

Gender Dynamic in Conflict Prevention, Management and Peacebuilding in Anambra State

Constance Oby Ifenweobi¹, Musibau Olabamiji Oyeboode¹ and Matthew Olusola Ojo¹

¹Department of Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution
Faculty of Social Sciences
National Open University of Nigeria

Corresponding Author's Email: obyifenweobi@gmail.com

Abstract

The importance of women inclusion in peace processes and development is seen to be beneficial in climes where they are allowed to express their bitter experiences during times of conflicts and engage in fashioning strategies to prevent conflict from re-occurring. Low involvement of women at all levels of peace and security pursuits in Nigeria is a subject of discourse in scholarship. This study analyzed gender dynamics in conflict prevention, management and peacebuilding in Anambra State. The source of data was from secondary materials such as journals and internet resources. It was found that the level of women inclusion in both decision making and grassroots peace-building process is minimal in Anambra State. This is because women are rarely included in the design and implementation of peace programmes such as reconciliation, societal reconstruction, rehabilitation, and empowerment of conflict induced displaced persons in the State. Therefore, the study recommends that the stakeholders in Anambra State, should recognize the United Nations Resolution 1325 (2000), and entrench women in all peacebuilding processes of the State. It is also recommended that gender inclusivity should be made a compulsory subject in both primary and secondary schools in Nigeria, to instill the culture of gender inclusivity in the country.

Keywords: conflict, gender, peacebuilding, prevention, management

Introduction

The role of women in setting agenda for peace processes is fast becoming a central focus for peacebuilders around the world. This is as women are increasingly agitating for front roles in conflict resolutions processes. The risks associated with conflict and war to women and children, and the importance of involving women in peace issues have been recognized as a global issue (Oluremi, 2021). There is a growing understanding of violence against women, generally and particularly in armed conflict. This is as women are often excluded from peace processes, reflecting the fact that most of the actors in conflicts are men and the masculine nature of conflict and peace.

The limited involvement of women in peace processes in most post-conflict communities reveals the hegemonic nature of masculinity in most settings. Post-conflict peace processes usually turn out to be missed or denied opportunities for removing patriarchal structures of violence against women. This is because formal and informal peace processes in post-conflict communities hardly give women active roles despite the disproportionate burden of the conflict borne by them. Despite being half of the global population, events around the world point to an underestimation of the fact that without women's active participation, peace cannot be sustained (UN, 1975).

According to UN (1975), the United Nations (UN) world conference on women in Mexico in 1975 was a watershed for the emancipation of women into peace-building and sustainable development. Also, Olawale, Adedolapo, Oluwaseun and Olusola (2023) noted that the 1995 UN youth world conference in Beijing, for the first time, presented responses to the horrors of war imposed on women during the Rwandan and Bosnian genocides and rising of intra-State conflicts with significant repercussions on women. This culminated in Chapter IV, Section on women and armed conflict in the Beijing Declaration and Platform Action. Scholars such as Osuchukwu and Udeze (2015) state that African women's roles as mothers, wives and aunts are normally put to effective use in peace building and conflict resolutions in the old Africa. Women put in so much in preventing, stopping and recovering from conflict with the strong desire to protect their children and ensure security for their families. Therefore, good reasons abound why women are important in conflict resolution processes, this is as women constitute half of every community and the difficult task of peace building must be done by men and women in partnership.

Several scholars such as Osuchukwu and Udeze (2015) conducted research on the promotion of women participation in conflict resolution in Anambra State, Nigeria. The study found that women have various groups in the communities where they participate actively in the peace-building processes of communities in the State. However, the research did not provide reasons for the exclusion of women in peacebuilding activities in Anambra State. Also, Oluremi (2021) studied the legal framework for women participation in peace process in Nigeria. The study found that women are excluded in peacebuilding process in Nigeria, but the work did not give details on the local factors that enables the exclusion of

women in peace processes in Nigerian communities. The major gap noted from the studies identified is that there is much literature pointing out that women are excluded from peace processes in Nigeria, and Anambra State in particular, while little or no data is available to show the reasons for such exclusions. Therefore, this study is aimed to fill this gap by analyzing gender dynamics in conflict prevention, management and peacebuilding in Anambra State, Nigeria. The study tries to identify the enabling factors that prevent the participation of women in peace-building processes in Nigeria. Based on this aim, the following research questions appear necessary.

