

THE ROLE OF LAW LIBRARIES IN CONFLICT RESOLUTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Law libraries need to be strategically expedient in the provision of peaceful environment for conflict resolutions, considering the imperative of peace in the global world today. Therefore, this paper identified various causes of conflicts and discussed succinctly the roles of law libraries in facilitating effective information delivery in conflict resolutions. The paper also, discussed the impact of law libraries in helping lawyers, judges or court, law students and other individuals to acquire skills in settlement of disputes for effective administration of justice. Challenges and solutions on the roles of law libraries in providing information services for conflict resolution were presented. However, recommendations were given, if well taken will promote effective and efficient information resources delivery for promotion of peace and social cohesion.

Keywords: Library, Law libraries, Conflicts, Conflict resolutions, Peace

INTRODUCTION

Jabo and Bayero (2014) opined that libraries are to provide free access to information, as well as uphold the principles of intellectual freedom, and ensure that information resources representing various points of view, at least opposing points of view on any given issue made available, are not recess ring succumbing to political and religious persuasions.

Applebanum et al (1998, cited by Osisioma H, 2004) define “conflict as” an interpersonal dynamic which is shaped by the internal and external environments of the parties involved andis manifested in a process which affects group performance either functionally or dysfunctional”.

Conflicts can originate within an entity resulting in intra-personal, intra-group or intra-national conflicts; or they cloud reflect in compatible action between contrasting groups or persons leading to interpersonal, inter-group or inter-national conflicts. Therefore, the challenge for leaders and manager is how to make conflicts constructive rather than destructive, overt rather than covert, marginal rather than fundamental, peripheral rather than pivotal.

Ofite (2001, cited by Osisioma H, 2004) attempted a summary of the sources of conflicts in the Nigeria polity

- I. Land-space and the resource available;
- II. Disputed jurisdiction of certain traditional rulers and chiefs;
- III. Creation of local government councils and the location of their head quarters;
- IV. Ethnic and individual/ sectional competition over a access to scarce political and economic resources;
- V. Micro-and micro social structures with variety of conflicting cultural interests, values and preferences;
- VI. Population growth and expansionist tendencies to sustain ethnic-bound occupations;
- VII. Perception of disregard for cultural symbols pollution of cultural practices;
- VIII. Politicization of religious pluralism and fanaticism of religious practitioners.

Conflicts are inevitable part of human existence this is because human beings have different background, interests, and worldviews these lead to degenerate into aggression and violence. Conflict may be noticed in individual level may eventually spread to the larger society but it's important to note that just as peace and co-operation is desirable , conflict for could be progressive when not allowed to become destructive

There are many definition of conflict, but it is commonly defined as an open clash between two opposing groups or individuals. **Oyeshola (2005)** defined conflict as disagreement, dispute or controversy in ideas, viewpoints held by two or more individual/ group.

According to **Hornby (2000)**, conflict refers to a situation, in which people, groups or countries are in a serious disagreement or argument. It could a violent situation or period of fighting between two countries. Also it is a situation in which there are opposing ideas, opinions, and feeling or wishes, a situation in which it is difficult to choose.

From the above we can deduce that conflict leads to fighting, violence and opposition.

In Nigeria, many of the conflict bedeviling the polity have been communal and ethnic based. While in Africa several causes of conflicts are weak State and state collapse, economic decline and economic shock, historical factors natural resource wealth, unemployment, lack of education and population pressure, abuse of independent, regional and inter locking conflicts, failure to consolidate peace etc I can say that justification for the saying “accidents do not just happen, they are caused” is locatable within the context of the causes of violent conflicts in Africa. It is obvious, that Nigeria’s conflict share a common backdrop of economic stagnation and faltering democratic rule that undermined state capacity and legitimacy. It then follows that, for Nigeria to wriggle out of her myriad conflicts their root causes need be properly identified, agreed on and exhaustively transformed accordingly. However it is necessary to break a long term resolution base on understanding of its underlying causes to ensure that resurgence does not arise. The need to end or resolve a long-term conflict, a relatively stable solution that identifies and deal with the underlying sources of the conflict bring us to what is called conflict resolution. Resolution means going beyond negotiating interests to meet all sides’ basic needs, while simultaneously finding a way to respect their underlying values and identifies. Truly, conflict resolution requires a more analytical, problem-solving approach than dispute settlement. This is because resolution requires identifying the causal factors behind the conflict, and finding ways to deal with them. This means that it is possible to settle a dispute that exist within the conflict of a larger conflict, without resolving the overall or underlying causes of the conflict.

However, achieving complete resolution of a conflict can require making significant socio-economic or political changes that restructure society in a more just inclusive way. As a matter of fact changing societal structures, such as the distribution of wealth in society, is difficult and can take decades to accomplish therefore, fully resolving conflict can be along laborious process. After conflict is resolve it pave way for peace development.

