SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS A SINE QUA NON FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN SOUTH – EAST NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study identified ways sustainable business will serve as an indispensible condition for conflict management in South East Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study while two null hypotheses were tested at $P \leq 0.05$ level of significance. Survey research design was adopted for the study. The population for the study consists of all the business educators in public universities in South East Nigeria. The instrument for data collection was a structured 19-item questionnaire titled: Sustainable Business for Conflict Management Questionnaire (SBCMQ). The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha reliability method. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for answering the research questions while t-test was used for testing the null hypotheses. Result obtained indicated that sustainable business will management conflict through employment generation, increase productivity among nations, increase business ability to comply with regulations, attraction of employees and investors across nations. The study among others recommended that there should be inter-state business bilateral relationships, inter community joint venture relationship so as to manage conflict in these states.

Keywords: Business, Sustainable business, Conflict, Conflict management.

Introduction

A business according to Hayes (2020) is defined as an organization or enterprising entity engaged in commercial, industrial, or professional activities. To the author, businesses can be profit entities or they can be non-profit organizations that operate to fulfill a charitable mission or further a social cause. The term "business" also refers to the organized efforts and activities of individuals to produce and sell goods and services for profit. In the opinion of Susan (2019), a business is said to occur when a person or organization profits by providing goods or services in exchange for money. It is an organization or economic system where goods and service are exchange for one another or for money. Businesses range in scale from a sole proprietorship to an international corporation. Notwithstanding the size, every business required some form of investment and possibly enough customers to whom its output/products can be sold to on a consistent basis in order to make a profit to sustain the business. Sustaining a business mean more than making sure that the business is

generating profit. It is a holistic approach that will make the business live beyond human imagination.

In today's world, sustainability is refers to continuity of resources for coming generation and how it can be used consciously. Sustainability according to Gupata, and Kumar (2013) has often been defined as how biological systems endure and remain diverse and productive. The 21st century definition of sustainability goes far beyond these narrow parameters. Today, sustainability Okanazu and Akele (2018) opined, refers to the need to develop the sustainable models necessary for both the human race and planet earth to survive. It is the study of how natural systems function, remain diverse and produce everything it needs for the ecology to remain in balance. Sustainability looks to protect our natural environment, human and ecological health, while driving innovation and not compromising our way of life (Keskin, Diehl, & Molenaar, 2013). Sustainability, according to Tokgoz and Once (2009), focuses on meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generation to meet their needs. To the authors the concept of sustainability is composed of three pillars: environmental, social and economical which is the concern of the business enterprises.

In terms of its economic perspective, sustainability is quite an important issue to any business but may not be achieved without imbibing sustainable business practices. Sustainable business according to *Galvao, (2020)* is an enterprise that has minimal negative impact, or potentially a positive effect, on the global or local environment, community, society, or economy. As succinctly put by *Edgeman & Eskildsen (2020)* sustainable business is any business organization that participates in environmentally friendly or green activities to ensure that all processes, products, and manufacturing activities adequately address current environmental concerns while maintaining a profit. In other words, the author continued, that it is a business that "meets the needs of the present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable business takes into account not only profits and returns on investment but also how business operations affect the environment, natural resources, and future generations (Marrewijk, 2019). Sustainable business management is concerned with all activities associated with running a business or company such as controlling, leading, monitoring, organizing, and planning that must be environmentally friendly and will not jeopardize the future of coming generation since businesses irrespective of size are facing a new paradigm especially in the area of conflict management.

Sustainability at the business level can be thought of as taking steps, such as recycling and conserving nonrenewable material and energy use to reduce the negative impact of a business's operations on the environment. While managing operations to reduce negative environmental impact is an important part of business sustainability, these types of activities are increasingly part of a deeper strategic perspective on sustainability for businesses. Businesses implement sustainability in their organization for a variety of reasons which includes: Reduction of energy used, materials used, reduction of waste and the costs associated with them; Lowering of legal risks and insurance costs; Differentiation of product or services and brand; Drive toward innovation to create new products and serve new markets; Improvement of organizational image and reputation with consumers, particularly the increasing numbers of consumers who are concerned about the environment and their own impact on the environment; Enhancement of investor interest by increasing numbers of investors taking into consideration organizational sustainability practices when they make their decisions on how to invest; Increase attraction and retention of employees who care about the environment and sustainability and finally

creating peace and cooperation among communities, tribes, and nations.

