

But to say development is a value laden concept is extremely unhelpful. Nonetheless it is important to note, however, that most definitions of the term development imply movement from a current or previous condition, to one which is in many respects different and has often the connotation of a necessary path of progress, embracing an idea of necessity, change and fundamental improvement. In other words, it can simply be explained as the improvement, upgrading or advancement of the state of a thing such as a country, community, structures or person. It is concerned with the most urgent needs and the greatest imbalances in human societies.

Often development is used interchangeably with the term social change. As Chambers (2005) pointed out, if development means good change what then is good and what sort of change matters? Traditionally, these good changes refer to increased living standards, better health care and well-being and other forms of common good which are seen to benefit society at large (Power, 2003). Whichever perspective we take, development means change and that cannot in anyway be over emphasized. Socio-economic development refers to the improvement of living standards, social conditions, and economic opportunities for individuals and communities. It encompasses both social and economic dimensions, aiming for a holistic development that addresses the well-being of people and the sustainable growth of a society, Alimba, (2014).

## **DIMENSION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Different dimensions of socio-economic development have been identified by Angela, (2015), which considers access to quality education for all, from primary to higher education, improved access to affordable and quality healthcare services, Social safety nets to protect vulnerable groups, such as the elderly, children, and the disabled, Efforts to reduce disparities in income, wealth, and opportunities and Promoting the participation of marginalized groups in society.

On the aspect of Economic Development, it shows an increasing production of goods and services to improve living standards, Generating employment opportunities to reduce unemployment and poverty, Investing in transportation, energy, and other infrastructure to facilitate economic activity, Encouraging innovation and technological progress to boost productivity, balancing economic growth with environmental protection and social equity. Due to the impact of Social and economic development, a well-educated population contributes to economic growth, while economic growth can generate resources for social programs. Similarly, a healthy population is more productive, leading to economic growth.

## **COMPONENTS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Several indicators are used to measure socio-economic development, including: Gross Domestic Product (GDP) showing a measure of a country's economic output. Also is Human Development Index (HDI): indicating composite index that measures health, education, and income, The proportion of the population living below the poverty line, The percentage of the population that can read and write, The average number of years a person is expected to live, the number of deaths of infants under one year of age per 1,000 live births. Major indicators of socio-Economic development shows Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate, Per capita income, Employment rate, Poverty rate, Income inequality, Foreign direct investment as the Social Indicators includes: Literacy rate, Life expectancy, Infant mortality rate, Access to healthcare and education, Gender equality, Human development index (HDI), while the Environmental Indicators includes: Carbon emissions, Renewable energy use, Air and water quality, Biodiversity (Angela, 2015).

- **Employment Opportunities**

Employment generation refers to the process of creating new job opportunities within an economy. It's a crucial factor in economic growth, social stability, and individual well-being. When people are employed, they have the means to support themselves and their families, contributing to a stronger economy and society, Nwobashi, et al, (2018).

- **Educational Development**

Educational development refers to the process of improving the quality and accessibility of education. Educational development encompasses a wide range of activities, which according to Nwobashi, et al, (2018), includes developing effective teaching methods, providing teachers with professional development opportunities, and creating supportive learning environments. Ensuring that all children have access to quality education, regardless of their socioeconomic background or location. Raising academic standards and improving student achievement. Building schools, providing educational materials, and

ensuring that schools have adequate resources. Providing opportunities for people to continue learning throughout their lives.

Education can help people to acquire the skills and knowledge they need to find good jobs and improve their livelihoods, as it also help people to make informed decisions about their health and to access healthcare services. It is through education that social and economic development are Promoted, it create a skilled workforce, which is essential for economic growth, and finally, it Strengthen democracy due to the fact that it help people to become informed and engaged citizens.