The reason why conflicts are analyzed is because it has been observed that a lot of solutions or recommendations made during conflicts are proffered on the basis of inaccurate analysis which sometimes compounds the conflict situation. Therefore, analysis help to identify root causes and to formulate policies based on credible evidence. It facilitates future planning and prevents reoccurrence. It also facilitates the identity of all parties in conflict. The following are reasons for conflict analysis:

- Diagnosis.
- Identifying causes.
- Determine best approach.
- Assess damages.
- Guard against future occurrences.
- Identify factors and forces in play – apparent or hidden.
- Proffer solutions.

A better understanding of these tools necessitates a highlight of stages of conflict. These include:

- Formation stage.
- Escalation stage.
- Crisis or peak of the conflict.
- De-escalating stage.
- Transformation stage or reconciliation stage.

In as much as there is dark sides of conflicts, there is also the positive sides of conflicts. **Ogunyannwo (2005)** highlighted that conflicts are sometimes desirable to achieve the following:

- Effect necessary changes.
- Generate new ideas.

- Test existing and novel ideas.
- Explore possibilities.
- Identify the boundaries between the possible and the impossible.
- Reveal fears and promote an opportunity to understand the other party better.
- Provide opportunities for people to vent their spleens and express deep rooted feelings.
- Release tension and bottled-up feelings.
- Provide emancipation from oppression and tyranny.
- Create mutual respect and dependence.
- Provide opportunity for dialogue.
- Break unwholesome alliances.
- Reveal different needs and interests.
- Recruit like minds and build formidable teams.
- Test group cohesion.
- To resolve conflicts, one has to:
 - Understand that conflicts are inevitable.
 - Resolve to address conflict quickly.
 - Focus on the problem.
 - Be open to solutions.
 - Acknowledge how others are feeling.
 - Listen attentively.

Conflict Resolution

Miller (2003) posited that conflict resolution is a variety of approaches aimed at terminating conflicts through the constructive solving of problems, distinct from management or transformation of conflicts.

Miall and Woodhouse (2001) posited that by conflict resolution it is expected that the deep rooted sources of conflict are addressed and resolved, and behavior is no longer violent, nor are attitudes hostile any longer, while structure of the conflict has been changed. However, in the understanding of **Mitchel and Banks (1996)** conflict resolution refers to an outcome in which the issues in an existing conflict are satisfactorily dealt with through a solution 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 and process or procedure by which such an outcome is achieved. Conflict resolution performs a healing function in societies. It provide opportunity for examinations of alternative payoffs in a situation of positioned disagreement and restores societies by facilitating discussions and placing parties in a situations in which they can choose alternative positive decisions to resolve conflicts.

It is assume that conflict is a short term phenomenon that can be resolved permanently through mediation or other intervention processes. It addresses the causes of conflict and seeks to build a new and lasting relationship between hostile groups **Best (2006)** conclude 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 conflict is resolved in a true sense of it. However **Best (2006)** identified the following approaches to conflict resolution.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR): This is an application of non-conventional peaceful methods of settling disputes and resolving conflicts using the least expensive methods and in ways that satisfy the parties and preserve the relationships after settlement might have been reached. it is an alternative to litigation. At the ADR centre person is given the opportunity to participate in a mediation or arbitration session conducted by a mediator or arbitrator. The objective of the ADR centre is to facilitate access to the justice system by contributing to the productivity and effectiveness of the system. Lawyers and courts come to mind when ADR is discussed because they are gatekeepers in the temple of justice and people with problems will naturally gravitate towards them. Therefore, lawyers and great benefit from ADR. Every expecting field of the concept allows for the integration of ADR into legal practice no matter the angle from which it is viewed. Statistics show that each year, a lot of non legal personnel get trained in ADR, especially in arbitration and mediation. The training empowers them to assist in the resolution of dispute wherever they are. In the entire arrangement, the council in full blown legs/practice has the opportunity to establish a Dispute Reformation Department in his law office. Time has passed when legal profession was one known for litigation alone. Clients attend lawyers with problems they want resolved and not necessarily litigated. Trained mediators

and arbitrators can apply to be listed as neutrals of existing multi-door court houses, free hold centers and agencies providing services such as the Nigerian Communication Commission. ADR with businesses is method of resolving all kinds of commercials, consumers and employment related disputes in a more efficient, more economical and effective ways than litigation. ADR processes provide the disputants with the opportunities of having a specialist sitting as either a mediator or an arbitrator. The Lagos Multi-Door Court House Law (The LMDC) was promulgated in 2007 to create a legal framework for the operations for the LMDC and to create the proper environment for the fulfillment of its overriding objectives. The ADR process comprises of five major stages, namely: The Initiating Stage, The Intake Screening Stage, The Pre-Session Stage, ADR Session Stage and The Closure Stage. However, settlement agreement is enforceable as a contract between them and when endorsed by an ADR judge. It shall be deemed to be enforceable as a judgment of High Court of Lagos State.