Thought, in the context of this study the researchers are looking on how sustainable business will serve as a sine qua non for conflict management in South-East Nigeria especially now that communal conflicts, Boko Harama insurgence, herder- famers' conflicts, boundary disputes, banditry among others are on a high increase. A pertinent question one will ask is what is a conflict in the first place? A conflict as opined by Houghton (2020) refers to a sharp disagreement or collision as in interests or ideas and emphasizes the process rather than the end. It is a serious difference between two or more beliefs, ideas, or interests. To Harper (2019), conflict is a serious disagreement and argument about something important. It can also be a state of mind in which an individual finds it impossible to make a decision. Conflict with regards to the way this study viewed it, is fighting, struggle, especially a protracted one or war between countries, states, regions, communities or groups of people. It is a struggle between people which may be physical, or between conflicting ideas. Conflicts can either be within one person, or they can involve several people or groups. As stated by Smriti (2019), Conflict occurs in 'layers'. First layer is always misunderstanding. While the other layers inclues: differences of values, differences of viewpoint, differences of interest, and interpersonal differences. According to Smriti, it is also called a process because it begins with one party perceiving the other to oppose or negatively affect its interests and ends with competing, collaborating, compromising or avoiding. Conflicts arise because there are needs, values or ideas that are seen to be different, and there is no means to reconcile the dispute. Very often, conflicts lead to fights or even wars where the conflicting parties believed that conflicts are solved with weapons. Conflict irrespective of its degree or nature, can be resolve through a proper conflict management.

Conflict management underlines the principle that all conflicts cannot necessarily be resolved, but learning how to manage conflicts can decrease the odds of non-productive escalation. Conflict management according to Swetha (2020) is the process for handling disputes and disagreements between two or multiple parties. To the author, the goal of this system is to minimize the negative factors that are influencing the conflict and encourage all participants to come to an agreement. Conflict management involves acquiring skills related to conflict resolution, self-awareness about conflict modes, conflict communication skills, and establishing a structure for management of conflict in an environment (Smriti, 2019). To HRzone (2020), Conflict management refers to techniques and ideas designed to reduce the negative effects of conflict and enhance the positive outcomes for all parties involved. Members of every households, communities, organizations and nations need to have ways of keeping conflict to a minimum – and of solving problems caused by conflict, before conflict becomes a major obstacle to their existence and cohabitation. Successful conflict management results in a mutually beneficial outcome that is agreed upon by each party. Conflict management in the opinion of Scalia and Mckinney, (2020) is the practice of being able to identify and handle conflicts sensibly, fairly, and efficiently. As succinctly put by the authors, since conflicts in a community, nation or even business are a natural part of the business/workplace, it is important that there are people who understand conflicts and know how to resolve them. The techniques and ideas used in resolving conflict depend on the type of conflict that is being managed. Conflict resolution can be an aim of conflict management but not all conflict management techniques or styles have conflict resolution as the ultimate target as it may not be feasible.

Conflict resolution can be defined as the informal or formal process that two or more

parties use to find a peaceful solution to their dispute. It is the process by which two or more parties reach a peaceful resolution to a dispute (Doyle, 2020). Conflict resolution required a wide range of skills to succeed. In fact, Individuals who are able to resolve conflicts are often excellent mediators, rational, and able to manage difficult personalities from a place of empathy. Conflict resolution in communities, nations, country involves some or all of the following processes: Recognition by the parties involved that a problem/ conflict exists; having some mutual agreement to address the issue and find some resolution; making an effort to understand the perspective and concerns of the opposing individual or group; identification of changes in attitude, behaviour, and approaches to work/issue by both sides that will lessen negative feelings; Recognizing triggers to episodes of conflict; Interventions by third parties such as Human Resources representatives or higher level managers to mediate; A willingness by one or both parties to compromise; Agreement on a plan to address differences; Monitoring the impact of any agreements for change; Disciplining or terminating employees who resist efforts to defuse conflicts (Doyle, 2020).

