A STUDY OF THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF ARMED CONFLICT ON CHILDREN EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN BENUE STATE, NIGERIA (2018-2022)

BY

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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled **"A Study of the Causes and Effects of Armed Conflict on Children's Educational Development in Benue State, Nigeria (2018-2022)"** is a product of my research effort. It has not been presented or published anywhere by any person, institution or organization or used for any previous application for a degree or other qualifications. All sources of information used have been duly acknowledged by means of references.

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Godwin Agaba OCHUBE **Date**

CERTIFICATION

This research entitled **"A Study of the Causes and Effects of Armed Conflict on Children Educational Development in Benue State, Nigeria (2018-2022)"** meets the regulations governing the award of Master's degree in Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to Almighty God for being there for me and the love he has shown me and to my family members, particularly my dear parents, Mr. and Mrs. Emmanuel Ochube.

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I am most grateful to God for keeping my family and I during the course of running this programme and for making it a reality. My profound gratitude to my parents Mr. Emmanuel Ochube for their prayers and support.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACLED: Action Conflict Location and Event Data

ACLED: Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project

CJTF: Civilian Joint Task Force

CNN: Cable News Network

DPO: Divisional Police Officer

IDP: Internally Displaced Persons

LGA: Local Government Area

LGEA: Local Government Education Authority

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

NPF: Nigeria Police Force

NYSC: National Youth Service Corps

SEMA: State emergency Management Agency

SFCG: Search for Common Ground

SUBEB: State Universal Basic Education Board

UBE: Universal Basic Education

UN: United Nations

UNESCO: United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNHCR: United Nations High Commission for Refugees

UNICEF: United Nations Children`s Fund

UNITA: National Union for the Total Independence of Angola

UNSG: United Nations, Secretary-General

USAID: United State Agency for International Development

Abstract

This study examined the Causes and Effects of Armed Conflict on the Educational Development of Children in Benue State, Nigeria (2018-2022). The study identified the types and nature of armed conflict, the factors responsible for them, and their effects on children's access to education in IDP camps. The study also examined the coping strategies and measures employed to improve their educational development. The study adopted Conflict theory and Relative Deprivation Theory as a theoretical framework. The adoption of the Conflict Theory in this study is justified by its recognition of the role played by the competition among groups or classes for limited resources. This theory helps shed light on the obstacles children face in accessing education during conflict. Similarly, the Relative Deprivation Theory allows for examining the psychological effects of armed conflicts. By exploring the perceived disparities in resources between different social groups, this theory helps reveal the potential effects of relative deprivation on the educational development of children residing in IDP camps. The study collected both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data was collected using 278 questionnaires, while qualitative data was gathered from in-depth interviews with 19 key informants. The study found that the primary type of armed conflict in the area was a crop farmer-cattle herder dispute, and the nature of the attack was the mass shooting of victims in their communities. The conflict was caused by a shortage of land for crop farming and animal grazing space. Displacement due to the conflict led to a lack of access to formal education and psychological trauma among children. Coping strategies included vocational skills acquisition and play therapy. The study recommended short-term measures such as providing learning infrastructure, psychological support, teachers and teaching aides to IDP camps, and long-term measures such as resolving the conflict, providing security, resettling the displaced victims, and rebuilding destroyed school infrastructures.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Armed conflict refers to a situation where two or more parties use conflict or force to achieve political, economic, or social goals (Council on Foreign Relations, 2022). According to the Alert 2022 report by ReliefWeb (2022), 32 armed conflicts were reported in 2021, with most of the conflicts occurring in Africa (fifteen), followed by Asia (nine), the Middle East (five), Europe (two), and America (one). For the first time in a decade, high-intensity armed conflicts accounted for more than half (53%) of all cases worldwide. The 17 cases of serious armed conflict in 2021 were in Cameroon (Ambazonia/Northwest and Southwest), Ethiopia (Tigray), Mali, Mozambique (north), the Lake Chad Region (Boko Haram), the Western Sahel Region, the CAR, the DRC (east), and others.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) (2022), at least 15 countries with active armed conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa in 2019, including Nigeria. In Nigeria, conflicts have escalated due to competition for land and resources between nomadic Fulani herders and sedentary fabrmers in the Middle Belt region (Olunba, 2022). These violent clashes between farmers and nomadic herders have been dubbed "eco-conflict" by academics, which refers to conflicts that resulted from groups vying for water and agricultural resources and were exacerbated by state failure, environmental injustice, and social injustice (Amnesty International, 2018). Recent eco-conflict has reached unparalleled levels of severity, killing thousands of people and destroying millions of dollars' worth of property. More mass killings and kidnappings in the Middle Belt region are linked to environmental conflict; reputable Nigerian and foreign news sources claim that hundreds of people are killed per week (Olunba, 2022).

The north-central is the region most impacted by environmental conflict. The north-central is home to an estimated 30 million people, mostly sedentary farmers from the Tivs, Idomas, Berom, Jukuns, and Mambila ethnic groups (Ioratim-Uba, 2014). Conflicts associated with eco-conflict claimed the lives of almost 11,700 persons in Benue State as of 2014 (Vanger & Nwosu, 2020). A 2021 survey found that 309,231 people had fled their homes in the Middle

Belt, with 204,193 fleeing communal conflict in Benue State alone, making it the State in Nigeria with the highest proportion of internally displaced people.

According to Oyefara & Ukaegbu (2019), the conflict can be traced to marginalization, economic inequality, land disputes, and political power struggles. The Tiv people, the largest ethnic group in the State, have complained of marginalization and neglect by the government, leading to tensions and clashes with other ethnic groups (Adie, 2016). The Fulani herders, predominantly Muslim and of a different ethnic group, have been involved in clashes with farmers in the State over access to land and resources, which have sometimes turned violent (Umaru & Abimiku, 2019). The herders are also accused of attacks on farming communities, leading to lose of lives and property (Abdullahi, 2019). Political power struggles have also been identified as a driver of conflict in the State. According to Ochola (2019), the struggle for political power and control of resources by different ethnic groups has contributed to the recurring conflicts in the State.

However, there have been efforts to broker peace agreements and prevent further conflict. In February 2022, more than 20 clans from the Agatu community signed a peace agreement on the sharing of resources, which also covers free movement in the area and the safe passage of people and goods. The goal is to replicate this agreement in neighboring areas and states and involve women, youth, and people with disabilities (Center for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2022). The Nigerian police force and the air force have also conducted several operations targeting allied armed groups, and despite some impact and arrests, the conflict has continued. Several commissions have been set up at the federal level, but the State response to the conflict needs to be stronger, with small numbers of police officers stationed.

Moreover, there has been little attempt to hold perpetrators to account, with reports of direct military harassment or security forces ignoring impending attacks, leading to a climate of impunity and a cycle of retaliatory attacks (Armed Conflict Survey, 2019). Following the wave of conflict in 2018, the Federal government 2019 launched a ten-year National Livestock Transformation Plan 'to curtail the movement of cattle, boost livestock production and quell the country's lethal armed conflict. However, according to the International Crisis Group, implementation of the plan (which is, in its opinion, the key to resolving the conflict)

is hindered by 'inadequate political leadership, delays, funding uncertainties and a lack of expertise, in particular, the 'widespread distrust' in the plan (International Crisis Group, 2020)

Armed conflicts have significantly affected the educational development of children in the State. According to Education Development Trust (2014), the number of out-of-school children in Nigeria has increased due to the impact of armed conflict on education. The study found that children in conflict-affected areas are more likely to be out of school than those in non-conflict areas. The effects of armed conflict on students' educational attainment and the role of parents in resilience schooling and the education process have also been studied (Kadir, Shenoda, & Gold-Hagen, 2019). The effects of armed conflict on child health and development have been documented, including physical or developmental morbidity associated with exposure to armed conflict, exposure to conflict, and access to basic services (Kadir et al., 2019).

The advent of armed conflict could worsen preexisting inequalities between different groups within a country, leading to disparities in educational attainment (Omoeva, Hatch & Moussa, 2019). Armed conflict and associated physical destruction can interrupt children's education through school damage, absence of teachers, and fears of insecurity (Save the Children, 2019).

Benue State has one of the highest rates of out-of-school children in Nigeria, with over 800,000 children out of school (United Nations International Children Emergency Fund, 2021). According to a report by Save the Children, over 600 schools in the State were closed due to conflict in 2018 alone (Save the Children, 2019). This disruption of schooling can have long-term effects on children's academic progress, as they miss out on valuable learning opportunities and fall behind their peers. According to a study conducted in Uganda, children who had experienced conflict had lower levels of academic achievement and were more likely to drop out of school (Aber et al., 2013). In Benue State, children exposed to violent clashes struggle to focus in class or experience anxiety and depression, making it difficult to succeed academically. Armed conflict can also lead to the displacement of families, forcing children to leave their homes and communities. This can significantly impact their education, as they may need to change schools or miss significant periods of schooling. According to a United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) report, over 400,000 children in Nigeria were

displaced due to conflict in 2019 (UNICEF, 2019). The displacement of families due to violent clashes can severely impact children's education as they struggle to adapt to new schools and learning environments. Armed conflict can also lead to increased poverty, making it difficult for families to pay for education-related expenses such as school fees, uniforms, and textbooks. According to a report by the World Bank, conflict can reduce household incomes by up to 50% (World Bank, 2020). The poverty resulting from violent clashes can make it difficult for families to afford education, leading to higher school dropout rates and reduced academic achievement in the State. The conflict situation in the State has further worsened the situation, with many children being unable to access education or dropping out due to insecurity and displacement (UNICEF, 2019). According to UNICEF (2018), internal displacement often strains already inadequate educational infrastructure, and when displaced children attend school, in many cases, it is through parallel systems. These tend not to have qualified teachers, infrastructures or offer certified examinations and risk having their funding cut at short notice. This study examined the effects of armed conflict on children's access to education in internally displaced person camps in Benue State, Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Education is a crucial instrument for national development. However, its continuous growth depends on several factors, such as the provision of infrastructural facilities and the quality of teachers. Other factors include prompt payment of teachers' emoluments, provision and constant curriculum revision, and a peaceful environment (Ogbonnaya, 2013). These factors are paramount and can bring about the desired growth where they are pursued and provided.

On the other hand, where there is no inhibition, such as armed conflicts, and they are not pursued, it stifles growth. It slows down the education process, eventually leading to dropping out of school and losing interest in formal education. With the continuous increase of internal displacement, the United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG) faced the need for a distinctive definition to identify persons of concern, their needs, and their population. Also present was the difficulty of the legal framework and policies to assist them at the outset of the agency's mandate (Utsumi, 2022). The nature of education within the national territory of displaced persons has aggravated scholarly debates about who should be responsible for providing access to adequate education and personal development in camps. Despite the

normative IDP framework created by the UN, recognizing through empirical studies that children are the most vulnerable in any conflict-induced conflict has informed some scholars' charge for issues of educational development in IDP policy and, ultimately, the field operations carried out by the UN and other humanitarian actors (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2018).

Armed conflicts in Nigeria have affected local government areas like Agatu, Guma, Logo, Gwer-West, Gwer-East, Ukum, Buruku, Katsina-Ala, Kwande and Makurdi, all in Benue State. For example, on March 13th 2016, over 40 primary and secondary schools were closed as 73 people were killed, and properties worth millions of Naira were destroyed in Guma and Logo Local Governments (State Emergency Management Agency, 2020). In these local governments, attackers usually invade settlements killing people, sacking them and destroying their property and farmlands (SEMA, 2020). In some communities, they occupy areas after chasing away original dwellers. Aside from killing and destroying properties, their activities affect children's access to education. Victims often migrate to camps, settle in schools owned by host communities, and destroy facilities rendering classrooms and offices unusable and truncating academic activities for both victims and host communities.

According to State Emergency Management Agency (2020), about 80,450 children are trapped in eight Internally Displaced Peoples" (IDP) camps established by Benue State Government to cater to victims of armed conflicts in the State. Out of these numbers, LGEA Primary School Daudu Camp hosts 10,871 children, while LGEA Primary School Ugba Camp accommodates 7,569 children. The management of schools, which requires proper planning, directing monitoring, and controlling human material time, physical resources, finances, records, and information flow, has been affected drastically due to conditions of IDP camps in the State. Also, most school facilities and documents in host communities are destroyed, thereby keeping students and teachers out of school (Ahmed, 2015).

Suleiman (2016) observed that when such violent conflicts occur, school infrastructural facilities, such as classroom buildings, offices, books, and other relevant documents, are greatly destroyed or damaged. Most often, schools were burnt to ashes in rural areas, making it hard for learners to continue their learning activities for a long time as they relocated to safer places with their families. The emotional and psychological problems created in people

due to fear further lead to decreased school enrolment, denying access to school poor educational service delivery. Parents in internally displaced people's camps prefer staying with their children than sending them back to school to continue their education (Joseph, 2017). Some towns and villages in affected local governments were deserted by occupants, thereby limiting access to formal education for displaced children.

The Federal Government of Nigeria and Benue State Governments have made concerted attempts to ensure peace returns to affected areas. Furthermore, internally displaced persons return from camp to their homes, but this does not seem to have yielded meaningful results as most people are yet to return, as SEMA (2021) noted. Buttressing this point Rick (2015), noted that armed conflict often forces parents to seek survival within camps which may include sending children out to hawk using children as a source of income rather than allowing them access to formal education. In addition, Adepelumi (2015), opined that children exposed to ongoing conflict in Nigeria might suffer severe cognitive dysfunction and depression.

To the best of the researcher`s knowledge, limited information exists regarding the effects of armed conflict on children's educational development, and even estimates of the number of children who lose their lives due to such conflicts are scarce. Existing studies have primarily focused on the physical health effects and the aftermath of displacement for children living in areas affected by armed conflict. However, this research aimed to provide insight into how armed conflict affects children's educational development and mental well-being. Additionally, the study sought to gather information on factors that contribute to these effects, strategies to minimize their impact, and protective measures that can be implemented.

1.3 Research Questions

Thus, the relevant research questions asked in this regard are;

I. What are the types and nature of armed conflict in Benue State?
II. What are the factors responsible for armed conflict in Benue State?
III. What are the effects of armed conflict on children's access to education in IDP Camps in Benue State?

IV. What are the measures put in place for improving children's access education in IDP camps?

V. What are the measures of mitigating the effects of armed conflict on children's educational development in IDP camps in Benue State?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The broad aim of this study is to investigate the effects of armed conflict on children's educational development in Benue State. The specific objectives are to:

i. Find out the types and nature of armed conflict in Benue State;

ii. Identify the predisposing factors responsible for armed conflict in Benue State;

iii. Identify the effects of armed conflict on children's access to education in IDP camps in Benue State;

iv. Identify the measures for improving children's access to education in IDP camps in Benue State.

v. Suggest measures of improving children's educational development in Benue State.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study has significant implications for both academia and policy. From an academic perspective, it presents an understanding of the causes and effects of armed conflicts on children's education. This study has the potential to inspire further research in this area, leading to a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by children living in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps.

Moreover, the study's practical implications are equally important. It highlights the need for policymakers to address the education-related challenges faced by children in IDP camps. This study provides crucial information to the Ministry of Education, the Nigeria Police Force, and other security agencies responsible for ensuring the safety of citizens' lives and properties. They can use this information to understand the situation better and implement policies to mitigate the problem.

This study's policy implication is clear: Policymakers must prioritize providing educational opportunities to children living in IDP camps despite their security challenges. This involves creating safe spaces for learning, providing distance learning opportunities and funding education programs specifically targeting displaced children. Ultimately, the study's findings

can help to improve the lives of children affected by armed conflict by providing them with access to education and the opportunity to thrive.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study investigated the effects of armed conflict on the educational development of children in Benue State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study focused on the effects of armed conflict on children's access to education, academic performance, and psychosocial well-being. The was limited to the study objectives and covered the period between (2018- 2022).

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Arms: Any material means, e.g. manufactured weapons but also stones, sticks, fire, and water.

Child: A child (plural children) is a person below eighteen (18). The age of majority depends upon jurisdiction and application, but it is generally 18. Minor is used in contexts unconnected to the majority's overall age.

Conflict: Conflict is coming into collision, clash or being in opposition with one another. The tension experienced when a group of people feels that their needs or desires are likely to be denied.

Education: Education is the process of facilitating learning or the acquisition of knowledge, values, habits, and skills.

Development: Development is the socio-cultural, educational, political, economic and spiritual well-being of society. In a genuinely developed State, there is the assurance of good life, quality education, the exercise of all human rights and freedom to participate in the democratic process.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs): Someone who is forced to leave his/her home due to violent conflict but remains within their country's borders.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviewed literature in the armed conflict field and its effects on children's educational development, along with a review of the theoretical perspectives that fit into the study. The chapter presents the nature and pattern of armed conflict, the predisposing factors of armed conflicts, the effects of armed conflict on children's access to education, and government efforts to curb the effects of armed conflicts on educational development. Also, the chapter presents the Conflict theory and Relative Deprivation theory as the theoretical framework, the strength and limitations of the theory and their relevance as an analytical framework for this study.

2.2 Conceptual Clarification

2.2.1 Armed Conflict

Armed conflict refers to the use of armed force between two or more organized groups or states, involving military action or hostilities. This type of conflict can take various forms, including civil wars, international conflicts, and non-international armed conflicts. The term "armed conflict" is commonly used in international law to refer to situations where conflict has reached a certain level of intensity and involves the use of lethal force. Several scholars have attempted to define armed conflict, and their definitions often reflect different theoretical perspectives and approaches. For example, according to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), armed conflict is defined as "a situation of protracted conflict between governmental authorities and organized armed groups, or between such groups within a country or territory" (ICRC, 2021). This definition emphasizes the importance of the duration and intensity of conflict and the involvement of organized groups in the conflict. According to Bell, armed conflict is "a contested social relationship between the state and non-state actors, within and/or outside the territory of the state, in which the non-state actors use violent means to achieve their political, economic, social or cultural

objectives" (Bell, 2004). This definition highlights the contested nature of the conflict and the various objectives that non-state actors may seek to achieve through conflict.

An 'armed conflict' is said to exist 'whenever there is a resort to armed force between States or protracted armed conflict between governmental authorities and organized armed groups or between such groups within a State (Stewart, 2011). Armed conflict is a sustained contest between two or more organized adversaries, making purposive use of armed force (Armed Conflict Survey, 2018). An armed conflict is a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in one calendar year (Armed Conflict Survey, 2018). International humanitarian law distinguishes two types of armed conflicts, namely: international armed conflicts, opposing two or more States, and non-international armed conflicts, between governmental forces and non-governmental armed groups, or between such groups only (ICRC, 2008). The classification of a situation as an armed conflict means that international humanitarian law comes into force immediately. However, due to certain legal and political challenges, there is no single definition of armed conflict in international law (Chelimo, 2011).

However, these definitions highlight the different aspects of armed conflict, including the use of armed force, the involvement of organized adversaries, the number of battle-related deaths, and the distinction between international and non-international armed conflicts. While there is no single definition of armed conflict in international law, these definitions provide a basis for understanding the nature and scope of armed conflict.

2.2.2 Education

Education is a broad and complex concept that encompasses a wide range of activities and processes aimed at facilitating human learning and development. While there is no single definition of education, scholars and experts in the field have attempted to define and conceptualize education in various ways. One of the most comprehensive definitions of education is provided by UNESCO, which defines education as "the lifelong process of acquiring knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and competencies that enable individuals to participate effectively in society, to contribute to the development of their communities, and

to lead fulfilling lives" (UNESCO, 2015). This definition highlights the multifaceted nature of education and emphasizes its role in promoting personal and social development.