The utilization of the available ADR mechanisms in the settlement of the commercial conflicts can create an enabling environment for foreign investments. In Abuja, ADR mechanism was established to resolve cases faster, easier and cheaper than the normal recourse to litigation which has the tendency to delay and prolong business or commercial conflicts. Abuja Multi-Door Court House (AMDC) has the capacity to facilitate quick resolution of commercial conflicts and commercial alternative dispute resolution options like mediation, conciliation, arbitration and early neutral evaluation are employed. AMDC usually organizes refresher course for the members of the Panel of Neutrals the Dispute Resolution Officers (DROs) of the AMDC. The course was designed to keep the DROs and the neutrals abreast and on top of latest topical issues and the new techniques of effective dispute resolution intervention.

Western Alternative Dispute Resolution: This method seeks to promote the use of non-violent approaches to conflict resolution. It involves the use of government ministries, police and the courts-from magistrate to the Supreme Court.

Negotiation: Rambotham and woodhouse (1999) defined negotiation as the process where the parties within the conflict seek to settle or resolve their conflict. The goal is to reach agreements through joint decision making between parties. **(Jeong 2000)**. It is the process whereby two or more parties, who are faced with a problem of conflict about some limited resources, attempt to agree on how best to resolve the problem or resolves the conflict. It is a form of verbal communication, adopted by parties to a contact of interest, without resort to arbitration or other judicial processes, with the aim of reaching a common ground and compromise. It is facilitated by a third party who helps the conflict parties to reach a mutually satisfying agreement.

Mediation: This is a popular method used in conflict resolution. it involves the intervention of the third party who does not impose solution on the parties. The role of the method is to create an enabling environment for the parties to have dialogue that will lead the resolution of pending conflict. it is also an informal, voluntary (unless ordered by a court), non-binding confidential, private dispute resolution process in which a neutral, trained, professional, disputer, resolver (the mediator) facilitates understanding, communication and negotiation between disputing parties and assisting those parties in reaching their own mutually acceptable resolution or negotiated document to their dispute.

Arbitration: This is the use and assistance of a neutral third party in conflict, who hears the evidence from both parties, and renders a decision which is binding on the parties. **Best (2006)** Arbitrators fulfill this role by virtue of the positions of authority they occupy to the society.

Adjudication: This involves the use of courts and litigation process to resolve conflicts. The judgment given by the court is legally bound on the conflicting parties. It is a law suit or a civil action brought before a court, in which the party commencing the action, the plaintiff, seeks a legal remedy, usually from offence.

Communication: This involves the use of sharing and exchange information between individuals, group; and parties in a conflict resolution. This is where the services of libraries and information centres are needed in a conflict resolution. Libraries are repositories of information and knowledge in various formats. **Best (2006)** noted that the exchange and sharing of information between conflicting parties can help remove doubts, suspicion, ignorance and contribute to the process of peace building. The methods discussed above have information as a common ground therefore the place of information in conflict resolution cannot be over- emphasized.

Religion: Oyeshola (2005) is of view that religion is one method which can be used to resolve conflicts. He noted that all the methods discussed above are basically human and the spiritual dimension must be part of the efforts in negotiating for conflict resolution. Religionists should be sincere in their practice of their faith, thus bringing about permanent resolution of conflict. **On-line Dispute Resolution.** The development of technology, especially the internet, has brought about new methods of conflict resolution called Online Dispute Resolution (ODR). Many names have been used to describe the same concept as Electronic Dispute Resolution, Online Alternative Dispute Resolution, Internet Dispute Resolution. ODR encompasses many other forms of ADR and court proceedings that incorporate the use of internet, websites, e-mail communication, streaming media and other information technology as part of the dispute resolution process. **Conciliation:** Conciliation is another aspect of negotiation which allows taking of peace messages to and from parties in conflict in order to promote attitudinal and behavioural changes that will build a positive relationship between parties in dispute. It is a process whereby the parties to a dispute agree to utilize the services of a conciliator, who then meets with the parties separately in an attempt to resolve their differences. The Arbitration and Conciliation Act of 1990 stipulates that the conciliator must be appointed, may use documentary evidence only and may even make recommendations for settlement.

Arb-Med is a process by which parties present their case before an arbitrator. The award of the arbitrator is sealed and the parties are encouraged to try mediation and see if they can arrive at an amicable resolution. If mediation works, then the mediation agreement will supersede the award, else the award will be open and read to the parties. Arb-Med works by employing subtle pressure (sealed award) on the parties. It encourages them to seek a mutually agreed solution or risk having one imposed on them. This ADR spectrum was introduced by Ogunyannwo.

