

**INFORMATION MANAGEMENT BY THE NIGERIAN ARMY  
CONTINGENT IN THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE SUPPORT  
OPERATIONS IN LIBERIA**

**BY**

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## **CERTIFICATION**

I certify that this work, which has been read and approved as meeting the requirement for the award of the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies, University of Ibadan, was carried out by KOLEOSO, MobolajiAdeleke (Matriculation No. 148604) under my supervision.

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This work is dedicated to the memory of my father Pa Emmanuel LaafaKoleoso (10 January, 1910 – 12 January, 1995) and my mother Madam Comfort IbiyoonuKoleoso

Late Dr. Olajide Adedotun Koleoso (26 October 1935- 31 August 2018)

And

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## ABSTRACT

Nigeria has been involved in the United Nations Peace Support Operations (UNPSOs) since independence. Several studies have focused on Nigeria's Peacekeeping Operations with scanty attention paid to the role of Information Management as a determinant of the success or failure of UNPSOs. The role, processes, information acquisition and management and the attendant challenges of Nigerian Army's (NA) Information Management in the UNPSO in Liberia were examined.

The study adopted the Cohen's Agenda Setting and Etzioni's Decision-making theories and employed survey and case study research designs. Twenty-eight officers and 172 soldiers were purposively sampled from Nigerian Battalions (NIBATTs) 36 and 37 that served in Liberia while 18 in-depth interviews were conducted with heads of military units in Liberia. Two key informant interviews were conducted with one Commanding Officer and the Military Assistant to the Force Commander. Secondary data were collected from Nigerian Army Signal Messages, Part One and Part Two Orders and the United Nations documents. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data was content analysed.

The critical role of information management in decision making was reflected by 192 (96.0%) of respondents who affirmed that adequate information management was crucial to the success of Peace Support Operations (PSOs) in Liberia. Also, 182 (91.0%) of the respondents averred that Information Management processes in NA PSOs in Liberia included communication links, satellites, cables and procedures, formats and filters for information transport and retrieval. These not only reduce uncertainty in the processes of decision making but also formed the foundation for action. Furthermore, 184 (92.0%) of the respondents held that information on the NA in PSOs in Liberia was well managed and protected by both officers and soldiers. Information acquisition in NA PSOs in Liberia was in form of open sources like visual observations by patrol and authorised flights, open communication with belligerent forces and local populations while the act of cryptography or sending coded messages was employed for information sharing. However, both officers and soldiers were confronted by some challenges in information management and control as a result of the lack of intelligence for coordination, lack of sharing information with other operating battalions, differences in culture and language and lack of investment in new information technologies.

Though beset with information sharing and coordination challenges, strategic information management by the Nigerian Army contingent enhanced operational efficiency and contributed to the overall success of the United Nations Peace Support Operations in Liberia. However, to achieve a more efficient and reliable management of information resource in PSOs, synergy on information management among the different military battalions in the PSO should be encouraged.

**Keywords:** Information management, Nigerian Army Contingent, United Nations Peace Support Operations in Liberia

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background to the Study

Information management has become central to military engagement in peace support operations. Of course, information management is very crucial in the security architecture of nations as it is in every decision-making process (Landree, Silberglitt, Chow, Sherry and Tseng 2009). This rests on the contention that in societies and from pre-history times, decision-making mechanisms have always required and relied on adequate information as an essential element in facilitating appropriate policies geared towards improving the state of security and development. To this end, information is an indispensable resource, that when effectively managed, can serve as the driving force for the scientific, technological, economic, political and socio-cultural development of a nation (Muhammed, 1994). As such, information acquisition and dissemination are the propelling forces of military science across the globe. In fact, according to Goldfrab (2006) “security facilities matter a lot when designing problem solving strategies that dealt with learning, through human basic information processing.”

At the receipt of information, what users do with it is to translate into information management. Mullins (2003) views information management as a process that involves the gathering and utilisation of data sourced, using unilateral or multi-dimensional sources that can most times lead to low quality of content formation. At this actual position, information management is exclusive and limited to critical stakeholders. Management implies organisation, coordination and control of the different aspects, including planning, form, organisation, evaluation and presentation of information processes aimed at meeting certain set goals so as to support organisational roles in the creation of useful facts and sharing them based on designated compartments are very essential.

However, advocacy for promoting the security for the military and the security architecture of the territories they guide is at no time more important than this era of modern technological warfare (Landree et al, 2009). With the increasing sophistication in modern warfare, military commanders in various fields of assignments are today faced with the global challenges of capable, effective and efficient information management to enhance military operations. Across

the world, nations in defence of their territorial integrity and deterrence of external aggressions have realised that in addition to the accumulation and launching of arms and other weapons of mass destruction, efficient information management plays a pivotal role in security operations (IPA, 1984:39).

Today, the changing conditions of warfare challenges the currency of the security of societies and that of military personnel. Thus, in emerging trend of sophistications and advancement of technologies, security operations can no longer be pursued successfully by depending primarily on available operational logistics such as men, money, materials and machinery. There has also been an increasing reliance on the effective use of available information in security operations (Nasu and McLaughlin, 2014:5). It is therefore a significant and sacred responsibility of the information managers whether in peacetime or war situation to make sure that the choice of information gathering, dissemination and application of mass media are vigorously, accurately and efficiently pursued. To this end, in war situations, the significance of accurate information gathering and dissemination by the information managers to secure support, persuasion, morale boosting of military personnel in warfront or to counter negative propaganda cannot be underestimated.

Nonetheless, whether in peacetime or war situation, appropriate steps need to be taken to effectively manage the war information such as movement of troops in war fronts, the number of casualties and the advancement and withdrawals of troops in war terrains. Proper acquisition and distribution of information will place in perspective strategies of withdrawal or exit in difficult situations to save the troops or the territories that are being guided. In peacetime, military information managers need to ensure that personnel are enlightened on the activities of the military and government in order to promote good relationship within the organisation and the general public, thus enhancing the image of the Armed Forces. While this is the conventional nature of military operations, it is only recently that scholars of African conflicts began to explore the role and importance of information management in enhancing security in the continent.

Accordingly, information management is critical in military operations especially in Peace Support Operations (PSOs). Also, there is the widely accepted view that the Nigerian Armed



Forces have, over the years, played critical roles in the security architecture of Africa. Thus, despite its limitations, the Nigerian Armed Forces (NAF) have now become an important stakeholder and influencer when looking at the current Peace Support Operations and internal security operations in Africa and elsewhere. In response to article 43 of the UN Charter and in keeping with the Nigeria Defence and Foreign policy objectives, the NAF has continued to offer assistance to many organisations, including the African Union (AU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations (UN), in the provision of troops for PSOs.

The Nigerian military has participated in PSOs around the globe for over 50 years. The success of military troop support in Liberia, Sierra-Leone and Guinea Bissau typically opened up new pattern of regionally fostered cooperation and needed security of the scope of West-Africa. Interestingly and arguably in PSOs today, Nigeria is a major actor which bestowed critical responsibility shouldered on the ability of the men and officers of the Nigerian military to adequately utilise information with the aim of achieving its country's defence and foreign policy objectives. Indeed, the top priority of any foreign policy is the protection of its national interest.

In this sense, the objective is the security of West Africans in which Nigerians are fully inclusive. Accomplishing this goal will fail without adequate information acquisition and dissemination. There are evidences showing the role Nigerian Army played during Liberia conflict, whereby ECOMOG went for peace keeping and it was documented purely that the success recorded by "ECOWAS Operation Cease Fire" then was instrumental by Nigerian Army (UNGA, 1992). According to General Nwachukwu, the Member States participating in ECOMOG do so at great cost (UNGA, 1992).

This follows a situation fastened with intimidation stemming among the co-members underrating the tasks of nation building. This led to sustained substantial costs in materials and men. A devastating war such as that of Liberia required the intervention of the regional body- ECOWAS for various reasons advanced by its members. Two of such reasons are paramount and further emphasises the necessity for information management in securing the sub-regional environment in this age of advanced technological warfare. These include hatred and dreadful refugee

problems that stalked the region at that time; and the mirror and neighbourhood effects of the conflict which bid fair to destabilise and engulf the entire sub-region.

Peace Support Operations at such perilous time require great diligence and resourcefulness and adequate utilisation of information to reduce cost of conflicts and prevent break-out of violent hostilities in the entire sub-region. Therefore it becomes a necessity for a solid and virile information outfit to provide information and maintain awareness for personnel while on operations. However, the current research had explored the use of information in the UN Peace Support Operation in Liberia with special reference to the Nigerian Army. It sheds light on how information management reduces the costs of conflicts- both in human and material terms. The study interrogates the nature and role of information management in Peace Support Operations.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Several wars, disputes and major conflicts have been documented all over the world from time immemorial and we have also witnessed security lapses in strategies adopted to ensure national security across nations. Yet, information management has made vital contributions in the military operations. However, the role of good and adequate information acquisition and dissemination is unarguably the mainstay of military operations; its neglect could potentially jeopardise such operations and risks the security of an entire nation, including the lives of the military personnel. This is because the global system has experienced and is still experiencing a revolution accelerating in a dramatic speed (Papp and Albert, 1997; Landree et al, 2009; Joe-Harris, 2014). This revolution in the field of information technology has emerged as a positive trigger in driving changes in the ways humanity conduct their affairs, especially in the realm of conflict and military affairs (Papp et al., 1997). The characteristics of the information-age are too complex, which reveal that the security of any nation, people, government and troops in operation hinge largely, on its capacity to adapt to and utilise these complexities and dynamic change for its security.

Thus, in recent times, information has developed into a geo-strategic resource which is crucially important to all military operations. However, information superiority goes beyond merely, the capability to assemble larger, impressive or loftier information for precise and timely deployment of force. It also has to do with the capacity to compete and strive in the increasingly

multifaceted, globally-connected information environment. Thus, accurate information and data are required regularly for the strategic planning, positioning, and in the channelling and structuring among troops in PSOs.

Studies on military operations in PSOs, have focused on logistics of PSOs (Adonkie, 2014), contribution of Nigerian military contingent in PSOs (Ali, 2013), the role of intelligence in PSO (Umoru, 2013), pre-mission planning and cost benefits of PSOs (Utsu, 2012; Nicholas, 2003). While these studies are important and provide a background understanding of the Nigerian Military and PSOs and a number of the challenges encountered, they have not adequately explored the role of effective utilisation of information management by the Nigerian Military involvement in Peace Support Operation in Liberia to reduce cost of conflicts– human and material– while ensuring the security of its territory. Thus, existing studies have not interrogated the roles and nature, trends, methods and challenges of information management in military peace support operations. This study intends to fill this gap.

### **1.3. Research Questions**

The research questions outlined here are to guide the process of achieving the study objectives:

- i. What are the roles and nature of information management by the Nigerian Army in United Nations' PSOs in Liberia?
- ii. What are the trends, patterns and processes of information management by the Nigerian Army in the United Nations' PSOs in Liberia?
- iii. How is information acquired and managed by the Nigerian Army in the the United Nations' PSOs in Liberia?
- iv. How has information management by the Nigerian Army in the United Nations' PSOs in Liberia been challenged?

### **1.4. Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The study generally assessed information-management by the Nigerian Army at the United Nation's Peace Support Operation (PSO) in Liberia. The specific objectives are to:

- i. explore the roles and nature of information management by the Nigerian Army in United Nations' PSOs in Liberia;

- ii. explain the trends, patterns and processes of information management by the Nigerian Army in United Nations' PSOs in Liberia;
- iii. investigate how information is acquired and managed by the Nigerian Army in the United Nations' PSOs in Liberia; and
- iv. examine how information management by the Nigerian Army in the United Nations' PSOs in Liberia has been challenged.

### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

The saliency of empirical examination of the function of information management in Peace Support Operations by the Nigerian Army is germane to their own security, country's security, fulfilment of foreign policy goals, to other members for the same mission. Information management in decision making and particularly PSOs is like the main operational network upon which not riding on it increases the cost of conflict during military operations– PSOs. Peace Support Operations in Liberia have been viewed as a resolve by stakeholders to rise to its responsibilities in ensuring security, stability and peace in the area (UNGA, 1992). However, this resolution cannot be achieved without proper decision making that rests on effective information management.

Nonetheless, information management is not only a means to facilitate appropriate decision making during conflicts but also a requirement for achieving peace, security and reducing conflict costs. Therefore, this study is significant in three basic ways. One, it provides a guide to the Nigerian Army leadership tasked with the responsibilities of planning and making decisions for PSOs. Two, the research provides a framework for officers and men of the military in PSOs for the proper utilisation of information management during operations and for cost reduction;hence, resulting in human and material benefits during the operations. Three, while the study shall help Nigeria to consolidate her participation in PSOs and achieving her foreign policy objectives, it also hopes to contribute to the literature and debate on PSOs related security panel and instrument for great success in peace-keeping operations.

### **1.6. Scope of the Study**

This study strictly focused on information management by the Nigerian Army in the peace support operations in Liberia. The Liberian case is important given its intensity and the

attainment of subsequent peace in the area. The period covered is from 2003 to 2016. 2003 was the period of relative peace; a period when the application of Chapter Seven of the UN Charter was suspended. This ushered in the periods of peacebuilding process lasting up to 2016 to sustain the peace. This period helps to divide the objectives of this study into blocks of time to understand the nature, trends, patterns and processes of information management in PSOs and the emergent constraints, while promoting peace and security of the forces, including the protection of the assigned territory in order to reduce the cost of conflicts.

### **1.7. Operational Definition of Terms**

**Information:** This refers to any material, data, fact, evidence, processed data and/or statistics that has meaning and is also reliable and valid for decision making purpose, policy, or useful for an important usage.

**Information Management:** This refers to the coordination, collation, protection and usefulness of data for a particular purpose, and properly secured for re-use or reference event. Also, information management is exclusive and limited to critical stakeholders. It also means application of management techniques to collect information, communicate same in a contained military environment or beyond, and it can be useful for decision making in the PSOs.

**Information Operations (IOs):** This entails actions undertaken to impact or influence the information and information systems of an adversary while defending one's own information and information infrastructure. Information operations cut across all aspects of an operation, and apply at all phases of military warfare. IOs are a crucial element in any military's ability to achieve and sustain the level of information superiority required for decisive combat operations

**Open Source Intelligence (OSINT):** This includes information or data available on the public domain which could be mined for intelligence or utilised in an intelligence context. In the intelligence community, OSINT implies that the intelligence information is overt or publicly available and could easily be accessed by anyone. These could be sourced from the social media, internet sources, newspapers and articles, etc.

**Information and Communication Technology (ICT):** This constitutes the infrastructure and elements that drive modern day computing. It generally refers to all devices, applications,

software, systems and networking components that enable individuals and organisations to interact in simple, fast, efficient and digital manner. In other words, it implies a convergence of audiovisual and telecommunication networks with computer systems, through a single wire-linked system. ICT facilitates digital information production, storage, retrieval, manipulation, dissemination and usage.