- **Small-Scale Enterprises**

According to Julius, (2015), Small-scale enterprises also known as small businesses, are businesses with limited resources and a relatively small scale of operations, as noted by Julius, (2015), Small-scale enterprises are characterized by firstly, limited size as business involve a smaller workforce, limited capital investment, and a smaller production capacity compared to large-scale industries. This can range from sole proprietorships with only one employee to businesses with a few dozen employees.

Secondly, Small-scale enterprises often operate within a specific geographic area, serving local or regional markets. They may focus on serving the needs of their immediate community or a wider regional market. Thirdly, Small-scale enterprises are often owned and managed by one or a few individuals, who are actively involved in the day-to-day operations of the business.

Fourthly, Small-scale enterprises tends to rely more on manual labor than on machinery and automation. This can make them more labor-intensive and less capital-intensive compared to large-scale industries, and finally, Small-scale enterprises is more adaptable and responsive to changes in the market or consumer preferences due to their smaller size and less complex organizational structures. Small-scale enterprises include Retail stores, Restaurants, Salons and spas, Crafts businesses, Small manufacturing businesses, Home-based businesses, Fozzard, (2002).

### **Inter-Communal Conflict and Socio-Economic development**

Inter-communal conflict, often rooted in disputes over resources, identity, or political power, has a profound and detrimental impact on socio-economic development (Eyo, 2023). This complex relationship is characterized by a vicious factor, where conflict hinders development, and underdevelopment, in turn, and fuels further conflict, Bradshaw, (2007). The major Impacts of Inter-Communal Conflict on Socio-Economic Development as observed by Bradshaw, (2007), includes

Destruction of essential infrastructure like roads, bridges, schools, and hospitals. This hampers economic activity, limits access to education and healthcare, and hinders overall development.

Another impact is the disruption of agricultural production, trade, and other economic activities. Fear and insecurity deter investment, leading to job losses and reduced economic growth. Conflict often forces people to flee their homes, leading to displacement and migration. This can disrupt social and economic networks, and strain resources in host communities.

The overwhelming majority of internally displaced persons are women and children who are especially at risk of abuse of their basic rights. More often than refugees, the internally displaced tend to remain close to or become trapped in zones of conflict, caught in the cross-fire and at risk of being used as pawns, targets or human shields by the belligerents of which the communal conflict between Iwouchang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State.

The violence also claims several lives. On the 3rd of January 2018 it was reported that twelve people were killed in a single night of violence (peace online, 2018). Respondents also claimed that lot of deaths are either not reported or are played down by the authorities to reduce the tensions. They however maintained that in every major violent outbreak, more than a hundred lives are lost.

Properties running into several millions of Naira are lost annually through the violence. Arson, looting and gun battles are perpetuated during clashes between the feuding factions. These destroy the properties of many people from both factions. 17 respondents to the questionnaires, representing 57% of the sample population, claimed they have either personally lost property through the violence or have relatives who have lost properties. In the wake of the violence, which took place at the close of 2007, it was reported that over 15 shops and 159 houses were burnt. (dailysun web, 2008 ) some Public facilities are however targeted in these clashes.

The history of human kind and the rise and fall of civilizations is unquestionably a story of conflict. Conflict is inherent in human activities. It omnipresent and fore ordained. (Isard, 1992) Human conflict is truly a ubiquitous social phenomenon. It is experienced by all of us much of the time. It is the inevitable result of the living in close proximity of vast numbers of intelligent, complex beings with ambitions and goals that are always going to be compatible in context of a world of finite resources. (Bradshaw, 2007). Like most concepts in the social sciences, different scholars have defined development differently placing emphasis based on their individual areas of specialization. Johan Galtung (1996), identifies three broad definitions of the concept of development in the scholarly literature. The interconnection of development factors often causes further conflict escalation. For example, administrative chaos in under-financed governmental bodies often causes the transfer of responsibilities from the central state to NGOs, local governments, and the private sector. The result is that such organizations assume duties that may go well beyond their capacities, which causes further conflict. For example, NGOs, local governments, and the private sector lack training in facilitation, mediation, and negotiation, as well as the theoretical knowledge of conflict resolution. So conflicts escalate, with no one knowing what to do about it, Angela, (2015),

To put it more elaborately, both conflict and development have to do with the satisfaction of needs (human or non-human): development being the ability to meet such needs and conflict the effort to satisfy the needs of different parties. Therefore where the ability to meet needs is expanded (development) little effort would be used to satisfy individual needs. In times of conflict, competing groups and individuals use their energies unproductively to contain their opponents, rather than use them productively to improve life.



## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Relative Deprivation theory was adopted to guide this study. The concept of Relative Deprivation was introduced by Samuel Stouffer and his co-workers in their classic social psychological study. "The American soldier in 1949; it was also used by Robert K. Merton in his standard text "social theory and social structure in 1949; and was widely used by sociologists in the 1950s (Marshall, 1998). Relative deprivation is defined as the conscious feelings of a negative outcome between legitimate expectations and presents actualities (Schaefer 2000). Relative deprivation as theoretical concept has been used to analyse contexts perceived injustice and inequality, and is frequently used within the social science (Manzi, 2007). Relative deprivation theory claims that a person would feel relatively deprived if he or she lacks an object, desire it, sees some other person(s) with that object, and thinks feasible that object ((Bruck, 2001).

(Bruck, 2001), (Eyo, 2023), also observed that Relative deprivation is the perceived difference between the material and social conditions that individual's think should achieve, and the conditions they believe they would achieve which causes relative deprivation. Relative deprivation can be managed by a gradual elimination of inequality, which causes value expectation and value capability to coverage thus avoiding socio economic upheaval. The ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria is as a feeling of relative deprivation by the southern indigenes who are mostly Christians. The decreasing availability of physical, environmental and land resources such as clean water, good agricultural land for arable and animal husbandry could create a condition of simple security group identity" and deprivation in the area. (Shetima and Usman 2008), which could provoke violent conflict of high magnitude due to population movement and the scramble for available resources. The theory of Relative Deprivation is seen as a gap between just wants and the satisfaction expected wants. Relative deprivation is therefore, the difference between what we need and what we get. A group of people who fail to get a desired improvement in life conditions, justice, equality, and infrastructural development are deprived. In addition to that, if they are poor, and feel society is morally obliged to provide them with basic necessities, the gap between a just want that can generate irritation, anger, frustration and conflict. Thus, the idea of relative deprivation has been used either to measure fairness, inequality, social justice, or to explain grievance, social hostility or aggression (Godswill, 2007). This shows that, if relative equal access to pasture was given to both groups as Awogbade (1983) said that it used to be before the advent of colonialism in Benue tae, then the symbiotic relationship enjoyed by the groups before would be restored.

This theory is relevant to the study as it shows the place of conflict emanating from the deprivation which arises as a result of land, water usage, and economic activities between Iwouchang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State.

## **EMPIRICAL REVIEW**

In the works of Esara et al., (2024), it could be noted that on insecurity and communal conflicts in Akwa Ibom State, of which the objectives included; an investigation of the factors that necessitate communal conflict among communities in Akwa Ibom State, using regression analysis with primary and secondary sources of data collection, it was discovered

and concluded that inter-communal conflicts in Akwa Ibom State have been affected by insecurity thereby making the state an insecure one as it affects businesses, schools and development.