Early Neutral Evaluation: It is used to access the likely outcome of a legal action. This evaluation provides a quick method of obtaining a neutral advisory opinion which may assist the parties in their negotiations. The evaluation is binding if the parties so agree and is usually done by a retired judge or an experienced lawyer.

Med-Arb: It is the process that gives the parties the opportunities to use mediation to reach a settlement, and then to rely on a decision by the arbitrator on which new agreement has been reached. This process encourages the parties to create their own best settlement under the threat of having one imposed by an arbitrator. The parties sometimes choose to have the same person act as both the mediator and the arbitrator. However, the problem, if the same person acts in both notes, is in the issue of confidentiality. Knowledge that the mediator may eventually act as arbitrator may well cause parties to be more restrained in revealing their real needs and positions.

Ombudsman: It is an official appointed by the government to investigate and report on complaints made by citizens against public authorities. The parties are obliged to attempt resolution before passing on the dispute to the ombudsman. Decisions are usually based upon written evidence, although, there is an increasing trend towards meeting with the parties, both jointly and individually. The process provides a cheap and relatively informal means for individuals to complain of misadministration or improper decisions by major institutions, businesses or government. In Nigeria, the Office of the Public Defender and the Public Complaints Commission serve this purpose.

African Indigenous Conflict Resolution is a tradition method of conflict resolution which involves negotiation, mediation, arbitration, adjudication and reconciliation methods. It is anchored on the dramatization of the issues involved in conflict. Performance had always been stage managed by notable dramatic personae, which included experienced elders, priests, age-grades, chiefs and kings in African societies. The stage includes the media houses (as public court) and colonial court of heritage (as customary courts). The performers of conflict resolutions were dukes of African judges and adjudicators, the litigants (complaints and plaintiffs) or parties to the conflict and witnesses were groomed in the tradition from where the stage language and techniques evolved. The rules were tailored to equitable distribution of justice and the maintenance of law and order in the process of resolving conflict in traditional African societies. Humanity before the adjudicator was encouraged and reference to the unseen forces of the ancestors was enhanced at the scene of conflict resolution. **Olaoba,(2006)**

Executive Tribunal: It is called a 'mini-trial', non-binding third party involvement in which a senior executive from each party intervenes when there is a deadlock in negotiations, mediation who normally would not have not had direct involvement in the dispute, joins the mediator or other neutral and they sit as a panel to hear the submissions from each sides' representatives in a joint meeting. After the submissions,

the executives will retire, usually with the neutral as chairperson, bring in senior management perspectives to bear on the issues and negotiates a settlement.

IMPACT /ROLES OF LAW LIBRARIES IN CONFLICT RESOLUTIONS.

A law library is a sizeable collection of reference law book, text books, journals on law, law report, document and non book materials on legal education and allied disciplines, housed, organized and documented with easy retrieval system to serve the vary information needs of its clientele or patrons.

According to Wikipedia, a law library is a special library, used by law student, lawyers, judges and their law clerks, historians and other scholars of legal history in order to search the law. A law library is an organized collection of information sources to meet the need of the legal profession.

A law library, for the purpose of this paper is the library set to provide legal materials to assist judicial officers, other members of the court and their clients in case of the court, law scholars and students in academic institution and other law officers in ministries, police station and other law definition enabled it to fall under the category of a special library.

Uloko (2001) that “court libraries is a specialized library because of its unique place as a tool i.e. the teaching of law, research in law and its valuable contribution to the maintenance of peace and stability in the country “ therefore, the court libraries function as a reservoir that keeps up to date records of the numerous law decrees, edicts, constitutions, court proceeding, and amendments as they are passed. Therefore, the objectives of the law libraries in Nigeria is to make information resources accessible to its users, as a well- stocked law libraries is indispensable to the legal practitioners as well as to the judges in their administration of justice. Three class’s law libraries are:

- i. The specialist library for commercial firms, courts of justice and government departments.
- ii. The legal practitioner’s library set up by private practicing Barristers/solicitors.
- iii. The academic law library set up in the Nigeria Universities, Collage Library Research institutes, Nigeria Council of Legal Education.

As the world increasingly becomes a global village conflicts with transcends national frontiers and assume global dimensions. Therefore legal profession and practitioners need to acquaint themselves with requisite skills as a mediator and negotiators and as an arbiters to handle local, national and cross- national conflicts in an assured, confident and professional manner indeed, they all need to acquire conflict resolution skills and work towards preventing conflicts from destroying our precious relationships.

The work is designed to provide an insight to legal practitioner the roles which law libraries plays in providing access to information resources that will equip them to have information for better skill and efficiency in their practice in conflict resolution. The absence of the right information or breach of communication between the parties involve is common in a conflict situation therefore, provision of the right information has been one of the solution for conflict resolution.