1. What are the roles women play in peace-building processes in Anambra State, Nigeria?
2. What are the factors preventing women participation in peace-building processes in Anambra State?
3. What are the ways to encourage women participation in peace-building processes in Anambra State?

Based on the research questions identified above, the following objectives were set out for the study:

1. To find out the roles women play in peace-building processes in Anambra State, Nigeria.
2. To identify the factors preventing women participation in peace-building processes in Anambra State, Nigeria.
3. To determine ways in encouraging the participation of women in peace-building processes in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Conceptual Review

This section contains the review of related literature to the subject matter of this study. Hence, the concept of Peacebuilding, Gender, and Gender Equality were qualitatively reviewed.

Peacebuilding: The Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies (2018) sees peacebuilding as an activity that aims to resolve injustice in nonviolent ways and to transform the cultural and structural conditions that generate deadly or destructive conflict. It revolves around developing constructive personal, group, and political

relationships across ethnic, religious, class, national, and racial boundaries (Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, 2018). Peacebuilding efforts aim to change beliefs, attitudes and behaviors, to transform the short- and long-term dynamics between individuals and groups towards a more stable, peaceful coexistence. Peacebuilding is an approach to an entire set of interrelated efforts that support peace.

International Alert (2023) sees peacebuilding as a means of supporting people in or at risk of conflict, to prevent or end direct violence. It also means creating the conditions for sustainable peaceful coexistence and peaceful social change by addressing 'structural violence' and the underlying inequalities, injustice or conflict between groups of people by established institutions or processes. In addition, creating the conditions for ongoing positive social change and addressing structural violence requires communication and relationships between those who seek change and those who maintain the status quo, whether that is in formal institutions or through the established attitudes and behaviours in society. Societal structures, attitudes and behaviours are well established and influencing those who have the power to change them as a long-term endeavor (International Alert, 2023).

According to Chandler (2017), peace-building as an institutionalized practice through which war-torn societies are helped by the United Nations (UN) missions, and other multi- and bilateral actors to stop armed conflicts, engage effective peace negotiations, sign peace treaties, commit to reconciliation efforts, hold democratic elections, build state institutions capable of engaging in good stable governance, and thus achieve peace in crisis and haunted by failure.

Common to the definitions outlined above is the agreement that improving human security is the central task of peacebuilding. As such, peacebuilding is a multidisciplinary cross-sector technique or method that becomes strategic when it works in the long run, and at all levels of society, to establish sustained relationships among people locally and globally, thus, engenders sustainable peace. In this sense, peacebuilding includes a wide range of efforts by diverse actors in government and civil society at the community, national, and international levels, to address the root causes of violence and ensure civilians have

freedom from fear (negative peace), freedom from want (positive peace) and freedom from humiliation before, during, and after violent conflict.

Although many of peacebuilding's aims overlap with those of peacemaking, peacekeeping and conflict resolution, it is a distinct idea. While some scholars see peacebuilding as a term that refers to only post-conflict or post-war contexts, most scholars use the term more broadly to refer to any stage of conflict.

Gender: Most cultures use a gender binary, in which gender is divided into two categories, and people are considered part of one or the other (boys/men and girls/women) (Sigelman & Rider, 2017). Those who are outside these groups may fall under the umbrella term non-binary. Some societies have specific genders besides "man" and "woman", such as the Hijras of South Asia; these are often referred to as third genders (and fourth genders, etc.). Most scholars agree that gender is a central characteristic for social organization (Heinemann, 2012).

In the 1970s, feminist theory embraced the concept of a distinction between biological sex and the social construct of gender. The distinction between gender and sex is made by most contemporary social scientists in western countries (Kimmel, 2017).

Gender Equality: LeMoyne (2011) sees gender equality as women and men, girls and boys, enjoying the same rights, resources, opportunities and protections. It does not require that girls and boys, or women and men, be the same, or that they be treated exactly alike.