The work of Eyo, (2023), examined the contribution of commercial tricycles to the socio-economic development in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, through revenue generation to the government, employment generation for the people and the movement of economic goods within the Uyo metropolis, Akwa Ibom State. Using the survey research technique, data for the study were drawn from primary and secondary sources through the cross-sectional survey of 400 respondents from 10,500 registered Keke riders in Uyo. The study employed the economic development framework as a theoretical framework to determine how transportation activities enhance socio-economic development. It was discovered among others, that tricycle operation has generated revenue from the payment of taxes and registration fees to the State Ministry of Transport; that it has generated a lot of direct (riders) and indirect (spare parts dealers and mechanic) employment opportunities to the citizens; and that tricycle operations have aided in the movement of people, goods and services, even to the rural areas. The study recommended that apart from the State Government ensuring that revenue generated from tricycle operations is channeled to the development needs of the state, it should also effectively monitor tricycle operations to avoid illegal registration and diversion of the funds by fraudulent revenue collection agents.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Survey design was adopted for this study because it could facilitate gathering of information for the study. The population of the study was the total population in the two local government Area, which is about 316,100 being the residents of Iwouchang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State, (NPC, 2006). This research adopted Taro Yamani formula to determine the sample size (n). This study adopted both primary and secondary sources of data collection, primary sources comprises of interview and questionnaire as the researcher developed a structured questionnaire, while the secondary sources comprises of the internet, textbooks, magazines, published journals etc,. In preparation of the data, the researcher used the Pearson moment correlation method in analyzing the collected data.

### **Data Presentation and Analysis**

**Table 4.1: Gender Distribution of Respondents**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Male	200	50
Female	200	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field work (2025)**

The table above shows the gender distribution of respondents, as male were 200 representing 50% while female were also 200 representing 50% bringing a total of 400 respondents representing 100%.

Table 4.2: Age distribution of respondents

Year	Frequency	Percentage
19-28	100	34
29-38	132	27
39-48	110	25
49-Above	64	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work (2025)

The table above represents age distribution of respondents as those between 19-28 years of age were 100 representing 34% while those within 29-38 of age were 132 representing 27%, those of the ages within 39-48 were 110 representing 25% while those within the ages of 49 above were 64 representing 14.

**Research Hypothesis 1: Ho:** Inter-communal conflict do not tend to have any effect on employment generation, education and small scale businesses in Iwouchang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State.

Tables 4.5: Responses on how Inter-communal conflict has affected employment generation, education and small scale businesses in Iwouchang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State.

S/N	Inter-communal conflict and employment generation, Education and small scale businesses	S/A	A	D	S/D	TOTAL (%)
1.	Fishermen no longer go for fishing	250 (75%)	50 (25%)	-	-	300 (100%)
2	Teachers no longer go to school due to the conflict	290 (95%)	10 (5%)	-	-	300 (100%)
3	Shop owners no longer open their shops because of the conflict	320 (60%)	80 (40%)	-	-	300 (100%)
4	Schools and houses have been destroyed due to the conflict	280 (90%)	20 (10%)	-	-	300 (100%)
5	Death cases have been recorded	180 (40%)	120 (60%)	-	-	300 (100%)

From the questionnaire retrieved, it was observed that 250 respondents representing 75% strongly agreed to question no. 1, while 50 respondents representing 25% agreed, on

question number two 290 respondents representing 95% strongly agreed while 10 respondents agreed to it, on question number 3, 320 respondents representing 60% agreed to it while 80 respondents representing 40% agreed to it, again, 280 respondents agreed representing 90% strongly agreed to question No. 4 while 20 representing 10% agreed to it and finally, 180 respondents representing 40% strongly agreed to question No. 5 while 120 respondents representing 60% agreed to it.

### Test of Hypotheses

The null hypothesis indicates that there tends to be no effect of inter-communal conflict on employment opportunities.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and regression analysis was used in analysis of the above hypothesis with the examination of the responses to the questions on the relationship between communal conflict and employment opportunities. The PPMC obtained for each of the responses to the questions in Table 4.2.1, is presented in Table 4.2.1.