Okoye, 2010 quoting Gisesa stated that researches regarding conflicts and peace have revealed that conflicts are based on deficiency of information, stressing that cases of misinformation, wrong information or that which may lead to as well as enlighten conflicts .

Against this backdrop, the law libraries is seen as a very useful tool and instruction that provides the related information and materials that helps society and legal practitioners to understand the realities of any conflict situation. Consequent upon the above important role the user through the information would be able to resolve and prevent conflicts.

Echezona(2001) citing ogunkelu asserts that libraries including law libraries equip(legal) researchers with techniques of Identifying and preventing conflicts at early stage, which could be by inviting discussions and brainstorming from expert on conflict resolution in workshops and seminars, and documenting the information so generated for users to learn the art of resolving and managing conflicts, thereby increasing the value of human intellectual output. The traditional functions of law libraries such as collection development, organization of relevant materials, retrieval and dissemination of legal and related information resources is an important instrument for conflict resolution.

Librarians, regardless of type, found it relevant to employ ICT facilities in addition to books, as part of their collections. Law libraries of varying types have to employ the use of ICT facilities in order to meet the ever increasing production, use and retrieval of library materials. The content of law libraries is both primary and secondary sources of information. Journals being one of the secondary sources of information contain information in conflict resolution. For examples, Journal of international dispute settlement(JID)which primarily addresses fundamental and lasting issues of international dispute settlement, and gives preference

to articles of enduring importance concerning significant trends in field. McGill journal of Dispute Resolution(MJDJ) is a bilingual peer-reviewed, student-run academic journal dedicated to the presentation and promotion of high quality scholarship in the fields of arbitration, mediation, facilitation, negotiation and forms of alternative dispute resolution .Besides, law libraries provide web resources on ADR .Examples are: WorldLII alternative Dispute Resolution, settlement of International Dispute Research Guide(peace palace)this research guide provides information about basic legal materials in area of international disputes including handbooks, leading articles, bibliographies, periodicals ,serial publications and documents of interest .Equally ,law libraries are hooked to on line legal information sources for easy and speedy delivery of information on conflict resolution and related fields. Examples are Legalpedia, Law companion, LEXIS NEXIS.

Law libraries have always played key roles in administration and access to justice, because they promote intellectual resource geared towards peace, unity, and resolution of conflicts among parties and litigants in the law courts and outside the court.

Therefore, it is imperative to recognize the roles they play in resolution of conflicts in the society and between individual's conflicts.

Moreover, law librarians and law libraries in Nigeria can effectively and efficiently engage in resolution of conflict through the various services it renders. Thus, **Edoka (2000)** and **Aina (2004)** stated that library services are the overall activity that goes on in the library geared towards effective utilization of resources by the users. The users are the following judges, law teachers, magistrates, law students, legal practitioners etc.

The services offered by law librarians and staff enables them to carryout activities and duties applying the information materials to them for the purpose of meeting the information needs of the law library users they serve

Hence, Metzger (1991) in his own view emphasized that library services are needed for the following:

- Public Enlightenment on rights in the society, understanding social values and expected conduct in public life.
- Assisting to adjust to existing, social political, spiritual and economic activities of the society.
- To cultivate and maintain reading culture and promotion of good literature.
- Law libraries and librarians here a strategic position in taking the role as information dissemination through the library resources and programs which include; talk shows, film shows, Book fair, symposium, library week, Book exhibition, internet, mobile library, law conferences, workshops and seminars, media discussion etc

Haruna (2009) further identified the following library services as an important tool in resolution of conflict, they include:

Current Awareness services (CAS): This service enables the users of law libraries to know the latest materials acquired by the library. Law librarians also perform a service known as the Noter-up service with respect to new piece of legislation amendments and updating the statute books. **Jejede (1993)**

Selective Dissemination of reformation (SDI): It is part of current Awareness service. This system renders information service to library users by compiling record of research interests of the users with a view of sending to selected users latest available information in the research area. Such research information could be in area of issue related to ADR, conflict Resolution, decisions judgments of multi Door court house of various states. The data bank of conflict resolution information can be organized on readers and service them on a selective basis.

Indexing and abstracting services (IAS): Indexing is a systematic guide to the text of any reading material or to the contents of other documents. Law libraries can index informative items scattered in the wide range of rules of mediation or Alter native Dispute to Resolution used in multi-Door court House of various state. They could be assembled chronologically as a reference guide to be consulted. Abstracting services produce the summaries of the contents of resolution in the law libraries and make it available to the users thereby serving as time saver for the library user.

Referrals services (RS): The references services are provided by law libraries by providing resources for specific information needs on conflict resolution. The referral service is provided by the law reference librarian who is a middleman between the reader and the right book. The law libraries offers information on conflict resolution , by providing adequate answers to queries. Guidance can be given to the reader on the availability of relevant specific books in conflict resolution.