Education is a dynamic process that involves the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes that enable individuals to lead productive and fulfilling lives, participate fully in their communities, and contribute to society as a whole (OECD, 2013). Education is a transformative process that promotes personal and social development by providing individuals with the opportunity to explore their potential and develop the skills and competencies necessary to succeed in a rapidly changing world (UNESCO, 2015). Education is a human right that enables individuals to exercise their fundamental freedoms and to participate fully in democratic societies. It includes not only formal schooling but also non-formal and informal learning opportunities (UN, 2015). Education is a lifelong process that begins at birth and continues throughout an individual's life. It encompasses all forms of learning, including formal schooling, workplace training, and personal development (European Commission, 2018). Education is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that is shaped by a range of social, cultural, political, and economic factors. It involves not only the transmission of knowledge but also the development of critical thinking skills, creativity, and problem-solving abilities (Sahlberg, 2011).

Education can be defined as a multifaceted and lifelong process of acquiring knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and competencies that enables individuals to participate effectively in society, to contribute to the development of their communities, and to lead fulfilling lives. Education can occur in various settings, including formal schooling, experiential learning, and community-based initiatives, and can have a transformative impact on individuals and society as a whole.

2.2.3 Internally Displaced Persons

The term IDPs stands for "Internally Displaced Persons." IDPs are people who have been forced to flee their homes due to conflict, conflict, natural disasters, or other humanitarian emergencies, but have not crossed an international border to seek refuge. IDPs are therefore different from refugees, who have fled their countries to seek protection and assistance in another country. Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are individuals or groups of people who

have been forced to flee their homes or places of habitual residence due to armed conflict, generalized conflict, human rights violations, or natural or human-made disasters, but who have not crossed an international border (UNHCR, 2018). IDPs are a vulnerable population that faces a range of challenges, including lack of access to basic services such as healthcare and education, as well as discrimination and stigma. They require protection and assistance from the government and the international community to rebuild their lives (Brookings Institution, 2015).

IDPs often face significant challenges, including lack of access to basic needs such as food, water, shelter, and healthcare. They may also be at risk of conflict, exploitation, and discrimination. As they remain within their own countries, they are often overlooked by the international community, which tends to focus on the needs of refugees. The term IDP is used by the United Nations and other humanitarian organizations to describe this specific group of displaced persons who remain within their own countries.

2.3 Types and Nature of Armed Conflicts

Violent conflict is a complex phenomenon that has been studied from different perspectives, including political, sociological, psychological, and anthropological. It has various types and expressions, ranging from interstate wars to civil unrest, terrorism, and armed conflict. According to Galtung (2019), there are two types of armed conflict: direct and structural. Direct conflict refers to physical harm inflicted on individuals or groups, while structural conflict refers to the systemic and institutionalized harm that results from social, economic, and political inequalities. Violent conflict can be either overt or covert, visible or invisible, depending on the level of intensity and the actors involved (Stewart, 2018).

Direct violent conflict is a primary feature of armed conflict, which involves the use of lethal or non-lethal force to achieve political, economic, or social objectives. Direct violent conflict can be either interpersonal or intergroup, and it can involve various types of conflict, including physical, sexual, or psychological conflict. The intensity and scale of direct violent conflict vary depending on the type of conflict, the actors involved, and the level of organization (Tilly, 2015). The causes of direct violent conflict are multifaceted and complex, and they often vary depending on the context and the actors involved. Some of the

main causes of direct violent conflict include political, economic, social, and cultural factors (Stedman, 2017).

Political factors include power struggles, competition for resources, and the pursuit of political goals. Economic factors include the control of natural resources, land, and wealth. Social and cultural factors include identity-based conflicts, discrimination, and intolerance. Direct violent conflict in armed conflict has far-reaching consequences for individuals, communities, and societies. It results in loss of life, physical injury, and psychological trauma. Direct violent conflict also leads to displacement of people, destruction of infrastructure, and the disruption of economic and social activities. Moreover, direct violent conflict can have long-term consequences on development and can lead to poverty, underdevelopment, and lack of progress (Boserup, 2013).

The structural type of armed conflict refers to the underlying social, political, and economic conditions that create and sustain conflict. Armed conflict is often rooted in structural inequalities and injustices, such as poverty, inequality, marginalization, and discrimination. Structural conflict, which refers to the indirect harm caused by social and economic structures, is often the underlying cause of armed conflict (Kalyvas, 2016). Structural conflict can be perpetuated through political systems, economic policies, and social norms, and it can lead to the emergence of armed groups. The causes of the structural nature of armed conflict are complex and interrelated. Poverty, inequality, and exclusion are often key factors that create and sustain structural conflict. Political instability, corruption, and weak governance can also contribute to the structural nature of armed conflict (Kalyvas, 2016). Moreover, the exploitation of natural resources, including oil, diamonds, and minerals, can fuel armed conflict and exacerbate structural conflict. The consequences of the structural nature of armed conflict are often long-lasting and pervasive. Armed conflict can lead to the destruction of infrastructure, displacement of people, and loss of life (Kalyvas, 2016). Moreover, it can result in the breakdown of social institutions, the erosion of trust between communities, and the perpetuation of poverty and inequality. Structural conflict can continue even after the conflict has ended, leading to ongoing cycles of conflict and insecurity (Tilly, 2015).

Nigeria is a country with a complex history of ethnic, religious, and political tensions that have led to violent conflict in various regions (Ibrahim &Egbule, 2019). The type of violent conflict in Nigeria is multifaceted and complex, involving a range of actors, motivations, and triggers. Violent conflict in Nigeria can be categorized into three broad types: communal conflicts, insurgency, and inter-group conflict (Agbiboa, 2015). According to Ibrahim & Egbule (2019), communal conflicts involve tensions and clashes between communities over land, resources, and political power. Insurgency involves armed groups that challenge the authority of the state and seek to establish their own political and social systems. Inter-group conflict is conflict between different ethnic, religious, or social groups. Communal conflicts are a common form of violent conflict in Nigeria, particularly in rural areas where communities vie for resources, political power, and control over land (Agbiboa, 2015). Communal conflicts are often driven by long-standing historical and cultural grievances, which are further fueled by competition over resources, political power, and economic opportunities. This article provides an overview of the nature of communal conflict in Nigeria, its causes, and its consequences (Agbiboa, 2015). Communal conflict in Nigeria can be described as conflict between two or more communities, often based on ethnic or religious differences, that involves conflict and destruction of property. Communal conflicts can also involve political power struggles and control over resources, such as land, water, and grazing areas. In some cases, communal conflicts can be triggered by external factors, such as climate change, migration, or natural resource exploitation (Agbiboa, 2015). Communal conflicts in Nigeria often involve a range of actors, including local community leaders, youth groups, and vigilante groups. These groups often engage in violent attacks on rival communities, leading to the displacement of people, destruction of property and infrastructure, and loss of life. In some cases, communal conflicts have led to the formation of armed groups, which perpetuate conflict and undermine peace and stability in affected areas (Ibrahim & Egbule, 2019).

Insurgency is a prevalent form of violent conflict in Nigeria. Insurgency refers to the organized use of conflict by non-state actors to achieve political, religious, or ideological goals (Gberevbie & Olutayo, 2016). In Nigeria, insurgent groups have been responsible for thousands of deaths, displacement of people, and destruction of infrastructure. Insurgency in Nigeria can be traced back to the 1990s when ethnic and religious tensions led to the

emergence of groups like the O'odua People's Congress and the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (Gberevbie & Olutayo, 2016). Insurgent groups like Boko Haram and the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) have emerged and gained prominence in Nigeria. These groups are responsible for attacks on civilians, military and police personnel, and government installations (Kehide, 2019). Insurgent groups in Nigeria often operate in remote and marginalized areas, where they exploit the absence of government presence and provide services to local communities. These groups also use conflict to intimidate and coerce local communities into providing support and funding for their activities. In some cases, insurgent groups have formed alliances with criminal groups, such as kidnappers and smugglers, to finance their activities (Kehinde, 2019).

Inter-group conflict is a prevalent form of violent conflict in Nigeria. Inter-group conflict refers to violent clashes between different ethnic or religious groups. These conflicts have been responsible for thousands of deaths, displacement of people, and destruction of property (Gberevbie & Olutayo, 2016). Inter-group conflict in Nigeria can be traced back to the colonial era when the British government used divide and rule tactics to maintain control over the country. After Nigeria gained independence in 1960, inter-group conflicts continued, often fueled by political, economic, and social factors (Ibeanu, 2015).

Inter-group conflicts in Nigeria often involve clashes between different ethnic groups, such as the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo, or different religious groups, such as Christians and Muslims (Homer-Dixon, 1999). These conflicts are often triggered by disputes over resources, such as land and water, or political power. Moreover, inter-group conflicts in Nigeria are often characterized by reprisal attacks, where one group seeks revenge for perceived injustices committed by another group. The consequences of inter-group conflict in Nigeria are far-reaching and devastating. Inter-group conflicts have resulted in the displacement of millions of people, destruction of infrastructure, and loss of lives. Moreover, inter-group conflicts have undermined peace and stability in affected areas and eroded public trust in government institutions (Gberevbie & Olutayo, 2016). Inter-group conflicts have also had a significant impact on education in Nigeria. Children have been unable to attend school due to insecurity, and schools have been destroyed or damaged in conflict zones. Moreover, teachers have been targeted by warring groups, leading to a shortage of qualified educators.

As a result, many children in conflict-affected areas are unable to access education, which has long-term consequences for their future (Ogundipe & Ogunjuyigbe, 2018).

Otegwu (2010), opined that rebels have a common nature of attack similar to insurgents. This is the use of guerrilla tactics. Guerrilla tactics are the classic ploy the weak use against the strong. Unlike conventional or European military operations designed to win a quick victory, guerrilla tactics are designed to avoid a decisive defeat at the hands of a stronger enemy. Although conventional forces are constructed around the mobility of large units, guerrilla forces base their operations on the mobility of the individual soldier. In small units, guerrillas avoid presenting themselves as tempting targets for government forces, which usually have vastly superior firepower at their disposal (Otegwu, 2010). According to Guerrilla Warfare Readings (1962) in Otegwu (2010), the rebels attack the very root of the society, the villages and the poor through guerrilla tactics.

Lacking the numerical strength and weapons to oppose a regular army in the field or youths of the villages, guerrillas avoid pitched battles. Instead, they operate from bases established in remote and inaccessible terrain, such as forests, mountains, and jungles, and depend on the support of the local inhabitants for recruits, food, shelter and information. The guerrillas may also receive assistance in the form of arms and information (Microsoft, 2002). Guerrillas fight only when it is to their advantage to fight, often quickly organizing themselves into firing teams, concentrating a superior force against an isolated government unit, attacking and then disappearing as quickly and mysteriously as they appeared. Rarely do forces using guerrilla tactics attempt to hold terrain, for to do so invite destruction by superior enemy forces. Guerrilla tactics can be used by almost any kind of force with the proper training (Marighella, 2002; Nadama, 2019; Otegwu, 2010). Mburu (1999), observed that perpetrators of violent conflicts had transmuted from what he called ‘innocuous tribal sport’ into terrorism unleashed by hardened former guerilla fighters that were used to killing and having little respect for the laws of the land, or any symbol of formal authority. These new forms of armed conflict even involve both inter and intra-ethnic raids for livestock and farm products.

Moore (2005), posits that today’s rebels employ asymmetric methods to achieve their goals. They possess the military, political, economic, and social resources normally held by a state. They are even seen on security outfits, in a way that it will be hard to distinguish them from

State security. They form and grow, systematically weakening the State's grip on power. These rebels survive by not being seen and by fighting in subversive and shadowy groups that only show themselves momentarily, and then blend back into the surrounding physical or human terrain. Notably, they now hide virtually in plain sight in populated and urban areas. Remaining in the urban shadows, operating in dispersed and compartmented cells, drawing sustenance and protection through the support, acquiescence, or intimidation of the populace, and carefully, but visibly, directing conflict at civil targets, they gain strength and wear down their enemies. They need not gain a decisive battlefield advantage for more than a few seconds; they need only to keep from being tactically overwhelmed. The longer they remain a threat, the greater their chance for success (International Crisis Group, 2018).

The most famous site for drivers of conflicts known to historians until quite recently was the mountains. Ultimately, they sought hideouts in the mountains where it was most difficult for the repressive forces to reach. The mountains were a safe harbor if they were located near the border (Belenguer, 2015). Nadama (2019), observed that armed conflicts who terrorized villages in Zamfara State perpetrate their criminal acts along different routes which cut across different parts of the State and the neighboring States of Katsina, Kaduna, Niger, Sokoto, and Kebbi. Their major hideout is Sububu forest in Maradun L.G.A, Zamfara State. From sububu forest, the hoodlums pass through Rudunu, Indulmu and Tangila villages to Dandabi forest in Shinkafi L.G.A, Zamfara State. From Dandabi forest, they move to Dumburum forest in Zurmi L.G.A of Zamfara State. From Dumburum forest, the hoodlums may either go east towards the Batsari forest in Katsina State or southwards towards Shamushalle thick forest in Birnin-Magaji L.G.A of Zamfara State. Shalangwa (2013:57), observed that:

> *The attack was always sudden and usually where the forest was so thick and visibility was impeded or at a river crossing. Lugard, who had encounters with some of the rebels, described their method thus: "1000 men could sit within 20yards (or 20feet) of the path, and the first half of the caravan could pass without knowledge of it. At the first gap caused by a tired or lame man, they could step across the path and kill the first unarmed porter who appeared and the rest would flee in panic and throw their loads.*

According to Blumell (2007), gangs operated mainly in the countryside or on the frontiers of rural centers where there was little government opposition or where local magistrates were

responsible for policing. The reasons they preferred these types of regions are manifold. Such areas gave them the freedom to roam relatively unmolested in search of prey along highways and roads where pre-industrial travel was generally slow and cumbersome, and also the opportunity to disperse and hide from serious threats quickly. Blumell further observed that while it is somewhat difficult to characterize the types of men who became engaged in armed conflict, most men who became violent came from the lower echelons of society. Closely related to those who engaged in armed conflict because of a previous life of poverty were those who resorted to conflict out of sheer necessity. These men were drawn from the ranks of disenfranchised farmers, peasants, tenant laborers or itinerants who were constantly on the brink of destitution and who were only one crop failure away from extinction. For Hasbawn (1969) in Rufa'I, (2017), criminal gangs usually operate in the shadows, often on the fringes of society, in geographically isolated areas. Thus their lives and actions, like those of other frontier figures, remain shrouded in mystery and legend.

Ajayi (2011), classified perpetrators of armed conflict into psychotic or normal fighters. Psychotics are "hardened" and pathological criminals. They operate "with a terrorist mindset". A case in point is the series of raids in rural villages of Benue, Zamfara, Niger, and Kaduna States and also the assault on the Potiskum cattle markets 2011 is a relevant instance. Okoli (2011), also contributed to this view by stating that these categories of criminals are violent and dreadful, they are feared even by security agents who they often engage in terrible onslaught. Normal armed robbers are the opposite of the psychotic. They tread with caution and have appreciable regard for life and personal safety.

2.3 Factors Responsible for Armed Conflicts

There have been several behaviors and activities that have consistently led to violent conflict. Yet men, who organized themselves as rebels, pastoralists, bandits, and other violent groups, are at the root of every violent conflict in Nigeria. Thus, for this study, elements like insurgent activities, armed banditry catastrophes, farmers' and herders' disputes, poverty and inequality within and among groups, unemployment, ethnic diversity and differences, a breach of the social contract, a culture of impunity among public officials, and the activities of religious extremists were taken into account (Rufa'I, 2017). One of the main factors contributing to the violent conflict in Nigeria according to Okoli & Okpaleke (2014), is

insurgents and their actions. The insurgencies in Nigeria have persisted in strengthening and becoming more complex, as well as becoming a pain for both Nigerians and the country itself. For a while, the number of rebel groups in Nigeria grew, but it lately started to decline a little. The Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), the Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF), the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), the Niger Delta Avengers (NDA), and Boko Haram are among the insurgencies in Nigeria. Boko Haram, one of the rebel organizations, is still terrible and was labeled a terrorist organization by the US in 2013. Boko Haram has carried out around 1,639 violent large-scale attacks in Nigeria, resulting in the deaths of 14,436 people, the injuring of 6,051 people, and the taking of more than 2,063 captives in the country's northern regions (Ibeanu, 2014). The rise in insurgencies in Nigeria has been attributed to a variety of factors, including inequality, or the widening gap between the elite and the masses; broken political and economic promises; a high unemployment rate; poverty; injustices; violations of human rights; and subpar service delivery, among others. All of these problems make people angry and violent, which leads to the emergence of the insurgent organization, which many individuals are compelled to join in order to survive (Chimezie, 2013).

The relative ease with which arms are trafficked worldwide, particularly in countries and regions afflicted by civil wars, is also a contributory factor. Although not a cause of conflicts, the wide availability of such weapons tends to fuel them, undermine peace agreements in situations where combatants have not been completely disarmed, intensify conflict and crime in society, and impede economic and social development (Global Witness, 2007).

Global Witness (2007), estimated that some 500 million light weapons are in circulation worldwide. At least seven million small arms are in West Africa, where they have killed more than two million people since 1990, more than 70 per cent of them women and children. Induced, mass movements of populations have also contributed to the spread of conflicts, as in Central and West Africa. In some countries in the sub-Saharan region, struggles for control over vital natural resources, such as diamonds and gold, coupled with broader political ambitions, have increased the intensity of armed conflicts, for example, in Angola, where the rebel movement UNITA controls a substantial part of the diamond

production, an estimated $3.7 billion from the sale of diamonds between 1992 and 1998 allowed UNITA to maintain its armed forces (Global Witness, 2007).

The Angolan Government, for its part, is financing the war mainly with revenue from oil concessions granted to foreign multinational companies. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, several complex factors, including the desire to get a share of the country's rich potential wealth in minerals, especially diamonds and gold, have drawn six States in the region into a battle either for or against the Government. In Sierra Leone, RUF's control of the diamond mines has been a source of power and wealth for the rebel movement. Rebels, according to reports, purchased arms through the sale of diamonds and paid in diamonds to Liberian soldiers who fought alongside their counterparts in the RUF/Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (Jeffery, 1999).

Ajayi (2011), posits that the factor of post-conflict access to arms and ammunition is pertinent to our understanding of the prevalence of armed conflict in Nigeria. The proliferation of weapons in the aftermath of armed conflict leaves such weapons in the hands of criminals who use them to perpetrate criminal acts (Ajayi, 2011). In addition to those mentioned are the factors such as youth unemployment, social inequality, social and economic exclusion, and the practice of itinerant Islamic catechism, known in Arabic as the Al-Majiri system (Okoli & Iortyer, 2014).

O'Malley (2010), gave conditions necessary but insufficient for armed conflict to thrive, the presence of a conscious chronic class conflict, and the absence of an effective institutionalized political organization of the interests of the direct producers commonly sought ends. Blumell (2007), also associated conflict with conditions of famine, economic instability, social distress, and general societal breakdown resulting from civil war or rebellion.