As of 2017, gender equality is the fifth of seventeen sustainable development goals (SDG 5) of the United Nations; gender equality has not incorporated the proposition of genders besides women and men, or gender identities outside of the gender binary. Gender inequality is measured annually by the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Reports. According to The Global Fund (2023) Women and girls often face higher risks and vulnerability to infection, barriers to health information and services, lack of decision-making power, and control over resources. In addition, rigid gender norms, roles and relationships around masculinity and femininity contribute to worse health outcomes for men and boys as well as women, girls and gender-diverse communities.

Gender equality can refer to equal opportunities or formal equality based on gender or refer to equal representation or equality of outcomes for gender, also called substantive equality (De Vos, 2020). Gender equality is the goal, while gender neutrality and gender equity are practices and ways of thinking that help in achieving the goal. Gender parity, which is used to measure gender balance in each situation, can aid in achieving substantive gender equality but not the goal in itself. Gender equality is strongly tied to women's rights, and often requires policy changes. On a global scale, achieving gender equality also requires eliminating harmful practices against women and girls, including sex trafficking, femicide, wartime sexual violence, gender wage gap (Meriküll & Mõtsmees, 2017).

Roles of Anambra State women in peacebuilding

Women are vital to the peacebuilding process in Anambra State, and their approaches often depend on their experiences, viewpoints, and ties to the local community. The strategies used by the women of Anambra to achieve their goals in peacebuilding include **Community Mobilization**: In Anambra State, women carry out extensive community mobilization campaigns that are aimed at fostering peaceful coexistence. Through a series of techniques, which include rallies, demonstrations and promoting feminism or peace advocacy movements, they mobilize and recruit community members (Ukwueze & Onyeka, 2016).

Dialogue facilitation: Anambra women contribute to the facilitation of community dialogues that seek to tackle problems, resolve disputes and foster better relations between people. This is achieved by establishing neutral, secure avenues where conflicting parties can have productive discussions. By cultivating trust with participants through their empathic approach, community ties, and credibility, the women guarantee that every voice is heard and understood. Women's mediation skills contribute to addressing long-standing issues and resolve conflicts by actively listening to and facilitating open communication (Osuchukwu & Udeze, 2015). Moreover, cultural awareness is one area where women peace builders excel most as they traverse through intricate cultural set ups, promoting mutual understanding among folks hailing from diverse backgrounds.

Networking: Anambra women engage in networking with other organizations to promote a peaceful environment. Through these connections, alliances are formed across different groups which work together towards achieving common objectives such as gender equality, peace promotion among others hence fostering security within their areas of operation (Oluwaseun.2023). Networking enables Anambra women to exchange knowledge, skills or experiences on how best peace can be built taking advantage of their numbers.

Advocacy: Women from Anambra State act as public figures who campaign vociferously against gender biasness and stereotypes, pushing for legal reforms necessary for safeguarding their rights. In addition, they offer critical services such as legal aid and counselling to deprive females thereby empowering them to demand for justice (Ugwueze & Onyeka, 2016). Anambra women widen their sphere of influence by using media platforms like radio stations, television channels etcetera during awareness creation activities towards achieving this goal.

Healing and Trauma assistance: Anambra women create safe places where survivors of gender-based violence, conflicts and natural disasters can freely share their feelings or talk about what they went through. Secondly, they give psycho-social counseling to individuals and groups alike. Thirdly, these professionals recommend that communities should adopt practices which are sensitive to the needs of those who have lived through traumatic events by advocating for a trauma-informed approach to care (Mary, Clancy & Brandon, 2008). Additionally, Anambra women working in this sector also provide companionships and emotional supports specifically designed for gender-based violence victims alone. Also, they design community-based programs on reconciliation and healing while implementing resilience building and trauma rehabilitation strategies. Another thing Anambra women do is incorporating cultural knowledge and traditional healing methods into their work, to ensure that their approach is holistic and culturally sensitive (Okoro, 2013).