**Intelligence Information:** Intelligence information are secret information gathered mainly about potential or actual opponent/enemy or an enemy area. What distinguishes intelligence information from others is its covert nature. They are processed, classified intelligence that gives the holder the ability to learn, understand or deal with emergent or difficult situations regarding a potential or actual enemy. They are related to military intelligence and are useful in planning and execution of military policies or operations.

**Peace Support Operations:** In the context of this work, this term describes the military special tasks whereby a Nigerian or UN sponsored force could be used, such as peacekeeping, peace-making, conflict prevention, anti-terrorism operations etc.

**Nigerian Armed Forces:** These are the Special Forces established by the Nigerian government as defence and fighting forces. These include Nigerian Army, Nigerian Navy, and the Nigerian Air force. This study focused on the Nigerian Army.

## CHAPTER TWO

### CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS, LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1. Conceptual Clarification

Some concepts considered to be germane to the study are clarified in this chapter . Some of these concepts include information, information management, Peace Support Operations (PSOs), peacekeeping, peace enforcement, peace-making and peacebuilding.

**Fig. 2.1: Diagrammatic Representation of Conceptual Framework**



**Source:** designed by the researcher, 2016.

##### 2.1.1. Information

Information, as a concept, has generated varied views in explaining the phenomenon. There are many definitions from different scholars with each definition describing the contextual or situational perception of authors' references. Aguolu (1989) emphasises the utilitarian value of information as relating to decision making process of respective individuals, agencies, countries and other groups of people. Further, he defines information as a message that has different meanings in varying contexts:

The concepts of information are associated closely with the notions of constraint, control, data, form, knowledge, education, meaning, mental stimuli, communication, decision-making perception, entropy and representation. This could be through any medium, language or subject (Aguolu, 1989).

Aguolu's (1989) perspective situates information as a structured data that enhances communication and decision making. However, the military intelligence considers information as a raw data that needed to be evaluated for reliability and validity of its content prior to the usage or application, based on the specificity of context; this implies that not all information are useful for specific operations (Nigerian Armed Forces Doctrine for PSOs, 2009:15). Therefore, any information received, non-validated within this context, is not technical but more elaborate and more encompassing than the raw data of information of the Nigerian Army. It includes the way and manner in which information is acquired and managed. It also considers the strategic management of this information in operations and levels of arrangement during PSOs.

The characteristics or attributes of information is easily noticed and this study refers to it as the trinity of information. These trinity attributes or characteristics of information comprise exactness, genuineness with time-bound. Indeed, many wrong commands and decision made during PSOs were linked to the lack of authenticity of information worked upon and this reflects how dangerous inaccurate information is during peace-keeping operations. Likewise, an untimely piece of reliable information cannot be valid or useful due to the continuous level of changes in time and space. Therefore, good and valid information must be consistent, bonafide and timely to produce or yield desired outcomes on the battle field.

### **2.1.2. Information Management**

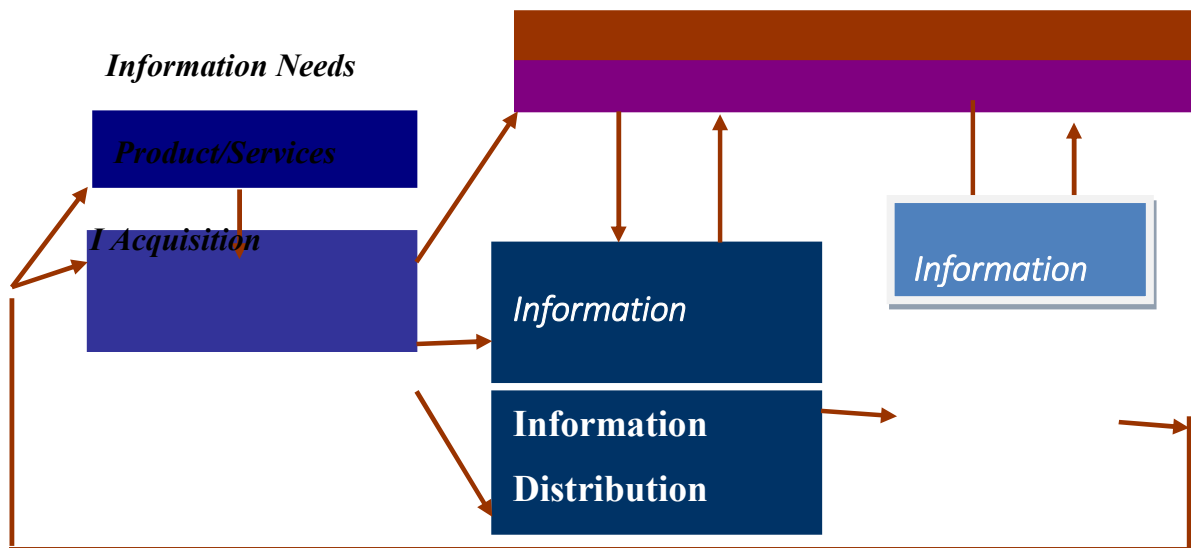
It implies effective and efficient dissemination of pertinent information to the right individual or institution timely and useful to pave way for specific learning and informed rational decisions (Senn, 1978:15). Of course, this comprised of two supporting components. The first are the Information Systems (INFOSYS). INFOSYS are the facilities and equipment that assemble, process, evaluate, organise, project and distribute information. These include the software and hardware computers, the communication structure and patterns, and the terms and policy conditions of its applicability. In addition, the second component is the relevancy of information.



This relates to all information considered by commanders and staff to be of importance in the exercise of command and control.

To Choo (1995), information management from the internal and external sources matters a lot and this should not be overlooked at all when channelling information and values. Accordingly, information management is a function of six characteristics but inter-connected processes that firmly support organisational learning; recognition, of the need for information, gathering the target information, information organisation and storage, information distribution including the use of information. See Figure 2 for details.

**Fig.2.2: Information Management Cycle in Information Organisation and Storage**



**Source:** Choo (1995: 5).

**As shown in Fig.2.2, the first step to be taken is to identify the needs for specific information which could emerge as a result of research, brainstorming, and most times critical situational analysis. It is concerned with the questions of what? Why? How? And, where? This suggests that there must be need for information that has to be clear, obvious and in a non-ambiguous manner; this stage represents information need and subsequently succeeded by acquisition stage where the information needed will be sourced from either internal or external sources using acquisition model or chat in a well-organised approach. Having acquired the information, it will be processed, evaluated and stored and this particular stage is described as information organisation and storage stage.**

**Further, at this juncture, the information may be used while that information identified for future purpose would also be stored-up in the storage unit for its timely access. So, the military intelligence might have vital information at hand now, and preserve them for future predictions and applications. This shows that information management cycle actually operates cyclically as contained in any organisation. However, this confirmed that there is a point where precarious learning becomes more valuable as past experiences are crucial for current and future decisions and actions as referenced in the work of Liu (2004).**

The environment the Armed Forces operate in today is fundamentally different from that of 60 years ago. A battalion commander during World War II was ill informed about the world outside of his area of operations. Soldiers in Vietnam could not chat with spouses at home via AOL Chat rooms. The classic perspective on information sees it as a message. The Army recognises this and states that information means data. The second view on information sees it as transmission medium. One of the lapses of this definition is information that is difficult to conceptualise. Information is classified into three sub-categories: public, merit, and private. The public information generates a community good. Merit information provides benefits for the collector and other joint users. Private information is only beneficial to the collector of the information.

The stored information can be easily recalled and allocated for organisational needs in the future among managers, top and mid-level managers for effective decision making, both tactically and strategically. Thus, Argyris (1971: 291) defines information management as a system which supports management cadres in the organisations with accurate and valid information for the

smooth running of the organisation directed towards achieving organisation set objectives, both in short-term and long term purposes and conscious for the satisfaction of the stakeholders' requirements.

For Baskerville and Myers (2002), information management system encompasses the development, usage and deployment of information capabilities by persons, establishments and society. Also, BECTA (2005) provides a similar description of information system as one comprising the various communication channels and networks, utilised within an organisation. Also, there is the application of electronic mail, local access and off-line remote locations once there is connection to the website. This is very useful as sourcing information becomes the need of every organisation and this does not exclude the military organisation. Similarly, information and communication technology (ICT) is pertinent for corporate and private organisations to maximise performance, especially the military organisation. In fact, ICT has become a necessity to all human organisations and societies. Therefore, information management can be seen from another perspective as a process for identifying and gathering of information, based on quality assurance and information preservation for specific operational application.

Central to ICT are telecommunication technologies that provide access to data and information. For instance, cell phones, internet, wireless networking, broadband, and many other medium of communication (National Bureau of Statistics, 2012). In other words, Information and Communication Technology literally means the combination/fusion of information technology (IT) and communication technology (CT) central to which are computer and mobile networks. Accessibility, effectiveness and efficiency have made ICT popular in different fields of endeavours, including farming and other agricultural sectors.

A neighbouring view of information management according to Wilson (2003) relates to how management principles are applied to the process of acquiring, organising, controlling, disseminating, and applying information available and increasing productivity in the organisation. Moreover, Davenport (1997) holds that the notion of information environment contributes a vital role to effective and efficient management of the organisations.

Shelly et al (2004) emphasise that information technology (IT) includes hardware, software, databases, networks, and other components that comprise a system; these have significant

functions that establish information management. Therefore, ICTs in this regard are integrated or intricately linked with several technological devices such as the internet, television, mobile phones, computers etc., throughout the world (Rao, 2007).

Operational circulation and application of information and communication technology have the ability to boost production and enhance interests in agricultural activities as more information about the value of agriculture are made known to stakeholders. Successes in ICT deployment can significantly increase output, lower cost of transaction, increase agricultural incomes and generally raise the level of agricultural efficiency (Rao, 2007).

Processing and managing information is a central feature of Okute's (2001) view on Information and Communication Technology. The key features include data conversion, storage, protection, processing, transmission and retrieval at any given point in time. This is made possible by electronic computers and computer software. Military strategists in the United States maintain that information, when converted into capabilities, is a potential guarantor of military success. So too, besides the war itself, an essential part of military strategy in an operation is the establishment of situational dominance (Department of the Army *Information Operations*, 1996). Information technology ranks highly in the preferences and demands of military commanders as a key requirement for realising the goal of a PSO, based on the guiding principles and policies in a credible manner,

A hugely important advantage of the Information Age to Peace Support Operations is the vast improvement in the ability to share quick and accurate information universally, and objectively. Information operations, a terminology first used by the U.S. Army Planning Doctrine 8211, make much meaning to the stakeholders in all PSO settings as its application helps facilitate legitimacy and promote credibility and integrity (U.S. Department of the Army, 2000). ICT has been defined by Roberts (2000) to include all electronic technologies, resources and techniques used to acquire, manage and share data and knowledge. The use of ICT has been integrated into almost every aspect of production, trade, service, governance and other civic activities in developed countries.

Michiels and Vancrowder (2001) describe ICTs as variety of electronically configured technology that are integrated in a complex manner and programmed to be adaptable,

empowering political, strategic socioeconomic transformation including redefining organisational and social relations. Thus, ICTs are an increasing assemblage of technologies which individuals, groups or organisations could use to retrieve, process, store and share information amongst different recipients using a range of devices and multiple media.

Toffler (1995) considers the multidimensional consequences of ICTs, on “Third Wave” in developing nations, and concluded that the time frame is shorter for digital age while this was supported by John’s (1992) contention when the age of information is linked to the era of computer liberation occasioning the emergence of societies whereby information becomes highly accessible (John, 1992).

According to Roberts (2000), ICT is to include all electronic technologies, resources and techniques used to acquire, process and disseminate information and knowledge. The use of information technology has been integrated into almost all segments of military organisation, including peace support operation. The military has, over the years, come to appreciate the significance of information in peace keeping operation and has added the information environment to the battle space of a commander. The doctrinal definition of the ecology of information is the collective of persons, establishments, or structures which gather, handle and distribute classified information and information itself.

An issue that flows from the above discussion is the question of information superiority. This emanates from the operation and strategic advantage that an organisation derives from possessing a greater ability to assemble, process and utilise information in an unencumbered manner (Army Field Manual 3.0) which may also include the capacity to exploit, disrupt and deny an adversary, the ability to do same (Baldacchino, 2002). The Army stresses the qualitative nature of information as part of the essential tenets necessary to carry out decisive operations (Bell, 2001). Worthy of mention in the discourse is information systems: these are the facilities and equipment that gather, explore, evaluate, protect, project and distribute information. Computers (hardware and software) and other communication technologies, including the policies and implementation plans are all part of the information systems.

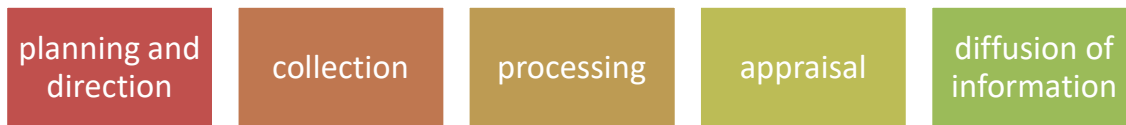
There are three broad views on defining the term information (John, 1997). According to him, information as a message come first and it has been used and cited most frequently. Most dictionary definitions take this approach. The focus for this interpretation is on reports, orders, and instructions. The Army shares this view. The Army states that information is the meaning associated to data. This meaning derived from data is clearly a message that is intended to control actions.

The second view of information starts with the message definition and expands it to include the transmission medium. This definition describes information in the terms of the procedure of transmitting and receiving the desired signals. This views information as complexity in the information networks and define information as a process. Management is a system comprised of functions. A simpler way to define management is referring to it as the act of problem solving (Bernard, 2002).

### **2.1.3. Intelligence Information**

Clausewitz characterised intelligence as any information acquired about an antagonist or rebel group and her global region, thus representing vital portion of one's operational and key strategy planning based on intelligence work (George and Kline 2006:3). Presently, intelligence has conventionally been connected to the state, power or sovereignty and national security. Kent (1949) opines that “there are three types of intelligence; kind of knowledge, organisation that produced the knowledge, and lastly, the nature of activity in pursuit by the intelligence organisation concerned. In his views, Herman (1996:379), agrees with the second point of Kent, that intelligence power of information collection or acquisition, evaluation and prediction rest with government agencies for the functions of the government executives. Also, actual process of developing “Intelligence Product” is an important concept which has been considered as the intelligence cycle; it is defined in five stages according to Gill and Phythian, (2006):

### **Fig. 2.3: Intelligence Cycle**



**Source:** Gill and Phythian (2006: 45)

Basically, secrecy is a vital feature of intelligence. It reflects from the information acquisition stage, information processing through analysis. These processes are together defined as the intelligence product. Therefore, a product of intelligence contains special information codes with higher significance and value, ready to be utilised by decision makers and his adversaries (Gill and Phythian, 2006).

Shulsky and Smith (2002:1) define intelligence as information useful to government in policy formulation and implementation for national security improvement and to handle better threats coming from actual or potential adversaries. Similarly, Joint Intelligence Doctrine JP 2-0 conceptualise intelligence operations as wider scope of intelligence staffs and organisations with the aim of providing military and political leadership decisions associated with precision, periodic and significant intelligence (Joint Publication 2-0, 2007).