Though in the context of this study, the researchers are looking on how sustainable business will serve as a remedy for conflict management. Sander and Bordone (2019) outline ways sustainable business can resolve conflict in workplace, communities, states, nations and countries to include: Diagnosing of dispute symptoms: here, sustainable business being business for the current and future generation is expected to do an assessment of the type of disputes that typically arise in the environment they operates and how organization can handle them. It must identify who is typically involved in the disputes. How frequently do disputes come up, and what trends that trigger them. Having this information will enable the organization have interest-based structures that will help them in resolving disputes. Similarly, Fort and Schipani (2014) confirmed that many businesses understand the conflict-related functions of their organizations in terms of corporate social responsibility, political risk management, and public and government relations, but most time do not integrated them in a way that reaps the benefits of peace-building among their host communities. How businesses respond to information asymmetries, market fragmentation, institutionalized corruption, and oppressive policy frameworks varies, and the mitigation strategies they choose can have negative or positive consequences for peace (Jane, 2012). The author opined that in some cases businesses resort to negative strategies as a coping mechanism against market and governance failure. Others may use them as a means to maximize profit. Negative strategies include bribery, flouting international laws and standards, cutting corners, and neglecting contractual arrangements. These can create new conflicts or exacerbate existing tensions. Positive strategies include support for anticorruption activities, investment in human and physical capital, collaborations on social strategies, and leadership in multilateral regulatory reform efforts. Regulation can influence greatly the strategies that businesses adopt and can have powerful implications for encouraging or discouraging conflict-sensitive approaches. As the engine behind economic activity, International Alert (2006) affirmed that sustainable business can foster peace in a multitude of ways and facilitate transitions from aid dependency to self-sustained progress. Conceptually, the goals of profitable business can be aligned with peace strategies if conflict-sensitive and ethical approaches are adopted. Therefore, it is in the best interest of firms that adopts sustainable business management to work for peace where possible in the communities in which they operate; this is true for strategic and risk-mitigation purposes, as firms are not immune to tensions in conflict affected areas.
Despite laudable benefits that Sustainable businesses are expected to bring, it seems that

most communities especially the ones in South East Nigeria are still facing challenges in the area of communal conflicts, herder- famers' conflicts, boundary disputes, among others These challenges most times lead to business failures as a result of poor patronage by the consumers who are on unstable condition as a result of uncertainty in their environment. It is against this backdrop that the researchers seek to identify how sustainable business will serve as a sine qua non for conflict management in South-East Nigeria in other to foster peace and communal integration.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study was to determine how sustainable business will serve as a sine qua non for conflict management in South-East Nigeria.

Specifically, the study sought to identify;

1. Ways sustainable business will serve as an indispensible condition for conflict management in South-East Nigeria

2. Challenges faced by sustainable business in conflict management in South-East Nigeria

Research Question

Based on the specific purpose of the study, the following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What are the ways sustainable business serves as an indispensible condition for conflict management in South-East Nigeria?

2. What are the challenges faced by sustainable business in conflict management in South-East Nigeria?

Hypothesis

$H0_1$: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of business educators in federal university and those in state university on ways sustainable business will serve as an indispensible condition for conflict management in South-East Nigeria.

$H0_2$ There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of experienced and less experienced business educators on the challenges faced by sustainable business in conflict management in South-East Nigeria

Method

Two research questions guided the study and two hypotheses were tested at the probability level of 0.05. Survey research design was adopted for the study. Survey design was found suitable for this study because questionnaire was used to collect data from respondents on how sustainable business will serve as a sine qua non for conflict management in South-East Nigeria. The population of the study consisted of all the entire 75 business educators drawn from the eight public universities that offer business education programme in South East Nigeria. Due to the relatively manageable size of the population, the entire population was used for the study without sampling.

The instrument for data collection was a 19 item structured questionnaire titled:

Sustainable Business for Conflict Management Questionnaire (SBCMQ). The questionnaire was structured on a 4-point rating scale of Strongly Agreed (SA); Agreed (A); Disagreed (D); and Strongly Disagreed (SD) respectively. The instrument was face-validated by three experts in business education department, UNN. For the purpose of establishing the internal consistency of the instrument, Cronbach Alpha reliability method was used. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.83. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed by the researchers with the help of three research assistants. All the 75 copies of the questionnaire administered were retrieved representing 100% return rate. The data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted for items whose p-values were greater than 0.05 level of significance while hypothesis of no significant difference was rejected for items whose p-values were less than 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question One

1. What are the ways sustainable business serves as an indispensible condition for conflict management in South-East Nigeria?

$H0_i$: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of business educators in federal university and those in state university on ways sustainable business will serve as an indispensible condition for conflict management in South-East Nigeria.