It is also mainly the case that the environment plays a significant role in addition to other factors that may be peculiar or unique to the individual criminal. The frequency of armed conflict in the rural and urban areas can be attributed to the ease with which foreign rebels from neighboring countries move in and out of Nigerian territory (Shalangwa, 2013). The political insurgency erupted in Chad, Libya, and Niger in the previous decade. During this period, rebels converted the island of Lake Chad into their base, from where they launched

guerilla attacks. These rebels occasionally entered Nigeria from Chad, Libya and Niger to attack the border communities and steal properties such as cattle and money to prosecute their insurrection against their national Government (Bobbo, 1999). Mburu (1999), observed that a similar experience in Somalia has also shown how crime can be exported to another country through refugees, including former regular soldiers who hide sophisticated firearms in the bush to rob. Obtaining animals, farm products and other tools improve one's fighting prowess.

In addition to the sheer number of guns leading to violent crime, firearms could increase assault and murder. The presence of guns somehow causes individuals who are otherwise unlikely to engage in conflict (Conklin, 2002). It has been revealed in Africa that out of the 640 million small arms circulating globally. It is estimated that 100 million are found in Africa, about 30 million in Sub-Saharan Africa and 8 million in West Africa alone. Of the majority of these Small and Light Weapons, about 59% are in the hands of civilians, 38% are owned by government armed forces, 2.8% by police and 0.2% by armed groups. Eight million new guns are manufactured yearly by at least 1,249 companies in 92 countries. In addition, 10 to 14 billion units of ammunition are manufactured yearly, enough to kill every person in the world twice over (Okeke & Oji, 2014).

Another predisposing factor identified by Chimezie (2013), is poverty; in Nigeria, poverty has assumed a disturbing dimension and a causal link to communal clashes. It has become multidimensional and exhibits national, rural-urban, age, racial, inter-family, occupational and individual differential with its various manifestations, including lack of income and hunger, malnutrition, ill health, limited access or total lack. The pervasive poverty in Nigerian society, which affects people and homes, is a significant factor that accounts for violent activities. It predisposes people to sundry tactics of survival which may entail criminal indulgence (Okoli & Okpaleke, 2014).

Judging by the American standard, about eighty-five per cent (85%) of Nigerians are poor. It gives birth to the high involvement of her citizens in criminal activities such as corruption, bribery and all types of immoral conduct. An average Nigerian family may be unable to afford (3) three square meals daily. In many parts of the world, poor people are regarded as

those who cannot, for one reason or the other, have an economically productive role economic standards to provide adequate income for themselves. (Thompson, 2008). Poverty and ignorance are fertilizers for insurgency anywhere and at any age. When they combine and cloak themselves in religious, ethnic, or other partisan robes, they become ready for the most brutal and reckless of conflict. A Majority of those involved in these crimes are trained graduates who are supposed to use their knowledge productively in gainful employment and proper guidance. However, they turn around and use such knowledge negatively to pull down society (George & Ukpong, 2013). Due to the unstable economy, according to Mburu (1999), the only employment left for young men is armed conflict as a fleeting opportunity or under the ambit of the militia of one fiefdom or the other.

Governance failure may also be responsible for Nigeria's rising incidence of armed conflict. Abiye (2011), noted that armed conflict arose in Nigeria because emergent militant groups took advantage of the Government's inefficient action and inactions in dealing with the fundamental elements of nationhood. Such as internal security, resource control, injustice, corruption, ethnicity, sycophancy, favoritism, over lordship, and marginalization. These factors have made it a crime to be ethicized in Nigeria. The Government's incapacity further manifests it to deliver public services and provide basic needs for the masses. The lack of necessities has created a pool of frustrated people. These people are ignited easily by any event to be violent and take to armed conflict for survival.

In addition, poor governance and corruption have diverted public resources to private individuals. The inability of the Government to provide good governance and accountability led to armed conflict in northwest Nigeria (Ajayi, 2011). Adenyi (2012), asserts that the manifested incapacity indexes governance failure to deliver critical public goods, such as water, electricity, roads, healthcare, job opportunities and none the least, security. As a result, average Nigerians lack access to these essential services that would lead a healthy, satisfying, and productive life in society. It contributes to the emergence of many frustrated populations, especially young people. Onuoha (2010), has noted that the key challenge here is not the lack of sufficient public resources. Instead, it is a problem of widespread corruption, especially in the public sector, which compounds other governance and development deficits that are bedeviling Nigeria. Akande (2007), further stated that over 5 million Nigerian youths are job

seekers and that thousands and thousands of graduates of tertiary institutions are released each year to the job market. When getting a job is difficult, they result in other means, such as armed conflict.

News media reports have indicated a strong linkage between armed and social conflicts in the cycle of rural conflict. It is necessary to ascertain to what extent the two are connected. In Northern Nigeria, there is intense competition between farmers and pastoralist groups over scarce arable land and water resources, frequently leading to conflict. It has been used to explain repeated cycles of conflict and reprisals in different parts of Northern Nigeria and, recently, even in some parts of Southern Nigeria (Ibrahim & Dabugat, 2015). It is also supported by Blumel (2007), who has attributed the insurgence of conflicts to social conflicts. There has been a steady rise in violent conflicts between nomadic pastoralists and sedentary farmers in Nigeria and West Africa. This conflict has led to clashes between herders and farmers in many states (Okwueze, 2017). These acts of conflict have spilt dramatically over the past few years, and conflicts between pastoralists and farmers are transformed into generally armed conflicts (Okwueze, 2017).

Criminal groups have taken advantage of the conflict to intimidate and terrorize villages in the affected places. In addition, some criminal groups are operating along the border between Benue and Taraba States, compounding the insecurity problem. One such group is headed by the late Terwase Akwaza (Ghana or Gana). He once claimed to lead a communal defense brigade, and his gang is known to have perpetrated several massacres and acts of armed conflict (International Crisis Group, 2018).

A study by Uche & Iwuamadi (2018), found that the Nimbo community armed conflict invasion of the Nimbo community is similar to the clashes witnessed between herders and sedentary farmers across Nigeria. The combatants (herders and farmers) felt frustrated with their businesses' conduct; hence, they resorted to self-help in the face of a security vacuum and governance failure. The crises were largely driven by the tendency to protect and preserve economic assets (lands, farms and cattle) on the one hand. On the other hand, the absence of political will to tackle the menace by governments. Similarly, Ewetan & Urhie (2014), noted that the act of armed conflict in Kaduna State was initially perceived as clashes over natural endowments and was often portrayed as a conflict among settlers and nomadic

people. It, however, deteriorated into large-scale armed conflict with high human and economic costs that negated state security and economic development.

Identifying the predisposing factors of armed conflict, according to Bashir (2017), depends mainly on one's perception of the menace acts. He identified the following as significant factors deduced from his research: Poverty which represented 16.6%, followed by political interference 14.4%, climate change occasioned by droughts and reduced access to water sources 13.3%. Competition over access and control of scarce natural resources represented 12.8% and limited natural resources 11.7%. Pastoralist culture (herders) and traditions passed over the years have promoted animosity in the area 11.7% Commercialization of cattle rustling, which represented 10.6%, Poor policies on pastoralists community that have destabilized the livelihoods of other communities 7.1%, Invading of private farmlands in search of grazing land 1.9%, which have contributed detrimentally to the development of affected communities.

Obarisiagbon & Akintoye (2019), studied the predisposing factors and reviewed that 85 (10%) of the respondents surveyed considered ethno religious conflicts as a factor, 105 (13%) of the respondents believed that weak security and judiciary system while 100 (12%) were for unemployment and poverty situation, 98 (11.7%) were for lopsided development and feeling of marginalization, 42 (5.1%) were for porous borders, and 401 (48.2%) were for all the reasons stated. Porous borders, poverty, corrupt government officials, the involvement of international organized criminal groups or networks and the limited capacity of our commitment by immigration and law enforcement officers to control borders are also contributory factors to different crimes. All these factors combined explain Nigeria's rise and prevalence of armed conflict.

2.4 Effects of Armed Conflict on Children`s Education

Armed conflict has affected almost three-fourths of all countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, and it is critical but difficult to measure the medium to long-term consequences on children (Akresh & Walque, 2008). Davis & Weinstein (2002), posit that recovery from World War II allied bombings on Japanese cities was powerful for children. Brakman, Garrtesen & Schramm (2004), also observed that allied bombings on West German cities negatively impacted children. The global magnitude and devastating burden of conflict against children

are hard to comprehend. Conflict affects more than one billion children in every country and every community every year across the globe (Hillis, Amobi & Kress, 2016).

Although wars and armed conflict attacks share many commonalities, one facet remains constant, the devastating affects it bestows upon children and their rights to education. Frequently, children are forced to bear the lion's share of the negative fallout of emergencies (Collier, 2004). As a result of armed conflict, millions of children are killed, injured and internally or externally displaced from their homes. Consequently, many children spend their entire childhood in camps or other temporary shelters. Children's educational needs are often neglected (Fanara, 2010).

Conflict-affected countries contain one-third of those living in extreme poverty and are responsible for almost one-half of child mortality worldwide. They also account for 42% of all out-of-school children (28 million), even though only 18% of all children in the world of primary school age live in conflict-affected countries (Justino, Leone & Salardi, 2011). The short and long-term health consequences of conflict against children are widely recognized (Lee & Cianci, 2011). The effects of such conflict include fatal/non-fatal injury (possibly leading to disability); physical health problems; cognitive impairment; psychological and emotional consequences (such as feelings of rejection and abandonment, impaired attachment, trauma, fear, anxiety, insecurity and shattered self-esteem); mental health problems; and health-risk behaviors (such as substance abuse and early initiation of sexual behavior). In addition, developmental and behavioral consequences can lead to the deterioration of relationships, exclusion from school and conflict with the law (Justino *et* al., 2011).

Evidence shows that exposure to conflict increases a child's risk of further victimization and violent experiences, including later intimate partner conflict. In addition, exposure to conflict during childhood can impact brain growth with long-term negative consequences; emotional trauma during early childhood may be much more challenging to treat than physical abuse (Tomoda, 2010). Conflict may also negatively impact children through health and nutritional channels due to the association of violent conflict with famines, malnutrition, the outbreak of infectious diseases, post-war trauma, and the destruction of health facilities (Justino et al., 2011).

According to Shakya (2011), the years of conflict represent an interruption to the education of these children. For this reason, many will often not want to return to school or do so belatedly. For these children, this interruption to their routine and the years spent away from the classroom is a source of embarrassment when they return to education, and they are thus unwilling to make that step. To understand this, one should consider that their peer group would have advanced and that they would be returning to class with groups of a younger age corresponding to their academic level. Many of them feel too old to go to school, although this does not diminish their willingness to receive an education. The marginalization they suffer from community members also separates them in centres of learning (Shakya, 2011). Another frequent situation during a conflict where children are displaced is their enrolment in new learning centres alongside different cultures. When a child is moved from a centre of learning, he or she will need a particular time to acclimatize to that new environment, for children who have suffered the consequences of armed conflict and have been displaced. As a result, the period of acclimatization may be more complex and lengthier (Naciones, 1996 cited in Rufa'I, 2017). Naciones further described the reality children face during population movements: states offering political asylum may refuse to provide education to refugees for fear of this encouraging them to remain indefinitely in that country. In such a case, this is not a refusal of the children but rather an impediment to them exercising their right to education.

Another important issue which prevents children from returning to education is the inadequate economic conditions of some families, forcing children to search for work (Caceres et al., 2002). Suppose the positive effects that returning to learning may have on children and their mental health are analyzed. In that case, it can be seen that any rejection and impediment to returning to education may worsen the post-traumatic symptoms from which these children suffer since the intervention program followed have to be based on a context in which school and the other educational agents have to play a part. For this reason, it should be considered essential to run a campaign to raise public awareness, principally among children and families, of how important and necessary returning to education is for their future (Caceres et al., 2002).

In economic terms, it is known that periods of conflict are seriously detrimental to the country's conditions and spending on arms and defense rockets. O'Hare and Southhall (2007),

provide data which reveals that spending on education and health is significantly lower and that spending on defence is significantly higher if there has been a recent conflict. Furthermore, according to the yearbook of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (2013), global military spending in 2012 reached 1.756 trillion dollars. *An Education for All* monitoring report -*No progress in reducing the global number of children out of school.* UNESCO (2014), demonstrates that if wealthy countries were to reallocate six days of military spending to education, the deficit of 16 billion dollars required annually to achieve *education for all* would be eliminated, enabling the education of all the children in the world in 2015 (UNESCO, 2011). Poirier (2012), obtains similar results. He claims that the calculation of the effects with average margin demonstrates that the percentage of children not attending school could decrease by 1.7% and that the percentage of children completing primary and secondary education could increase by 4.4 % and 2.6 %, respectively, if an extra 1% of GDP were allocated to education. Moreover, the percentage of humanitarian aid allocated to education has been reducing over the years: in 2009, it was 2.2% compared to 1.4% in 2012 (UNICEF, 2015).

Armed conflict represents one of Nigeria's most significant educational challenges (Okoli & Okpaleke, 2014). During armed conflict, assets get lost or destroyed through fighting and looting. These include houses, land, labour, utensils, cattle, livestock and other productive assets. The destruction of productive assets affects the access of individuals and households to essential sources of livelihood, which may severely affect their productive capacity and damage their economic position, which in turn affects parents' ability to pay children's fees (Justino, 2006). Those who face sudden losses of land, houses, cattle and other assets will be left without earning a living or providing food and shelter for their members. Such losses will significantly impact affected households' ability to recover their economic and social position in post-conflict settings (Okoli & Okpaleke, 2014).

The effect of being directly impacted by conflict on a child's educational accumulation and enrollment is of particular concern because of education's critical role in increasing human capital and productivity (Wharton & Oyelere, 2011). The importance of education in any economy is enormous. It is acknowledged in the literature that education has a positive relationship with economic growth and sustainable development and that the development of

nations in the 21st Century depends on the quality and quantity of this level of education in different countries. It arguably remains one of the essential requirements in the development processes of any nation (Okwueze, 2017). Education enables individuals to acquire appropriate knowledge, values and skills for personal development and contributes meaningfully to the development of society (Fafunwa, 1990).

The UN Study on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children showed that children, including adolescents, are not just bystanders in armed conflicts but frequently deliberate targets. In the turmoil of displacement, family and community structures will likely break down. At the same time, traditional and social norms have disintegrated, placing displaced children at greater risk of infringing their fundamental rights than other children. Children in displacement situations are more readily exposed to malnutrition, illness, conflict and violations of their physical integrity, psychosocial well-being and development (Internationally displacement monitoring centre, 2006). Attacks on education have caused injuries, deaths and possibly lifelong psychological trauma to children and adults alike. By early 2016, an estimated 952,029 school-aged children had fled northeast Nigeria and consequently had little or no access to education (Human Rights Watch, 2016). An infamous attack in 2014 was the abduction of 276 girls from a boarding school in Chibok, Borno State, by Boko Haram insurgents, which caught the world's attention and led to global condemnation (CNN, 2014).

Akresh & Walque (2008), examined the impact of the Rwandan genocide on children's human capital investment, focusing on primary-level schooling as 93% of the population under age 35 has not completed primary school. The authors found that children exposed to the Rwandan conflict lost years of schooling compared to their peers who were not exposed. They were also 15% less likely to complete grades three and four. Ali (2006), examined the impact of exposure to the 36-year civil war on education outcomes for the rural Mayan population. In this disadvantaged group, the authors find a strong negative impact of conflict on education accumulation. For the three periods of the civil war identified, rural Mayan males showed 0.27, 0.71, and 1.09-year decline in educational attainment, while females showed 0.12, 0.47, and 1.17-year decline. With very low education attainment overall, this

amounts to a 23% and 30% decline in years of schooling during the third period of the war for males and females, respectively. London (2012:4) notes that:

> *Out of school, one is exposed to all manner of perils, the same perils that face grown-ups, and one must usually face these perils alone. In school, however, a child can sit and play, spend time with other children and not have to work outside the schoolhouse walls. The one, and only job in school is to learn. Children in school socialize; they feel like part of a community, a feeling that is all too scarce during times of war.*

Sommers (2002) in Fajana (2010), observed that most primary-school-age children in conflict-affected areas are not in school and have no realistic hope of enrolling in one. In addition, a recent survey found 115 million children worldwide without primary education. More alarming, one-third of the above-noted children are being deprived of education due to armed conflict.

The effects of armed conflict on schools and children are pretty devastating. Schools which serve as critical social institutions are not spared. Schools were not only prevented from operating during instances of armed conflict but they were also targeted for attacks. Both primary and secondary schools were prevented from operating due to attacks in their community. Primary and secondary schools lost several weeks of learning due to armed conflict (Ajayi, 2011). Households were made poorer due to the conflict (loss of crops and assets and disruption of business activities). Given the more challenging economic circumstances, they might further discriminate against girls' schooling (Akresh & Walque, 2008).

In Kaduna State, primary schools bore the brunt of armed conflict more than secondary schools. This is because primary schools were prevented from operating for long periods in several communities; schools were closed for six months to a full year following the attacks (Ajayi, 2011). According to Azad et al. (2018), the most common effect of conflict in North Central Nigeria was household displacement or migration of at least one household member, which affected one-third of households (33%). Twenty-nine per cent of households reported losing the economic opportunity. The most common consequence was additional costs, such as spending money on medical treatment or replacing resources, affecting 13% of conflict-affected households. Eleven per cent of conflict-affected households had sent their children

away or removed them from school. Only 66% of the most recent events were reported to any authorities. Of the reported events, 65% were reported to community leaders and 15% to the police. Sommers (2002), writes, "many children who should be in school are hard to find, hard to get into school, and hard to make sure they remain there".

2.5 Coping Strategies of Improving Children's Education

Young people today encounter higher and more unique challenges than ever before. During a crucial development phase, they are confronted with the biological and psychological growth processes that characterize youth and adolescence. They must also grapple with formidable external pressures such as conflict, poverty and diseases. The eruption of armed conflicts further compounds the adversities many children face. Coping strategies are broadly defined as problem-focused (acting on the environment or the individual) or emotion-focused (attempting to change the meaning of the event or how problems are attended to (Shapiro & Levendosky, 1999). Preventing armed conflict is imperative for development. While wars and violent confrontations are not new, the scale of conflict perpetrated against civilians and the complexity of the emergencies occurring in the past decades is unprecedented (U.N., 2012).

During conflicts of such magnitude, masses of people are displaced after their homes and communities are destroyed, rapidly increasing the ranks of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) worldwide. Children are often a targeted group during conflict (U.N., 2015). Young people's participation in armed hostilities is facilitated through the trade of small arms and light weapons. The dearth of opportunities in their communities often leads them to gravitate towards violent conflict and acts of terrorism. Many are successfully mobilized through the ideologies of war (Youth and Conflict, 2003). As victims and witnesses, they cannot help but be affected by the grim realities surrounding them. Traditional prevention mechanisms have proved top-heavy and ineffective in addressing the root causes of conflict and problems leading to the escalation of tensions. It is not surprising, then, those young people have taken on active roles and created youth networks to build peace and prevent outbreaks of conflict. As one young Nigerian articulated, "the older generation has failed us, and we cannot continue watching while our future is being mortgaged." In response to the increasing prevalence of armed conflicts, the international community has incorporated early

warning and prevention systems in its peace-building agenda to identify and address risks. However, the indicators and variables used for monitoring and evaluation are still under discussion. The new policies and approaches present significant opportunities for progress. More importantly, the role of youth is now recognized as critical in creating long-term stability, producing effective outcomes within communities, and offering protection from future conflicts (Youth & Conflict, 2003). Recognizing the critical importance of addressing prevailing trends and issues in armed conflict, the United Nations has integrated relevant measures into mandates and reports dealing with other priority concerns, including reintegration and resolution, peacekeeping, disarmament, security and human rights. The importance of conflict prevention for youth at the domestic and international levels is reflected in United Nations resolutions and in the increase in funds (from private sector grants) for non-governmental conflict prevention projects (Global Witness, 2007).