Strategic intelligence: This usually brings about significant change in peace operations especially when there is a pending or ongoing operation as emphasised by JP 2-0 (2007).

Strategic intelligence has three (3) fundamental goals (Steele, 2003):

- (a) An efficient early warning system that can effectively monitors looming conflict circumstances and political underpinnings on a worldwide basis.
- (b) Operational intelligence involves information that has implications for an ongoing peace operation that is bounded geographically in peace operation as cited in Eriksson et al., (1996). This information is normally gathered within the conflict marked geographical boundary and handed over the information to the appropriate quarter, the mission headquarters (HQ) of the peace operation where it would be ruminated upon strategically

before sending the information to DPKO if characterised with strategic value of requirement.

However, with regards to the Security Council, the situational consciousness of the conflict and conflict environment is very important and requires effective and comprehensive approaches that can enhance effective mission performance in the operational domain. This considers an historical analysis of the operations environment and its adversaries. Tactical intelligence in an organised peace operations deals with certain conditions that have direct significance to the deployed armed forces in the conflict domain as cited in Eriksson et al., (1996). The focus of tactical intelligence is to analyse the potential threats among parties of the conflict to improve the effectiveness in the implementation of mission mandates (Smith, 1994).

#### **2.1.4. Peace Support Operations**

The end of the First World War (1914-1918) and the desire by the global community to ensure there was no repeat of such war led to the formation of the first general purpose, universal membership organisation, the League of Nations. The League envisioned that collective consultation and action were the best ways to ensure and promote international peace and security. It thus became the first real attempt to globalise efforts to maintain security and peace in the world. Nevertheless, the body could not prevent the Second World War II (WW II) 1939 to 1945. Yet, the League of Nations performed some peace observation functions that were to evolve into the peacekeeping strategy of later years. An example is the Poland/Germany dispute over Upper Silesia and Greece in 1925.

At the end of WW II, leaders of the Grand Alliance who emerged victorious agreed to replace The League with a new body—the UN— to maintain international peace and security. To enforce the required international peace, it was felt that the Security Council of the UN must establish a force of its own to execute its resolutions. This resulted to the establishment of the UN peacekeeping force. The United Nations has been trying to preserve peace relying on the various peacekeeping forces and military observers drawn from member states. Article 1 of the UN Charter gives it the mandate to:

Maintain international peace and security, and to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, or



settlement of international dispute or situation which may lead to a breach of the peace (cited in Johnson, 2000).

Part of the efforts made to maintain international peace and security involves Peace Support Operations which include peace-making, peacekeeping, peace-enforcement and peacebuilding (Simbine 2004). A peacekeeping operation is defined by the UN (1990) as involving military personnel without enforcement powers, established by the body to assist in maintaining or restoring peace in places of conflict. Peace-making refers to any action aimed at establishing an accord or truce among the warring parties through negotiations or peaceful bargaining, while peacebuilding increases the opportunities for both conflict prevention and peacemaking (Boutros-Ghali, 1992). In a similar vein, Lederach (1997) conceives of peacebuilding as the long-term transformation of a war system into a peace system, inspired by a quest for the values of peace, justice, truth and mercy. The core dimensions of this process are the changes in the personal, structural, relational and cultural aspects of conflict and this usually happens over a period of time.

Peace Operation is a broad term that encompasses multi-agency and multi-national crisis response and limited contingency operations involving both military, economic, political and other instruments of national power deployed to prevent, contain and mitigate conflict situations and stabilise the political environment to a level that peacemaking initiatives could take place with the objective of returning or establishing legitimate governance. Peace operations include peacekeeping, peace enforcement, peace-making, peace building, and conflict prevention efforts.” Peace Support Operations include peacekeeping, peace-making, peace-enforcement and peacebuilding (Simbine, 2004).

The objective of PSO can be described in a short-term or long-term perspective. The short-term objective is to successfully perform the given operational tasks. The main objective with logistics in PSO is to create the means for the operational units (Skoglund and Dorn, 2008). Nonetheless, the details for creating the means are very complex and not thoroughly defined in any research. The long-term objectives are normally the same as the overall operational objectives for PSO, that is, to create security and lasting peace. Peace support operations can and should put requirements on the supply chain and the logistic activities required to achieve the overarching goal. A Boutros-Ghali (1992) notes that for peacemaking and peacekeeping to achieve real

success, there has to be a comprehensive effort including identifying and supporting peace-generating structures that will entrench peace and build confidence among the local people. This view of Boutros-Ghali indicates why efforts must be made to identify and enable the right mechanisms that tend to promote peace during peace support operations. Although not mentioned, yet, information management constitutes part of the important structures that need support for effective PSOs.

### **2.1.5. Components of Peace Support Operations**

The British Army Field Manual (2004) defines PSO as the generic concept used in explaining those military operations in which a UN sponsored multinational force may be used. The problem with this definition is that it focuses only on the military without recourse to the police, para-military and civilians in PSO. However, the US Joint Warfare Publications defines PSO as a mission that objectively utilises military, diplomatic and civil measures, typically in pursuit of UN Charters purpose and principles, to restore or maintain peace. Such operations could include peacemaking, conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, which are principally to protect civilian agencies (Ekoko and Voght, 1997).

Peace Support Operations is a term first used by the military to cover Peacekeeping (PK), Peace Enforcement (PE), Peacemaking (PM), Peacebuilding (PB) and Preventive Diplomacy (PD) and is now used more widely to embrace other peace related operations. A few of these are discussed below.

#### **A) Peacekeeping**

The most lucid UN attempt to define peacekeeping came in 1992 when it was defined by Ghali (1992:8) as an operation involving personnel, but without enforcement power, carried out by the UN with the aim of keeping, maintaining or restoring international peace and security in areas of conflict. Peacekeeping operations are voluntary and are founded on consent and cooperation. Though involving the deployment of military personnel to achieve the objectives, they are not meant to use force. This non-use of force distinguishes peacekeeping from enforcement action where force could be used as stipulated under Article 42.

Diehl (2003) gave a broader and more acceptable definition of peacekeeping when he defines it as:

The imposition of neutral and armed interposition forces following a cessation of armed hostilities, in order to discourage a renewal of military conflict and promote an environment under which the dispute can be resolved. What emerges from these definitions and concept is that peacekeeping requires the cooperation of the parties to the conflict and in effect seeks to settle disputes through the medium of a pacific third-party initiative.

The UN Security Council, in 1960, approved the deployment of the United Nations Operation in the Congo after the major Congolese conflicting parties asked for an intervention of the international community (UN, 1960). The UN forces were mandated to assist the Congolese Government with the maintenance of law and order, to facilitate the pulling out of all Belgian and since then till now, the UN have been involved in over fifty peacekeeping operations throughout the world.

The UN started PK as an operation in the management of conflict, yet as a concept, PK cannot be found anywhere in the UN Charter. The concept, however, flows from the idea of peaceful settlement of disputes engrained in the UN charter. Article 2 (7) of the charter provides and encourages all its member states to pursue peace in their international engagement and refrain from aggressive behaviours that are in violation of the purposes for which the UN was set up; including the threat to or actual use of force, and to respect the political independence and territorial integrity of other states.

According to Ekoko and Vogt (1997:7), PK was an adaptation of the provision in Chapter VI of the UN Charter. This gave the organisation the jurisdiction to promote and facilitate the establishment of an environment that is conducive for international peace. They elaborated further and said a vital aim of peacekeeping was to create the appropriate security environment within which the conflict under dispute can be negotiated because it was believed that parties to a conflict are not likely to be conciliatory for as long as their forces are in active combat. PK was therefore conceived as an inter-positionary force employed between 2 or more warring factions. UN Peacekeeping missions involve both military and civilian personnel (Virginia and Fortna 2008).

There are four categories of peacekeeping missions:

- **Observation Missions:** small unarmed deployments of armed and occasionally civilian observers with the task to monitor a ceasefire, the withdrawal of troops or other terms of an agreement. They have to watch and report on the things they see.
- **Inter-positional Missions:** also called the traditional peacekeeping missions. These are deployments of lightly armed troops. It is part of their mission to monitor and report on compliance with an agreement, but often they have also to separate forces or to support the demobilisation and disarmament of military troops.
- **Multidimensional Missions:** deployment of both armed personnel and civilian staff to support the implementation of a comprehensive peace settlement. They have the same role as inter-positional and observer missions, but they also have tasks like organising elections, human right training and monitoring, police reform, institution building, economic development etcetera.
- **Peace Enforcement Missions:** deployment of substantial military troops that could utilise force primarily for self-defence, to provide security and to compel compliance with a cease-fire. Sometimes these operations are referred to as multidimensional (Newman and Richmond, 2001). After the Cold War, there was a dramatic increase of peace operations and a growth of UN involvement in intrastate conflicts (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, 2003). The increase of PKOs was complemented by a change in their nature, function and composition. This new UN strategy was developed in 1992 by the release of the report of Boutros-Ghali in which peacebuilding was defined as effort to entrench peace and to avoid relapse of conflict (Peacebuilding and the United Nations, 2014).

Peacekeepers are generally mandated with the task of monitoring the compliance of the conflict parties to the terms of a pre-determined ceasefire agreement. PK ensures that peace, law and order are maintained between conflicting parties in the attempt to create a stable environment for solving the issues that led to a conflict. PK has always been applied on an ad-hoc basis to meet emergency situation. The UN concept of PK is an operation involving military personnel, but without enforcement powers, under the auspices of the UN to help restore or maintain peace in areas of conflicts (Ekoko and Voght, 1997:8). This definition, however, fails to mention other

international organisations such as North Atlantic Treaty Organisational (NATO), ECOWAS and other regional bodies that are involved in peacekeeping missions.

The International Peace Academy (2002) thus offers a broader definition of peacekeeping as the prevention, moderation, containment and termination of hostilities, facilitated by a peaceful and third-party intervention, through the deployment of multinational forces of military and non-military personnel to maintain and restore order. Again, this definition is problematic. This is because, peacekeepers move out of the posture of peaceful third party and enter into shoot-outs with parties to the conflicts in the war areas. This is either in self-defence, in enforcement of an agreement or in defense of a strategic location or structures. Diehl (2003) has a definition that incorporates military operation which emphasises the resolution of conflict by defining peacekeeping as a multinational exercise comprising an operationelement toensure cessation of hostilities and/or resolutions of long-lasting disputes.

In an attempt to escape the problems of using force by peacekeepers, or having UN in the definition of peacekeeping, the former Secretary-General of the UN, Boutros Boutros Ghali defined PK simply as a technique that increases the potentials for both conflict prevention and peacemaking. Ekoko and Voght (1997) however, provide a more comprehensive definition of PK as the use of multinational military, civil police and in some cases civilian personnel for the prevention, containment, and termination of conflict, facilitated either by the UN or any other international body when there is a threat to international peace and security. Bassey (1993) brings out the critical role of PK when he asserts that PK is a conflict-controlling and tension-diffusing operation, carefully designed to provide the belligerents a stabilised situation and a conducive environment for the non-violent resolution of the conflict.

Johnstone and Nkiwane (1993) describe peacekeeping as an internationally-led operation involving the use of armed troop and sometimes civilian staff, in a post cease-fire environment, to keep the peace. Notably, PK is usually deployed after obtaining the consents of the warring parties. Allan (1991) defines peacekeeping as a method of conflict control that re-establishes and maintains peace. Liebenberg, Malan, Cilliers, Sass and Heinecken (1997) stated that the concept of peacekeeping has been extended to include a host of third-party interventions and actions such as preventative diplomacy and other humanitarian measures.

Traditional peacekeeping operations recognise and respect state sovereignty and have permission of the state or states on whose territory the troops will be stationed. According to (Higgins, 1994:4), traditional peace keeping operations require the approval of the state. Furthermore, in traditional peacekeeping operations, lightly armed UN forces are stationed between hostile factions to observe a truce, troop withdrawal, and /or buffer zone while political negotiations go forward. They were devised by the UN as a practical mechanism to contain armed conflicts and facilitate their political settlement through non-adversarial means (Liu, 1992: 11).

Modern peace operations activities lay beyond the strictly defined UN parameters (Mackinlay 1993). Unlike traditional peacekeeping operations, their use could be ordered without the express consent of the disputants and they are trained and equipped to use force if necessary. This, according to Ruggie (1993), would enable the UN force to present a credible threat to convince all conflicting groups that hostilities will not succeed; in which case, the objective of the mission is to deter, dissuade, and deny (Rouge 1993, 27). According to the UN, peacekeeping is supposed to be a temporary measure and thus should be accompanied or followed by peace-making activities which will peacefully settle the conflict (United Nations, 1990).

UN peacekeeping missions are aimed at containing violence and preventing it from escalating war; limiting the intensity, geographical spread and duration of war once it has broken out; consolidating ceasefire and creating space for reconstruction at the end of the conflict (James and Jones, 2007). Amongst these diverse definitions of PK, the UN's conceptualisation remains the most ideal. This is because, before PK operations take off, consent and co-operation of the disputants would be sought. Also, while the operations include the deployment of armed personnel, the peacekeepers expect to realise their mission goals by persuasion rather than the use of military force. This is so, in order to distinguish PK from enforcement operation of the United Nations under Article 42 of its Charter.

### Reasons for Peacekeeping

The reasons for PK essentially are the control of conflict, diffusion of tension, provisions of a stabilised and conducive atmosphere for disputing factions to engage in peace talks. At the start of a PSO, the key objective is to separate the conflicting parties by interposing the peacekeepers in between them and then secure and maintain a cease-fire. Once both goals are achieved, peace-

making machinery is put into motion to bring the parties together for peaceful negotiations and agreements. Thus, Bassey (1993:242) notes that in functional terms, peacekeeping expresses the humanitarian appeal of sealing off exploding military situation until the basis of a more durable settlement could be established. He goes on to state, quoting Ake, that the cardinal objective has been to avoid the development of situations where the necessity for the operation of collective security might arise. The emphasis is not on the frustration of potential aggressor, but on the avoidance of intensified rivalry.

By implication therefore, PK in addition to those stated objectives, stops conflicts from escalating. This drastically limits the degree of destruction, as well as refugee movement, and amount of resources including foreign exchange wasted on war and defence spending. The money thus saved could be spent on socio-economic well-being of the people and overall development of the country as a whole.

## **B) Peace Enforcement**

This refers to a third-party intervention to bring a war to an end by the use of force. According to the UK military doctrine, peace enforcement initiatives are usually neutral and not in support of or against any conflict faction. Rather, the goal is the restoration of peace in an even-handed manner and in line with establishing mandate. The problem with peace enforcement is always going to be how force deployment could be done such that it will not influence the political dynamics of the conflict (Special Comm. on Peacekeeping Operations, 1992).