**Table 4.2.1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficients for Hypothesis One**

		Employment opportunities-EO	Employment opportunities-EO	Employment opportunities-EO	Employment opportunities-EO
Employment opportunities- 1	Pearson Correlation	1	.593**	.414**	.426**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	300	300	300	300
Employment opportunities- 2	Pearson Correlation	.593**	1	.659**	.599**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	300	250	300	300
Employment opportunities- 3	Pearson Correlation	.414**	.659**	1	.932**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	300	300	300	300
Employment opportunities- 4	Pearson Correlation	.426**	.599**	.932**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	300	300	300	300

**Source:** Researcher's Computation (2025)

Table 4.2.1 indicates that on the statements that there is no significant effect between inter-communal conflict and employment opportunities within in Iwouchang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State. Pearson Moment Correlation (PPMC) coefficients generated include 0.893, 0.414, 0.426, 0.659, 0.599, and 0.932 were found to be statistically significant at 5% level of significance. This is an indication of the significant influence of communal conflict on employment opportunities

within Iwouchang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State. However, on the nature and degree of relationship communal conflict (independent variable employment opportunities, the regression and correlation results are presented in Table 4.2.5.

**Table 4.2.2: Analysis Results for Hypothesis One**

---

EO = 3.336 + 0.091COMCON  
t-stat= (51.795) (2.244)  
Prob. = (0.000) (0.026)  
R= 0.141; R<sup>2</sup> = 0.020; F-stat= 5.035; Prob. (F-stat) = 0.026

---

**Source: Researcher's Computation (2025)**

**EO= Employment Opportunities, COMCON-Communal Conflict**

Table 4.2.5 shows that employment opportunities (EO) will remain positive at an average of 3.336 units, if there are no changes in Communal Conflict (COMCON). This implies that Communal conflict remain constant, indicating the more the unit of communal conflict the more the level of employment opportunities which will lead to an increase of 0.091 units change. This positive relationship is statistically significant with a computed t-statistic value of 2.244 and a probability value of 0.026 (Sig = 0.026), since the probability value obtained is less than 0.05 at 5% level of significance.

The correlation (PPMC) coefficient R value of 0.141 indicates the existence of a positive correlation between communal conflict (COMCON) and employment opportunities (EO). However, this can be said to be a low positive correlation. Also, the predictive power of communal conflict (COMCON) to explain the changes in employment opportunities (EO) is low given the obtained coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) value of 0.020 obtained.

Finally, given that the computed F-statistic value obtained is 5.035 and the probability (sig) value is 0.026, the relationship between communal conflict (COMCON) and employment opportunities, can be said to have goodness-of-fit. This implies that the relationship is statistically significant. This is an indication that the null hypothesis earlier stated will fail to hold, and is hereby rejected. This implies that a positive and significant relationship exists between communal conflict (COMCON) and employment opportunities (EO).

## **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **COMMUNAL CONFLICT AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES.**

from the findings of the study, it was discovered that employment opportunities (EO) remains positive at an average of 3.336 units, indicating that communal conflict remain constant, as the more the unit of communal conflict the more the level of employment opportunities which leads to an increase of 0.091 units change. The correlation (PPMC) coefficient R value of 0.141 indicates the existence of a positive correlation between communal conflict (COMCON) and employment opportunities (EO) meaning there is a low positive correlation of which the relationship is statistically significant showing an indication that the null hypothesis earlier stated failed to hold, and is hereby rejected leading to a discovery that there is a positive and significant relationship existing between communal conflict (COMCON) and employment opportunities (EO), meaning that inter-communal

conflict have significant effect on employment generation of persons in Iwuochang in Ibeno and Esit Urua in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State, which is in line with the postulations of Lucien, (2014).

### **COMMUNAL CONFLICT AND EDUCATION**

The second finding also showed that inter-communal conflict have significant impact on educational development in Iwuochang in Ibeno and Esit Urua in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State as the null hypothesis indicates that communal conflict most likely influence education in Iwuochang in Ibeno and Esit Uduu in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and regression results were used in analysis of the above hypothesis with the examination of the responses to the questions on the impact of communal conflict and education in Iwuochang in Ibeno and Esit Uduu in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State, which is in line with the postulations of Johan (1996),

### **INTER-COMMUNAL CONFLICT ON SMALL AND MEDIUM SCALE ENTERPRISES**

Finally, it was discovered that communal-conflict have severe negative impact on small scale enterprises in Iwuochang in Ibeno and Esit Urua in Eket, Akwa Ibom South Senatorial District, Akwa Ibom State as the conflict has affected lots of businesses thereby making the small scale business owners and their sales boys/girls homeless and jobless as the correlation (PPMC) coefficient R value of 0.932 indicates the existence of a correlation between communal conflict (COMCON) and small scale enterprises (SSE) which is in line with postulations of Nicolas, *et al.* (2009).