The data for answering the first research question and testing the first null hypothesis are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Mean ratings and t-test of the responses of business educators on the ways sustainable business serves as an indispensible condition for conflict management (N 75)

S/N	Item Statements Ways sustainable business serves as an indispensible condition for conflict management include:	$\bar{X}$	SD	Rem.	t-value	Remark
1.	Promotion of prosperity and stability in conflict prone/affected area through corporate citizenship and increase productivity.	3.41	.71	A	.61	NS
2.	Development of risk mitigation strategies to resolve conflict through attraction of employees and investors across & within their host regions	3.56	.69	SA	.79	NS
3.	Designing of high risk management strategies to combat endemic corruptions and myriad market failures.	3.67	.80	SA	.58	NS
4.	Designing strategies that will distort weak economic governance and reinforced political economy to curb conflict.	3.47	.93	A	.61	NS

5.	Performing of social cooperate responsibility to their host communities through increased business ability to comply with regulations.	3.87	.77	SA	.82	NS
6.	Embarking on projects that may be jointly owned and managed by their host communities.	3.56	.46	SA	.91	NS
7.	Creation of employment to their host communities	3.67	.81	SA	.71	NS
8.	Producing products that are not harmful to their host communities	3.88	.61	SA	.52	NS
9.	Properly disposing of waste products in case of manufacturing businesses to avoid environmental contamination.	3.51	.73	SA	.43	NS
	Grand Mean	**3.62**	**.80**	**SA**	**.66**	**NS**

Note: G $\bar{x}$ = Grand Mean; $\bar{x}$ = Mean; SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; N = No of respondents; S = Significant; NS = Not significant; Sig. at 0.05.

Table 1 show that the mean ratings of the responses of the respondents on 7 out of the 9 items in the Table ranged from 3.51 – 3.88 which are within the boundary limit of 3.50 – 4.00 on 4 point rating scale. This indicates that business educators strongly agreed that the seven identified items are ways sustainable business serves as an indispensible condition for conflict management in South-East Nigeria. Similarly, data in the Table 1 show that the mean rating on items 1 and 4 are 3.41 and 3.47 which are within the boundary limit of 2.50 – 3.49 on 4 – point rating scale. By this finding, the business educators agreed that items 1 and 4 in the Table are also ways sustainable business serves as an indispensible condition for conflict management in South-East Nigeria. Furthermore, the data presented in Table 1 on the first hypothesis show that the t- values of the entire 9 items in the Table ranged between .43 - .91 which are in each case greater than 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there were no significant difference in the mean ratings of business educators in federal university and those in state university on ways sustainable business serves as an indispensible condition for conflict management in South-East Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted on all the nine items.

Research Question Two:

1. What are the challenges faced by sustainable business in conflict management in South-East Nigeria?

$H0_2$: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of experienced and less experienced business educators on the challenges faced by sustainable business in conflict management in South-East Nigeria

The data for answering the second research question and testing second null hypothesis are presented in Table 2 on page 10.

S/N	Item Statements challenges faced by sustainable business in conflict management in South-East Nigeria include:	$\bar{X}$	SD	Rem.	t. value	Remark
1.	Neglect of business core social cooperate responsibilities among their host communities.	3.76	.74	SA	.82	NS
2.	Bad leaderships in most of the business organizations.	3.56	.69	SA	.52	NS
3.	Globalization which have affected most business operations.	3.77	.52	SA	.34	NS
4.	Insincerity of government to tackle corruption	3.57	.49	SA	.47	NS
5.	Illiteracy in most communities	3.92	.88	SA	.86	NS
6.	Greed among some members of the business host communities.	3.89	.61	SA	.41	NS
7.	Political interest among some members of the communities.	3.59	.89	SA	.78	NS
8.	Laziness among youth in the communities	3.87	.66	SA	.91	NS
9.	Poor disposer of business waste.	3.89	.93	SA	.97	NS
10.	Poor government presence in must area.	3.49	.39	A	.44	NS
	Grand Mean	**3.73**	**.68**	**SA**	**.65**	**NS**

Note: G $\bar{x}$ = Grand Mean; $\bar{x}$ = Mean; SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; N = No of respondents; S = Significant; NS = Not significant; Sig. at 0.05.