According to Chapter VII of the UN Charter, the UNSC may take enforcement measures and even resort to military measures to effectively maintain or restore international peace and security (Krisch, 2013). These enforcement operations include but not limited to:

(a) Non-military enforcement actions which have a coercive, but non-forceful character and include travel bans, arm embargoes, economic/trade sanctions, and financial or diplomatic restrictions; (b) Military enforcement actions which are coercive actions, for which armed force is used by a state or a group of states, to force states or a faction within a state to comply with decisions of the Security Council, for example to deter aggression or to prevent human rights violations (Mccoubrey and White, 1996.).

### **C) Peacemaking**

Peacemaking thus involves the use of a peaceful third-party (an individual, a group, state or states) to mediate in the dispute, providing the disputing parties with a conducive environment (Akindele, 2004). The US Joint Warfare Publications (2001:35) gave a broader explanation of peacemaking as “a Peace Support Operation conducted after the initiation of a conflict to secure a ceasefire or peaceful settlement that involves priority diplomatic action supported by direct use of military assets.” This assertion is in consonance with the relevant UN Charter.

Peacemaking generally aims at institutionalising peace. Peacemaking entails peace enforcement, peacebuilding and other elements of PSO. In other words, peacemaking now accompanies peacekeeping. The complementary roles they play is indicated by the back and forth movement between them in third-party intervention. According to Claphan (1998), peacemaking falls between the tasks of seeking to prevent conflict and keeping the peace; it involves efforts to influence disputing parties to come to an agreement by peaceful means. Peacemaking addresses conflicts in progress, attempting to induce cessation through non-violent, diplomatic and mediation techniques. Peacemakers may include regional organisations, envoys of governments and the United Nations; peacemakers may likewise be unofficial and non-governmental groups, as was the case in Mozambique, where negotiations leading to a peace accord were led by a team of four non-UN personnel (Elisabeth and Josie Lianna, 2009).

### **D) Peace Building**

This is a more contemporary concept that explains the various efforts and initiative undertaken to restore the foundations of peace, nurture them and build on them the type of stability or peace that goes beyond the absence of conflict or war (Brahimi, 2003). This is preceded by a ceasefire and a negotiated agreement between disputants. Peace building efforts generally start with confidence building activities such as providing security, imposing and observing ceasefire arrangements, assisting troop withdrawals, providing buffer zones between conflicting groups, and delivering humanitarian aid (*The Blue Helmets*, 1990).



Peacebuilding is the identification and support of measures that will solidify peace and build trust and integration among former perceived enemies and adversaries, with a view to avoiding a conflict relapse. The International Peace Academy (IPA, 1986) defined peacebuilding as:

A positive continuous and cooperative human endeavour to build bridges between conflicting nations and groups, it aims to enhance understanding and communication and dispel the wandering roots of distrust, fear and hate (IPA, 1986: 39).

Galtung conceptualises peacebuilding in the context of self-supporting conflict resolution in which incompatible interests of the parties need to be eliminated (Galtung, 1976). This conception of peacebuilding is focused on the settlement of positive peace by setting up a structure of peace that is founded in the elimination of conflict triggers at the same time providing peaceful alternatives to violence in situations where the possibility of violence outbreak is real. The UN peacebuilding approach includes all the activities that are meant to preserve security and peace worldwide. These activities are: conflict prevention and mediation, peace-making, peace enforcement, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. According to the UN, these activities should be seen as complementary and ought to have unified and integrated the civilian and military chains of command in its operations James (2007).

Boutros-Ghali (1992: 104) conceptualises peacebuilding as activities to support and entrench peace and peaceful initiatives so as to prevent conflict recurrence. He further differentiates between peacebuilding, peacemaking, preventive diplomacy and peacekeeping. In sum, Ghali associated peacebuilding with post-conflict actions aimed at peace consolidation. Ghali's view of peacebuilding also highlighted some essential features and activities including the rebuilding of infrastructures and institutions that had been destroyed during conflict and strife and building bridges of peaceful coexistence among groups hitherto engaged in hostilities. Peacebuilding is also about addressing the underpinning triggers of conflict: poverty, despair, social inequality, and political oppression. Moreover, peacebuilding encompasses a lot of other activities including demobilisation and disarmament of ex-combatants, mopping up and subsequent destruction of recovered weapons, rehabilitation of the ex-combatants and their reintegration into the society. It also involves refugee repatriation, reforming of the security sector especially training of the local and national security services to provide the job of securing the peace; building election capacity,

general democracy and good governance promotion, reforms of the civil service and other public institutions, repatriating refugees, promoting initiatives on respect and protection of human rights, advancing campaigns for political inclusiveness and participation (Boutros-Ghali 1992).

On the other hand, the more recent Brahimi report (2003) conceives peacebuilding as more than ending armed conflict, but also aimed at seeking to address its underlying causes. The report agrees with Ghali's assertion that peacebuilding is about preventing conflict relapse, promoting peaceful social relations and non-violent means of resolving conflicts. Peacebuilding is all about how to rebuild the society after war. There are many different aspects to include, for example; build state institutions, develop central and local governance, re-establish rule of law, reconstruct infrastructure, create business, reintegrate individual fighters into civilian life (Goodhand & Humle, 1999; Humphreys & Weinstein, 2007; Kaldor, 2003a). For Korac (2006), it is important to identify what the dominating factors are, to create a lasting peace. Korac argues that achieving sustainable peace depends on efforts or actions that support and encourage local capacities for peace.

Peacebuilding activities are performed by UN agencies such as United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as well as by some Non-Governmental Organisations that work alongside peacekeeping missions as requested and emphasised in the Agenda for Peace. Peace building involves extensive post-conflict activities including physical re-construction of structures damaged during conflict. Hence, Harbottle (2001:29) conceptualises peacebuilding as a process of socio-economic reconstruction, development and expansion in conflict scarred and deprived area and among under privileged people.

#### **2.1.6. Principles of Peace Support Operations**

For PSO to be successful, there are guiding principles enunciated by the UN for its implementation. The principles are Consent, Impartiality, and limited use of force, Authority/Legitimacy, Mandate, Finance and Logistics and Mutual Respect. They serve as both a guide and a standpoint for all participants in PSO.

##### *Consent*

The principle is an inherent requirement for the creation of the PSO and the direction of the force in implementing its mandate. UN Tactical Manual states that consent refers to acceptance of the activities of the UN peace keeping force in the mission areas by all recognised parties to the conflict. Gbor (2004:188) also defines consent as indication of agreement or permission. Thus, seeking and promoting consent is an important activity in which intervening parties should engage, although all parties in conflict may not consent to the form and nature of intervention. For example, ECOMOG involvement in Liberia was opposed by Charles Taylor because he did not consent to the intervention.

### *Impartiality*

The notion of impartiality oscillates more or less between perception and practice. It is not enough for peacekeepers to act impartially; they must be seen to be acting impartially, else they become part of the conflict they have been mandated to control or solve. Impartiality remains the vital characteristic of peace support operational conduct and must be maintained at all cost despite provocation and challenges. This is the only way of maintaining the cooperation and confidence of the conflicting parties. Any proof of partiality will result in loss of credibility and increased difficulty in executing operational tasks. Therefore, Commanders should use the impartiality criterion as a critical determinant of all planning and conduct of PSO, especially when the application of force becomes necessary.

UN peacekeeping operations ought to observe the principle of impartiality in both inter-state and intra-state conflicts. History has, however, indicated that the UNPKOs do not often succeed in upholding the fundamental principle of impartiality. Nevertheless, impartiality, as Tharoor noted, is the oxygen of peacekeeping (Tharoor, 1995). The UN peacekeepers can only successfully discharge their mandate when the various parties of the conflict trust them and when open and clear communication is used.

### *Finance and Logistics*

Finance and logistics is an important component of PSO. In this direction, UN member-states are ready to sponsor operations, provide adequate support logistically for the effective and efficient execution of the mandate. Any situation whereby finance support stopped while peace keeping operation last, there would be chaotic atmosphere and it may cause escalation of hostilities,

causalities and loss of confidence among peacemakers. The problems associated with contemporary conflicts and the deployment of military might are gaining the attention in several countries. This is because the results of peacekeeping are less impressive compared to expectations.

The objective is that intervening forces need to do more than ensure the peace. It is to restore the state or country to normalcy through several means, which would include economic, social, political and general developmental institutions. It is called the British Doctrine or Wider Peacekeeping. It is a concept developed by General Moore. The British Doctrine or Wider Peacekeeping doctrine calls the new approach to PSOs. According to the UK Doctrine, these are neutral and neither support nor oppose any party. PSO is essentially about restoring peace and ensuring that disputants comply with the obligation in an even-handed manner.

PSO as a means of humanitarian or moral imperative has clearly assumed greater prominence in the considerations of policy and decision makers. In addition, though secondarily, a number of other motivations and constraints have also shaped the means regarding the decisions to apply forces to achieve peace in the terrorised environment. This means that PSO, with the participations of the military would continue to be relevant in the handling of conflicts that are in vogue and their devastating outcomes. This is justified due to the consequences of conflicts and wars on socio-economic development of the societies which are indeed disastrous, thus returning the proper restorations in the societies.

## **2.2. Literature Review**

### **2.2.1. The Nigerian Armed Forces and Information Management**

The Nigerian Armed Forces (NAF) comprises mainly three components—army, air force and navy. The sole primary responsibility of the NAF is the defence and protection of the territorial integrity of the country against external aggression and internal insurrection. The Federal Government of Nigeria is mandated to prepare, equip, and preserve the Armed Forces as might be viewed as sufficient and efficient to empower the establishment shield the nation's regional boundaries, secure its land, air and sea borders from being violated and generally defending it from external attacks. Other tasks, though not part of its primary function, include internal security duties such as suppressing rebellion and assisting the civil authorities to restore order

when summoned at the concerns of the president according to the extant laws passed by the National Assembly.

According to the basis of Nigerian policies in international relations as declared by the Nigerian government at independence in 1960, Nigeria hopes to maintain friendly relations with all nations and would participate actively in the activities of the UN. The above conception invariably states that the Nigerian Armed Forces has responsibility to peace support operations by the UN. Therefore, there is dire need to examine information management for effective PSOs in the Nigerian Armed Forces in Liberia starting from 1999 to 2013.

Whereas the focus of the research is on the Nigerian Army, it is apposite to capture the Armed Forces to have a comprehensive understanding of information management in Nigerian security landscape. The discourse on the Nigerian Armed Forces and information management would be done within the context of the institution's constitutional roles, services and state of information management within the target organisational context. Before then, we examine the three components of the NAF.

### *The Nigerian Army*

There was no formal information management framework in the Nigerian Army (NA) even as at 2013, regardless of its sentiment with the computerisation dating back to the late 1970s. The *modus operandi* of overseeing information management at the time was generally manual, including the profiling capacity of data in file cabinets, while information disseminations as message was through Telex, Signal Dispatch Service. At that point likewise, sorted out information management was believed to be confined to the security and intelligence units of the NA, for example, the Nigerian Army Corps of Military Police (NACMP) and the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI). Then, the accounts of these units are professionally engaged with obtaining, stockpiling or storing and the general management of information for the productive obligation execution in support of national security. Therefore, different units do obtain, store, recover and distribute information. These capacities were not viewed formally as information management when it is generally new and postdates the presentation of computers. All things

being equal, the significance and estimation of the information held inside the service is shockingly underestimated.

The presentation of PC and IT in the Nigerian Army toward the end of the 1970s was a greater amount of a misadventure than a deliberately thoroughly considered exercise. Two unmistakable forces pushed the computerisation. The first was ascribed to the activity of the PC sellers who were just keen on profiting by emptying registering equipment on the Nigerian Army with little thought as to whether they were required or helpful at the time or not; and the second was the unintended impact of the exercises of the Nigerian Army Finance Corps (NAFC). The Corps, in an offer to decrease rates of misrepresentation and asserted misconduct in the management of fund and remittances of the troops, chose to mechanise its compensation technique.

The significance and convenience of Information Technology and its positive effect on the general triumphs of the Nigerian Army operations was perceived in the 1980s by the NA chiefs. This spilled out of the great capacities of IT that has radically changed the ways the military work, throughout the world, . All together not to be abandoned, the Nigerian Army built up an arrangement on computerisation which brought about the foundation of the Directorate of Automated Data Processing (DADP) in 1981 as obtained by the Department of Administration (Army). Since the mid-1990s, IT had initiated innovative method for information management exercises in the Nigerian Army. According to the Director of the Automated Data Processing Department (DADP), computers were installed generally for word processing purposes. It was additionally uncovered that test preliminary uses for departmental database were made for the Military Secretary Unit of the Nigerian Army. Computers are also engaged as a part of the planning of officers and soldiers remunerations and compensation systems. This insignificant presentation of computers enhanced the speed of processing of information. In any case, despite the presence of the computers, the manual way of dealing with information management has remained a standard practice.

In the late 1990s, an endeavour was made to propel the computerisation of the NA, utilising stores given by the Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF). Nonetheless, the amount of the computers obtained which were around 60 (PCs) was far beneath the underlying prerequisites of 340 PCs for the Services. Subsequently, these endeavours had no huge effect on information management in the Armed Forces. According to the Directorate of Army Data Processing (DADP) in 2013, it

was still in the process of mechanising the Nigerian Army weapon records as at the time this examination is being led. The Directorate would like to mechanise store and equipment procurement, training support, military operations and doctrine, research and combat developmental process. The Directorate has continued to promote IT thoughtfully in the Nigerian Army, through the training of officers and soldiers in PC operation, hardware and software courses and information technology.

#### *The Nigerian Navy*

Like the Nigerian Army, information management in the Nigerian Navy (NN), has been rudimentary even in the early 1990s. According to the Naval Secretary, a few computers were in the inventory of the Service by 1999, but these were used largely for word processing purposes. Computers are now being used extensively for personnel database in the Navy Secretary's office. Computers are also being used in the preparation of officers' and soldiers' salaries. Alongside this minimal introduction of computers, the manual approach to information management has remained a usual practice in the Service. The Service, through the Navy Secretary and the training schools, have promoted several initiatives to increase IT awareness by training nominated officers and sailors in computer operation, hardware and software courses as well as general information technology.

#### *The Nigerian Air Force*

The NAF from inception had always, either by default or training, been involved with IT by reason of it being a highly technical service with such equipment as aircraft, radar equipment and control tower. The need for computerising the Nigerian Air Forces was, however, first muted in the early 80s. The major factor that necessitated the initial idea of computerisation in the NAF was ironically not to support operations but the Administrative Branch. The mind-set was that the Administrative Branch needed computers to address the clumsiness of paper filing and problems associated with tracing documents. In addition, the large stock of equipment, mainly aircraft spares and other hardware at the Equipment Supply Depot (ESD), Ikeja and operational units made computerisation invaluable for the NAF. This is intended to curtail incidences of missing aircraft parts and military equipment as well as providing easy access to them when needed.

However, the goal of NAF for IT was not fully realised until year 2000 when the NAF commissioned a hi-tech computerised Directorate of Personnel Management (DPM) that would address personnel administration problems. However, information management activities in the service is still at its basic stage as only a few computers are available in the other branches and they are largely used for word processing purposes. Nevertheless, IT awareness has increased and has been shaping information management activities in some Branches of the service.