Bibliography services (BS): It helps in preparation of reading lists for readers on conflict resolution so that the users will quickly and easily retrieve the materials on demand without delay.

Organizing seminars, conferences, workshops, symposia, exhibition: Law libraries is an avenue to organize seminars, conferences, exhibition, workshops and symposia that covers thematic areas on conflict resolution this provide an avenue to educate and enlighten the participant on information on conflict resolution.

Mobile library (ML): The use of mobile library the law libraries can make information on conflict resolution available to disadvantaged areas, like prison, hospital, rural areas and handicapped patrons.

Resource sharing services (RSS): Law libraries provide resources sharing services through consortia arrangement for optimum utilization of resources and services in conflict resolution strategies locally and internationally. This will enable the law libraries to be more productive and effective to their user community. Consortium building save cost and make resource global without restriction.

User education services (UES): law libraries facilitate user education services to enable the users have access to the library collection on conflict resolution and other related topics whether in analog or electronic library. The law library helps the users to access information from various sources physical or online. The librarian instruct the users who are willing to conduct searches on how to use the analog and digital catalogue and the internet/ e-library to access information needed on conflict resolution.

Electronic document delivery services (EDD): This is done through electronic access to global legal literature or materials on conflict resolution or related topic, so that users can go beyond and above what is contained within the four walls of law libraries. This is made possible by migration of legal knowledge to the electronic environment library automation and computerization and internet access to enhance availability of knowledge based information. On-line Dispute Resolution (ODR) has been made available on-line.

Horne (2012) sees the term ODR as an array of dispute resolution procedures, some fully automated, other although place exclusively online, involving a human neutral. ODR has been accepted by practitioners some describe it as Electronic Dispute Resolution, on-line Alternative Dispute resolution internet Dispute Resolution. ODR encompasses other forms of ADR and court proceedings that incorporate the use of internet, website, e-mail communication, streaming media and other information technology as part of the dispute resolution process.

Other services provided by law libraries to facilitate conflict resolution are:

Acquisitions services: This involves acquiring legal and non legal information materials necessary for practice and procedure of the law. The policy guides the libraries at ensuring that relevant and appropriate materials on conflict resolution are selected, ordered and acquired for the users.

Readership services: A Law library provides leadership service to facilitate prompt access to the right information on conflict resolution. This is done through the service of circulating department through charging and discharging on information materials on conflict resolution.

Reprographic services: law libraries provide open and equal access to conflict resolution information and its related information for all potential users through reprographic services for reproduction of the materials using photocopying machine.

Inter-library loan and co-operation: Law libraries provide inter-library loans and co-operation services to the user because no law library is self-sufficient. Through this system information resources on conflict resolution and related materials that are available in one library can be borrowed or inter-change and made available to users.

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS OF LAW LIBRARIES IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Just like other types of libraries law libraries are fraught with challenges in discharging their roles in conflict resolutions.

1. **Inadequate funding:** This is one of the major factors that challenge availability of materials and right information services for conflict resolution. The continuous under funding coupled with skyrocketing prices of reading materials and the fall in the purchasing power of the Naira has rendered many law libraries into mere monuments. As budgetary allocation is inadequate, allowance are not made for constant expansion in the field of prices. As a result, there is paucity of fund for acquisition of information resources and main tenancy of law libraries as well as not performance of some special project and programme i.e. seminars, workshops, symposia, inter-ship etc. **ogbeide (1988)** rightly observed, "I do not know of any law libraries yet whose compliant is not that of

insufficient vote to run its services”. Therefore, there should be provision of enough votes and robust funding for rendering the right information services for conflict resolution and to procure adequate and relevant looks collections on conflict resolution. **Nwofor (1999) and Edoka (2001)**, suggested that attention should be given to what libraries could do to generate substantial funds internally as part of the overall effort to contain the harsh economic situation. They noted that libraries derive fund from gifts, photocopying, consultancy services and book binding, electronic mail.....etc. The funds generated should be used to supplement the library vote.