The International Committee of the Red Cross (2011), has identified the following coping strategies for improving the lives of affected children:

a. **Street education ("meet them where they are "):** to reach young people in their environment, trying to build trust;
b. **Recreational activities (arts and sports):** to explore young people's individual and collective capacities, raise their self-esteem, reclaim the management of public spaces and improve the image of youth in the eyes of the community;
c. **Psychosocial support:** to encourage young people living in the IDPs to reconnect with their families and community. Programmes sometimes include health care (e.g. a medical facility – attached to the community health centre – that provides psychosocial and medical care, with particular emphasis on reproductive and sexual health, exclusively for young people);
d. **Vocational training:** to facilitate the professional reintegration of young people and their families.
e. The value of involving young people and communities in the entire programme cycle (design, implementation, evaluation). It implies working for young people and the community and working with them to develop their identities and increase their self-esteem. When young people and communities make programmes theirs, it guarantees success because ownership is linked to greater acceptance and sustainability.

f. **Role models and exit strategy:** Role models are fundamental for young people's personal development. In the absence of parents who would typically serve as role models, Red Cross staff or volunteers often play that part while serving as a substitute family. However, it may lead to problems later when the programme provider's withdrawal may leave the beneficiary with a sense of personal loss. Therefore, it must be prepared well in advance to avoid jeopardizing gains made by the programme.

g. **Peer-to-peer education** – Empathetic and motivated peers are better positioned to help and understand others who have to cope with similar, challenging experiences. It becomes more accessible than breaking isolation, developing a sense of belonging and creating a safe and trustworthy environment, all of which are essential for reintegration and psychosocial or conflict prevention programmes (International Committee of the Red Cross, 2011).

UNICEF (2019), asserts that displacement disrupts children's education pathways, and many need support to re-enter formal schooling. In this sense, providing access in the form of school places is only the first step toward inclusion. Schools also have to adapt to their new students' needs. Investment in IDPs' schooling will contribute to peace-building and long-term development. Education plays an essential role in helping to reduce the likelihood of conflict and conflict, build inclusive and accepting communities and foster tolerance and understanding. It means all schools and alternative education programs accept all internally displaced children without discrimination, following their rights as citizens or habitual residents. Displaced children should receive additional support when necessary, including language and catch-up classes, and teachers should be trained in working with multilingual classes and traumatized children (U.N.H.C.R., 1999).

Household coping strategies during conflict often lead to a rising in child labour and the removal of children from school (Rodriguez and Sanchez, 2009, cited in Justino *et al*., 2011). Households often choose to replace dead, injured or physically and mentally disabled adult workers with children. The development economics literature reports children's use as an economic security mechanism. Child labour becomes a form of compensation for low income due to the loss from armed conflict attacks. This form of household coping strategy may have severe negative consequences on the long-term welfare of children. Children that

are needed to replace labour may be removed from school. It may, in turn, deplete the household of its stock of human capital for future generations (Justino, 2012).

2.5 Government Efforts to Curb the Effects of Armed Conflict on Children`s Access to Education

The security of life and property is germane for any country to experience sustainable development. Excellent and proper security has been the watchword of the major advanced countries of the world like the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and Japan, to mention but a few (Babatunde, Obong & Olarewaju, 2014). The roles of the State are many and varied. For Onuoha (2012), the chief responsibility of the State is the maintenance of social and political order. It is also the custodian and provider of security.

In ancient times, different levels of government, whether imperial, provincial or local, had taken various measures to stamp out armed conflict and ensure safe travel on the roads and highways around the Ancient Roman Empire (Blumell, 2007). The irony is that despite enormous amounts invested in military and security operations, the security situation seems to be deteriorating. Between January and April 2019, the Nigerian Army implemented several operations, such as *Operation Harbin Kunama, Operation DiranMikiya* and *Operation Puff Adder*, to tackle armed conflict in the Northwest (Suleiman, 2019).

According to the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (A.C.L.E.D.) in Global Security (2020), following the continued killings of innocent citizens by armed conflicts in Benue, Zamfara and Kaduna States. President Muhammadu Buhari ordered the establishment of *Operation Whirl Stroke* to checkmate the situation commanded by Major General MA Yekini, similar to *Operation Safe Heaven* Commanded by Major General Anthony Atolagbe in Jos Plateau State. The three Operations are joint operations under the control of the Defense Headquarters (Global Security, 2020). However, given the inability of the Nigerian State to effectively perform its core functions of providing or guaranteeing security for the people, the public institutions responsible for offering protection and delivering justice cannot bring violent conflicts to justice due to inadequate resources (Ukpong, 2016).

The Government of Zamfara alone has spent over N17 billion funding military and security operations in the State. However, the conflict seems to be expanding the scope of their

operations beyond Zamfara and into the neighboring States. With the fragile state system and lower public confidence in Police and State security institutions, the allegiance of defenceless rural communities is gradually shifting toward informal, armed groups and local vigilantes (Suleiman, 2019). Ogbozor (2016), observed about 377,000 police officers for about 170 million Nigerians. Sadly, more than half of these policemen are attached to politicians and other top government officials. It invariably means that the ratio is one poorly motivated police officer to over 500 disgruntled and discontented Nigerians. This ugly situation has created an avenue for the formation and proliferation of different informal security outfits, such as vigilante groups, to fill up the vacuum left by the Nigerian Police Force (N.P.F.).

The vigilante group of Nigeria is the oldest and largest informal security outfit in Nigeria, with a total of 3.2 million members across different States and local governments. Their number is more significant than that of the Nigerian Police, which invariably means that, if properly and adequately trained on security strategies and tactics, they will go a long way in bridging the security gap in the country (Kehinde, 2019). Vigilantes have long been involved in curtailing conflicts, usually without State coordination or support. Some have suggested recreating local forces as a solution. The institutional mechanisms created by the Borno State C.J.T.F., with provosts and a disciplinary committee, are welcomed and could be improved and replicated elsewhere. It also would be helpful to show that vigilantes are held accountable by making information publicly available on cases and decisions submitted to the committee through a yearly report and periodic engagement with human rights entities (International Crisis Report, 2017). It is important to note that a country like Nigeria is bedeviled by different types of crises: ethnic, religious, political and even land-related conflicts. Therefore, vigilante groups play a vital role in conflict prevention and mitigation (Adam, 2016).

The underlying motive behind any form of vigilantism, according to Ogbozor (2016), is to safeguard lives and properties in their communities to complement security agencies, gather intelligence information, and arrest and hand over suspected criminals to the Police. Some vigilante groups combine security provisioning with social development activities (construction of roads, bridges and environmental sanitation facilities), while some engage in a land-dispute settlement. However, Rufa'I (2018), maintained that it is an irony for one to

think that the vigilantes formed to ensure the security of the lives and properties of the people would eventually turn against them. In Zamfara State, the insecurity created by cattle rustling and rural armed conflict created the opportunity for the vigilante to either witch-hunt their old foes or amassed illegal wealth. Both the conflicts and the *Fulbe* pastoralists complain of constant harassment, intimidation and confiscation of properties unlawfully by the vigilantes. Sometimes, livestock and other properties retrieved from the conflicts would not get to the rightful owners. Moreover, some rotten eggs amongst the vigilantes have turned the whole situation into a 'money-making venture. However, Obeagu (2014), maintained that a government that wishes to eliminate the negative influence of a mafia-like organization (Vigilante) should take steps to reduce the level of armed conflict in society by increasing the effectiveness of government police forces as an effective tool for decreasing the effects on peasants.

The police officers and the people they serve must be as close as possible and know one another where possible. Such closeness can generate the police-citizen cooperation necessary for the involvement of the whole community in community protection. This approach was adopted in Ontario, Canada, in 1972, called the "Canada Approach". This approach involves setting up a task force composed of a representative of the government, municipalities and the general public to examine the policing of the province. In the Canadian approach, the task forces analyzed present and future needs and studied alternative approaches related to those needs (Obeagu, 2014).

Obarisiagbon & Akintoye (2019), examined the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies in managing crises. The study reviewed that 150 (18%) of the surveyed respondents agreed that law enforcement agents are capable of preventing and managing security crises in Benin City, while 670 (80.6%) stated that the law enforcement agents lacks the capacity of preventing crime in their area and 2 (1.2%) were undecided. Therefore, it implies that most respondents do not believe law enforcement agents can prevent and manage security crises in Benin City. Similarly, Obarisiagbon & Omage (2018), posit that the upsurge in criminal activities, particularly kidnapping, ritual murders, arson, herders' murderous activities, and armed conflict, has dampened the hope of the public in the ability of the Police to guarantee people's security.

Historically, community policing as a concept originated in the United States in the 1970s as a philosophy and tactic of policing to integrate the public into Police institutions, not as police personnel but as collaborators in the security affairs of the nation for optimal efficiency and responsiveness (Wong, 2009). Indeed, this approach advocates for a paradigm shift. Rather than leaving the job of policing to the State and Police, people are more than ever tasked to play many complementary roles in their communities' security affairs (Kasali & Odetola, 2016). Community policing, according to Okeshola & Mudiare (2013), should focus on constructive engagement with people who are the end users of the police service and renegotiate the contract between the people and the Police, thereby making the community co-producers of justice and quality police service.

Education is one of the most potent weapons against crime. With a good education, the individual acquires the skills and capacity for legitimate employment to earn a living and conquer poverty. Poor early childhood education, on the other hand, multiplies the risk of criminal behavior in adulthood (Byrne & Hummer, 2016). When implementing educational strategies and practices to meet the needs of children affected by armed conflict, a holistic approach is needed by incorporating all stakeholders. Namely the children, their parents and community members. The government, international and local N.G.O.s and foreign governments in developing and implementing educational programs for children affected by armed conflict.

Sommers (2002), cautioned against 'top-down' based measures in such situations. Instead, steps must be taken to include the children in the intervention design. Generally speaking, children are in subservient roles in armed conflict situations; as such, they may have been conditioned to silence or not express their opinions. Therefore, strategies must be designed to encourage children's participation in designing educational programs and proffering solutions.

UNICEF (2019), gave the following measures to improve children's education in Internal Displaced Persons Camp:

a. **Strengthening education systems** so they can provide high-quality learning opportunities for host community children, absorb displaced children, and cater for their specific needs. It entails addressing operational challenges such as teachers' pay,

infrastructure issues, data management and quality assurance; and developing curricula, methods and materials that help children overcome language and cultural barriers.

b. **Ensure access to national education systems for internally displaced children.** All internally displaced children are accepted by all schools and alternative education programs without discrimination, following their rights as citizens or habitual residents. In addition, displaced children should receive additional support when necessary, including language and catch-up classes, and teachers should be trained in working with multilingual classes and traumatized children.

c. **Prioritize schooling for internally displaced children at the earliest stages of emergencies** to minimize the disruption to their education and maximize the potential protection and support that school offer by re-establishing a daily routine and helping them restore a sense of normalcy. Schools can also serve as effective means of achieving other objectives in emergencies, such as distributing food, supporting income-generating activities for youth and adults as school staff and disseminating critical messages on security, health and other issues. When feasible and safe, the first option should be to integrate internally displaced children into local schools. In other cases, or for transition purposes, it may also include providing interim services such as "school in a box" kits and mobile educational programming (UNICEF, 2019).

d. **Ensure adequate measures are in place to keep students safe**. It includes organizing escorts to accompany displaced children on their walk to and from school, marking schools as "zones of peace" to ensure education can continue unaffected by conflict, and preventing school closures due to political activities. They are also reducing the presence of armed forces in and around schools and preventing the misuse of school grounds and buildings.

e. **Take specific measures to ensure displaced girls can attend school.** It includes supplying them with clothing, soap and sanitary materials, building separate latrines, providing childcare opportunities for adolescent mothers and hiring female teachers. In addition, education must be designed to support girls' education by tackling gender-based stereotypes, combating discriminatory practices and protecting the education rights of pregnant girls.

f. **Remove legal and administrative barriers** to internally displaced children attending school. It includes waiving specific registration requirements in terms of documentation.
g. **Remove financial barriers** by abolishing school fees and establishing scholarship programs to help fund education, including higher education, for internally displaced children, building on examples of such initiatives for refugees.
h. **Develop child-centred adaptation and resilience strategies for sudden and slow-onset crises** to better address and respond to their adverse effects on education. Sector plans must consider the risk of loss of life, infrastructure damage and displacement to ensure that disasters and emergencies disrupt education services as little as possible (UNICEF, 2019).

Achieving a viable measure towards curtailing the effect of armed conflict on children's academic development also requires community self-help groups to a vast extent. In Kaduna State, Ali (2006), posits that Self Help Groups in Giwa Local Government Area have transformed rural areas into semi-urban areas and made life more meaningful to the populace. They have been able to provide teaching materials, form vigilante groups, and executed several projects like community primary and secondary schools, markets, health clinics, roads, bridges, boreholes, electrification, poultry farming and orphanage homes. These groups have promoted rural development by ensuring the emergence of an effective and integrated development process within the local government area, thereby fostering the spirit of community ownership and use of economic assets and the maintenance of such facilities and organizations on a sustainable basis (Ali, 2006).

2.6 Theoretical Framework

In this segment, related theories were reviewed. The aim was to understand and explain the armed conflict phenomenon and its effects on children's access to education. The approaches include; Conflict theory and Relative Deprivation theory.

2.6.1 Conflict Theory

Conflict theory stands as a prominent perspective in sociology, offering a critical lens through which to analyze social structures and dynamics. Rooted in the works of Karl Marx,

it challenges the notion of harmony and consensus within society, instead emphasizing the inherent presence of conflict arising from competition and inequality. While Marx laid the foundation, conflict theory boasts numerous proponents who enriched its understanding. Max Weber explored the role of power in social stratification, highlighting the multi-dimensional nature of inequality beyond just economics. Georg Simmel emphasized the influence of conflict in shaping social interactions and group dynamics. Later theorists like C. Wright Mills and Ralf Dahrendorf further explored the concepts of power, domination, and social change within conflict theory. Conflict theory, therefore, assumes that:

1. Scarcity of Resources: Society possesses limited resources (wealth, power, opportunities) leading to inevitable competition and conflict between individuals and groups seeking to maximize their share.
2. Group Interests: Individuals identify with groups based on shared characteristics like class, race, or gender, leading to distinct and potentially conflicting interests.
3. Power Dynamics: Power resides unequally within society, empowering dominant groups to control resources and institutions, often at the expense of marginalized groups.
4. Social Change: Conflict serves as the engine of social change as marginalized groups challenge the status quo and push for a more equitable distribution of resources and power (Shalangwa, 2013).

Criticisms of Conflict Theory

Despite its contributions to understanding social dynamics, conflict theory has faced criticism from various quarters. One critique is that it tends to oversimplify complex social phenomena by reducing them to issues of power and conflict. Critics argue that this narrow focus

overlooks the role of cooperation, consensus, and shared values in maintaining social order. Additionally, some scholars have questioned the deterministic view of social change inherent in conflict theory, suggesting that it overlooks the agency of individuals and the role of cultural factors in shaping societal outcomes. Moreover, conflict theory has been criticized for its tendency to prioritize economic factors, such as class struggle, at the expense of other forms of inequality, such as those based on race, gender, or ethnicity. Critics argue that this narrow focus obscures the intersecting nature of oppression and fails to account for the complexities of identity and privilege within society.

Application of the Theory

Applying conflict theory to the causes and effects of armed conflict and children's education in Benue State, Nigeria, reveals underlying power struggles, economic disparities, and social inequalities that exacerbate tensions and hinder educational opportunities for the most vulnerable members of society. In Benue State, armed conflicts often stem from long-standing ethnic, religious, and land disputes, fueled by competition for scarce resources such as fertile land and water. These conflicts are often symptomatic of broader power struggles between different ethnic groups and socio-economic classes. The dominance of certain groups in political and economic spheres can lead to marginalization and disenfranchisement of others, exacerbating social tensions and contributing to violent confrontations. For example, clashes between farmers and herders in Benue State have resulted in displacement,

loss of livelihoods, and widespread insecurity, further deepening existing divisions within the society.

The effects of armed conflict on children's education in Benue State are profound and multifaceted. Conflict disrupts schooling by damaging infrastructure, displacing families, and creating an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty. Schools may be destroyed or repurposed as shelters, making it difficult for children to access quality education. Displacement also leads to interrupted schooling, as families flee violence and are unable to enroll their children in new schools. Moreover, the psychological trauma of experiencing or witnessing violence can impede children's ability to concentrate and learn, hindering their academic performance and overall well-being. Additionally, the breakdown of social networks and support systems further isolates children, exacerbating their vulnerability to exploitation, including recruitment into armed groups or involvement in child labor to support their families economically.

From a conflict theory perspective, these challenges in children's education can be understood as a consequence of unequal power relations and structural inequalities within society. The dominant groups, often represented by political elites and economic interests, may prioritize their own agendas at the expense of investing in education and social welfare programs for marginalized communities. The education system itself may perpetuate existing inequalities by favoring certain groups while neglecting the needs of others, reinforcing patterns of privilege and disadvantage. Furthermore, conflict may serve to perpetuate the status quo by diverting attention and resources away from addressing root causes of inequality, thus perpetuating cycles of poverty and marginalization. Efforts to address the impact of armed conflict on children's education in Benue State must therefore address

underlying power dynamics and structural inequalities. This includes promoting inclusive and equitable access to education for all children, regardless of their socio-economic background or ethnic identity. Initiatives to rebuild and strengthen educational infrastructure must be accompanied by measures to address the root causes of conflict, including land tenure reform, conflict resolution mechanisms, and economic development programs aimed at reducing poverty and addressing disparities in wealth and opportunity. Moreover, fostering a culture of peace and tolerance through education can help to mitigate the impact of conflict on children's well-being and promote social cohesion within communities.

2.6.2 Relative Deprivation Theory

The second theoretical basis for this study is the Relative Deprivation Theory which has been conceptualized from various strands. The development of the concept of relative deprivation is often attributed to the American sociologist Robert K. Merton, whose study of American soldiers during World War II revealed that soldiers in the Military Police were far less satisfied with their opportunities for promotion than regular GIs (Curran & Takata, 2003). Robert Merton used the term "social anomie" to describe an aspect of deprivation. Merton (1957), argued that such anomie, which could be a social construction, leads to deprivation.

Relative deprivation theory suggests that people may feel deprived of something essential in their society (e.g. education, rights, political voice, status) due to armed conflict. Relative deprivation is the judgment that one is worse off compared to some standard, accompanied by feelings of anger and resentment. Social scientists use relative deprivation to predict a wide range of significant outcome variables: school dropout, learning problems, individual achievement and deviance and intergroup attitudes (Duclos, 2001).

Marx (1847/1935), in Duclos (2001), captures the intuitive appeal of relative deprivation as an explanation for social behaviour. In comparisons to other people, groups or even themselves at different points in time lead people to believe they do not have what they deserve, they will be angry and resentful. Relative deprivation describes these subjective evaluations. Thus, Relative deprivation is a social psychological theory par excellence. It

postulates a subjective state that shapes emotions, cognitions, and behaviour. It links the individual with the interpersonal and intergroup levels of analysis. It melds easily with other social psychological processes to provide a more integrative theory (Pettigrew, 1991).