The minimal introduction of computers has improved information storage capacity and the speed of retrieval of information in the Personnel Management Group and the Directorate of Air Intelligence. NAF operational capability has also been boosted with the training of officers and airmen of the Directorate of Air Intelligence (DAI) on the Geographic Information System (GIS), for the acquisition of military-oriented skills such as camouflage detection, terrain analysis, digital elevation modelling, digital terrain modelling, and troops track assessment and map updating using satellite imagery, among others. Furthermore, Nigerian Defence Headquarters is, at present, linked to the internet which individual computers can access but not yet properly networked.

### **2.2.2. Communication System in the Nigerian Armed Forces**

The three Services of the Nigerian Armed Forces (Army, Navy and Air Force) presently adopt independent operation system in the high frequency (HF), very high frequency (VHF), ultra-high frequency (UHF) and private automatic branch exchange systems (PABX). Evidence support has revealed that the operation of individual service operation system endeavours at joint activities and Joint Task Force (JTF) have uncovered non-interoperability of equipment.

This was confirmed during the two effectively successful joint activities/operations, to be specific, Operation SEADOG in 1985 and Operation TAKUTE EKPE, held in May 2004. To remedy the inadequacies, Defense Headquarters (DHQ), in attempts, set up common user systems. This prompted the recommendation for the establishment of a Defense Integrated Strategic Communication Network (DISCON) by DHQ in the year 1998. Further efforts were made which led to the introduction of Very Small Aperture Terminals called (VSAT) for the NAF operations while DISCON project was slowed down due to insufficient funding by the government.



Additionally, to enhance NA communications in operation, the Federal Government had approved DHQ, the utilisation and mix of the communication equipment utilised amid the 1999 FIFA World Cup Competition held in Nigeria in 1999 and also during the All Africa Games in 2003 (COJA, 2003). This significantly helped and supported the information acquisition, dissemination and sharing ability of the DH and the services. The Very Small Aperture Terminals System is reasonable for consolidating the present Armed Forces Communication equipment and furthermore meets the prerequisite of the Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) essential for information operations for the strength of the electromagnetic range support.

### **2.2.3. The Role and Nature of Information Management in Decision-making**

In this age of information revolution, virtually all organisations (governmental and private alike) depend on information for their survival. The reason for this is based on the idea that having the right information creates more opportunities in terms of facilitating effective and efficient decision. As observed by Berisha-Namani (2010), from its conventional function of basically supporting operations in the past, information management and information systems have become strategic tools for decision making. This therefore explains why information is perceived as news, data, fact, intelligence, or knowledge that reduces uncertainty in a decision making process (Espejo and Watt, 1998). If information is that which helps in reducing uncertainty, this usefulness therefore makes it a strategic weapon which gives the holder advantage over other opponents in a contest. This is the sense in which the German military strategist, Clausewitz (2012) avers that information is the knowledge of an enemy and his territory which forms the foundation of action. By action, Clausewitz was referring to the decision that follows when a commander has information that is valuable to the military operation which he is conducting. The glaring relationship which exists between information and action lends credence to Espejo and Watt's (1998) claim which asserts that information and action are complementary and critical in military operations.

Consequently, given the vital role information plays in military operations including the effective functioning of other organisations, it has turned out to be vitally important and therefore, considered a crucial asset which ought to be safeguarded just like financial capital. In modern

times, this process of safeguarding information is what is primarily understood as information management in the literature.

Conceptually, the literature on information management elucidates on the term within the discourse on information management starting from collation of data, to dissemination or information sharing at PSOs, based on regional analysis and need identity (Bocij, Chaffey, Greasley and Hickie, 2003; Laudon and Laudon, 2009). Information management in this context has the tendency of facilitating quite a number of operational issues within an organisation; for example, the capability to inform and share information when the need arises, being able to make informed decision by way of converting information to action as rightly observed by Espejo and Watt (1998), the ability to preserve a vast repertoire of information that would be readily available for use in time of need, and the ability to educate the people concerning the availability of data within an organisation.

Within the distinct domain of military intelligence, the idea of managing information has little, in terms of contradistinction with what obtains in the life of private organisations or other government agencies that are not military institutions, because information plays the same role in military operation like it does in non-military setting. That is why in the Field Manual of the US Department of the Army (2007:1), the principle that soldiers have a responsibility not only to observe but also to make available any information (that may be useful in facilitating decision-making in their disposal) to the leadership is as old as war itself. This means that the practice or culture of military operations relying on valuable information from its personnel for the success of its forces operation has been part of warfare from time immemorial.

For clarity, proper information management which is essential for success in warfare, is explained by the Australian Government Department of Defense (2010) to mean the ability to get the right information to the right individual (who is the field commander) at the appropriate time to enable him/her make the right decision. Within this conception, there are two important things which are central to success of military operation: the emphasis on information being crucial in decision making in warfare or PSO; it has to reach the end user at the appropriate time. The second is the importance of risk awareness in handling intelligence when conducting defense business. The latter also implies safeguarding information in such a manner that it does not become available to an adversary. All these are elements of information management.

The role of information management in decision making has been explored in a plethora of studies outside military circle (Ghaffarzadeh, 2015; Roberts, Campbell and Vijayasarith, 2016; Peixoto, Golgher and Cyrino, 2017). However, the narrative can be applied to the conduct of military operations as it concerns decision making in warfare. According to Ajayi and Omirin (2007), where the relevant information required for planning are not available, the operation is going to suffer planning failure, weak decision-making, misplaced priorities and defecting scheduling or programming of activities. In essence, Ajayi and Omirin are saying that information plays a vital function in facilitating the attainment of quality and efficient decision making. In buttressing this view, Al-Zhrani (2010) also contends that the success of decision making is highly dependent on the availability of accurate information. This is especially true in intelligence gathering where accurate information is a requirement in determining a commander's victory as he/she makes what Clausewitz (1942:5) described as “ a heroic decision”.

However, this heroic decision is not easily achievable by the commander. It is driven by information superiority; which is having the advantage and access to information required to energise one's forces and such information being superior (in terms of relevance, comprehensiveness, timeliness and accuracy) to that possessed by any adversary. Certainly, with information superiority, a field commander will be at advantage to subdue his adversary, because he is armed with superior intelligence that is capable of guaranteeing victory. This makes the ability to find, process and share valuable information to troops in the battlefield or military agencies responsible for checking threats to internal security an essential component of military operation. In situations where the information management framework breaks down and fails to produce advance information within the intelligence community, this is likely to have ramifications on national security. As Best (2011) observes, this was one among the reasons that made the 11 September 2001 terrorist attack in the US easy for the terrorists. The agencies within the intelligence community had clues to the impending attack but they retained them in their files; an act that negatively impacted on prompt decision making to foil the terrorist attack.

The 9/11 attack and such similar situations where an adversary launches an attack without prompt response from the attacked can be better comprehended when viewed in the context of Edward and Gerald's (2008) concept of information asymmetry, which they conceive to mean a

situation where one party in a bargaining situation has better information than the other and can use this for its advantage. Although they used this concept in analysing decision making in marketing where a competitor is expected to make a reasoned decision which is highly irreconcilable, this could also be used to explain the 9/11 attack. The terrorists succeeded in attacking the US because intelligence wise, they had superior information ahead of the US, which explains the perception of asymmetry. To compound this asymmetry, the little that was within the US intelligence community was unable to reach the military because of bureaucratic inertia. Apparently, this glaring information deficit that existed on US side affected it in reaching the heroic decision of Clausewitz that could have foiled the 9/11 attack.

Accordingly, information asymmetry could also pose challenges to peacekeeping operation when peacekeeping troops are not properly armed with the activities of belligerent forces. That is why Chaters (n.d) avers that in addition to tactical intelligence requirement to operations, peacekeeping troops will need to understand the local dimensions of conflict in the area they are being deployed to be able to accomplish their mission effectively. This understanding relates to the debate on information management which provides decision support to strategy, to policy, and to acquisition. When all of these are readily available, it helps in guaranteeing the success of peacekeeping operation. As Ali (2012) notes, the protracted political instability in Sierra Leone and Liberia was resolved largely due to the role of intelligence support that was available to the contributing troops which also helped diplomats in mediating between the warring forces.

However, where there is information deficit, it will also have ramification on peacekeeping operation. Hamman *et al* (2014) capture this more accurately in their study on Nigeria's role in peacekeeping operations. According to them, there were extreme cases where ad hoc troops arrangements were made in the 90s and deployment to their mission area was equally made just about the same time. Certainly, such ad hoc arrangements of troops would affect PSO at the level of support to strategy, which is very important in battling belligerent forces. In addition, such ad hoc arrangements also have the tendency of failing to factor in the strategic role proper intelligence gathering can play in providing a better political understanding of a conflict situation between warring parties before deploying troops (Smith, 1994) for peacekeeping operation. In this context, information management which deals with having quality information that is useful

and timely guides a commander in making reasoned decision in military operation. This, according to Clark (2009), helps in reducing uncertainty in conflict.

It is equally essential to understand why information management is a critical component in a field commander decision in military operation. According to the AGDD (2010:7), war-fighting capability depends upon a commander's ability to seamlessly access intelligence, logistic, personnel knowledge to enable him/her make strategic or tactical decision. In essence, the victory of field commanders in warfare is not solely dependent on having a formidable military (although it is an important factor). A formidable military in the warfront whose field commander cannot access the needed intelligence about an adversary upon which he makes strategic or tactical decision is definitely going to fall prey to its adversary. This, therefore, explains why nations take information management seriously in addressing the issues of defense. They strive to ensure that their intelligence team is well equipped with vital information that are essential to military operations for use in time of war.

That is why the UK Defense Ministry states in 2009 that information must be treated as a strategic asset. It further posits that defense information is a strategic asset which needs to be managed in a structured way, made available to stakeholders who need it, and protected with security, legal and commercial requirements. Beyond depending on information as the foundation of making evidence based decision, the UK Ministry of Defense also raises the important issue of securing information; failure of which tactical decision making that could leverage a commander over an adversary cannot be made should a valuable intelligence comes to the knowledge of an adversary.

In alluding to the growing importance of information to decision makers during military operations, the US, on her part, has accorded information the status of national power like economic, diplomacy, and military (United States Department of Defense, 2016). Such elevation is quite understood, especially now that the war on terror has been given a special place in US foreign policy; leading to its occupation of some parts of the Middle-East. For it to succeed in its military operations in fighting terrorism from within and without, it needs to be armed with superior information that will help field commanders in making reasoned decisions as they coordinate military capability in the enemy territory. Hence, the purpose of information management is seen as one that enables effective and efficient performance management and

decision making through the provision of timely, accurate and up to date information (Gandomi and Hairder, 2015). Once the desired information by a commander is not up to date and provided timeously, there is every tendency that it will affect the operation he/she is leading because the right decision will not be made.

From the above, one thing is known: a good information management framework is very essential for any organisation because of the critical function it plays in its life. In the military, where we expended a lot of time discussing, it provides support for policy in combat operations, it provides support in fashioning out the best strategy to be adopted in defeating an enemy, and also provides support in acquisition of the right capability to prosecute a war. Without the right information at the appropriate time, a commander cannot lead his troop to defeat an adversary. Also with respect to peacekeeping operation, the right information helps in the PSO by contributing troops. This is achieved with a proper framework of intelligence sharing. That is why Tode (1997) opines that that information sharing is essential in furthering cooperation among PSO stakeholders.

#### **2.2.4. Trends in Military Information Management**

Research in military studies have often emphasised that there will always be changes in the environment, and these changes will affect information managers, and most especially military decision makers: their role, motivation and even survival (US Department of Defence, 2018; Theohary, 2018). These facts make information management an exciting topic for discussion in the contemporary age. The notion of data mining or extracting specific data from huge fields of information is usually used along with information management. This allegory highlights the launch of the industrial revolution in the Europe. Industrial economic growth expanded and companies increased in complexity. Some of the emergent issues that needed to be addressed included the necessity of recording and transmitting a rapidly growing amount of data. Given the low level of technological sophistication at that time, solutions tended to be manual(Defense Intelligence Agency, 2019a). In view of this fact, at the turn of the nineteenth century, information management has tried some conceptual and practical changes.

Before the 1980s, management of information passed through seven different stages. In the first period, the dilemma was the physical control of information containers that, in the early period

of the twentieth century, more or less had to do with the need to computerise and simplify data containers which could also be easily replicated. This heralded attempts to restrict the production of manual, analogue sources of data storage such as paper. Between 1920 and 1930, further attempts were made to improve on record management with particular focus on better organisation of data and broader and easier availability.

The breakthrough in computer development between 1930 and 1940 gave this drive a boost especially the introduction of the Electronic Numerical Integrator and Calculator (ENIAC) developed by Pennsylvania University scientists, Mauchly John and Eckert Presper. The success would result in the creation of the first commercial computer, Univac in 1951 (Fabry, 2016). This began the fourth stage, represented by the management of automated information technologies. The distinguishable features of the fifth phase were the explosion of information technology and devices including computers, microfilms, punch cards and optical devices. Evolution and improvements in data management systems characterised the sixth stage which occurred in the late 1960s.

Information resource was the popular term used in place of information management in the 1970s. This seventh stage featured an advanced approach for handling important and required information in an organisation. Most of the modern organisations are experiencing this improved method of information management, although a new concept has already appeared recently, which is knowledge management, widely considered as the latest phase of information management.

The widespread acceptance and approval of the internet and the technologies that drive it since the 1990s, has increased the rate of globalisation and inter-connectedness of local and national networks into one big, complex and global system. Internet was initially an experimental network funded by the US government whereby researchers in the field of computer science were tasked with the development. From the Mid 1980 and till date, it has proved very successful as a worldwide information infrastructure for military and then private organisations (US Department of the Army 2017).

In the area of technology, three related changes are observable: first is the emergent mobile digital programme. Second is the progress in online software as a service; and lastly is the

advancements in cloud computing where more and more software run over the Internet. Some social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook , Instagram that enable individuals, groups and even corporate institutions to communicate with one another and share information on a global scale are all examples of these technologies. Most of the social media platforms also allow video and audio sharing that enable people to share, watch and generate interesting discourses on some of the contents. These developments are, indeed, impressive technological breakthrough that defines the information age.

With an estimated 206.9 million ardent users, Facebook, for example, was described as the most prominent social networking site in the world in 2009 (Wilshusen, 2010). Like Facebook, Twitter is also very prominent. With the United States' President, Donald Trump, often using Twitter to communicate policy issues and decisions, Twitter messaging took on a whole new level of a veritable means of communication that arguably rivals the value of the traditional news media. It has been argued that Twitter experienced over 500 percent increase from 2.7m to 18.1m in 2009 (Wilshusen, 2010).