Data presented in Table 2 revealed that the mean ratings of the respondents on 9 out of the 10 items ranged from 3.56 – 3.92 which are within the boundary limit of 3.50 – 4.00 on 4-point rating scale. This indicates that business educators strongly agreed that the nine identified items are challenges faced by sustainable business in conflict management in South-East Nigeria. Furthermore, data in Table 2 equally show that the mean rating on item 10 was 3.49 which is within the boundary limit of 2.50 – 3.49 on 4-point rating scale. By this finding, the respondents agreed that item 10 in the Table is also a challenges faced by sustainable business in conflict management in South-East Nigeria. Similarly, data presented in Table 2 also revealed that the t-values of the entire 10 items ranged between .34 - .97 which are all greater than 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there were no significant difference in the mean ratings of experienced and less experienced business educators on the challenges faced by sustainable business in conflict management in South-East Nigeria Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted on all the ten items.

Discussion of Findings

This study identified Ways sustainable business will serve as an indispensible condition for conflict management in South-East Nigeria to include; Promotion of prosperity and stability in conflict prone/affected area through corporate citizenship; Development of risk mitigation strategies to resolve conflict in their host regions; Designing of high risk management strategies to combat endemic corruptions and myriad market failures; Designing strategies that will distort weak economic governance and reinforced political economy to curb conflict; Performing of their social cooperate responsibility to their host communities; Embarking on projects that may be jointly owned and managed by their host communities; Creation of employment to their host communities; Producing products that are not harmful to their host communities; Properly disposing of waste products in case of manufacturing businesses to avoid environmental contamination.

These findings were in agreement with the opinion of Tyler (2012) who articulated that business sector can promote prosperity and stability in conflict-prone and conflict affected regions through good corporate citizenship, operating in these high-risk, but high-rewarding environments is fraught with great difficulty. To the author, many firms develop risk mitigation strategies designed to minimize exposure. In the same vein, International Alert (2010) asserts that poor risk management strategies combine with endemic corruption and myriad market failures and distortions resulting from weak economic governance to reinforce aspects of the political economy could trigger and sustain violent conflict. The agency maintained that effectively addressing these failings could reduce business costs, increase efficiency, and improve governance and livelihoods in fragile regions. To them lack of transparency and corruption among government and private sector is the hallmark to regional conflict across the globe.

Furthermore, Luc (2010) opined that when adopting strategies to benefit from the immense potential of the business sector to foster peace in conflict areas, one must also look at the size of the firms, whether the firms are state or privately owned, which industries they are involved in, and their interconnectedness within supply chains. According to Luc, key components of effective strategies include crafting incentives to reward investing firms that espouse good corporate citizenship, strengthening international initiatives that promote transparency and contain corruption, developing initiatives that will fully incorporate the local economy into global value chains, and introducing mechanisms to forge global consensus on appropriate conflict-sensitive business practices. As violence and instability persist in much of the world, spending trillions of naira on military activity each year is unsustainable therefore; alternative methods of fostering peace among nations which business can serve are called for in other to prevent conflict.

There was no significant difference in the mean ratings of business educators in federal university and those in state university on ways sustainable business will serve as an indispensible condition for conflict management in South-East Nigeria. This is in agreement with the opinion of Darleen, (2018) who affirmed that Conflict irrespective of one's location has the potential to cause serious problems if not managed effectively. When managed effectively, conflict can represent an opportunity. It can help in break through counterproductive ways of thinking, stimulate creativity and innovation, and ultimately bring people together. Leaders play an important role in resolving these differences and their actions will often determine whether the conflict led to a positive or negative experience. Conflict around business environments are unavoidable and tend to escalate if

it is not managed quickly and effectively. While some conflict can be highly beneficial, unresolved conflicts can have very negative effects on an organization. Rising tensions can reduce productivity, stifle creative collaboration, and create barriers to communication.

Furthermore, the study identified challenges faced by sustainable business in conflict management in South-East Nigeria to include: neglect of business core social cooperate responsibilities among their host communities; Bad leaderships in most of the business organizations; Globalization which have affected most business operations; Insincerity of government to tackle corruption; Illiteracy in most communities; Greed among some members of the business host communities; Political interest among some members of the communities; Laziness among youth in the communities; Poor disposer of business waste. Poor government presence in most area

The finding is in line with the report of Kubiat (2018) who authenticated that globalization which is the spread of worldwide practices, relations, consciousness, and organization of social life has affected business operations in many ways. To the author, advancement in technological development especially as in information communication technology (ICT) has made the world a small village in which case the world economy, culture, and political space are being integrated into a world economy. Thus, globalization has affected virtually every aspect of man, culturally, economically, politically and institutionally. Globalization is therefore a great challenge to insecurity and conflict management. Globalization has brought benefit to some, but miseries to an increasing number of others. It has concentrated wealth in the hands of a diminishing few while denying access to such wealth to an increasing many.