Significant Assumptions of Relative Deprivation Theory

- A person does not have something (access to quality education) as a result of the social problems caused by armed conflict.
- That person knows other people who have the thing.
- That person wants to have the thing.
- That person believes they have a reasonable chance of getting the thing.

According to Runciman (1966), relative deprivation emerges from a feeling of dispossession that could trigger resentment, trauma, learning disorder, anger, conflict and emotional instability. Similarly, Peter (1979), in Walker & Smith (2001), posits that relative deprivation is the denial of access to resources such as education for subsistence or livelihood of an individual or a group. This theory puts in proper perspective the understanding of the fundamental trigger of certain behavioural traits in the particular case of the effects of armed conflict on displaced children in Benue State in terms of their access to good living conditions conducive environment for learning and personal development. Runciman (1966), reinforced the basis of relative deprivation as informed by material choices. The quest to possess what the community has, in turn, led to the displacement of children from their homes in search of a safe environment which affected their chances of getting better education as compared to children of other groups not affected by conflict. Runciman (1966), draws attention to the question of social justice as a modality to redress relative deprivation which increasingly accounts for inequality in access to education.

Deprivation accounts for several factors, such as rebellion, wars and the rise in resilient social movements (Walker & Smith, 2001). Relative deprivation provides valuable theoretical insights which could advance knowledge on the effects of armed conflict on displaced children's access to education in Benue State. The conflict is linked to distortion, alienation and deprivation of school children's access to a clean environment. It also leads to a lack of parental care, comfort, quality education in their communities, and their parent's

access to their farmlands. All these challenges directly affect educational development in the affected areas.

Criticisms of Relative Deprivation Theory

1. Critics of relative deprivation theory have argued that it fails to explain why some people who, though deprived of rights or resources, fail to participate in social movements meant to attain those things. However, proponents of relative deprivation theory argue that many of these people want to avoid the conflicts and life difficulties they might encounter by joining the movement with no guarantee of a better life.
2. Relative deprivation theory does not account for people participating in movements that do not benefit them directly. In these cases, participants are believed to act more out of empathy or sympathy than feelings of relative deprivation (Collier, 2004).

Application of Relative Deprivation Theory

Relative deprivation theory suggests that individuals or groups who perceive themselves as having less access to resources or opportunities compared to others in their social comparison group may experience feelings of deprivation and dissatisfaction, which can lead to negative outcomes such as frustration, aggression, and conflict. In the context of armed conflict and children's access to education, this theory can be applied to understand how the experience of conflict affects children's perceptions of relative deprivation and their access to educational opportunities.

Children living in conflict zones may perceive themselves as having less access to education compared to children living in peaceful areas. This can lead to feelings of deprivation and frustration, which may in turn lead to negative outcomes such as dropping out of school, engaging in risky behaviors, or joining armed groups. The perception of relative deprivation can also exacerbate existing social inequalities, such as gender or ethnic disparities in education, which may be more pronounced during times of conflict.

Armed conflict can directly impact children's access to education by damaging or destroying schools and educational infrastructure, displacing families and disrupting schooling routines, and creating safety concerns that prevent children from attending school. These factors can

compound the sense of deprivation and frustration that children may already be experiencing, further limiting their access to educational opportunities.

Applying relative deprivation theory to the study of armed conflict and children's access to education highlights the importance of addressing the underlying causes of conflict and reducing inequalities in access to education to promote positive outcomes for children in conflict-affected areas. It also underscores the need for targeted interventions that address the specific challenges faced by children in conflict zones, including the provision of safe and accessible educational opportunities.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methods and techniques employed in collecting and analyzing data relating to the phenomenon of armed conflict. The chapter briefly describes the research design, location of the study, population, types and sources of data, sampling techniques, and methods of data collection and analysis. Also, it discusses the difficulties and experiences encountered in the field.

3.2 Research Design

The study utilized the descriptive survey method as its research design. This approach was deemed suitable because the research aimed to provide a comprehensive account of the effects of armed conflict on children's access to education, particularly in terms of the availability, sufficiency, functionality, and present condition of the educational facilities established in affected communities. Moreover, the descriptive survey method was chosen because it involved a systematic and organized gathering and presentation of data to offer a clear and precise representation of a specific situation, ensuring a precise depiction of observations of the phenomenon (Eboh, 2009).

3.3 Location of the Study

Benue State, located in the north-central geopolitical zone of Nigeria, was created on February 3rd, 1976, from the former Benue-Plateau State. Its headquarters is in Makurdi, and it derives its name from River Benue, the second largest river in the country and the most prominent geographical feature in the State. The State has a population of 5,741,815 (National Population Commission, 2016) and is made up of several ethnic groups, including Tiv, Idoma, Igede, Etulo, Abakpa, Jukun, Igbo, Hausa, Akweya, Nyiton, and others.

Benue State shares boundaries with Taraba State and the Republic of Cameroon in the North, Cross River and the Ebonyi States in the East, Enugu and Kogi States in the South, and Nasarawa State in the West. The State is divided into three senatorial districts and twenty-three (23) local government areas.

The State's economy is mainly agrarian, with most people engaged in farming, and it is known as the "Food Basket of the Nation." Some crops grown in the State include potatoes, cassava, yam, soya beans, rice, guinea corn, and groundnuts. Livestock rearing in the State includes goats, poultry, and cattle, while the riverside inhabitants engage in fishery as their primary occupation.

The people of Benue State are famous for their cheerful and hospitable disposition and rich cultural heritage. However, the State has been ravaged by armed conflicts that have displaced many school children and destroyed educational infrastructure. In response to this, the Nigerian Defense Headquarters launched a significant military operation in 2014, code-named "Operation Whirl Stroke," to curtail the wanton destruction of lives and properties by

the itinerant armed conflicts. The operation aimed to capture the armed conflicts, recover their illegally acquired firearms, and turn them over for investigation and prosecution (GlobalSecurity.org, 2020).

3.4 Population of the Study

The study population included several groups of people, namely school children, IDP camp leaders, State Emergency Management staff (SEMA), school teachers, women leaders, parent/guardians and vigilante leaders. The total number of displaced persons across the state and the wider region was not accurately known, as many of them lived outside the six official camps for internally displaced persons and with relatives or other people in unaffected communities. However, the study focused on a specific population of 175,070 victims, as reported by the Benue State Emergency Management Agency, among which 27,454 were children in the IDP camps located in Logo, Makurdi, Guma, Agatu, and Kwande Local Government Areas of Benue State (SEMA, 2021).

Moreover, the researcher intentionally selected one affected local government from each of the Senatorial district zones in Benue State: Logo Local Government Area in Zone A, Makurdi Local Government Area in Zone B, and Agatu Local Government Area in Zone C. The selection was based on the affected local government areas that hosted different IDP camps in the study area. However, Agatu Local Government Area did not have any officially recognized IDP camps; instead, it had settlements managed by SEMA staff in the area.

3.5 Types and Sources of Data

The type of data collected for the study was primary data. The primary data was obtained through the questionnaire and In-depth interviews on a first-hand basis to elicit information.

The data sources for this study were obtained in two categories; the first category consisted of children from ages 7 - 18 who are in different IDP camps and settlements in Agatu, Makurdi and Logo local governments areas of Benue State. IDP camps and settlements were chosen because most affected school children and parents migrated into IDP camps and settlements where they were provided shelter, security, food and other provisions. In addition, residents of the affected communities fled for fear of other attacks (SEMA, 2021).

The second category consisted of women leaders who are mothers, representatives of All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN) Benue Chapter, fathers in the camp, vigilante heads,

SEMA staff, representatives of Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria and school teachers in IDP camps in the selected local governments who have had direct links to the issue of armed conflict in the affected communities. Data from the first category (children) was collected through a questionnaire, while data from the second category was collected through in-depth interviews. The data on the types and nature and factors responsible for armed conflict were collected via in-depth interview from the adult respondents. This was done to enable reliable information on the topics to support that of the children.

3.6 Sampling Size and Sampling Techniques

According to the State Emergency Management Agency SEMA (2021), in Benue State, there are 175 070 internally displaced persons. Of these, 27,454 are children, some currently taking refuge in the Internally Displaced Person camps at Agatu, Guma, Logo, Makurdi, and Kwande local government areas. Although there are no officially recognized camps in Agatu LGA, there are settlements for displaced children. Therefore, the researcher purposively selected one local government from each of the three Senatorial districts of Benue State to represent the views of other victims across the State (Agatu, Logo and Makurdi LGAs).

The justification for the above three LGAs from each Senatorial district was for representations across the zones and time constraints of the researcher. Data from the three Local governments (Agatu, Logo and Makurdi LGAs) represented the views of the displaced children and other stakeholders in the State. As at 2022 when the study was conducted they were 1033 children in IDPs camps across the three selected local government areas as stated by SEMA (2022) as represented below:

S/NO	Local Government	IDPs Camps	Number of school children
1	Logo LGA	Anyin camp	323
3	Makurdi LGA	Abagena camp	400
4		Tse-Itchua camp (unofficial)	210
5	Agatu LGA	Central Primary School Obagaji (unofficial)	100

Total	**4 selected camps**	**1033**

SEMA, (2021)

The study employed Krejcie and Morgan (1970), sampling determination table to select a sample size of (278) from the total population of (1033), displaced children in the 4 selected IDP camps in Agatu, Logo and Makurdi LGAs of Benue State. The researcher selected two officially recognized IDP camps and two unofficial camps for a better representation and understanding. According to Krejcie and Morgans (1970), a sample of 278 is appropriate for the population of 1000 and above. (A copy of the sample size determination table is attached as appendix VI).

The researcher further employed Bowley (1964), proportion allocation formula to determine the sample size for each of the four (4) selected camps in the three LGAs.

The formula is expressed as:

$$nh = \frac{nNh}{N}$$

Where:

nh = number of children to be sampled from each IDPs camp selected

n = targeted sampled size for the study

Nh = number of population in each IDP camp

N = population size of the six selected camps from the three local governments

For Anyin IDP camp $nh = \frac{278\times323}{1033} = 87$

For Abagena IDP camp $nh = \frac{278\times400}{1033} = 108$

For Ichua IDP camp $nh = \frac{278\times209}{} = 56$

1033

For Obagaji IDP camp nh= $\frac{278 \times 100}{1033}$ = 27

Using the Bowley's population allocation formula described above, the following sample sizes were derived for the sampled IDP camps as thus:

Anyin Camp	=	87
Abagena	=	108
Ichua	=	56
Obagaji	=	27
Total	**=**	**278**

The total sample size for this study is therefore 278. Simple random sampling through the use of lottery method was used to select respondents across the selected camps.

Due to the transient nature of IDP camps, it was difficult to obtain a comprehensive list of respondents for the research. Therefore, non-probability sampling techniques were utilized. The study employed a purposive sampling method, specifically availability sampling, to select 278 children who were administered the questionnaire. Additionally, 19 key informants were purposely selected for in-depth interviews.

For Agatu LGA, seven respondents were interviewed, including one camp leader (father), one representative of All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN) Benue Chapter, one-woman leader (mother), one police officer, one vigilante head, and one representative of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) at Central Primary School Obagaji settlement.

For Makurdi LGA, a total of six respondents were selected for the interview, including one father, one representative of AFAN, one representative of the MACBAN, one police officer, one emergency school teacher, and one SEMA staff. These interviews took place at Abagana and Tse Ichua IDP camps. For Logo LGA, six respondents were selected for Anyin IDP camp, including one father, one vigilante head, one-woman leader (mother), one emergency school teacher, and one SEMA staff.

A total of 19 key informants were purposively selected across IDPs camps, including three camp leaders, two representatives of All Farmers Association of Nigeria AFAN Benue Chapter, two women leaders who also represented parents, two fathers, two police officers, one SEMA staff, two school teachers, two representatives of the MACBAN, two vigilante heads, and one NGO staff. The interview was conducted by the researcher through a tape recorder and an interview guide designed in line with the objectives of the study. The researcher also took notes during the interview section. They provided complementary information to that of the children through in-depth interviews using a researcher-designed interview guide. Separate IDI guides were created for each key informant and these were included in the appendix list for clarity.

3.7 Methods of Data Collection

The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods to obtain rich information about the subject of study. Quantitative data was obtained through a survey by the administration of a questionnaire. The technique was adopted because it allowed the researcher to collect multiple views from the respondents. The questionnaire was structured into six (6) sections comprising twenty-one (21) questions administered to children (a copy is attached as Appendix I). Qualitative data were gathered through in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews were conducted with seventeen (19) participants which include three camp leaders, two representatives of All Farmers Association of Nigeria AFAN Benue Chapter, two women leaders who also represented parents, two police officers, one SEMA staff, two school teachers, two representatives of the MACBAN, two fathers, two vigilante heads, and one NGO staff to complement the data obtained through quantitative techniques and considered the various points of convergence and divergence of participants/respondents.

The questionnaire was administered simultaneously with interviews, to children in the selected IDPs camps as a further means of data triangulation, being a study on the effects of armed conflict on children`s education. This is supported by Sogunro (2017), who used questionnaire combined with interviews, document analyses, and direct observations to examine the impact of conflict on educational development. To ensure that the questionnaire was responded to, the semi-structured questionnaire after design was piloted and a preliminary analysis was carried out on the pilot data. The results of the pilot survey helped

in reshaping the final questionnaire which was distributed in hard copy to the respondent at IDPs camps.

Each respondent was given five hours to complete the questionnaire. The researcher and the care givers at the camp used English, Tiv and Idoma languages to administer and collect data from the respondents. A total of 278 questionnaires were administered simultaneously as the interviews were conducted by the researcher with the key informants at the camp, 225 respondents completed the questionnaires, representing a response rate of approximately 81%. For the in-depth interview, the researcher used a tape recorder, in-depth interview guide and a note to record nonverbal signs during the interaction. The researcher understands the language of the research area and in most cases used the Nigerian pidgin language which many of the participants were more comfortable with for the interview.

3.8 Methods of Data Analysis

Data generated for this study was analyzed based on both quantitative and qualitative methods. For quantitative data analysis, data was first sorted out, the data was converted into values in a code book manually and further transfer into a code sheet. It was then analyzed with the help of a computer application software called Statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 21). The analysis was also done through the use of descriptive statistics inform of percentages and frequencies. Data collected through qualitative method was transcribed from the tape verbatim. The thematic areas were brought out and used in conjunction with the quantitative data.

3.9 Problems Encountered in the Field

During the course of the research, the researcher faced several obstacles. Initially, they encountered difficulties in locating the IDPs, but this issue was ultimately resolved with the assistance of personnel from the Makurdi Zonal State Emergency Management Agency. Another challenge arose when attempting to gain entry into the selected IDP camps. The researcher was initially provided with an introductory letter from the Department, but this letter was rejected by many of the camp leaders. To address this issue, the researcher obtained an additional introductory letter from both the State Emergency Management Agency and the Benue State Ministry of Education. Despite these efforts, many of the potential respondents were initially unwilling to participate in the study. However, with the

presence of SEMA representatives whom they were familiar with, many became more receptive to the idea of participating in the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is on the analysis of the data collected from the field. The chapter is organized into six sections. This include the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, nature and pattern of armed conflict, factors that influence armed conflict, effects of armed conflict on children's access to education, possible coping strategies to enhance children education in IDPs camps, measures of mitigating the effects of armed conflict on children education in IDPs camps and discussion of major findings. Out of the two hundred and seventy-eight

(278) questionnaires administered, 225 (81%) of the questionnaires were successfully retrieved. Also, seventeen (17) Key informants were interviewed and the results of the two findings were analyzed and triangulated. Thereafter, discussion of major findings followed suit.

4.2 Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section examined the Socio-Demographic attributes of respondents such as their age, sex, educational level before displacement, religion and type of family.

Table 2: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

IDPs Camp	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age		
7-11 years	34	15.1
12-16	116	51.6
17-18	75	33.3
Total	**225**	**100.0**
Sex		
Male	104	46.2
Female	121	53.8

Total	**225**	**100.0**
Education level before displacement		
None	23	10.2
Koranic	8	3.6
Primary	94	41.7
Junior Secondary	60	26.7
Senior Secondary	40	17.7
Total	**225**	**100.0**
Religion		
Christianity	192	85.3
Islam	17	7.6
Traditional	16	**7.1**
Total	**225**	**100.0**
Type of Family		
Nuclear Family	159	70.7
Extended Family	56	24.9
Single-parent Family	10	4.4
Total	**225**	**100.0**

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. It was gathered that the respondents between the ages of 12 – 16 years were of the highest number representing 51.6% which is expected since the study is on children's education, this is followed by respondents who were of the ages of 17-18 years representing 33.3%. While the ages 7-11 years were 15.1% representing the lowest ages of respondents. This indicates that the majority of respondents who took part in this study were young children of ages 12 and 16. Findings also showed that the majorities 53.8% were females and 46.2% were males.

Regarding the educational level of the children before the displacement; a significant proportion 41.7% were primary school pupils, 26.7% were junior secondary students, 17.7% were senior secondary school students, 3.6% had only koranic education and only 10.2% had no access to formal education. It can be deduced from the data that the majority of the respondents were in primary classes before the displacement.

The data obtained also disclosed the religious background of the respondents. It was discovered that the majority 85.3% of the respondents were Christians, 7.6% of the

respondents were Muslims. Only 7.1% of the respondents practiced traditional religion. Finally, on the type of family respondents were born into, findings revealed that the majorities 70.7% of the respondents were from nuclear family, and 24.9% were from extended family while 4.4% were from single-parent family. A single-parent family is a household where one parent, either a mother or father, is raising one or more children on their own.

Based on the data analyzed, it can be inferred that a significant portion of the children affected by displacement were enrolled in primary schools prior to the event. This finding is particularly significant because it reveals that a majority 41.7% of these children had not completed their primary education before the displacement occurred. This has serious implications for their future prospects, as they may face significant challenges in continuing their education and achieving their full potential. It is therefore critical to prioritize educational support for displaced children, particularly those who were still in the early stages of their schooling.

4.3 Types and Nature of Armed Conflict Attack

This section discusses the respondents' understanding of the types and nature of armed conflicts in their communities. Notably, data for this section was exclusively sourced from adults via in-depth interviews. This approach was adopted as adults possess a greater awareness of the nature and types of armed conflict compared to children, given their direct involvement in such situations. By relying on the insights of adults, we can gain a more accurate understanding of the armed conflicts in these communities and identify effective strategies to mitigate their impact.