Army commanders routinely use so-called Web 2.0 technologies like wikis and collaboration tools to influence quick and effective decisions. As management behaviour changes, how work gets organised, coordinated, and evaluated changes also. By connecting military personnel working on teams such as peace missions, the Web 2.0 network enables the works gets done quickly. Army personnel working far from home also use social networks to reach their loved once when they need to. Corroborating the above argument, Wilshusen (2010) states that by July 2010, 22 of 24 major federal agencies in the US had had a presence on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. He further added that the use of the technological tools was endorsed in President Obama's January 2009 memorandum in a bid to encourage transparency in government. Heads of agencies and departments were encouraged in the memorandum to leverage on these technologies and put information about their activities online for easy access to the public; and also welcome feedbacks on their activities and operations as this would aid better service delivery and collaboration and cooperation in government.

Nevertheless, other emerging forms of computing such as iPhones, iPads, Blackberry and Web-surfing notebooks are not just gadgets or entertainment outlets. They epitomise new evolving



technological advancements as reflect in the wide-ranging numbers of new software and hardware technologies. Army personnel are increasingly using these devices to coordinate military operations, communicate with each other, and provide intelligence that impact decision making.

The first development of multi-faceted information systems involves that each subscriber operates different types of documents such as papers, reports, letters, messages or records, performing complex manipulations on the documents, example could be scanning, seeking, routing, producing or modifying them. These could be supported in these activities by secondary object types like directories, dictionaries and indexes. The entire activity, though complex, is also simplified with computer programming. This makes it easier for the user to multitask at the same time. He/she could be writing and then turn to something else like search a dictionary or view a thesaurus. These programmes are done in such a way that they can accommodate other users who are on close related platform in term of information resources. They are further characterised by providing information resources for the individual user which depend on a larger information system, as with mail files (Jones, 1998). Adopting artificial intelligence implies handling the computerised information management actions require expertise using universal model for observational method to create support for military peace support operation information system. This would have, in part, characterisations of conflicting parties, fighting and killings andon the other hand, characterisations of the people involved and the stakeholders available for non-violent determination of the conflict.

### **2.2.5. Methods of Military Information Acquisition and Dissemination**

#### *Information at the Field Commander's disposal*

The success of any military operation to a great extent depends on the worth of information at the field commander's disposal, which helps the commander in responding to threats or an attack by an adversary in time of war. That is why governments expend consideration amount of funding information acquisition and information resources to secure national interest (Crawford,2001). Such arrangements do not only exist at the national level, but it is also found at the global level where a multinational Military Information Office has been established by the

UN to support field commanders in PSO with intelligence in line with the UN objective of promoting global peace as contained in its Charter.

Whether at the national or global level, these agencies do not get information easily without going through a well calculated, standard procedure that is put in place for such purpose. Literatures on military operations note that the method of acquiring military information is referred to as intelligence gathering; which is described as processed information (UNODC, 2011) that is meant for action, or which supports decision making. Under it, there are quite a plethora of other methods in military operations that are employed in acquiring information which have been extensively elucidated by researches on intelligence gathering. Some of these methods which are central in determining the success of military operation include clandestine methods like espionage and covert action, or open methods like surveillance and Open Source Intelligence (OSINT).

In an extensive study conducted by Lefever (2004) on espionage, he contends that espionage has been adjudged as one of the oldest method of information acquisition in military operations because it is as ancient as history itself. To buttress his claim, he cited how it was utilised in the Old Testament when Moses commissioned spies to go and see what the Canaan was like ahead of the Israelites preparation to conquer the land (Numbers 13:17-19). In modern times, governments invest huge budgets to fund espionage missions in sourcing for information that would help check direct threat to their security in which valuable information are clandestinely acquired from adversaries in strategic places like military bases and other important establishments like ministry of defense, security agencies under it, sea ports, embassies etc. A country can commission espionage activities on any of the above-named institutions to foil any clandestine move by another country that is aimed at attacking it.

Instances of such missions are replete in history. In his study on US espionage mission during the Cold War, Callanan (2010) details how the US utilised espionage and covert actions to launch the Bay of Pigs offensive and the Operation Mongoose in Cuba in a bid to bringing the Marxist-Leninist regime of Fidel Castro to an end. Interestingly, espionage and covert actions methods dominated military operations during the Cold War era as both the Western and Eastern blocs commissioned spies to obtain information from their adversary which will help foil intended military attack aimed at destroying them. Much of the strain relations which triggered

the use of espionage and covert methods of eliciting information were driven by the quest to spread a preferred ideological belief.

With the end of East-West ideological war, espionage still remains the one among the principal method of acquiring information about an enemy in the Post-Cold War period where civilisations are clashing (Huntington, 1996) and the war on terror appears to occupy a special place in the foreign policies of most countries. That is why American troops who battling with the terrorists have come to accept the use of espionage and other covert techniques of intelligence gathering as essential to defending national security which they argued is compatible with democracy and the American ethic (Lefever, 2004). Not many share this line of argument though (Clark, 2004). It has the tendency of breeding confrontations that could span to war as it did in the Cold War era.

Apart from using covert operations to source for information, espionage can also take another form. This form which has a touch of the Chinese method has been documented so well by Stratford Global Intelligence (2010) and Cortez (2018). According to the Stratford Global Intelligence report, the Chinese have an intelligence gathering method which often overlaps. These methods include the human wave or mosaic collection method which involves the dispatch of thousands of assets to acquire massive information. This might be different from the usual method adopted in covert operations that is done with few spies commissioned to acquire information for military use. However, the import of this kind of method is that it has the tendency of acquiring massive information in bits from all direction when collected together considering the volume of agents involved. Another method on this is through recruiting Chinese that are born in other countries to gather detailed intelligence on certain security issues.

Notwithstanding the risk involved, there is a whole lot of advantage the Chinese stand to benefit using this method which provides detailed intelligence to support its defense policy. Lastly, there is also the method of patiently cultivating foreign assets of power for long term influence, insight and espionage. These methods of information acquisition clearly indicate that the Chinese have duly imbibed Sun Tzu's military strategy which stressed the compelling need to gather accurate and timely intelligence which would be useful in winning battles.

Furthermore, considering espionage tendency of breeding conflict that could escalate to war among nations as it was with America/Cuban/Soviet during the Cold War, there seem to be a

plethora of theorizing by scholars on the need for an ethical method of acquiring military information in a manner that justifies peaceful preventive measures like Robert Steele pointed out in an interview at the Danish Royal Defence College. This has made utilising Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) method of acquiring information in military circle more attractive.

OSINT, as noted earlier, represents an interesting source of information/intelligence acquisition. Although the intelligence community has been involved in open source intelligence for decades, Kimmons, Makuta and Gilmer (2017) have noted that the elevation of the internet and social media as popular means of communication has arguably altered the dynamic of open source intelligence collection. Heather and Ilana (2018: ix) succinctly capture this point in their observation that “the Internet and the rise of social media have made OSINT more complex in terms of both sources and methods.” The UNODC (2011) refer to some of the emergent sources under OSINT as the grey literature; by which is meant technical economic reports, conference documents, scholarly dissertations and theses, subject related newspapers, and white papers. In other words, OSINT is about harvesting all of the relevant information available from sources in a manner that does not involve clandestine methods. Aside this merit it provides, OSINT information are usually not classified from their origin. As such, they can be acquired when needed at low cost, and without risk in the course of acquisition. That is why experts tend to favour the use of OSINT method above covert methods, arguing that the latter is unnecessarily expensive. The former United States spy, Robert Steele (2003), the Chief Executive of Open Intelligence Network is reportedly a strong critique of covert methods of information gathering, contending that it is not worth all the money governments spend on it.

Like Steele, Marcellino, Smith, Paul and Skrabala (2017) also emphasise that the utility of OSINT favour the development and improvement of open source technologies and methods. In their view, these are places where useful information can be elicited and intelligence agencies can take advantage, particularly, of the interactive nature of the social media. In fact, Schoen (2011) refers to the social media as valuable tools in today’s operational environment. Interestingly, these sources highlighted by the several authors are quite different from the usual covert methods like espionage and spy which involves secrecy, and has the tendency of degenerating into unilateral militarism as was the case in the Cold War era. Its utility does not only lie in its openness and cost effectiveness, it also has the capacity of eliciting more

information than any other method of acquiring military information. That is why Steele (2003), notes that OSINT has the capacity of providing 80 percent of the information required for guidance of national policy. This claim is consistent with Dulles 80 percent which he stated during his testimony with the SCAS.

In amplifying the foregoing claims, Nolte (2005) argues that one cannot say with certitude if the above cited percentage applies to other climes other than the United States, but it is most likely that the US is not an isolated case especially in the age of information revolution where a huge information supply that could be useful for security purposes exist in open sources. This therefore explains the growing importance of OSINT over covert methods of acquiring information, which inadvertently is expanding its role in aiding agencies that perform national security functions to evaluate and define the features, incentives and objectives of enemy groups whose activities could destabilise society and public order (Rhodes, 2011:159) without necessarily deploying covert or belligerent methods.

Not surprisingly, experts in the business of intelligence gathering who are averse to clandestine methods of acquiring information like Steele (2003) and several others who think of espionage as expensive secret technical method feel it should not be a preferred option of intelligence gathering when there exists an effective and low cost method like OSINT that could be exploited to achieve the same objective.

However, it is imperative to note also that in spite of OSINT's utility in accessing vast amount of information as Steele (2003) and Nolte (2005) argue, OSINT can hardly serve the same purpose in accessing hidden information that have the severity of posing potential harm to national security, because such information do not exist in public. Incidentally, these are the kind of information that are valuable insofar as obtaining them comes with investing huge amount of resources; which explains why governments around the world expend enormous funds establishing intelligence agencies as Crawford (n.d) noted.

Another key point is, it is not all information or intelligence that could be acquired using OSINT, especially valuable ones. It will be sheer foolhardy for an adversary or a nation to allow useful information that could destroy it to exist in the open where an opponent can easily access it. This probably explains why there is something called classified information. In a situation where an

adversary protects valuable information like classified information, covert human intelligence method like espionage becomes the possible method to be utilised in obtaining it. This therefore implies that in the business of information mining in the world today where elements of terror abound across the globe, there is no one method that can guarantee meeting the intelligence demand of military institutions of any nation without synergistically combining other methods that would help meeting the intelligence requirement of the military when dealing with serious issues of threat to national security. This is the point some strong exponents of OSINT like Steele (2003) seem to be missing when they strongly de-emphasise the gathering of intelligence using covert means, while they also forget that OSINT information do have problems of bias, inaccuracy or sensationalization, especially the grey literature.

With regards to Peace Support Operations, OSINT has also come to be useful in meeting the intelligence needs of both policy makers and commanders during peace building efforts. In a study on intelligence gathering in UN peacekeeping, Dorn (1999) points out how field operation can be effectively coordinated with the support of intelligence collected from open sources like visual observations by patrol and authorised flights. Open communication with belligerent forces, local populations, and content-analysing newspaper and public documents that are not classified can all serve useful purposes in PSO. This measure will, no doubt, help in curtailing information asymmetry in PSO that could pave the way for peace building efforts.

However, there is a limit to which OSINT can be utilised in peacekeeping operation to obtain information from the public. This limitation is clearly stated in the UN Charter, Article 2(7), which prohibits the UN in meddling in the internal affairs of member states. This also extends to the actions of peacekeeping which is coordinated by the UN. In other words, activities of UN troops and mediators can only collect and report information that fall within their mandate, which in most cases revolve around the activities of belligerent forces. However important other activities are, provided they are outside the scope of peacekeepers intelligence, collection is prohibited by virtue of Article 2(7) of the UN Charter.

Furthermore, besides the aforementioned methods, there are other principal means of information gathering information in military operations that has been robustly engaged by studies on intelligence gathering (see for example, Leigh, 2004; US Department of Defense, 2016; 2018). Reconnaissance and Surveillance constituted this principal means.

According to General Norton Schwartz of the US Air force, Reconnaissance and Surveillance as a method of intelligence gathering dates back to the use of balloons to observe the adversary during the French Revolution; a method which has been expanded to operate through air, space, cyberspace using sophisticated equipment (United States Air force, 2012). In the literature, these methods (Reconnaissance and Surveillance) are often used as though they possess similar meaning when in actual fact they do not.

According to the US Department of Army (2007) and the Report of Congress (2002), Surveillance involves a systematic way of collecting information that is usually passive and is likely to continue, while reconnaissance is a specific mission performed to obtain specific data through active participation of military forces. There is something very important which distinguishes these two methods: one is passive (Surveillance), which means that it does not involve mandating an agent to interact with the target or adversary to get information, while the other is active (Reconnaissance), which implies that information acquisition using this method involves participation of forces.

Information gathering using Surveillance can be done using security gadgets like camera and unmanned aerial vehicle (commonly known as drone) planted in enemy territory to record activities (in the case of Surveillance camera) which is later extracted, or aerial intelligence gathering which is done using remote piloted drone to uncover the activities of an adversary that is perceived to constitute direct threat to the national security of a country. Surveillance could also be conducted intrusively by mounting an eavesdropping device in a suspected target's home and closely monitor their activities through observation. That is why according to the US Department of the Army (1991), Surveillance entails observing a specific area or areas systematically from a fixed, concealed position. It could also be conducted through intercepting communications of an enemy like emails or phone calls, or even communication data obtained from telecommunication service providers.

Conversely, Reconnaissance is somewhat different. In order to gather information about the location of an adversary and all that needs to be known, reconnaissance is conducted through exploration of outside zone occupied by friendly forces in order to acquire intelligence on the natural features, enemy presence and other valuable information. That is why Reconnaissance as a method of intelligence gathering is seen as involving three components namely, enemy,

whether, and terrain (US Department of the Army, 1991), all of which are carefully observed. The observation is conducted in different ways such patrol by troops, long range reconnaissance patrol, military intelligence specialists, manned flash and manned reconnaissance aircrafts, satellites and setting up covert observation post. This is however distinguished from espionage, because reconnaissance involves the use of special military forces that carry out its operation ahead main forces. In spite of their glaring difference, both Reconnaissance and Surveillance are utilised simultaneously by commanders in order to complement both methods (Department of the Army, 2007). This therefore suggests that a relationship exists between Reconnaissance and Surveillance in the discourse of military intelligence.

In peacekeeping operations, Surveillance has served useful purposes in helping troops and mediators achieve their mission in trying to forge a viable military and political solution to civil wars and conflicts. Dorn (2013) captures this aptly in his study on Cyprus during the 1974 war involving Greece and Turkey, where volatility and violence necessitated the establishment of manned Observation Points (Ops) by the UN peacekeeping troops to monitor the activities of belligerent forces. These Ops are no doubt central to achieving the primary aim of peacekeeping troops as information that could bring about ceasefire in situations of serious war can be obtained.

So far, we have expended quite some time reviewing the various methods of acquiring information in the military. Incidentally, little time has been expended in reviewing how these acquired information are disseminated to commanders in field operation. According to Joint Publication 2-01 (2012), there are two methods of disseminating information: the hard and soft copy methods. The latter involves the use of digital technology such as Joint Worldwide Intelligence Communication System, Global Command and Control System and Secret Internet Protocol Router Network to convey intelligence and information to operatives in the field. What is instructive about these methods under the soft copy method is its secrecy that is aimed at protecting valuable information from reaching the wrong hands. The hard copy method involves the use of facsimile (FAX) or courier in hard copy. This method has the tendency of been open to security threat in the event the information is been intercepted by an enemy. However, using it becomes necessary in situations where technology is non-compatible (especially where Joint and Multinational forces are not on the same level in terms of technological advancement compared



with their counterparts) to enable them use the digital method in circulating information to participating troops.