Education and training: Anambra women's engagement in education and training play a pivotal role in promoting peace, gender equality, and conflict resolution within their communities. Their contributions span various crucial areas: Firstly, Anambra women educators inspire a love for learning and academic achievement among their students,

serving as mentors who provide guidance and encouragement. They actively participate in curriculum development, advocating for the inclusion of gender perspectives and challenging stereotypes to ensure a more inclusive and equitable education system (Okoro, 2013).

Mentoring and role modelling are integral aspects of their work, as women educators encourage young girls and women to pursue their educational and professional aspirations. By advocating for norms and education policies and opposing discriminatory legislation, they empower girls and women to stand up for their rights, challenge gender norms, and realize their full potentials (UN Women, 2020).

Economic empowerment: Economic empowerment of Anambra women is pivotal in fostering peace and stability within the societies. It encompasses their ability to control resources, make independent financial decisions, and capitalize on economic opportunities. This empowerment plays a critical role in promoting various aspects of societal stability and peace. Poverty is a major contributor to conflict, and empowering Anambra women economically helps alleviate poverty by providing access to income-generating activities, and healthcare. To achieve this, cooperative services (isusu) were introduced by women, which has brought about an enhancement to women economic well-being. Moreover, Anambra women's participation in the workforce enhances economic growth, stability, and advancement. Their inclusion brings diverse perspectives and skills, driving sustainable economic expansion and benefiting entire communities. This increased participation fosters more inclusive and stable political systems that better represent societal diversity and reduce potential sources of conflict (Okechukwu, & Agbodike, 2016).

Factors preventing women from participating in peacebuilding

Rape, sexual exploitation, and gender-based violence are crimes that affect women in conflict (Anne, 2019), but they are sometimes dismissed as "women's issues" or, in the worst-case scenario, as a diversion from peace negotiations. Also, women's participation is hampered by the damaging patriarchal standards that result in disregard of the gendered dynamics of conflict and battle.

Cultural Obstacle is a further challenge that prevent Anambra woman from peacebuilding processes. These obstacles include male dominance, gender discriminations, low education, financial constraint, lack of justice, incorrect interpretations of religious tenets, and mass media portrayals of women as incapables. According to Lyer (2020), one of the areas where gender inequality is most pronounced is the workplace. This is because of patriarchal society, son preference, dress codes, and specific activities for young girls. Moreover, lack of political support and marginalization by their male counterparts.

Empirical Review

Asako (2020) presented a report to the United Nations on strengthening women's role in building and sustaining peace. The report noted that women are key to achieving sustainable peace and development solutions. Whether peacebuilding, peacekeeping, or conflict and crisis response, the international community must invest more in the meaningful inclusion of women at all stages from participation to prevention, protection to resolution and recovery. Asako (2020) points out that women's involvement in peace negotiations contribute to the quality and durability of peace agreements, as well as a higher number of provisions aimed at political reforms and higher implementation rates. The report recommended the creation of gender-strong units in the field, in addition to innovative training for security forces, both police and military, to address key capacity gaps. There should be identification of promising female police officers and soldiers to participate in high-level officer training, to increase the supply of higher-ranking female officers for peacekeeping operations deployment. When decision-makers are women, they can better drive gender-responsive efforts (Asako, 2020).

Olofsson (2018) studied the role of women in Africa and Western Asia, and comparatively examined five cases where women's role in peacebuilding were mentioned more extensively. The work was done in two sections, first, the roles women are assigned in peace agreements and secondly, what the women work with. This creates a basis for the investigation of the presumed supposition that women are victims of conflict rather than agents of change, and also explores if women are engaged in work that follow societal roles, or if they act outside of these gender norms. The findings of the study showed that women engage in all types of peace-building work, and though women suffer as victims of war,

they are also agents of change and when they are limited by the gender roles that exist, they use the agency within the frame of their roles as women to implement change. The findings also showed that women are victims of conflict rather than agents of change, and that women are engaged in work that follow societal roles. The study recommends that conflict resolutions need to be implemented with the inclusion of women input, as this will help to increase women's role in peace agreements.