2. **Inadequate information resources.** The users encounter problem of dearth of current and relevant text book, libraries guide and journals in most law libraries in Nigeria. As a result, the users only depend on the available materials which may be inadequate. This is because of lack of established library policy on conflict management information services. Therefore, there should be established policy frame work on conflict management information services. According to **Ilorah, (2015)**, some relevant information resources are not available for the self purchase; examples are government publications, materials on cultural heritage, and Audio visuals items like Oral testimonies, films, videos, record speeches and news items. They could only be acquired by the libraries that have their depository rights besides, in most of the law libraries multi-Door courthouse newsletter were not made available to users.
3. **Constraints in the use of ICT and internet facilities:** most law libraries lack ICT and internet facilities to enhance information dissemination on conflict resolution to the users. This is as a result of the following factors; poor electricity supply; poor telecommunication facilities; lack of policy guideline; poor funding, low bandwidth; lack of interest in ICT facilities; lack of technical knowledge; High cost of equipment and insufficient database etc. Technological infrastructure should be provided to enhance information dissemination. Law libraries and their institution should reach out to IT companies to make available necessary facilities including funding ICT devices workshop and seminar should be organized for law librarian making ICT its main focus as part of it continuing education programme, Accordingly, legal practitioners, judges and law students etc should be computer literate. The use of alternative source of power such as inverters and so law panel will help to solve problem of power supply. Government can increase funds or vote allocated to law libraries in order to provide ICT hardware’s and connectivity to all law libraries. Recruitment of IT professions/or export will be an added advantage. Digital information systems such as e-mail internet, video conferencing, web content list serve etc could be used by libraries to promote conflict resolution. **Haruna, 2009)**
with the use of ICT and internet connection in various law libraries the new method of resolving dispute evolved i.e online Dispute resolution (ODR) According to **Ahmed (2013)**, ODR has transformed the way in which consumer disputes are being settled. it is a method of resolving dispute using technology as facilitator, based on ICT and based on the power of computers to effectively process enormous amounts of data stored and organize such data and communicate it across the internet on a global basis and with speed.
4. Librarians have not been receiving training in conflict resolution, henceforth; they should make concerted efforts to attend courses or workshop on peace and conflict resolution to keep pace with National University commission’s decision for Nigeria universities include peace and conflict resolution in their curriculum.
5. **Okoye et al (2010)**in their Descriptive survey study carried on in eighty eight academic libraries in the four federal universities of south Eastern Nigeria showed that ICT is poorly applied by libraries in information services for conflict resolution. Apart from disseminating information resources on culture, conflict, peace and security, the libraries are yet to apply provision of networked television services (**CNN**), showing conflict situations around the world; organization of multi-cultural gathering displays on topic issues concerning conflict resolution; organization of conferences and conflict resolution; organization of talks using authors on conflict resolution as resources person and organization of library week with the theme on conflict resolution. They equally found out none of the universities surveyed make use of any of the identified media for disseminating information on conflict, resolution, despite the recommendations of **Echezona (20007)** and **Malesi (2008)** that existence of materials and services for conflict resolution should be communicated to the people using handbills/flyers, radio/television, announcements/interviews, one- on-one message, organization of library week as well as

application of such ICT services as e-mail, teleconferencing, list serve and other –on- line reference services.

They finally conclude the universities libraries are faced with the problems of lack of established policy on conflict management information services, including lack of funds and government support, breakdown in communication due to low literacy level of members of community. The above findings corroborated with the opinions of **Thairu (2008)** and **Malesi (2008)** who identified inadequate technological infrastructure, lack of fund and government support in the generation of vital information related to social cohesiveness and breakdown in communication due to high illiteracy level of the community as the problems affecting library services for conflict resolution. In their survey study the librarian, out rightly debunked the problem of lack of skills in organizing and disseminating vital information for conflict resolution but asserted that if they are provided with government support funds and state – of –the art technologies they will deliver. However, their positive response on the problem of lack of established policy framework on conflict management information services could explain the reason why there was absolute lack of outreach programmes for conflict resolution in all the libraries.

Ilorah, et al 2009 identified inadequate fund, over-reliance on government as the only authority that could resolve conflicts, unavailability of relevant information resources, lack of translation of information materials are some of the challenges libraries faces in promoting conflict resolution.

However, the authors made the following **recommendations** that:

- Deliberate effort should be made to ensure that everybody is educated and enlightened about peace because lightened society has the strongest chance of understanding, appreciating and resolving conflicts.
- Investment in education should be seen as a crucial means of dealing with conflicts
- Government should improve all forms/agents of conflict resolution including libraries especially public libraries. They should implement promptly those recommendations found appropriate in resolving conflicts.
- **Yoroms (2005)**, recommend that Early warning system (**EWS**) could be used as conflict resolution mechanism to alerting the society about the impending conflicts situations.
- Organization such as the United Nations (**UN**). African Union (**AU**) and Economic Community of West African States (**ECOWAS**) use **EWS** for conflict prevention management and resolution. Libraries can as well as use **EWS** in resolving conflicts by providing information through the mass media and rosters on impending conflict situations. Libraries can also partner with these organizations by providing timely and relevant information on conflict resolutions.
- Community or rural libraries should be establishment in the rural areas. Such libraries should be well equipped bearing in mind the calibre of the potential users. Museums should also be established. Keeping of artefacts of peace and the history of law ethnic group have kept peace on the past through these artifacts for future consultation.
- **Abo, (2019)** was of opinion that the law librarian can through the Nigerian Association of law librarian (**NALL**) become advocates of peace building in touching the lives of the people. This can be done by creating room for exhibitions and symposia, workshops and seminars addressing conflict resolution and peace to part of the general meeting and conferences.
- **Bhatti (2010)** stressed that library associations should be committed to motivate and facilitate its professionals towards facilitating research activities influential to a growing educated society, peaceful culture and conflict resolution in the nation.