Besides the hard and soft copy methods of disseminating information, the military also uses personal method in broadcasting information to the public with a view to avoiding situations where different information reaches the public at the same time. This is a standard practice the world over in military operations which is aimed at ensuring seamless information dissemination.

### **2.2.6. Challenges of Military Information Management**

As more and more information become available today, so do the challenges to manage to contend with them. In the military environment, information is a key asset. The quote from Scriven is a perfect way to begin the discussion on the challenges of military information management. Scriven's analysis describes an army that belatedly came to appreciate the influence and advantages of the telegraph and leveraged on its capabilities, yet evidently understood is the strength of information on the battlefield. In a similar fashion, the military in many part of the world is yet to fully exploit the powerful technologies available. The modern day Army is faced with the similar challenges of Scriven Army and wishes to achieve the same goals. The goal manifests itself in Scriven's recommendation when he admonished the military to utilise (information) to its fullest.

Scriven's point is further emphasised in Kacala's (2015) study when he notes that warfare advantage is largely dependent on the fact of information superiority; and like Scriven, recognises that such superiority is only meaningful to the extent that the information is exploited to its maximum. The NA has a tremendous means to gather and distribute information. Irrespective of how poor Africa military power is, Nigeria is on the leading edge in leveraging information technology in military operations. Unfortunately, information en masse is not knowledge. While this idea sounds simple, an appreciation of it is a vital determinant of success. Knowledge includes providing the correct, analysed, and timely information to decision makers in a usable format (Norton, 2002). More succinctly stated is the right utilisation of information.

Norton's (2002) study of where many of the constraints of information management lay stated that if knowledge is power then the control of knowledge leads to greater power. According to

him, organisations prevent the right application of data for a couple of reasons. One is the structure of the information environment and the second is lack of policies and procedures. Because the nature of information environment is such that the military commander cannot control it all, he must then dominate that which he does control (Norton, 2002:28). This is the position that Strassman (1995) argues in his book *The Politics of Information Management* and it has great applicability in the Army.

The wrong version of software, the wrong variable for the security device, and no available drops for new computers, and the STU.III key is invalid. These are normal everyday occurrences on an exercise or deployment for a communications staff. How are these simple items overlooked? Strassman (1995) would argue that it occurs because information commanders or managers do not understand the policies or the environment in which they operate. The lack of buy in for policies at the operator or business level causes individuals to do what they believe is best. In other words, the users either (1) do not know the policies or (2) choose to ignore them (Straaman, 1995, 23). Although that statement is focusing on business and its customers, the application to military forces is readily apparent.

Reacting to the argument above, Norton (2002:29) posits that if sections within an organisation, for example the Intelligence Section, develop a system that works independently of the existing structure, the usefulness of the system is suspect. The technical problems can overwhelm the network to a point of failure. If this type of stove piping is the norm within an organisation, then its overall effectiveness downgrades exponentially. Instead of achieving information superiority, the organisation achieves paralysis. For example, a section independently shifting assets to support a private, latent value, information requirement at the expense of a more pressing merit, option system begins to derail the overall process. The slippery slope is apparent in this example. So what is the fix?

Strassman (1995), Norton, (2002) and the Defense Intelligence Agency (2019b) all advocate a federalist conception of information management as the solution to this problem. For Norton (2002), it models the U.S. Constitution concept of individual freedoms balanced by a common law resulting in an overall balance and effectiveness of information management. Hence, this concept embraces the rights of individuals to archive the desired information through means that follow the guidelines that are acceptable with the framework of the constitution.

The concept sounds inherently bureaucratic; though it is not in practice. The argument centres on the importance of having a stable plan for information management. Strassman (1995) argues that the greatest obstacle in the management of knowledge is the volatility in governance. Without a doubt, technology is a tool to support information management. Failure to recognise this crucial point results in a technological solution that is short-lived and ultimately flawed management of information.

The success of the constitutional model according to Norton (2002) relies on the commander. The reasons he suggested include: first, as with all critical assets within an organisation, the commander should be closely involved in its use. Second, to enforce a program or policy requires influence and control. This has to do with command responsibility. Third, the entire aim of managing information is decision making by the commander. With this as the stated aim, it is clear who should direct the overall framework.

Corroborating the above argument, Strassman (1995) suggests that because individuals cannot make their own rules and still expect order, there must be a central control. In the Army, that would be the commander. However, the personnel and subordinates should still be involved. He argues this by stating that policy developers should adopt principles for information management and organise them based on implications and the key to the engagement process is to have the correct people work the policies. This should not be the technical experts but rather decision makers and key personnel in support. One major danger in information management planning is delegating the responsibility to a technical expert (Strassman, 1995). No matter how talented, this individual has a different focus than a manager and this view skews the process.

Another approach of understanding the problems associated with managing information is to survey information managers in order to elicit the key issues. As regards, investigations have shown a number of information management-related challenges, particularly information timeliness and quality (Fisher, 2001 and De Bruijn, 2006); reluctance to share; unpredictability of needed information (Longstaff, 2005) and information overload, discrepancy in location and information misinterpretation

Literature reviewed by Galbraith and Brown posit that the problems of information management can be overwhelming. For this reasons, researchers and cooperate organisations have taken keen

interest on the issue. Over the past years, periodic surveys on IM have been conducted to establish the most compelling constraints in information management. Brancheau, Janz, and Wetherbe (1995) state that the top challenges are focused on technological infrastructure. These authors argue that developing a technology framework to aid and galvanise current applications is the key to operation success line.

Also, it was revealed that the information needs of modern organisations require that extraordinary effort be made on consistent basis by every organisation to improve on how information is acquired, processed, distributed and deployed. This is predicated on the ever increasing level of operational scope, size of the organisation, institutional competition and other challenges associated with the terrain. Therefore, effective management of information can help to increase commanders' situational awareness—robbing off too, on other personnel, and which becomes vital in effective decision making and better understanding of a specific context.

### **2.2.7. Information Management and Information Capabilities in Combat Operations**

A general consensus in the literature of modern military warfare is that effective combat operations depend, not only on the military's capacity to deliver kinetic energy, but also its ability to mine, process and optimally utilise information. According to (Grauer, 2017a), successful military operations today are largely a product of a deep understanding and ability to harness the advantages of an effective information management and information architecture framework. Modern scholarly and theoretical consensus on the primacy of information management in warfighting is partly predicated on the realisation that modern security challenges facing nations are much more different than they were few decades ago (Gruber, 2000; Defense Science Board, 2007; Army Techniques Publication, 2018).

Besides, the possession of a robust and wide range of capabilities, potential enemies in modern warfare have also altered and complicated the rules of military engagement. Defense Science Board (2007) also has argued that, unlike in the past, conventional adversaries were well defined by territories of battles and often had clear means of identification. But modern battle operation environment is far more complex; the enemies are more diverse, amorphous, adaptive and stealthy. These characteristics enable the enemies to neutralise even the most formidable

militaries' operational advantages in more traditional warfare, thus making many military establishments more and more reliant on information than they did in the past

Despite acknowledging the increased information needs of modern combat operations, some scholars have still argued that high quality troops, exceptional leadership and sophisticated communication infrastructure are essential determinants of a military's ability to fight well and produce high levels of military victories. In the book *Creating Military Power*, Brooks (2007) argues that to identify the greatest sources of military power that often guarantee military victories in battle, one must look beyond material and basic resources such as population size, technological and industrial base and so on. The most important element relates to the quality of troops that a nation produces. And this is dependent on the nation's global environments and the particularities of its culture, social structure and political institutions. These characteristics often affect how the state organises and prepares for combat, the quality of its fighting force and ultimately impacts its effectiveness in warfare. Thus, while wealth, technology and human resources are very vital for a state's capacity to create military power, more importantly is how these are utilised to generate a formidable fighting force, and this often depends on the political and social environment in which military activity takes place.

Although he agrees with Brooks (2007) about the imperative of high quality troops, Keegan (2011) attributes the effectiveness of an armed force mainly to the exceptional quality of the leader or commander. Citing the heroics of historical leaders such as Alexander the Great, Ulysses Grant and Adolf Hitler, he propounded the view that victories in warfare are inextricably linked to the political sagacity and military ingenuity of the generals. Keegan's (2011) military theory suggests that a good commander produces a good army which in turn results in success in combat operations.

Owens and Offley's (2001) study is more provocative in terms of its recommendations. The authors in the book, *Lifting the Fog of War*, had studied what they perceived as the declining military prowess of the United States and the need to reenergise the country's military architecture. Owens and Offley had argued that the United States seems to be an exhausted military super power. While remaining committed to a number of conflicts across the world, its important weaponry for prosecuting these wars is fast becoming outdated. Hence, they proposed the revolutionisation of America's military infrastructure with particular focus on harnessing the

advances in computing, communications and satellite technology and launching America's military into the information age. They argued that embracing information and technological advancements would transform the US military capabilities and make it stronger, more flexible and better prepared to deal with potential or actual enemy forces.

Even before Owens and Offley (2001), the idea of possessing effective information resource in battle had always existed. Information management, argues Grauer (2017b), is so critical to the military's command and control systems or command structures, and determines battle success. In late 1904, the Russian and Japanese armies fought a major war in the outskirts of the Manchurian town of Liaoyang. To the surprise of many, the Japanese won the war that they were never expected to win. The Russian army was better prepared, fielded more men and weapons and enjoyed a clear advantage in terms of soldier quality and skills. Yet, the Japanese won the war because they had a better information management capability that affected the martial strength of their adversary in the conflict. Grauer (2017b) argues that the Japanese forces were better able to discern what was happening at the battlefield; the commanders were able to gather, analyse and utilise battleground information, and as a consequence, utilised their men and materiel more efficiently and effectively than their Russian adversary did.

The role of information management in the Russo-Japanese war on 1904 relates to the relevancy of information and how the commanders are able to utilise information in command and control to overcome what Clausewitz (1989) referred to as the uncertainty of warfare—Owens and Offley's (2001) "fog of war". Overcoming this fog of war in combat environment requires commanders to have information that will enable them understand what is happening on the battleground, form judgments, availability of the right platforms to convey decisions reached to units in the field to enable them respond quickly and appropriately to emergent situations.

Having the right platforms or information infrastructure is just as important as the information itself. This is the whole essence of what is referred to as INFOSYS—the facilities and capabilities that gather, process, analyse and disseminate information. This is summarised under the concept of ICT in combat operations. In his views on information technology in combat operations, Taddeo (2012) notes that the use of information and communication technologies in combat has become an important aspect in the assessment of military might. He identified two ways in which the capabilities support combat operations: providing new weapons to be

deployed on the battlefield—such as drones and semi-autonomous robots used to strike targets, defuse bombs and intelligence gathering—and allowing for information superiority, the ability to collect, process, and disseminate information while exploiting or denying the adversary’s ability to do the same.

ICT gave rise to what is currently known as Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA)—which arguably explains the vital role of information superiority in combat operations. It concerns the core of military forces and how they have to deal with what Rizwan (2000: not paged) referred to as the “5th dimension of warfare *information*, in addition to land, sea, air and space. It has revolutionised martial capabilities and how to provide robust, useful information at all levels—from decision-makers to tactical users and support combat operations. The Defense Science Board (2007) highlights four advantages of combat information capabilities to any military establishment. First, it argues that robust information management enables better decision making in combat operations. Secondly, the global; Interoperable information technology enhances information dissemination and management. Thirdly, information technology architecture presents critical information assurance. And lastly, combat information capabilities are a critical defence weapons system.

Gruber (2000) goes further to note that superior combat information capabilities support aggressive and successful information operations. Information and communication technologies provide the means to conduct warfare in a completely different way that is cost effect, near bloodless and highly efficient. Information warfare (IW) is cost effective for two main reasons; first, it increases the effectiveness of each fighting unit by providing powerful communication tools. Second, the deployment of robotic weapons, like drones for example, and the use of cyber-attacks are both much cheaper than using traditional aerial vehicles and attacks, and can be more efficient. IW can be fought using tele-operated robots or launching a cyber-attack, disrupting the enemy’s resources (both human and non-human) without risking any casualties for the military that deploys such technologies (Taddeo, 2012).

Whatever the argument by Taddeo (2012), it would be misleading to consider IW simply as a non-sanguinary, cheap and less military-based version of classic warfare. IW can be as bloody and violent as traditional warfare, as it may determine damages and casualties comparable to traditional warfare. Nevertheless, the deployment of ICTs gives rise to a completely new form of

warfare, whose main peculiarity is that of being transversal with respect to the environment in which it can be waged, the kinds of agents involved in it, and the modes of combat. Such *transversality* represents the ultimate difference between modern IW and traditional warfare

### **2.2.8. Perspectives on the Liberian Conflict**

A military coup on April 12, 1980 led by Samuel Doe, ended the fifty years rule of the Americo-Liberians. Although only constituting about five percent of the country's population, the Americo-Liberians practically dominated politics and economy in Liberia (Adebajo, 2002). Their sway on political power was portrayed as a political situation whereby the minority dominated the majority through the use of monopoly of power and socio-economic space for more than 130 years (Dunn, 1998, Cook, 2018). The coup initially, had the support of the indigenous population as it was viewed as some form of salvation against an unfriendly regime. After executing President William Tolbert and many of his political associates, Samuel Doe set up a military administration following which he promised to democratise government, introduce a new democratic constitution and conduct a national elections in 1985 (Beyan, 1991). Like most coup leaders promise, he vowed to end corruption and ensure that the nation's resources are redistributed among the people.

However, like the regime before his, Doe was unable to produce an inclusive government leading to the Krahn ethnic group benefitting the most from governance. Yet, he undermined Amos Sawyer who led the National Constitutional Committee which he established in 1981 to formulate a draft constitution, particularly opposing the contents of improving the privileges and powers of the Presidential office (Ofuatey-Kodjoe, 1994). Unable to lead the country into a democratic regime, Doe, in 1984, created a transitional caretaker administration headed by him in the capacity of "civilian leader". Doe manipulated the electoral commission in his favour and ensuring that it was dominated by his cronies and associates particularly those from his political party; the NDP of Liberia (Sawyer, 1992).

Shortly thereafter, in 1989, the NPFL, National Patriotic Front of Liberia, prepared and led the America – Liberia , Charles Taylor, who eventually coordinated an insurgency to topple the Doe administration resulting in widespread ethnic violence that ended up destabilising vast sections of the country and throwing the country into turmoil. Consequently, an insurrection that began



from the marginalised Nimba County soon spread with the NPFL gaining control over a substantial amount of Liberian territory (Ofuately-Kodjoe, 1994). The late call by Doe to the country's population to unite and defend the country against rebellion yielded very little as Charles Taylor's group continued to gain the upper hand only suffering a little setback when the NPFL split with the new faction—the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL)—led by Yomi Johnson, opening a two-pronged war against both the Taylor-led NPFL and the Samuel Doe government (Kieh, 2009).