### **CONCLUSION**

This chapter has examined the impact of the inter-communal conflict and socio-economic development in the Area. These have been discussed in other chapters of this study. Based on the findings of this study, the study concludes that there is an existing positive and significant relationship between communal conflict and Employment opportunities, indicating that the more the increase of the conflict the greater the number of persons that will be displaced and staying idle without a job, considering Government employees, fishermen, farmers, traders, small and scale businesses owners, etc. World Bank Report (2006): it can also be concluded that there is a significant relationship between communal conflict and Education as the conflict between the two communities has led to the destruction of properties ranging from houses, primary and secondary schools, hospitals, churches, etc., a continuous increase in the conflict will lead to the destruction of properties leading to underdevelopment of the area as students are always out of schools due to the existence of the conflict. Ubani et.al (2020).

Finally, it can be concluded from the findings that the conflict has affected lots small scale enterprises in both the conflicting regions as these businesses can no longer go about their normal businesses thereby bringing a negative effects to the socio-economic development of the regions and at large that of Akwa Ibom State. Small and medium scale businesses being computer business centers, Naija bet centers, hair salons (unisex) bakeries, table water producers, restaurant, poultry business, crayfish centers and fish shops. Etc.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were made:

- The Akwa Ibom State Government should create and establish more schools in the affected areas to bring back those affected by the conflict in Iwuochang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket local government Areas of Akwa Ibom State in order to stem down the incessant inter-communal conflicts and its effects on employment generation
- The Akwa Ibom State government, should build more schools in various communities in order to forestall boundary crossing by indigenes from one community to another and reduce the effect of inter-communal conflict on educational development in Iwuochang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket local government Areas of Akwa Ibom State
- The Akwa Ibom State government, should provide more financial intervention programmes to support small scale businesses in Iwuochang in Ibeno and Esit Udua in Eket local government Areas of Akwa Ibom State who were affected by the conflict.

## REFERENCES

- Aaron, K. K (2015). Relative deprivation and insurgency: lessons from Nigeria's flawed federalism. *International Area Studies Review*, 18(2), 164-181.
- Agnew, J. (1989). "Beyond reason. Spatial and temporal sources of ethnic conflict" 41-52 in L. Kriesberg, T.A. Northrop and S.J. Thorson (Eds.), *Intractable Conflicts and their Transformations*.
- Alabi, D., & Famakinwa, M. (2017). "Effect of community conflict on rural economic activities in Osun State, Nigeria: Implication for Sustainable Development" *Ife Journal of Agriculture* 26 (1) 63 -73.
- Awogbade, M. O. (1983), "Pastoral Fulani reaction to grazing reserve development: the case of ruma-kukar-jangarai, kaduna state, Nigeria.
- Bernard, O. O, & Ashimi, R. A. (2014). Organization conflict; causes, effect and remedies" *International Journal of Academic Research in Economics and Management Science* 3 (6) 118- 137.
- Beyene, H.G (2014). Socio-economic factors as causes and remedies for conflict of the San community in platfontein. *Journal for Trans disciplinary Research in South Africa* 10 (4) 1-21.
- Bradshaw, T. K. (2007) "Theories of poverty and anti-poverty programs in community development" *community development* 38(1) 7-25.
- Bruck, T. (2001). Determinants of rural poverty in post-war evidence from a household survey and implications for government and donor Policy", *Oxford, QEH Working Paper Series*, No 67.
- Chambers, R. (2005) *Ideas for development*. London and sterling VA.
- Colletta, N. M. (2000). Violent conflict and the transformation of social capital, lessons from Cambodia, Rwanda, Guatemala, and Somalia World Bank
- Collier, P. (2000). Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and their Implication for policy (online)- URL.
- Devereux, S. (2000). *Famine in the Twentieth Century*, IDS Working Papers, No. 105.
- Eyo, U. E. (2023). Tricycle operation and socio-economic development within Uyo metropolis. *AKSU Journal of Administration and Corporate Governance* 3(2)165-176