Adeleye and Osadola (2022) studied the United Nations management of Internally Displaced Persons in Nigeria. The findings made shows that women are disproportionately affected by the adverse outcomes of the occurrences of conflicts and terrorism. The study also found that women are susceptible to encountering elevated levels of physical and sexual assault, relocation, loss of livelihoods, and disturbance of their daily routines in comparison to males. They often encounter distinct vulnerabilities and obstacles in the context of war and terrorism, rendering them exceptionally prone to injury and adversity. Adeleye & Osadola (2022) recommend that stakeholders in peace process should address distinct needs and rights of women in order to advance gender equality and uphold human rights. This will help to reduce the presence of gender gaps in war and post-conflict contexts.

Gbadeyan and Osadola (2023) analyzed the critical roles of women in mediation and peace-building in preparing for post-insurgency in Northeast Nigeria. The study found that there is great peace-building efforts of women in the social stratification of the society. The peculiar challenges faced by the women affected by insurgency, prompts their concerted efforts to ensure peace and stability in the region. Situating solutions within the context of the Resolution 1325, Gbadeyan and Osadola (2023) noted that it will help in precisely engendering sustainable peace and inclusive security. The study recommends that there should be the creation of a Joint-Problem Solving setting (JPS), mindful of the asymmetries of power along gender lines. Also, peace processes in the Northern region of Nigeria should be guided by well-defined peace model which will encompass gender inclusivity (Gbadeyan & Osadola, 2023).

Osuchukwu and Udeze (2015) studied the promotion of women's participation in conflict resolution in Nigeria. The study found that women bear the greatest agony, and this is widely recognized as having negative impacts on women. Women and girls in particular experience conflict and displacement in different ways from men because of the gender division of roles and responsibilities. The study also noted that women make up 80% of those who have to flee their homes in conflict in Africa. In the same vein, women, children, the elderly and the disabled are now the main victims of wars, with estimates that they account for 30 to 90 per cent of casualties. While approximately 75% of the estimated 60 million people displaced from conflict and disasters worldwide are women and children.

Olawale, Adedolapo, Oluwaseun and Olusola (2023) conducted a study on policies enabling women participation in peace processes in Nigeria. The study found that women in Nigeria face the challenges of lack of policies and instruments that enables their full participation and contributions to peace processes in the country. Women are often considered and relegated as home builders and wife materials alone, and do not necessarily have any meaningful contribution in political decisions involving the larger society. However, the study noted that Nigerian government has made efforts to initiate and implement policies and instruments on gender, and one of such efforts is the National Gender Policy. Despite the enactment of these instruments and policies, women have remained on the fringes in peace processes in post-conflict communities in Nigeria.

Ukiyedeikimie (2023) studied the prospects of peacebuilding in Africa. The study identified the issue of Africa, being a theatre of conflicts since the end of the Cold War. Intra-State conflicts have particularly taken a heavy toll on human lives in the past two decades. The state of insecurity in the continent has retarded socio-economic and political goals and set the continent decades back in all development indices. Consequently, Africans have witnessed unprecedented levels of misery and human suffering. This makes peace building an important engagement in the continent as a necessary tool to re-establish security and initiate the process of nation-building in war ravaged countries in the continent. This paper is a contribution to the debate on the place of peacebuilding in a troubled continent. The analysis is dependent on secondary sources: the internet, textbooks, newspapers and magazines. The paper discussed the roles of local level involvement, government/State

institutions and international partners and organizations in peace building in Africa. Identified challenges to peace building are the conception of peace building as a post conflict engagement by the international community, lack of capacity and proper coordination, lack of resources and external influence, and control of the process and programmes. To surmount these challenges, the paper recommended the involvement of local actors in the design and implementation of peace building programmes, indigenous capacity building, and central coordination of peace building initiatives.

Adjei (2019) studied women participation in peace processes and their contributions to conflict resolution. This study provides an in-depth review of the literature on women's contributions to conflict resolution and peacebuilding. The overall aim is to provide researchers and actors in the global peace market with a distillation of salient studies. Such an effort is necessary to bring together the sparse literature on women's contributions to peace and to reveal existing gaps in the literature for future research. The study identified that women play a prominent role in bringing about peace in post-conflict societies. Several studies have found the systematic and representative inclusion of women in conflict resolution processes to significantly increase the chances of sustainable peace. However, women's contributions to peace processes are often underemphasized or ignored in conflict management research and praxis. It was not until the passage of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and seven other related resolutions that critical attention was given to women's role in the peace process. Findings from the research shows that women are involved in peace processes in a large extent and help to address critical issues that are often left unaddressed during peace-building processes. The study recommends that women should always be engaged in the drafting and implementation of peace agreements and peacebuilding, so as to enable for their expertise and experiences.