From the foregoing I recommend as follows that:

There should be organization of educational programme and inclusion of peace and conflict resolution education in school curriculum for the student's appreciation of peace and conflict resolution.

Government should ensure enforcement of legal deposit of all laws relating to **ADR MECHANISM** and Multi-Door Court House Laws in all law libraries, relevant places in Nigeria so that information related to conflict resolution will be preserved in a digital archive for speedy access.

There should be constant training and re-training of law libraries and other library staffs on both conflict resolution strategies and on-line Dispute Resolution so that they will keep abreast to new innovation and reforms in area of conflict resolution.

Government should invest in education on teachers specially teachers of law who are the vital instruments in bringing about national cohesion, because they are one that will teach, guide and mobilize the citizens on the importance of living together in peace irrespective of religions and tribal differences.

Grant and TET fund intervention allocations should be given to all law libraries and to all facilitators of peace and conflict resolution to carry out research work, which is important for national development. The researchers needs to study scientifically and objectively to find out the root causes of the season of discontent sweeping through the nation in order to proffer solutions to resolve such conflicts amicably.

The Nigerian Association of law libraries should establish public Resource organization a nonprofit organization that will be created to disseminate government information by publishing and sharing articles and public domain materials in both the Nigeria states and internationally. This process will support public domain, digitizing information on conflict resolution and multi-door courts Houses, laws, legal resources and a multitude of other media produced by the Nigeria government.

The Nigerian institute of advanced legal studies (NIALS) library should play a major role in training thousands of librarians and information practitioners in their biennial National workshops to help provide continuing education for development of skills and competencies of librarians through training and re-skill training in conflict resolution strategies. They could offer legal education in peace and conflict Resolution skills as a course of study.

Adding a conflict resolution component to the bar examination could be an effective method to encourage more law students and law schools to take legal research on conflict resolution skills seriously. Law librarians could work with the National conference of Bar Examiners to encourage the addition of a legal research component on the bar exam. **Ogunsola (2011)** was of view that librarians have assumed the role of educators to teach their users how to find information both in the library and other electronic networks on conflict resolution.

Law librarians should provide proactive approach towards managing the law libraries by creating users awareness of availability of legal information in conflict resolution. A proactive library is one that takes time to know its primary clientele, anticipates the needs of the users and consults with them regarding materials. Mobile technologies have made communication and information access very convenient and timely to users from the comfort of their homes and offices and phone units or personal digital assistant.

It is recommended that inter-library loan services and co-operation among law libraries should be developed on a more formal basis, so that those funded by government should agree to lend their materials to other law libraries at local, state and national levels. For example, the High court librarian can help a client to borrow legal materials from the libraries of the court of Appeal, ministry of justice, House of Assembly or Law Revision commission. Besides, the research needs of the academic staff should be supplemented by inter-loans from the sister universities institutions. Library co-operation should be practiced regularly on an extensive scale like in developed countries.

Translation centers should be set up in the state capital cities and the federal capital. setting up of a combined translation or interpretation service center where information on laws of the state rule as well as rules and procedure of Alternative Dispute Resolution strategies will be interpreted in different languages or dialects so that it would be easy for the illiterate to understand the nifty gritty of conflict resolution strategies.

It is needful and advisable that the law library functionaries publicize and create awareness by publishing information related to conflict resolution and its strategies in magazines, newsletters, leaflets, etc which can be distributed inform of handbills to encourage potential users.

CONCLUSION

There is no doubt, that the impact of law libraries in conflict resolution has contribute positively in most significant way to the law profession, Individual and society by providing access and availability of information service delivery. These services have help to create awareness and public enlightenment about strategies used in resolving conflict to the users. Though, law libraries are fraught with some challenges such as inadequate funding, inadequate information resources, constraints in the use of ICT and internet facilities etc. Effort can be made to curb the above by provision of adequate funding or TET fund intervention allocation for all law libraries be it that of government and university etc. for law libraries collection development. Besides, in order for law libraries to render it services better integration of new innovation or ICT technologies will hold one of the keys to improve law librarianship in the country. I have the belief that if government and constituted authority play their role, by the year 2030 law libraries will witness greater technology reforms, interdependence and co-operative networking for effective and efficient

information resource delivery that will bring about social reforms and national development. This is because law libraries have always played key role in national development and integration as they promote intellectual contribution that is geared towards peace and unity as we recognize the relevant roles they play in resolution of conflict in the society.

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