- Fozzard, A. (2002). How, when and why does poverty get budget priority poverty reduction strategy and public expenditure in. London, overseas development institute (odi), working paper series, No. 167.pdf
- Frazer, L., Weaven, S., Giddings, J. & Grace, D. (2012). "What went wrong? Franchisors and franchisees disclose the causes of conflict in franchising", *Qualitative market research* 15 (1), 87-103.
- <http://www.worldbank.org/research/conflict/papers/civilconflict.pdf> collier cramer, christopher (2005): Inequality and conflict: A review of an age-old concern identities, conflict and cohesion (Paper 11). United Nations research institute for social development.
- Lucien, A. C. (2014). Structural causes of social conflict in Africa" published M.sc thesis submitted to department of international and global studies college of sciences university of central florida orlando, 1 -81.
- Luckham, R. Ahmed, I. Muggah, & White, R. S (2001). Conflict and poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa: An assessment of the issues and evidence", IDS working Paper, No. 128
- Lwanga, N (2003). Chronic Poverty and disability in Africa' paper presented at the international conference: Staying power: chronic poverty and development policy, held at the university of Manchester, 7 – 9 April 2003.
- Mihelic, K. K., & Tekavcic, M. (2013). Work-family conflict: a review of antecedents and outcomes" *International Journal of Management and Information Systems* 18 (1), 15-26.
- Nicolas, D. C, & Dominic, R. (2009). The Effects of conflict on the structure of the economy" proceedings of the German development economics conference frankfurt 6, 1 -41.
- Nir, H., Taya, R., Eileen Y. C., James, J., & Katz, A. T. (2014). Mental models at work: cognitive causes and consequences of conflict in Organizations" *Sage journals* 40 (1) 92-110.
- Okuntade, T. F. (2017). Causes and effects of conflict in the Nigerian construction industry" *International journal of technology enhancements and emerging engineering research*, 2 (6) 1-11.
- Patricia, J. (2011). Poverty and violent conflict: A micro-level perspective on the causes and duration of warfare. *Institute of Development Studies Working Paper* No 385, 1-25.
- Prakash, A. (2013). Conflict-induced displacement, understanding the causes of flight" *American Journal of Political Science* 57 (1) 82-89.

- Remus, I., Irene, E., D, P., Sandy, L., (2012). Attributed causes for work–family conflict: Emotional and behavioral outcomes. *Sage journal* 2 (4) 293-310.
- Richani, N. (2007). Systems of violence and their political economy in post-conflict Situations. Online- URL: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/>
- Tidström, A. (2009). Causes of conflict in inter competitor cooperation. *Journal of Business and industrial marketing*. 24 (7) 506-518.
- Ubani, P, Kio- L, Datonjo, Comfort O. (2020). Determinants of social and rural communal conflict in South –South environment, Nigeria. *International Journal of Research and scientific innovation (IJRSI)*. 11 (2), 2321–2705
- Wasil, A. (2010). The causes of conflicts among rural communities of district Archi, Afghanistan. A reference to irrigation water management” Master’s degree research project submitted to Van Hall Larenstein University of applied Sciences with specialization in training rural extension and transformation, 1-52.
- World Bank Report (2006). Community-driven development in the context of conflict-affected countries. Challenges and opportunities. Report No. 36425-GLB.