Theoretical Framework

Theory of Change (ToC): This study is anchored on the Theory of Change (ToC). According to Mayne (2017), the ToC is an explicit theory of how and why a social policy or program of activities lead to outcomes and impacts. The ToC is used in the design of programs and program evaluation across a range of policy areas. The Theory of Change model is a description of what is going to happen, and how it is believed to happen. It is

forecast that shows what conditions must exist for other conditions to come into being. As it is forward looking and logical, the theory of Change reflects the way processes are logically implemented. That is, in the occurrence of a, then b and c and chronologically will occur (Mayne, 2017). One major criticism of the theory of change is that, there is confusion about what the term 'Theory of Change' actually means; in some cases, what some scholars describe as a Theory of Change is simply a strategic plan or another approach that does not encompass the complexity of the Theory of Change approach (Brian & Markus, 2018).

However, the relevance of the ToC to this study is seen in the first step of achieving gender equality and identifying a workable long-term inclusion of women in peace processes in Anambra State. This long-term goal is the initiative that can be realistically achieved by stakeholders agitating for gender inclusivity in peace process, and the implementation of the UNSC 1321 (2000). The proper recognition of the role of women in peacebuilding and post conflict reconstruction, serves as a tool for change in addressing gender exclusion in peace and conflict resolution at the grassroots. Once the long-term goal is achieved through women participation, there is bound to be change in the society, as women will be well represented in the drafting and implementation of peace agreements, post conflict peacebuilding plans and implementation, and community peacebuilding in the grassroots.

Method

To achieve the objectives of this study, qualitative method in generating and analyzing data was used. Qualitative data used were retrieved from secondary materials such as journals, newspapers, textbooks and internet resources. Textual contents from literature related to the subject matter of this study were analyzed, and findings presented in the study.

Findings:

On the role women play in peacebuilding processes in Anambra State, the study found that women lead community-based peacebuilding efforts, address local conflicts and promote peace. Women organizations focus on combating gender-based violence, supporting survivors, and promoting women's empowerment. Women leverage informal networks, such as loan committees and neighborhood alliances, training and capacity-building programs, to promote peace and resolve conflicts, and create opportunities for women to

participate in peacebuilding initiatives and programs, hence, challenging gender stereotypes (Okafor and Nwankwo, 2018).

According to Oluwaseun (2023), women of Anambra form alliances with other communities to foster understanding and peaceful resolution of conflicts, promoting women's participation in peacebuilding. In order to promote a peaceful environment, Anambra women do a lot of networking with other organizations. Through these connections, alliances can be formed across different groups which will work together towards achieving common objectives such as gender equality, peace promotion among others, hence fostering security within their areas of operation locally and even globally.

Moreover, the study showed that Anambra women work in the field of healing and trauma support to help people who have experienced violence, conflict or any form of disturbance within their society. These experts offer moral, psychological as well as spiritual care for victims. According to Mary, Clancy & Brandon, (2008), women of Anambra State create safe places where survivors of violent conflicts can freely share their feelings or talk about what they went through. The women also give psycho-social counseling to individuals and groups alike.

The study revealed that Anambra women leaders champion different causes and ideas that seek to promote women's rights as well as improve their welfare while at the same time addressing discrimination against them, violence on them among other injustices. According to Ugwueze & Onyeka (2016), Anambra women offer critical services such as legal aid and counseling to deprived females thereby empowering them to demand for justice and in-care with media platforms like radio stations, television channels etcetera.

The study conducted by Onwuzuruigbo & Eboyichi (n,d)., disclosed that women of Anambra act as mediators since they have unique abilities and a different way of thinking than men, hence, are able to resolve conflicts by finding solutions that benefits both parties involved. Anambra women's involvement in mediation has various aspects associated with it. Their approach involves putting themselves into someone else's shoes thereby understanding his/her needs which might result from any dispute, like in the case of

Aguleri-Umuleri conflict. They also mediate family conflicts and promote peace within their communities.