Views of Respondents on the types of Armed Conflict in their Communities

Interrogating the types and nature of armed conflict in the research area is critical as it helps the research gain better understanding on the types of conflict predominant in the area and the nature in which the attacks were coordinated. According to a representative of All Farmers Association of Nigeria, Benue Chapter in Agatu LGA:

> *We have had different conflict in Agatu especially between Agbaduma and Abugbe communities but the ones that affected all of us and brought us to the camp is the Fulani attack on our communities. Our community fights are usually resolved within ourselves. But this one, the Fulani comes at night with heavy guns and burn down our houses*

> *with many persons been killed. We all have to run from the village to this place. There are people from the nearby villages that also came here for shelter and protection.*

The representatives of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria in Agatu also confirm the assertion from the crop-farmer by stating that:

> *If it is the type of conflict in Agatu then it is because of the attacks on cattle by the youths, they poison our waters and even cows, we have had lost of many of our livestock and that is the reason. We did not attack them or do any anything we are also affected; most times we have to protect our cows from entering the farms but then we are attacked by the youths.*

The women leader in Anyin camp stated that:

> *In my life I have not seen the type of the problem we faced currently, it is the Fulani and our people that had issues that led to the fight, we were attacked in the village and na gun they used shoot people in the village. Many of our people are dead because of the fight. Sometimes from nowhere they will attack us while going to the farm or even at night when everyone is sleeping. Sometimes they will kidnap many of our youths and even demand for money from us and the one that happen most is shooting everyone. So it is the fight between Fulani people and our famers that brought us here.*

When asked on the nature of the attack the women leader at Anyin camp stated that "the *way they attacked us is through shooting and some are using their knives and sticks but all of them were with gun and were shooting at any body they see.*

A class teacher based in Makurdi at Abagena camp stated that:

> *The type of conflict since 2016 is the farmer-herder's crisis and many schools have been closed; it is not only the farmers that were affected, there are also more than 12 nomadic schools in some of the villages that were closed and the Fulani children had to all moved to Nasarawa. Yes, different ethnic groups like the Tiv and Jukun conflict used to fight but this particular conflict that have continued and not stopping was caused by the struggle for land in the communities. Like my communities, we have not had any fight for close to 30 years now. Since I was born I have never witnessed any fight until the Fulani matter started, the nature of attack is through shooting of our youths that went to defend us, they also burn down our houses and farmlands.*

A Police Officer interviewed in Makurdi also asserts*; "The major issues of conflict here in the entire Benue is the dispute between crop farmers and cattle herders conflict, there are others but not as serious as this I have mentioned".*

According to the majority of the respondents interviewed, the type of armed conflict prevalent in Benue State is mainly related to crop farmer-cattle herders conflict. This conflict arises due to conflicting claims to land usage. While herders want to graze their cattle on the land, farmers object to their activities as it affects their crop farming activities. The majority of respondents agreed that this conflict is the most common type in their communities. The study highlights that crop farmer-cattle header conflict is the most significant type of armed conflict and the nature of attack is through mass shooting of residents and the use of cutlasses and burning down of their properties in the research location.

4.4 Factors Responsible for Armed Conflict

According to the respondents, the primary cause of armed conflict in Benue State is the ongoing rift between crop farmers and cattle herders. This struggle for access to farm land, water points, and grazing space has resulted in violent confrontations and widespread displacement. Other contributing factors include community clashes, access to weapons, and ethnic intolerance. Interviewees at various IDP camps emphasized that the conflict between crop farmers and cattle herders is the primary cause of the conflict and confusion in the region. All respondents agreed that disagreements between cattle herders and area residents were major triggers for the conflict. The representative of the All Farmers association of Nigeria Benue chapter, recounted their experience during an attack to further illustrate the findings stated that:

> *It is because the cows owned by the Fulani people destroyed our farms and we organized ourselves to put a stop to it, in return, they came with guns to chase us out of our villages.*

A Police Officer also said that:

> *It all started with the Fulani who usually bring their cows around November after harvest, they now decided to stay permanently in these communities and graze their cattle on our farm that were just planted. That is how the fight started and it became what we ourselves cannot control today.*

The Leader of a Vigilante group spoke in the same vein saying that:

> *The fight started when the State government signed the anti-open grazing law, since then we have not known peace. Fulani people come at will to kill and attack us, when it first started, the Fulani who were living with us, suddenly all of them left our villages and when they return again it was fight; we ourselves have to fight back but we did not attack them, they attacked us first and we fight back. That is how the problem started, they used to come in the evening when it first started, but now in the morning as early as 3 am to 6 am they will come with their guns to kill us and go back. Sometimes even day time and even on Sundays they use to come.*

A representative of All Farmers Association of Nigeria, Benue Chapter bitterly expressed his displeasure over the misconception on the causes of armed conflict in the area. He lamented that:

> *Would you blame unemployment for the reasons we are being attacked? Even here we are not employed by anybody in our villages. The anti-grazing law be the cause of the fight. Because since the government brought the law we don't know peace again in our communities, the yams that has been our major source of survival has been destroyed. The cause of the fight for me is that they attacked our farms, spoilt our water sources and killed our women and did all kind of wickedness against our people. Even though we did not fight back most of the times, but when our youths are being kidnapped, and they are asking us for money, our people enter the farm and they are being beheaded, or they even attack our villages, do you expect us to watch? The government brought the anti-grazing law and the fight became something from one village to the other. We used to have trailers come here to load yams to Lagos and other places but now, we cannot even go to farm in peace and return home safe.*

There was a point of divergent as an in-depth interview with the leaders of the cattle herders' association in Agatu village stated that:

> *The farmers burn the bushes, cut and burn the shrubs within their farms during the dry season, they cut the trees and restrict us access to water just with the full intention to starve our cattle, and*

this is intentional, no body owns the bushes. We have to feed our cattle, they have attacked us and put every crime on us, we have made peace but the problem still continues, that is the cause of the conflict but there is peace now, some of the problem we are not the cause, people come to destroy our properties and still our cattle.

The findings provided in this section reveal that there is a longstanding conflict between farmers and cattle herders in the area. The qualitative data suggests that the root cause of the conflict is the destruction of farms by cattle owned by Fulani herders. The farmers assert that the cattle herders graze their cattle on the farms, destroying crops and contaminating water sources. The farmers' spokesperson also accuses the herders of attacking them and committing various atrocities against their people. The introduction of the anti-open grazing law in the state appears to have worsened the situation, with the farmers and herders blaming each other for the ongoing conflict.

On the other hand, the herders' spokesperson claims that farmers intentionally restrict access to water and graze for their cattle, thus causing the conflict. The herders also accuse farmers of destroying the bushes and trees, thus depriving them of grazing resources.

The implications of these findings are that there is a need for a comprehensive approach to address the underlying issues that fuel the conflict. This approach should involve all stakeholders, including the government, farmers, and herders, working together to find a lasting solution. This solution should address the issues of grazing land, water resources, and crop protection. Additionally, efforts should be made to foster understanding and reconciliation between the two groups to prevent further escalation of the conflict.

4.5 Effects of Armed Conflict on Children`s Access to Education

In this section, the study explores the effects of armed conflict on children. To gather information, the children were administered questionnaire which directly asked about the effects of conflict on their education.

Table 3: Views of Respondents on Access to Education in IDPs Camps

How has the conflict affected your abilities to attend school?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
I cannot attend school at all	45	20.0
I attend irregularly	100	44.4

I attend but feel unsafe	50	22.2
The conflict has not affected my attendance	30	13.3
Total	**225**	**100.0**

The findings from Table 2 indicate that a significant proportion of respondents have been affected by the conflict in terms of their education. Almost half of the majority respondents 44.4% reported attending school irregularly, while one-fifth 20% were unable to attend school at all. Furthermore, more than one-fifth 22.2% of the respondents felt unsafe while attending school. It is encouraging to note that only 13.3% of the respondents reported that the conflict had no impact on their school attendance.

The implications of these findings are that armed conflict has a substantial impact on children's education. Irregular attendance, inability to attend school, and feelings of insecurity while attending school can all negatively impact a child's academic performance and emotional wellbeing. This was also confirmed during the in- depth interview with a mother:

> *Now that we are here, we find it difficult to take care of our children and put them in school, we can barely feed not to talk of paying for school fees. The fees are expensive here, compared to our village.*

From the result, it can be deduced that majority of the respondents are out of school children as a result of armed conflict.

Table 4: Views of Respondents on the Effects of Armed Conflict on Children Education

Effects of Conflict	N	Percentage(%)
Prolonged closure of school	148	9.0
School building destroyed	149	9.1
Teachers were killed	123	7.5
Children suffer psychological trauma	114	7.0
There are no textbooks for learning	107	6.5
Children were given out to relatives	112	6.8
Parents require children in the farm than school	115	7.0
Children hardly perform well academically	104	6.33
There are no teachers in the camp	87	5.3
There is no class specification in the camp	82	5.0
There is no graduation exams	95	5.8
Schools were turned into IDPs camps	112	6.8
I feel distracted in the class	172	10.5
I do not like going back to school	123	7.5
TOTAL	**1643**	**100.0**

Findings from the multiple choice questions on the effects of armed conflict on children showed that 10.5% of the children felt distracted during class hours due to the incidence of armed conflict. This finding was expected because in the chaos of armed conflict, many children became separated from their parents, others lost their loved ones and find it hard to adjust to the conditions of poor living conditions which directly affects their abilities to concentrate during academic or class activities. Closely followed effects such as the destruction of school buildings 9.1%; also, 9.0% of the respondents maintained that the prolonged closure of school as a result of the conflict affected their educational development.

Another 7.5% of the respondents said they would not like to go back to school. The implication of these findings is that the experiences of conflict may make children dislike

schooling which include discipline and adhering to instructions. Generally, it was indicated in the findings that armed conflict has numerous effects on children and their educational development.

Based on the findings, schools were destroyed, both in the communities attacked and the host communities who had to give out some of their schools to be converted into IDPs camps, there were also prolonged closure of academic activities especially in the unofficial camps where schools have not even been yet established.

On whether teachers were killed during the raid of communities, 7.5% of the respondents affirmed so. Another effect was that parents now required their children in the farm and not school as affirmed by 7.0% of the respondents, 7.0% of the respondents indicated that they suffered different psychological trauma as a result of the conflict, children were also given out to other relatives outside the camp as maintained by 6.8%. Also, schools that were previously operating were turned into IDPs camps as indicated by 6.8%, also 6.5% respondents indicated that there were no textbooks for learning in the emergency schools.

The educational development of children in internally displaced people's camps in Benue State is faced with numerous challenges as revealed by this study. Attention has been on the provision of shelter and other elementary care neglecting education. Although emergency schools have been established in some officially recognized camps by UNICEF and the Benue State government; however, the conditions of these schools remained poor and lacked staff while the unofficial camps have no formal educational institutions. The conflict led to effects such as prolonged closure of schools, schools in the host communities which were used for camps were destroyed and academic activities were suspended, children faced a lot of psychological trauma due to the experiences of the conflict. The emergency school lacked textbooks; there were not enough teachers in the camp, which affected children's abilities to perform well academically. The representative of the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) corroborated the findings by stating that:

> *The state had more than 900,000 students enrolled prior to the crisis, but today has less than 700,000. The majority of our schools have been destroyed by fire, along with their furniture and nearby homes. Schools in the Buruku and Kwande regions of Guma, Gwer-West, Makurdi, Logo, Katsina-Ala, and Agatu have been*

> *abandoned. Enrollment is down, and many schools and towns are empty. Schooling doesn't seem to be a priority for the majority of them because they are running for their lives. Enrollment has significantly decreased. To adequately care for the children who are not in school, we have made effort to open schools in IDP camps. The state government has made desks and chairs available for distribution.*

The findings suggest that armed conflict has had a significant negative impact on children's education in the affected regions. The destruction of schools, furniture and nearby homes have led to a decrease in enrollment, with many schools and towns abandoned. The majority of the affected population are running for their lives, and education does not seem to be a priority. This has resulted in a significant decrease in enrollment. However, efforts have been made to open schools in IDP camps and distribute desks and chairs. The implications of these findings highlight the urgent need for interventions to mitigate the impact of conflict on children's education and provide them with safe and secure learning environments.

A volunteered teacher in the camp also posits that:

> *Hmmm, obviously the effects, let me say, are too many. First, like some of us here as volunteer teachers we have ambitions not to even stop education at this stage even as adults but the condition is hard on us. For the children who are traumatized, the government in collaboration with UNICEF brought schools, but now, there are no seats for children to sit down. No materials for teaching, just the building. What we can offer them now is just primary education; the population of students to one teacher is like over 80 to one teacher because few of us in the camp here have teaching qualification and are even ready to do this work without payment from anybody. We just started the junior cadre for secondary education this year, which is JSS 1-3, to keep the ones that have finished primary school busy since they don't have anything to do. The State government does not even care about education; it is the effort we put in place that's all. Yes children are traumatized like I said earlier. Watch their classes tomorrow and see, some of them will keep quiet, even the ones that are 12 years old sometimes cry while we are teaching. To answer questions in the class is a problem. Even if I teach them I am traumatized, even the other teachers. This is because nobody is paying us and we cannot allow them to stay without education.*

These views are also captured in the State Emergency Management Agency quarterly discussion conducted with stakeholders in charge of IDPs camps management in the state. According to State Universal Basic Education Board chairman:

> *Well let me talk about the challenges to education in the camp; there are no adequate structures and personnel for education in the different camps, I can say that even the ones provided, there are no chairs, we don't have teachers there too, then the problem of constant monitoring and evaluation of the educational progress in the camp is also an issue of concern as a result of this conflict and the progress we have made in the camp to help out in their further education. The conditions of learning in the IDPs camp is too poor, enough to even discourage the children from schooling entirely. Some of the girls at primary four, three, five and are due for secondary are getting pregnant also. It is funny but it is not funny and we all know the cause and root of what I am talking about. All these challenges I am stating here today are for the officially recognized camps by SEMA, we all know that the unofficial camps hold more population and are even many in numbers than the official camps where there are no schools at all, so I can say the conditions should be more acute in those unofficial camps than even the official camps, and all I can say is to encourage all units to keep doing their best.*

The implication of these findings is that the teachers at the official camps in charge of teaching children were also traumatized. The emergency schools were in poor conditions as they lacked seats for children to sit down and learn, teaching and learning materials were also observed to be absent making teaching difficult for the teachers. The teachers in the camp worked on a voluntary basis without payment from the government and any humanitarian organization which in return made it difficult for the Benue State Universal Basic Education Board to monitor and evaluate the quality of staff and their services to the children. The findings also revealed that the unofficial camps had more children population with limited government presence and no emergency school at all over there.

Table 5: Views of Respondents on Psychological Effects of Armed Conflict on Children

Psychological Effects	N	Percentage (%)
Feeling hostile to others	148	13.5
Difficulty in sleeping	190	17.3
Suspicion of further attacks	123	11.2
Depression	113	10.2
Constant fear	106	9.7
Feeling like being alone	111	10.1
Loss of concentration during classes	114	10.4
Aggression towards others	104	9.5
Feeling sick	89	8.1
TOTAL	**1098**	**100.0**

Table 4 presents the views of respondents on the psychological effects of armed conflict on children. The most common psychological effects reported were difficulty in sleeping 17.3%, feeling hostile towards others 13.5%, and suspicion of further attacks 11.2%. Other effects reported were depression, constant fear, feeling alone, loss of concentration during classes, aggression towards others, and feeling sick.

The findings imply that armed conflict has a devastating impact on the mental health of children. These effects can hinder their ability to learn and develop, leading to long-term consequences. Interventions are needed to mitigate the psychological effects of armed conflict on children, including providing access to mental health services and creating safe spaces for children to learn and play.

Also, the results from the in-depth interview conducted showed that all the respondents interviewed were aware of the psychological problem faced by the displaced children. A Teacher in the camp said:

> *The children here are highly traumatized, I can show you some of them that lost their both parents and have no one, it takes us a lot of efforts to get them to concentrate on learning anything, it is making them to be very stubborn and hard for us to control, they are also too many for one person to manage since we the teachers are not many, but we usually get help at times and we are managing.*

In a bid to understand why the children displayed stubbornness as revealed by the teachers; a Mother in the camp responds that:

> *They are thinking about the conflict experience, in fact many of the youths left the camp and did not return, some left and returned; some of them use to cry at night, they use to be hostile towards their friends and even us the mothers can hardly control the problem.*

The qualitative responses from the teacher and mother in the camp reveal the devastating impact of armed conflict on children's education and mental health. The loss of parents, witnessing conflict and experiencing trauma have left many children highly traumatized, making it difficult for them to concentrate on learning, leading to poor academic performance. The lack of teachers in the camp exacerbates the situation, making it hard for one teacher to manage a large number of students.

The mother's response also sheds light on the psychological effects of armed conflict on children, such as difficulty in sleeping and feeling hostile towards others. These effects can lead to social isolation and further hinder the children's learning and development.

The implications of these findings are that interventions are urgently needed to mitigate the devastating impact of armed conflict on children's education and mental health. These interventions should focus on providing psychological support to the children to help them deal with the trauma they have experienced. The interventions should also provide additional teachers and resources to ensure that the children receive a quality education despite the challenges they face. The findings highlight the need for governments and international organizations to prioritize the education and mental health of children affected by armed conflict.

4.6 Children Coping Strategies in the Internally Displaced Persons Camps

This section deals with coping strategies adopted by the care givers in the IDPs camps. It begins with identification of vocational training as well as coping strategies employed to improve children welfare and education in the camps.

Table 6: Views of Respondents on Vocational Training in the IDPs Camps

Do you engage in vocational training?	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	152	67.2
No	73	32.4
Total	**225**	**100.0**
Vocational training engaged in		
Tailoring	15	6.7
Barbing	12	5.3
Shoe making	11	4.9
Soap making	100	44.4
Baking	14	6.2
No response	73	32.4
Total	**225**	**100.0**

The table 5 shows that out of 225 respondents, 67.2% engaged in vocational training while 32.4% did not. Among those who engaged in vocational training, soap making was the most popular skill with 44.4% respondents practicing it, followed by tailoring, barbing, and shoe making. Only 6.2% respondents did not respond to the question on the type of vocational training they engaged in. These findings suggest that vocational training is a common strategy used in IDPs camps to help children recover from the effects of armed conflict. The popularity of soap making may be due to its relatively low start-up cost and the demand for soap in the IDPs camps. A Teacher in the camp corroborated the findings by stating that:

> *Yes for learning of skills, most Saturdays; NGOs and other people use to come around to teach our women soap making, in fact the soap we use in the camp are mostly from the materials they give to our women and they use it to produce liquid soaps for everyone to use, there are others that come to teach tailoring, but they go back with their machines, some come to teach the boys barbing. But it is the soap making we are benefiting from more. No we don't use to sell it, when they produce it we share them at times.*

A Women Leader in the camp also posits that:

> *Uhh, they came to teach us water soap, even students in the university here, come to teach us how to bake cake, but we don't have the things that they use to make them, we forget the things they teach us because we don't have the things to be practicing. If you*

can tell them to help us leave the things for us, we can do it and even sell it.

In a bid to understand why liquid soap making dominated the skill acquisition over other skills in the camp; it was discovered that the requirements for soap making were easier to access than that of tailoring, barbing, shoe making and baking as found in the study area. Skill acquisition learning were in high participation by both parent and children because it is an outdoor activity that requires collaboration with the tutor and the children were very interested in them as observed in the study. Therefore, it is important to say that other skills that required expensive machines and tools will also thrive in the camp if the machines are provided by the government and philanthropists as it will benefit displaced persons and the host communities as well as the State at large.

Table 7: Views of Respondents on Other Activities Engaged in the Camp

Activities	Frequencies	Percentages
Peer-to-peer education	30	13.3
Vocational skills	55	24.4
Sports	50	22.2
Going to farm	10	4.4
Playing	80	35.7
TOTAL	**225**	**100.0**

The table presents the views of respondents on the activities engaged in the camp, which can help children mitigate the effects of armed conflict. The activities listed in the table are peer-to-peer education, vocational skills, sports, going to the farm, and playing. Out of 225 respondents, 35.7% of them mentioned playing as an activity engaged in the camp. This suggests that playing is the most common coping strategy employed in IDPs to help children mitigate the effects of armed conflict. Play is a natural activity for children, and it can be used as a tool to help children cope with trauma and stress. Play also provides a way for children to express themselves and process their emotions.