Similarly, Epstein and Epstein (2006) listed top barriers to conflict resolution to include Inadequate Planning and Preparation; Grief; Systemic Distrust; Failure to Communicate and Listen; Insufficient Focus on Underlying Interests; Partisan Perception, Judgmental Overconfidence, and Wrong Baselines; False First Impressions and Perceptions among others. To the authors, false first impression may be the most crucial barrier to successful conflict resolution. First impressions are terribly difficult to change. Decision-makers make their decisions on the data available at the time and they are slow to recognize and appreciate later contradictory data. The battleship once set in motion is incredibly difficult to turn about. Thus, the key is to make every effort to establish a good first impression. First impressions, which are generally lasting impressions, allow business organizations the luxury of not thinking or reasoning. The very best way host communities can deal with this unfortunate and stubborn shortcut is prevention. Thus, business host communities should make every effort to create a well positive first impression with business organizations; they should create enabling environments for businesses to thrive in their communities and region.

There was also no significant difference in the mean ratings of experienced and less experienced business educators on the challenges faced by sustainable business in conflict management in South-East Nigeria. This is in line with the opinion of Virginia (2012), who stated that too often parties in conflict create a barrier to conflict resolution because their risk assessments do not factor in the full range of key decision points that the court will be considering if there is litigation. This problem often leads to unrealistic client expectations. Parties tend to be averse to risk regarding gain and would rather have a certain gain than an uncertain larger gain. On the other hand, people are risk-seeking with regard to loss. That is, they would rather avoid a certain loss and take a risk of a greater loss if there is some chance of avoiding that greater loss. In other words, some parties would rather postpone a certain loss (settlement) for an uncertain result in the future (trial). Meanwhile treat others

how you would like to be treated is an adage we all learned in childhood, yet we frequently forget to heed it in the heat of battle. Business organizations should respect and regard their host communities as partner in progress. They should observe all the laws and corporate cultures of the communities so as to be able to resolve conflict that may hamper their business growth, development and sustainability.

Conclusion

Much attention has been devoted to understanding how sustainable business will serve as an important part of the solution in conflict-affected communities, region, states and nation. As the engine behind economic activity, sustainable business can foster peace in a multitude of ways and facilitate transitions from aid dependency to self-sustained progress. Given the diversity of businesses and their varied responses to policies, threats, and incentives, an aggregated analysis of how businesses influence peace and conflict in an area cannot be overemphasized. Distinctions should be made between large multinationals and domestic business, public and private ownership, types of industry, and formal and informal systems to identify the most effective peace-promoting behaviours required from each size. When circumventing challenges involving corruption and bribes to lubricate processes or avoid contractual and regulatory obligations that could trigger or sustain violence, adoption of a clear and comprehensive business regulation is one way to address the market and governance failures that compel sustainable businesses to adopt negative approaches in conflict management. However, it will be more effective and peace promoting if all players, domestic and foreign, business organization comply with the lay down rules so as to promote peace and resolve conflicts that will arise in their areas of business operations. Peace-building in conflict-affected regions requires more than boots on the ground, signing of peace accords, making security arrangements, and focused diplomacy. Practitioners, scholars, and policymakers agreed that successful conflict management requires the effective leverage of all stakeholders including the business sector on the holistic approach of conflict resolution. When this is done, there will be proper conflict management and resolution across nations especially in South East Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Sustainable business should develop strategies like establishment of inter-community joint venture relationship so as to manage conflict in communities, region or states they are operating.

2. Sustainable business should live up to their social cooperate responsibility of employment creation, poverty reduction, wealth creation and proper waste management to abate conflict escalation in their area of business operations.

3. Business organizations should also embark on projects that may be jointly own and managed by their host communities so as to create a sense of belonging to them.

There should be inter- state business bilateral relationships that will create mutual benefits among boarding communities, region and states to prevent conflict.

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