Women's engagement in peacebuilding is restricted by traditional gender roles and bias. According to Atuhaire & Ndirangu (2019), one of the biggest obstacles to women's involvement in peacebuilding and conflict resolution is the existence of restrictive gender standards and stereotypes. While gender roles in times of war may become less fixed and women can gain greater influence, the space often narrows after the conflict is declared officially over.

Findings also showed the patriarchy society of Anambra State, over dominance of the male gender in all spheres of peace-building processes in the State, often marginalizes women's voices and perspectives in peacebuilding (Okoro, 2013). Due to socio-economic restrictions, women's responsibilities for childcare and household duties limit their time and energy for peacebuilding activities. Furthermore, women are discouraged for fear of violence, harassment and stigmatization.

Radu (2016), contended that women are often excluded from initiatives that promote and maintain peace due to their limited access to information, education and skill development opportunities. As a result of these, women often lack access to resources and funding, making it difficult for them to engage in peace processes.

On how the women of Anambra state can be encouraged to participate in peacebuilding, the study found that men can support and advocate for women's participation in peacebuilding by amplifying women's voices and creating spaces for women to share their perspectives and ideas (UN women, 2018). Also, men can ally with women to promote gender equality, encouraging the traditional rulers to collaborate with women in advancing women's involvement in peacebuilding.

Oxfam International (2019), observed that gender stereotypes can be challenged by speaking and legislating against harmful gender norms, gender-based violence that limit women's participation, thus, ensuring women's safety and security. They proposed that law makers should encourage policies that advocate women's involvement in peacebuilding

and gender equality. The law should guarantee women's representation in decision-making processes and peacebuilding initiatives.

Okechukwu & Agbodike (2016) insisted that government at both federal and state levels should provide education and skill development opportunities, as well as funds required to support women-led peacebuilding projects. Also, women should be honored, celebrated and appreciated for the roles they play in promoting peace.

Lastly, Cherie Blair Foundation for women (2019) stated that creating mentorship opportunities by assigning females to male role models who can assist in their personal and professional development, will help motivate women.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study analyzed gender dynamics in conflict prevention, management, and peacebuilding in Anambra State. From findings made in the study, it could be seen that the importance of women inclusion in peace processes and development is beneficial in climes where they are allowed to express their bitter experiences during time of conflict and engage in fashioning strategies to prevent conflict from re-occurring. Women's participation is vital, as it helps to bringing to the forefront, issues pertaining to women in terms of reconciliation, rehabilitation and resettlement. Also, cultural practices of communities in Anambra State, in which women are restricted in male dominated communal decision-making bodies is a major factor mitigating against women participation in peace-building processes in the State. Conclusively, the role of women in peacebuilding is essential to the credibility of peace processes. This is as women, who are mostly victims of armed conflicts, often have few opportunities to participate in official peacemaking processes.

Based on the findings made in the study, the following recommendations appear necessary:

- Stakeholders in peace processes in Nigeria, especially in Anambra State, should ensure that peace agreements explicitly spell out women's equal right to benefit from and have access to all social and economic measures provided by the negotiated deals.

- Peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction efforts in Nigeria and specifically in Anambra State, should recognize the importance of the full and effective participation of women at all levels.
- Stakeholders in Anambra State should recognize the United Nations Resolution 1325 (2000) and entrench women in all peace-building processes of the State.
- Gender inclusivity should be made a compulsory subject in both primary and secondary schools in Nigeria, to instill the culture of gender inclusivity.
- The government both at State level and National level, should ensure the proactive integration of gender equality in all planned actions, including legislation, policies and programmes in all areas and at all levels politically, economic and societal spheres.
- There should be full recognition of women's involvement in informal peace processes, especially local women's groups in the informal setting for peace building and conflict resolution.
- The Nigerian government should ensure that the provisions of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 passed in October 2000, are fully domesticated in the country, and at all levels of policy implementation.

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