The next most common coping strategy is vocational skills, with 24.4% of respondents mentioning it. Vocational skills can provide children with a sense of purpose and self-worth. It can also equip them with skills that they can use in the future to support themselves and their families. Sports is also a significant coping strategy, with 22.2% of respondents

mentioning it. Sports provide an outlet for physical activity and can promote social interaction and teamwork. It can also help children build resilience and self-esteem. Peer-to-peer education is another coping strategy that some respondents mentioned, with 13.3% of them indicating it. Peer-to-peer education can provide children with a sense of control and agency, which can be important in helping them cope with traumatic experiences. It can also provide a way for children to learn from one another and develop supportive relationships. Going to the farm was mentioned by only 4.4% of respondents. While this activity may not be as commonly employed as other coping strategies, it can provide a way for children to connect with nature and engage in physical activity.

The findings suggest that playing is the most common coping strategy employed in IDPs to help children mitigate the effects of armed conflict, followed by vocational skills, sports, peer-to-peer education, and going to the farm. These coping strategies can be useful in helping children develop resilience, cope with trauma and stress, and build supportive relationships. Understanding these coping strategies can be helpful in developing interventions to support the mental health and well-being of children affected by armed conflict. This view was also presented in an in-depth interview with a 28-year-old female teacher in the Abagena camp. She revealed that:

> *The boys love playing football, their football field is just around the corner here, even when I teach them and I discover that they don't want to concentrate again I used to allow them to go play ball. Since their class doesn't have chairs to sit down on, they easily get tired of sitting on the ground, some just stand. Then at times I engage them in outdoor education where I will ask them to bring planting seeds like maize, beans and other seeds for planting. These kinds of classes you will see all of them; after that I ask them to go play their ball while the girls return back to help their mothers or go get firewood from the farm to sell in the town. Yes, they use to learn other skills, but it is when the NGO staff come around to teach them that we arrange them.*

A staff of an NGO specifically the Red Cross in the camp responding to the question on the psychological therapy employed in the camp stated that:

> *Aside playing football and other games the girls were engaged in the camp, we make out time to discuss with the children, we provide psychoeducation to them, explaining their situation to them and*

> *teaching them how to deal with the problem, especially the children that are very hostile towards others. Also, we have reports of abuses of the young girls by male youths in the camps but the police always expel these kinds of people from the camp and we engage in different psychological methods by talking with them through the help of the parents, we also keep them engaged in skills which makes them forget the problem easily. We ensure that they always interacting with each other's, and you know children they can forget their experiences once they are actively engaged. We listen to them carefully when they talk and we engage the parents and caregivers in the camps to ensure that they are not affected by the problem.*

The in-depth interview with the female teacher in the Abagena camp sheds light on the challenges faced by children living in IDP camps, particularly with regards to access to education and the need for outdoor activities. The teacher revealed that the lack of chairs in the classroom often leads to discomfort and loss of focus for the students, which is why she allows them to take breaks and play football. This not only provides a physical outlet for the children but also helps to improve their mental well-being by providing a sense of normalcy in their lives.

The teacher also mentioned the importance of outdoor education and how it helps to engage the children in learning. By asking them to bring planting seeds and teaching them how to plant, the children are not only learning a new skill but also contributing to their community's well-being. However, the teacher also noted that the availability of such classes is dependent on the presence of NGO staff, indicating a need for more consistent support in terms of education and skills training for children in IDP camps.

The staff of the NGO specifically the Red Cross, highlighted the need for psychological support for children in the camp. They mentioned providing psychoeducation to children, which involves explaining their situation and teaching them how to cope with their experiences. This helps to reduce anxiety and increase understanding among the children. Additionally, the staff mentioned that they engage in different psychological methods by talking with the children through the help of parents and caregivers in the camp. This approach helps to create a sense of community and support for the children.

The staff of the NGO also highlighted the issue of sexual abuse of young girls by male youths in the camp. They indicated that the police are involved in expelling these individuals from the camp and that they engage in different psychological methods to help the girls deal with the trauma of the experience. This underscores the need for increased attention to the safety and protection of vulnerable populations in IDP camps, particularly young girls.

The findings of the in-depth interviews highlight the importance of providing consistent support and access to education and skills training for children living in IDP camps. The provision of psychological support is also crucial to ensuring the mental well-being of these children. The need for increased attention to the safety and protection of vulnerable populations in IDP camps is also emphasized. These findings have implications for policymakers and humanitarian organizations working to support IDPs, particularly in terms of providing consistent access to education, skills training, and psychological support, as well as improving safety and protection measures.

4.7 Measures of Mitigating the Effects of Armed Conflict on Children Education

Various measures of mitigating the effects of armed conflict on children's educational development were adopted by respondents. Table 7 presents the level to which some of the preventive measures were agreed and disagreed upon by respondents towards mitigating the effects of armed conflict and improving children's access to education.

Table 8: Views of Respondents on Measures of Curtailing the Effects of Armed Conflict Children Education

Measures	**SA (%)**	**A (%)**	**SD (%)**	**D (%)**	**Total (%)**
Providing security in your community to allow you return home	158 (70.2)	54 (24.0)	4 (1.8)	20 (8.4)	**225(100.0)**
Rebuilding of destroyed schools	124 (55.1)	78 (34.7)	4 (1.8)	19 (8.4)	**225(100.0)**
Provision of skill acquisition programs	121 (53.8)	87 (38.7)	9 (4.0)	8 (3.6)	**225(100.0)**
Providing free education in the camp	147 (65.3)	62 (27.6)	4 (1.8)	7 (3.1)	**225(100.0)**
Providing reading materials such as textbook	143 (63.6)	66 (29.3)	9 (4.0)	7 (3.1)	**225(100.0)**
Adequate food supply in the camp	144 (64.0)	75 (33.3)	2 (0.9)	4 (1.8)	**225(100.0)**

Building of schools in the camp	144 (64.0)	68 (30.2)	5 (2.2)	8 (3.6)	**225(100.0)**
Access to health facilities in the camp	152 (67.6)	38 (16.9)	17 (7.6)	12 (5.3)	**225(100.0)**

Table 7 shows the measures of curtailing the effects of armed conflict on children's access to education. The results indicated that 70.2% of the respondents strongly agreed that there should be provision of security in the raided villages to enable them return back to their communities. Also, 67.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that there should be access to health facilities in the camps. This is confirmed by an in-depth interview where one of the mother assert that:

> *The children fall sick all the time and we don't have health centers here to care for them, it is once in a while that Red Cross people used to come here, even us the mothers use to fall sick, the children play a lot and they injure themselves, we find it hard to take care of them aside the herbs that we get from the bushes to boil and give them, we need health facilities here too.*

This was also confirmed during the in-depth interview. As a Women leader in the camp said;

> *The only thing we we want make the government do for us na to take us back to our village, like me na from Nasarawa I the come from we don't want any other thing more than that; na when you fit talk about good education for our children, see where we the sleep, see how we the leave, no food for us, make the gonment return us home. Our children do not get the better education we want here because of the fight, but if we go back to our village we will use the government school for our village. The children are very stubborn right now because there is no school to attend during the day time. We no longer control them, the vigilante people that help us flog them are not here again; they don't listen to us because there is no school. We want go back to our village.*

A Father in the camp asserts that:

> *Tell the government to do the needful, send the people that have occupied our lands and allow us return back to our ancestral home, I used to be a businessman and a farmer and I pay my children school fees on time, but now for the past three years we have been here, no good education, I cannot complain because I don't have any place to go to; my children and wife are here, I cannot provide for them. Tell them to return us back home safely and provide*

enough security for us, then we can talk about good education, good environment for our children.

A SEMA Staff in the camp also said:

The people are tired of this place, even if we build 10 schools here and do all we can, they will still want to go back to their houses, ahhahh; for how long? Some of them have been here since 2016, some 2018. Even me I met many of them here, the only way you can help the children access school is to take the parents back to their previous villages, I told you earlier that children don't concentrate in the emergency school, some of the children act like they are mad at times because they are traumatized, but they can easily get back their senses if they are in the village and their parents provide them basic needs. This one no be life ooh…they are our brothers and sisters; let us help them to return back to their village and farms.

A 30-year-old Male Primary School Teacher who is an NCE holder in Anyin camp who responded on being asked about measures of mitigating the effects of armed conflict on children education avers that:

Truly, we need teachers here, you see some of us here we are teaching because of the little education we had before the conflict. Government should post youth corpers to the camp, Npower people, students doing teaching practice should also come to the camp and do the teaching practice. The government is not paying us and it is not good; even the teachers here are also traumatized and we are facing a lot of challenges. So if the government sends teachers it will help us since UNICEF, the Catholic Church and other people are already helping us to put schools in the camp. What we need now is that the government should help to employ us and post youths to the camp here. There is no fight here in the camp, it is in our village that the fight occurred, and our camps are safe.

Similarly, a 45-year-old Primary School Teacher who also holds an NCE Certificate at Central Primary School Obagaji in Agatu LGA responded by saying that:

I think for me the government should first provide food for the children because here in Obagaji many of the children in the camp who were from the riverside areas have gone back to catch fish and come sell in Obagaji while some hawk just to get food to eat. Then the government should build schools for them in their villages where the attacks happened. There are no schools there, and no teacher will agree to go there. But since it is their village they will go. Here in Obagaji some attend our school here because the primary school was converted to an IDP camp when the fight

started. And again, when the government converted the primary school here to camp, some of our children in Obagaji, the Local government headquarters, were affected too. Their classes were used. But now we can manage as many are returning home now. But the thing I expect the government to do is to go to their village and build schools there, or they should repair the ones that are already bad, and send teachers there.

These views are also captured in the State Emergency Management Agency quarterly discussion conducted with stakeholders in charge of IDPs camps management in the state. According to SUBEB chairman:

The way out of the challenge relating to education is to equip and pay volunteer teachers who are engaged in teaching in the IDPs. Since we did not pay them, how can we monitor the teachings and other educational activities in the camp? There are no learning and teaching materials in the camp aside from the ones provided by Association of Nigerian Authors, Benue State Chapter, these groups are the people always showing concern when it comes to buying books, textbooks for volunteer teachers across all the camps. The governments have to put in more efforts to do this as well, and then we have been planning on the sponsorship of reading competitions in the different IDPs camps across the State to help improve their interests in school activities even in the camp. So we are recommending that the State Universal Basic Education Board should liaise with the Universal Basic Education Commission to provide learning structures in both officially recognized and none officially recognized camps across the State SUBEB should also post teachers to the camp. But as we all know we cannot do it all, so the government, SEMA, NYSC, and colleges of Education in our State, should also turn out in mass to champion this course by posting teachers to help voluntary teachers who are also victims of the challenges we are here talking about today.

A Staff of SEMA also avers that:

Well to add to what the SUBEB unit has said; we need to also go beyond primary education to secondary education in the camps that we already have schools. It is only one of the camps that we are testing running the junior cadre of secondary education and after that level there is no further education. So the government should also look into that; even though it is an emergency school, if we are giving the children an opportunity for education, let us do it well and extend the senior secondary cadre to the official camps as well.

The qualitative data gathered from various sources highlight the challenges faced by internally displaced persons (IDPs) in accessing education in camps in Benue State. The interviews with mothers, fathers, women leaders, SEMA staff, and primary school teachers revealed that children in IDP camps fall sick frequently, suffer injuries from playing, and lack access to basic health facilities. The parents and teachers pointed out that the lack of education facilities in the camps is due to the ongoing conflict that forced them out of their villages. Parents expressed their desire to return to their homes and communities to access better education facilities and provide a safer environment for their children.

The primary school teachers in the camp recommended that the government should post youth corps members, Npower beneficiaries, and teaching practice students to the camps to assist with teaching. They also emphasized the need for the government to provide food for the children in the camps. The SEMA staff added that providing education in the camps is not enough as the children are traumatized and require a stable environment to recover. Therefore, the focus should be on relocating the IDPs to their homes and communities to facilitate access to education. The SUBEB chairman suggested that volunteer teachers should be equipped and paid to teach in the IDP camps. They also highlighted the lack of learning and teaching materials in the camps.

The findings imply that the government needs to prioritize the safe return of IDPs to their homes and communities to enable them to access basic services such as health and education facilities. The government should also provide food and other essential items to alleviate the suffering of the IDPs. In the interim, the government can consider deploying volunteers, corps members, and teaching practice students to teach in the IDP camps while ensuring that they are adequately compensated. The provision of learning and teaching materials is crucial for improving the quality of education in the camps.

4.8 Discussion of Key Findings

The study's findings provide important insights into various aspects related to armed conflict and its effects in Benue State, Nigeria.

Firstly, the demographic characteristics of the respondents revealed that the majority were within the age range of 12-16 years, which was expected as this group had prior schooling

experience and could better comprehend the impact of armed conflict on education. Additionally, there was a higher representation of female respondents, while male children were observed to engage in economic activities outside the camps, such as fishing, to support their families.

The study's first objective focused on identifying the types and nature of armed conflict attacks in the study area. The findings highlighted that the primary type of conflict in Benue State is the crop farmer-cattle herders dispute. This finding aligns with previous studies conducted in the region, emphasizing the competition for resources and cultural differences as underlying factors contributing to this conflict. The nature of attacks observed in the research area involved mass shootings, a common tactic used by armed groups to intimidate and control civilian populations.

Regarding the factors responsible for armed conflict, the study found that the crop farmer-cattle herders dispute was identified by a significant majority of respondents as the primary cause of conflict. The destruction of crops by cattle, retaliatory actions by farmers, deprivation of access to resources for cattle herders, burning of bushes, and limited access to water points were highlighted as contributing factors. These findings correspond with previous research, which emphasized the role of this dispute in generating violent conflicts in the region.

The study's findings align with the conflict theory, which suggests that competition over scarce resources can lead to conflict between different groups. In the case of Benue State, the theory holds that the armed conflict arises from the competition between farmers and herders over land and resources. Environmental factors, such as climate change and drought, exacerbate the scarcity of resources, intensifying the competition and resulting in conflict and displacement.

Overall, the study's findings contribute to the existing knowledge by providing a comprehensive understanding of the demographic characteristics of conflict-affected children, the types and nature of armed conflict attacks, the underlying factors responsible for conflict, and the alignment of these findings with the conflict theory. These insights offer valuable information for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers in formulating targeted

interventions to address the specific challenges faced by children affected by armed conflict in Benue State.

The third objective of the study aimed to examine the effects of armed conflict on children's access to education and their psychological well-being. The findings revealed that the conflict resulted in displacement, leading to limited access to education for children in the camps. Prolonged school closures were identified as a major consequence of the conflict. Additionally, the study found that children exhibited psychological issues, such as difficulty sleeping and hostility towards others in the camps. These findings align with previous research, which has highlighted the negative impact of armed conflict on children's education and their mental health in various regions, including Benue State. Out-of-school children, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) were commonly observed in conflict-affected areas.

The relative deprivation theory, which suggests that feelings of dissatisfaction and resentment arise from comparing one's situation with others who appear to have more resources or better outcomes, can help explain the psychological impact on children in IDP camps. Due to their limited access to education and unstable environments, these children may feel relatively deprived compared to their peers. This sense of relative deprivation could further exacerbate their psychological trauma and negatively affect their concentration in class and overall mental health.

The fourth objective focused on assessing coping strategies employed in the IDP camps to support children exposed to armed conflict. The study found that a significant proportion of children and parents (67.2%) were actively engaged in vocational training, learning skills such as soap production, tailoring, baking, barbering, and shoemaking. Additionally, playing within the camp was identified as a psychological coping strategy by 72.9% of the children. These findings are consistent with research conducted in similar contexts, which has highlighted the effectiveness of vocational skills training, play, and peer-to-peer education as coping mechanisms for children affected by conflict and displacement. These strategies provide children with a sense of purpose, agency, and social support, promoting their well-being and resilience. Interventions such as structured play and art therapy have been found to

reduce symptoms of PTSD and depression among conflict-affected children in various studies.

The final objective aimed to explore measures to mitigate the effects of armed conflict on children's education. The findings indicated that a majority of respondents strongly agreed that government-provided security in their villages would enable their return home. They also suggested the provision of health facilities and the reconstruction of destroyed schools. Previous research has emphasized the importance of ensuring security, providing educational facilities, and addressing healthcare needs to promote access to education for children affected by armed conflict. Deployment of teachers, availability of textbooks and learning materials, and healthcare services can help address the issue of out-of-school children and alleviate the psychological effects of conflict. Creating a safe environment for children to return home and continue their education is crucial. The study's findings contribute to understanding the adverse effects of armed conflict on children's access to education and their psychological well-being. They underscore the importance of addressing resource scarcity, perceived deprivation, and promoting security and the provision of educational and healthcare facilities to mitigate these effects. By adopting measures that address both conflict and relative deprivation, policymakers and practitioners can work towards creating an enabling environment for conflict-affected children to access education and support their overall well-being.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion and recommendations based on the findings.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The study aimed to assess the effects of armed conflict on children's educational development in Benue State, Nigeria. The objectives of the study were to identify the types and nature of armed conflict attacks, examine the factors contributing to armed conflict, explore the effects of armed conflict on children's access to education in IDP camps, investigate coping strategies to improve children's access to education in IDP camps, and propose measures to mitigate the effects of armed conflict on children's educational development in Benue State. The study utilized the Conflict Theory and Relative Deprivation Theory as the theoretical framework. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed for data collection. Questionnaires were used to gather quantitative data, while in-depth interviews were conducted to gather qualitative data.

The findings revealed that the armed conflict in Benue State was primarily driven by disputes between crop farmers and cattle herders. The attacks mostly involved mass shootings in the

affected communities. Limited land for crop farming and grazing space for cattle were identified as significant factors contributing to the conflict. The conflict arose as crop farmers and owner-occupier residents sought more fertile lands due to poor soil conditions, leading to a scarcity of grazing land and water sources for cattle herders.

The study showed that the armed conflict resulted in the displacement of residents, significantly affecting children's access to formal education in IDP camps. Additionally, children in the camps experienced various psychological problems, including sleep disturbances and hostility towards others. Teachers and caregivers in the IDP camps employed coping strategies to address the challenges faced by children. Vocational training programs were implemented, focusing on practical skills such as soap production, tailoring, baking, hairdressing, and shoe making. Outdoor activities, including sports, were also utilized to alleviate the psychological effects of armed conflict on the children.

The study highlighted the recommendations provided by the respondents to mitigate the effects of armed conflict on children's access to education. They emphasized the need for government intervention to provide security in their villages, allowing them to return home from the IDP camps. Furthermore, the respondents called for the provision of healthcare facilities and the reconstruction of damaged schools. The study provided insights into the effects of armed conflict on children's educational development in Benue State, Nigeria. It identified the causes of armed conflict, the impact on children's access to education, coping strategies employed in IDP camps, and suggested measures to mitigate the effects of armed conflict

5.3 Conclusion

Armed conflict has adverse effects on the educational development of children in Benue State. As a crucial factor directly linked to national development, education plays multiple roles in every society, and armed conflict is considered a significant threat that sets back human growth and development. This study found that the major factors responsible for armed conflict are disputes between crop farmers and cattle herders. These disputes are linked to conflict theory, as both groups compete for limited resources such as land and water. Additionally, the Relative Deprivation Theory emphasizes the role of perceived inequality in causing conflict, which is relevant to the case of crop farmers and cattle herders.

Furthermore, this theory provides a valuable perspective on the effects of armed conflict on children's education, revealing that individuals who perceive themselves as deprived of access to education compared to others in their society are more likely to face depression, feeling hostile, and other psychological trauma. The continuation of the conflict has a profound impact on children's educational development, as academic activities can only take place in a peaceful environment. Thus, the study recommends for the provision of security in affected communities to enable them to return to their villages from IDP camps and the need to rebuild destroyed schools to enable children to have access to education in their communities. Additionally, there is a need to organize special social programs to help children solve psychological traumas and other related challenges.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings and suggested strategies from the study on the Effects of Armed Conflict on Children's Educational Development in Benue State, Nigeria, the following precise recommendations are proposed for policy formulation and improvement:

I. Promoting Understanding and Reconciliation: The Federal Government should intensify efforts to foster better understanding and reconciliation between conflicting groups, specifically focusing on the resource struggle between crop farmers and cattle herders. This can be achieved through dialogue, mediation, and community engagement initiatives.

II. Establishment of Commercial Cattle Ranches: To address the root causes of conflict, the Federal Government should establish commercial cattle ranches that provide comprehensive support for cattle herders and farmers. These ranches should include veterinary services, access to pastures, market access for cattle products, security against attacks and cattle rustling, and social amenities such as recreation, education, and healthcare for the communities involved.

III. Strengthening Security Measures: The Government should address the apparent failure of security agencies to provide adequate protection against attackers. This can be achieved by reviving the local community monitoring system, which involves the active participation of community members in ensuring security and

reporting suspicious activities. Restoring this system will contribute to a safer environment for resettling displaced victims.

IV. Reconstruction of Schools: Given the destruction of schools and the conversion of host community schools into IDP camps, the State and Federal governments should prioritize the rebuilding of school infrastructure in affected districts. Additionally, through regular dialogues with parents facilitated by the Ministry of Education, efforts should be made to encourage the enrollment of conflict-affected children in schools.

V. Provision of Qualified Teachers: To address the absence of qualified teachers in official IDP camps and the lack of emergency schools in unofficial camps, the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) and Universal Basic Education Board (UBE) should extend emergency schools to all IDP camps. This should involve the recruitment, training, and remuneration of volunteers, as well as the deployment of qualified teachers to these camps.

VI. Collaboration for Learning Structures: Collaboration between SUBEB, UBE, and the Ministry of Education is essential for providing adequate learning structures in both officially recognized and unofficial IDP camps across the state. This collaboration should also include the posting of teachers from the State and National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), as well as higher institutions, to the camps for national service and teaching practices.

VII. Monitoring and Evaluation of Educational Conditions: The Ministry of Education should establish a robust monitoring and evaluation system to ensure the quality of teaching and learning conditions in the IDP camps. This will help identify areas that require improvement and ensure the delivery of effective education services.

VIII. Procurement of Modern Learning Materials: The State and Federal governments should allocate resources to procure modern learning and teaching materials for all emergency schools in the IDP camps. This includes textbooks, instructional aids, and other necessary educational resources that facilitate effective teaching and learning.

IX. Provision of Mental Health Programs: The Benue State government should prioritize the implementation of mental health programs specifically designed for

children facing various psychological disorders as a result of the armed conflict. Caregivers should incorporate diverse outdoor activities and teaching techniques that promote healing and recovery for affected children.

X. Skill Acquisition Programs and Academic Competitions: The Government should integrate skill acquisition programs into the learning curriculum of children in IDP camps, empowering them with practical skills that enhance their future prospects. Additionally, academic competitions between different camps should be organized to foster participation, motivation, and a sense of achievement among the students.

These recommendations aim to guide policy formulation and strategies for improving children's education and preventing the recurrence of armed conflict in Benue State, Nigeria.

5.5 Contribution to Knowledge

The study on the Effects of Armed Conflict on Children's Educational Development in Benue State, Nigeria, makes significant contributions to the existing body of knowledge in several areas.

The study contributes to the understanding of the specific types and nature of armed conflict attacks in Benue State. By identifying the resource struggle between crop farmers and cattle herders as the primary cause of conflict, the study sheds light on the underlying factors that contribute to such conflicts. This knowledge can inform policymakers and stakeholders in developing targeted interventions to address the root causes of armed conflict in Benue State.

The study expands the understanding of the effects of armed conflict on children's access to education. By highlighting the challenges faced by children in IDP camps, including the displacement of residents and psychological issues, the study emphasizes the need for tailored educational interventions to mitigate these effects. This knowledge is crucial for policymakers and educational institutions in formulating strategies that prioritize the educational well-being of conflict-affected children.

The study contributes to the field of conflict resolution by proposing recommendations to promote understanding, reconciliation, and peacebuilding among conflicting groups. The suggestions for establishing commercial cattle ranches, strengthening security measures, and engaging local communities in monitoring and reporting suspicious activities provide valuable insights for policymakers and practitioners involved in conflict resolution efforts.

The study offers practical coping strategies and measures for improving children's access to education in IDP camps. The recommendations related to the provision of qualified teachers, reconstruction of schools, collaboration between education boards, and the incorporation of skill acquisition programs contribute to the existing knowledge on effective educational interventions in conflict-affected areas. These insights can guide policymakers and education authorities in implementing appropriate measures to enhance the educational experiences of children in IDP camps.

Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of mental health programs and outdoor activities in promoting the well-being and recovery of conflict-affected children. By emphasizing the need for tailored psychological support and incorporating recreational activities into the educational environment, the study contributes to the understanding of holistic approaches to address the psychological impact of armed conflict on children.

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APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CHILDREN

Dear Respondent,

You are among the few chosen to answer questions on the Effects of Armed conflict on Children Educational Development in IDPs camps Benue State. The study is being conducted as part of the requirement for Master's degree in Sociology. The information you will give will be treated in strict confidence. Please indicate your answers by ticking the appropriate parenthesis or filling the blank spaces or by an **X** in the boxes as it best describes your feelings. Thank you in anticipation.

SECTION A: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

In this section, I want to know a little about you so as to see how different people feel about the research problem.

1. Age a. 7-11 ( ). b. 12-16 ( ). c. 17-18 ( )

2. Sex: a. Male ( ) b. Female ( )
3. Highest level of education: a.None ( )b.Koranic ( ) c.Primary ( ) d. Junior Secondary ( ) e. Senior Secondary ( )
4. Religion: a. Christianity ( ) b. Islam ( ) c. Traditional ( ) d. Others (specify)……
5. What type of family is your household? a. Nuclear family (parents and children only) ( ) b. Extended family (parents, children, and other relatives ( ) c. others (specify)…….

SECTION B: THE EFFECTS OF ARMED CONFLICT ON CHILDREN`S ACCESS TO EDUCATION

6. **How has the conflict affected your abilities to attend school?** a. I cannot attend school at all ( ) b. I attend irregularly ( ) c. I attend but feel unsafe ( ) d. The conflict has not affected my school attendance ( )
7. **Which of the following will you consider as the effects of armed conflict on children education [Tick as many as applied]**
   a. Prolonged closure of school [ ]
   b. School buildings were destroyed [ ]
   c. Teachers were killed [ ]
   d. Children suffer psychological trauma [ ]
   e. There are no text books for learning [ ]
   f. Children were given out to relatives [ ]
   g. Parents require you in the farm instead of school [ ]
   h. Children hardly perform well academically [ ]
   i. There are no teachers in the Camp [ ]
   j. There is no class specification in the camp [ ]
   k. There is no graduation examination in the camp [ ]
   l. Schools were turned into IDPs camps [ ]
   m. I feel distracted in the class [ ]
   n. Others (specify) …….

8. **Do you experience any of the following (Tick as many as applied)?**
   a. Feeling hostile to others [ ]
   b. Difficulty in sleeping [ ]
   c. Suspicion of further violent attacks [ ]
   d. Depression [ ]
   e. Constant fear [ ]
   f. Feeling like being alone [ ]
   g. Loss of concentration during class [ ]
   h. Aggression towards others **[ ]**

SECTION E: CHILDREN COPING STRATEGIES IN IDPs CAMPS

9. Do you engage in any vocational training? A. Yes ( ) B. No ( )
10. If yes to question (28), which vocational training are you engaged in……..
11. Which of the following coping strategies are employed to improve your education in the camp? [Tick as many as possible]

a. Peer-to-peer education [ ]
b. Learning hand works [ ]
c. Sports [ ]
d. Going to the farm [ ]
e. Playing **[ ]**
f. Others (specify) **……..**

SECTION F: MEASURES OF MITIGATING THE EFFECTS OF ARMED CONFLICT ON CHILDREN EDUCATION

(S.A= Strongly Agreed, A=Agreed, S.D=Strongly Disagreed, D=Disagreed)

12. To what extends to you agree with the following statements?

MEASURES OF CURTAILING THE EFFECTS OF ARMED CONFLICT ON CHILDREN EDUCATION	**S.A**	**A**	**S.D**	**D**
Providing security in your community to allow you return home				
Rebuilding of destroyed schools				
Providing skill acquisition programs				
Providing free education in the camp				
Providing reading materials such as text books				
Adequate food supply in the camp				
Building of schools in the camp				
Access to health facilities in the camp				
Others (specify)				

APPENDIX II

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE

FOR CAMP LEADER/WOMEN LEADER (PARENTS).

A. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Age a. 18-23 ( ) b. 24-28 ( ) c. 29-33 ( ) d. 34-38 ( ) e. 39-43 ( ) f. 44-48 ( ) g. 49-54 ( ) h. 54 and above ( )

1. Highest level of education a. None ( ) b. Koranic ( ) c. Primary ( ) d. Junior Secondary ( ) e. Senior Secondary ( ) f. ND ( ) g. HND ( ) h. University degree ( ) i. Others (specify) ……..

2. Occupation: a. Farming ( ) b. Manual Labor ( ) c. Civil servant ( ) d. Trader ( ) e. Student ( ) f. Others (specify) ……
3. Occupation: a. Farming ( ) b. Manual Labor ( ) c. Civil servant ( ) d. Trader ( ) e. Student ( ) f. Others (specify) ……

B. TYPES AND NATURE OF ARMED CONFLICT ATTACK

4. Kindly describe the types of armed conflicts in your community?
   Probe
   - Farmers- Hearders dispute
   - Banditry
   - Land disputes
   - Ethno-religious conflicts
   - Politically related conflicts
5. Kindly describe the nature of armed conflict attack in your community
6. Describe the kind of weapons do they usually carry?
7. From your encounter with the attackers, where do you think they come from, and what languages did they speak
8. Are they usually violent?
9. At what times, and where do they attack their victims?
10. What do they take away from their victims?
11. How do they escape?
12. How would you describe armed conflict in your area 5 years ago
13. Would you say there are changes? If so, what is the cause (s) of these changes?

SECTION C: FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR ARMED CONFLICT

14. In your opinion, what are the factors that led to the emergence of armed conflict in your area?

PROBE

a. Unemployment
b. Disputes between herders and farmers
c. Poverty
d. Communal ethnic conflicts
e. Land disputes
f. Religious disputes

SECTION D: EFFECTS OF ARMED CONFLICT ON CHILDREN`S ACCESSS TO EDUCATION

15. What will you say are the effects of armed conflict on children education in this area?
    Probe

- No access to school
- Decreased enrolment
- Unqualified teachers
- Over population of school children
- Poor school infrastructure
- Lack of concentration from children
- Poor academic performances
- No class specification

- No graduation examination

16. What will you say is the effects of armed conflict on your socio-economic life?
17. In your own opinion does armed conflict affects your ability to take care of children academic needs?
18. How do you see the provision of education of education in the camp?
19. Do you think armed conflict will take another form in the future?

SECTION E: COPING STRATEGIES

20. In your opinion what other things do you think children should engage in to improve their education in the camp

    Probe

    - Vocational training
    - Arts and sport
    - Establishing schools in the camp
    - Organizing counseling units for the children

SECTION F: MEASURES TO MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF ARMED CONFLICT ON CHILDREN EDUCATION

21. What effort (s) did your community put in place to prevent and control acts of armed conflict?
22. How would you assess the measures put in place by the law enforcement agent?
23. What measure did you think should be put in place to mitigate the side effects of armed conflict on children academic development?
24. What has the government done to curb the menace of armed conflict in your community?
25. What measures would you suggest to improve children education?

Thank you.

APPENDIX III

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE

FOR POLICE PERSONNEL AND VIGILANTE PERSONEL

A. SOCIO-DEMOGRAHIC DATA

1. Police formation/Vigilante unit …….
2. Local Government Area……..
3. Age a. 18-22 ( ) b. 23-27 ( ) c. 28-32 ( ) d. 33-37 ( ) e. 38-42 ( )f. 43-47 ( ) g. 48-52 ( ) 53 and above ( )
4. Highest level of education a. Primary ( ) b. Junior Secondary ( ) c. Senior Secondary ( ) d. ND ( ) e. HND ( ) f. University degree ( ) g. Others (specify)……
5. Position of Respondent……

SECTIONB: NATURE AND PATTERN OF ARMED CONFLICT ATTACKS

a. Describe the manner in which your command has been handling cases of armed conflict?
b. What would you say are the basic characteristics of the armed conflicts in terms of
   Age,
   Sex,
   Number in a group
   Nationality of the attackers
c. From your investigations, what are the kinds of weapons used by the attackers
d. What time of the day do the armed conflicts usually attack and at what location?
e. What items were usually lost to the armed conflicts?
f. After the attacks, how do the armed conflicts escape and to where do they escape?
g. How would you describe the level of sophistication of the operation of the conflicts?
h. From your investigation, would you say the attackers had any form of training?

SECTIONC: FACTORS OF ARMED CONFLICT

a. During interrogation, what was attributed to be the cause of armed conflict?
b. In your opinion, what will you say are the causes of incidents of armed conflict?

SECTIOND: EFFECTS OF ARMED CONFLICT ON CHILDREN EDUCATION

1) What would you say are the effects of armed conflict on the socio-economic Lives of parents?
2) What would you say is the effect of armed conflict on children`s access to education?
3) What would you say is the impact of armed conflict on the operations of the police/vigilante in this area?

SECTIONE: CONTROL MEASURES TO PREVENT ARMED CONFLICT

1. What measures did your command put in place to prevent and control incidents of armed conflict in this area?
2. Would you say the measures were effective?
3. What suggestions would you make for effective improvement of affected children in terms of their education in this area?

Thank you.

APPENDIX IV

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE

FOR SEMA STAFF/OPINION LEADERS

SECTIONA: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Sex. a. Male ( ) b. Female ( )
2. Age a. 18-22 ( ) b. 23-27 ( ) c. 28-32 ( ) d. 33-37 ( ) e.38-42 ( ) f. 43-47 ( ) g. 48-52h. 53 and above ( )
3. Highest level of education a. Primary ( ) b. Junior Secondary ( ) c. Senior Secondary ( ) d. ND ( ) e. HND ( ) f. University degree ( ) g. Others (specify)……..
4. Position …….

SECTION B: TYPES AND NATURE OF ARMED CONFLICT ATTACK

a. How would you describe the prevalence of armed conflict in this area?
b. How would you describe the operation of the attackers in terms of weapons used and the way they treat their victims?
c. What is the type of armed conflicts in this area?

SECTION C: FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR ARMED CONFLICT

1. In your opinion, what are the likely causes of armed conflict that has displaced people into the camps?

PROBE

a. Unemployment
b. Disputes between herders and farmers
c. Poverty
d. Communal ethnic conflict

SECTION D: EFFECTS OF ARMED CONFLICT ON CHILDREN`S ACCESS TO EDUCATION

I. In your opinion what are the general effects of armed conflicts in the camps
II. What will you say are the effects of armed conflict on children?
III. What will you say is the impact of armed conflict on their learning abilities and psychological wellbeing?
IV. How would you describe the quality of education received in the camps?

SECTION E: COPING STRATEGIES

A. What are the coping strategies employed by SEMA staff in managing the effects of armed conflict on children`s education?
B. What activities do children engage in to help improve their education and welfare?

SECTION F: MEASURES TO MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF ARMED CONFLICT ON CHILDRENN EDUCATION

a. What effort (s) did SEMA put in place to prevent the effects of armed conflict on children? Were the measures effective?
b. What effort (s) did SEMA put in place to help improve children`s access to education in the area?
c. How would you assess the measures put in place by the law enforcement agent?
d. What measures would you suggest to improve children learning abilities?

Thank you.

APPENDIX V

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE
FOR TEACHERS AND NGO CARE GIVERS

SECTION A: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

a. Age a. 18-23 ( ) b. 24-28 ( ) c. 29-33 ( )d. 34-38 ( ) e 39-43 ( ) f. 44-48 ( ) g. 49-54 ( ) h. 54 and above ( )

b. Highest level of education a. None ( ) b. Koranic ( ) c. Primary ( ) d. Junior Secondary ( ) e. Senior Secondary ( ) f. ND ( ) g. HND ( ) h. University degree ( ) i. Others (specify) ……..

c. Name of your community? .....

SECTION B: TYPES AND NATURE OF ARMED CONFLICT

5. How would you describe the attackers in terms of age, sex and nationality?
6. What are the types of armed conflict in the area?
7. In your opinion what is the nature of attacks in the affected communities?
8. At what times, and where do they attack their victims?
9. What do they take away from their victims?
10. How do they escape?
11. How would you describe armed conflict in your area 5 years ago?
12. Would you say there are changes? If so, what is the cause (s) of these changes?

SECTION C: FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR ARMED CONFLICT

In your opinion, what are the factors that led to the emergence of armed conflict in your area?

PROBE

g. Unemployment
h. Disputes between herders and farmers
i. Poverty
j. Communal ethnic conflicts

SECTION D: EFFECTS OF ARMED CONFLICT ON CHILDREN`S ACCESS TO EDUCATION

1. Describe the effects of armed conflict on education in this area?

Probe

- Children`s access to education
- Enrolment
- Quality of education
- Class specification
- Promotion examination
- Learning facilities
- Children ability to learn
- Children ability to concentrate
- Children academic performances

2. What effects does armed conflict have on teachers in their efforts to manage learning process.
3. What are the behaviors displaced by children in the class?
4. Describe the challenges faced by teachers in carrying out their responsibilities

SECTION E: COPING STRTEGIES

5. What coping strategies employed to improve children`s education in this area
6. Describe the kinds of activities children engage in aside school?
7. Do you think armed conflict will take another form in the future?

SECTION F: MEASURES TO MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF ARMED CONFLICT ON CHILDREN EDUCATION

8. What effort (s) did the government put in place to improve children access to education?
9. What measures would you suggest to improve the welfare of teachers?
10. What measures would you suggest to improve children learning abilities?

Thank you.

APPENDIX VI

The Table is constructed using the following formula for determining sample size:

N	*S*	*N*	*S*	*N*	*S*
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	1000000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970

Formula for determining sample size

$$s = X^2NP(1-P) \div d^2(N-1) + X^2P(1-P)$$

s = required sample size.

X^2 = the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level (3.841).

N = the population size.

P = the population proportion (assumed to be .50 since this would provide the maximum sample size).

d = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (.05).

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970

NOTE: There is no need of using the formula since the table of determining sample size has all the provisions you require to arrive at your sample size.