Thus, this matter had gone beyond being a local Liberian affair and had turned into a sub-regional question (Emmanuel, 1991). Hence, it could be argued that for some of the West African leaders, intervention was required on humanitarian grounds. This is also reflected in the report of the Standing Committee that ECOWAS' presence was needed in Liberia to protect civilians and ensure there was some semblance of government in the country as what existed was incapable of providing governance as warring factions had held the country, the people hostage with significant socioeconomic consequences for the population (**ECOWAS, 1990**).

Charles Taylor criticised the intervention as external gang up and aggression by some ECOWAS leaders against Liberia and that there was no way the ECOMOG force could be considered to be a peace force (**ECOWAS, 1990**). Besides Charles Taylor, some members of the sub-regional body equally opposed the idea of it intervening in Liberia. Bulk of the opposition came from the French-speaking parts of West Africa particularly from Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso. The Burkinabe Head of State, Blaise Compaore, had sent a protest message to the then Chair of ECOWAS and former Head of the Gambia, Dawda Jawara, expressing his displeasure and that of his country against ECOWAS operation and that the body was not in any way mandated to intervene in any nation's internal affair but only in the event of an inter-state conflict (Greenwood 1993; Kieh, 2009).

The ECOMOG deployment in Liberia has been criticised on the grounds of effectiveness, legitimacy and force neutrality. Although the sub-regional leaders saw ECOMOG as a peacekeeping force, the opposition it faced in Liberia from arguably the strongest group on ground—the NPFL—inadvertently undermined ECOMOG's neutrality (and legitimacy, some would argue) in its operation in Liberia. At the end of 1990, ECOMOG was more or less oscillating between being a peacekeeping and peace enforcement force. In many instances, it

took on the role of a fighting force in some sort of a coalition with the AFL and INPFL which further eroded its neutrality (Adisa, 1990).

**In supporting the above view, the BBC Monitoring Report (1990, cited in Weller, 1994: 18) had observed that just within a month of its operation in Liberia, ECOMOG's mandate appeared to have metamorphosed into a military offensive with the sole purpose of defeating Charles Taylor and the NPFL and especially, preventing them from over running the Monrovia and therefore developing protective coat to support their zone around the capital city.**

An Observer Mission initiative was established by the UN Secretary Council known as UNOMIL. This was novel considering it was the first time the UN would jointly establish or cooperate an existing peacekeeping mission established by another organisation, in this instance, the ECOWAS. UNOMIL came into existence in February 1994 with six major components: military, engineering, transport, electoral, medical and communication. Formalisation of the ECOWAS-UN (OAU inclusive) peacekeeping cooperation on Liberia was done with the adoption of the Cotonou Agreement (Shiner, 1994; Kieh, 2009).

Yet, the implementation of the Cotonou Accord was beset by a number of challenges including those that had to do with trust and inadequate resources. To rectify these challenges, talks were held by representatives of the different parties resulting in two other accords signed by parties: Akosombo and Accra Agreements (September and December 1994 respectively). The former was a supplementary accord to the February Agreement with the purpose being to clarify some of the terms of the Cotonou Agreement. The latter is also known as *The Acceptance and Accession Agreement*.

However, the two agreements were equally mired in several disputes that limited their successful implementation. These controversies and failure of the accords to produce any meaning related to the situations on the battlefields in Liberia as the year 1994 drew to an end. Alignments and realignments resulting from factionalisation and splinter groups emerging with new interests (short and long term) had the biggest consequences on the failure of the various agreements. The UN at a time lamented the unfortunate situation, noting that Liberia had become “a no-man’s land” as warlords without any political ideology or agenda, but with considerable number of rebel fighters, embarked on conquering more territories to boost their own claim to power. At the

time, the NPFL faced significant opposition and attacks from ULIMO-K, AFL and ULIMO-J. It is believed that these opposition groups had covert support from some ECOMOG representatives considering the fact that their focus was on Taylor (UN, 1995).

### **2.3. Theoretical Framework**

This study is guided by two theories, namely, Agenda Setting Theory and Decision Making Theory. The former is used to demonstrate how the manipulation or management of information can be used to influence the views of targeted audience with the aim of satisfying the objective or end goal of the information manipulator or manager. The latter, on the other hand, emphasises the systematic administration of information, and notes, particularly in crisis management, that when decisions are not taken properly and in a timely manner, there would be consequences for the decision maker.

#### **2.3.1. Agenda Setting Theory**

The promulgators of the theory like Cohen (1963) and Grabber (1989) contend that information gathering and dissemination, and the news media has significant influence on what news or event is considered important and how much of it should be put forward to the audiences. The core argument of the agenda setting theorists focus on identifying essential theme in a pool of information based on the present need and store for future need (Asemah and Edegor, 2012). News editors and directors, through a routine selection and presentation of the news, focus their attention and influence public perception of what is newsworthy and what constitutes the day's most significant issues.

This capacity to sway perception and determine the salience of issues on the public agenda is widely referred to as the agenda setting role of the media or information managers. Associated with agenda setting is agenda building theory, which describes the process by which a topic is brought to the notice of decision makers. The agenda that becomes vital is the outcome of interplay between the media and other sources or the public in general. These become the issues of important to the public. The agenda setting theory, therefore, implies that issues that garner prominent and frequent coverage in the media turn out to be the themes that the viewing public considers to be most important. The point underscored is that the theory puts forward that the media or an information manager does not necessarily have to support a particular view against

another before public opinion could be affected, rather, the media shapes public opinion by emphasising certain issues in public domain.

Though more popularly utilised in the study of media communications, agenda setting theory is relevant to this study in so many ways. Eriksson and Noreen (2002) give an example of its relevance. They argue that though the agenda setting theory is not often utilised in the traditional security studies and research community to determine or influence the security policy agenda, the theory has made valuable contributions to security risk perception, threat images and generally, military combat politics. Generally speaking, given the fact that information managers are responsible in setting an agenda for their organisations to follow and thus influence what members of that organisation think about at a time, to this fact, it becomes imperative therefore, to use the agenda setting of information managers to understand and explain how information management either increased casualty figure or improve security and peace in the operation of the Nigerian Army during PSOs in Liberia.

More specifically, its relevance to the study could be gleaned from its usefulness in four different areas. How it affects communication with the enemy, on the public, on friendly forces and allies, and on own contingent. The theory supposes that how information is manipulated and portrayed determines how stakeholders view one's capabilities and strength. It is important towards understanding, predicting and countering the posturing of both friendly and friendly forces, and even the civilian populations. Agenda setting in military warfare relates to military psychology. Effective communication could contribute to the psychological resilience of the fighting force and instil a feeling of superiority over the enemy.

There are potentially dangerous or threatening actions and events that could ultimately negatively affect the conduct of an operation. It could relate to casualty figure, information about enemy capabilities and so on. In such instances, information managers in military operation could effectively utilise information in their possession to encourage resilience among their troops and counteract enemy forces for operational successes. As observed by Murray (2013), information management and psychological warfare are value added roles that eventually contribute as determinant of military victories. Through the manipulation of information, military decision makers can more effectively understand, develop, target and influence friendly

and enemy forces to accomplish tactical, operational and strategic objectives in a peace support operation.

### **2.3.2. Decision-making Theory**

Advocates of decision making theory include Etzioni (2014). The theorist assumes decision making as a mental process (cognitive process) in determining a particular plan or course of action having considered many possibilities. In fact, all decision making attempt link the adoption stage of final choice which considered the most suitable for the situation at hand as dependent on basic psychological conditions.

Etzioni begins by arguing that generally, humans are poor knowers in terms of the information they generate and the manner in which these are processed. He argues also that in addition to suffering from limitations of their brains, humans are equally easily influenced by their emotions and are subject to hardwired cognitive biases. Based on these limitations, Etzioni recommends the importance for decision makers to acquire what he termed “built-in delays” (2014: 616) in decision making. The argument is that, as long as human emotions play a vital role in distorting individual’s choices, decision makers would greatly benefit from putting in place mechanism and safeguards that could assist them from being unduly swayed by their emotions or their hardwired cognitive biases, especially the wrong ones.

Because of the gravity of impact that some decisions can have on the recipients, there is the need for decision makers to utilise every available institutions and mechanism that could aid informed decision making or the ability to quickly recall a decision if made in error. While some decisions may have to be taken quickly, patience is also vitally important to prevent wrong judgment. Etzioni (2014) recommends that one simple approach decision makers can utilise in preventing wrong decision making could be,

drafting a decision but ‘sleeping’ on it, delaying announcing and implementing the decision for a period of time, discussing the decision with others who do not share the same emotions that the decision evokes in the decision-maker, and above all role playing – pretending to be subject to the decision rather than the decision-maker (Etzioni, 2014: 616).

Another approach could involve developing a computer application that could make it possible to quickly and easily recall, for example, a sent email within a given period of time chosen by the sender before such information could be read by the receiver.

Nonetheless, proponents of decision making theory such as Stojanovic (2013) believe that most of decision making theory is prescriptive or normative, largely focusing on the best alternative choice of action; even though in practice, what is considered the best option may be flawed and unable to achieve the maximum expectation in certain situations. This is so even though the decision emerged from a fully rational, accurate and extensive decision making process. A vital aspect of the theory talks about decision analysis which is more or less prescriptive and discusses practically, how decisions should be made by stakeholders. Etzioni (2014) agrees with Stojanovic (2013) that decision analysis equally relates to the search and provision of scientific tools, software and approaches that could be put into effect to assist decision makers arrive at an informed choice of action. The most comprehensive, sophisticated and systematic automated tools created so far are known as decision support systems.

Since axiomatic rules are rarely adhered to by actors in terms of their behaviours, this often leads to under-utilisation of certain available advantages that could have aided better decisions. Within this context, studies of descriptive discipline argue that people or stakeholders, sometimes will naturally do what they want to do irrespective of decision support systems. Furthermore, it is probable to lower the perception of flawless information, reasonableness and things like that in different ways, and generate a sequence of diverse recommendations or projections about behaviour, creating the potential for further analysis of decision making of these kinds that ensues in reality. More recently, greater attention has been focused on what is sometimes referred to as 'behavioural decision theory' leading to further inquiry into what rational decision-making requires.

The prescriptive value of the decision making theory lies in its recommendations to decision makers to ensure that robust, accurate information is available at appropriate levels of notice to inform the various decision making phases. With regards to the study, the military authorities can be seen as the decision makers who are saddled with the task of using available information in peace support related situations. Their capacity to make right decision, manage the information

they have and the extent to which their operations are successful are all determined by the information they receive and how they utilise same.

Decision making in military combat is both science and art and requires rigorous scientific analysis. Decision making can stand in the way between life and death, and thus, those who make the decision require, as Etzioni (2014) argues, an objective mind and must make maximum use of information available to them. While every Battle Command is divided into two groups—Command and Control, the art of command is the arena of the commander and it is his duty as the decision maker to visualise the threats and opportunities, make decisions and lead. Hence, the military authorities, to be able to provide tactical and strategic decision making that will translate to military successes, need to ensure effective management of information. This involves effective analysis of intelligence information through the application of professional knowledge, logic and judgement.

Another important application of the decision making theory to the study is that, as a system, the decision making process, including the Mission Analysis, Course of Action Development, Course of Action Analysis/Comparison, and Decision & Execution must be seamlessly tailored by the military authorities to the unique needs of the mission. Lastly, even though Etzioni (2014) recommends built-in delay mechanisms to prevent misjudgements, TCAICE (undated) argues that military decision makers, especially commanders at the battlefields, still need to make and implement decisions quicker than the enemy; and to achieve this, they recommended that commanders must ensure that decisions are:

- Flexible: abbreviate or modify the process to accommodate the situation and time available
- Comprehensive: consider both quantifiable and intangible aspects of military operations. This requires the translation of friendly and enemy strengths, weapon systems, training, morale, and leadership into combat capabilities. It also requires a clear understanding of weather and terrain effects and the ability to visualise the possible flow of the battle.
- Continuous: The tactical decision making process (TDMP) is a continuous process. The commander and staff must constantly collect, process, and evaluate information; and lastly,

- Focused on the Future: doctrinal emphasis is on making decisions which influence the outcome of the battle and which result in seizing the initiative.

### **3.0. CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Research Design**

This study employed survey and case study research designs. A case study research does an in-depth analysis of specific individuals, processes, organisations, programmes, neighbourhoods, institutions and incidences. It provides rich data and analysis on a phenomenon (Neale, Shyam and Boyce, 2006). Case studies are selected because they are highly effective, representative, and typical or special thus could be utilised to extrapolate for larger groups. Yin (2004) corroborates



this when he affirms that a case study examines in-depth a case within its real life context. There could be exploratory, descriptive or explanatory case studies. Thus, the use of case study design here is to explain and explore the role and nature of information management by the NA during PSO.

Furthermore, survey design could be employed for descriptive, explanatory and exploratory purposes. This design, according to Earl Babbie (2007:244) is chiefly used when individuals serve as the unit of analysis. It is vital for original data collection and description of a population that may be too extensive for total sampling. It is also an excellent design in measuring orientations and attitudes in a large population. In this study, survey design is used to describe how information management by the Nigerian Army during the PSO in Liberia is challenged.

This study, therefore, investigated the use of information by the NA in the Peace Support Operation using the Liberian case. It sheds light on how information management minimised the cost of warfare- both in human and material terms. The research interrogated the nature and role of information management in PSOs. The choice of case study and survey designs is appropriate given that they help to critically assess the phenomenon—the Nigerian Army in Liberia. The choice is also informed by the fact that no singular design would have been able to furnish us with all details required to interrogate how effective information management impacts military PSO. The study, therefore, employed descriptive survey and case study.

### **3.2. Area of Study**

This study was conducted in Liberia, West Africa. Liberia is bordered in the west by Sierra Leone, in the north by Guinea, and on its eastern borders by Cote d'Ivoire. It borders the North Atlantic Ocean to the southwest and lies between latitude 4° and 9°N and longitudes 7° and 12°W. The country has a 2019 population estimate of about 4,945,584 with a total land area of 37,189 square miles (<http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/liberia-population/>).

#### **Map 3.1: Administrative Map of Liberia**



Source: <http://www.geographicguide.com/africa-maps/liberia.htm> (retrieved April 1, 2019).

The country is the oldest republic in Africa believed to have been founded in the 19th century but became notorious for its almost intractable and ruinous civil war in the 1990s. The war which registered high cost in terms of human and physical destruction led to series of peace support operations- peacekeeping, peacebuilding and peace enforcement. To this end, officers and men of the Nigerian Army have piloted military operations. These operations- the failures and successes- have depended largely on the management of information. It provided the impetus to examine information management.

### 3.3. Population of the Study

The population for this study is the Nigerian Army- troops who have participated and are still participating in the PSO in Liberia. However, the target population for the study comprised of officers and men of NA who have participated in PSO in Liberia since 2003 and NIBATT 36 and

37 of the Nigerian Army deployed in United Nation PSO in Liberia from July 2015-July 2016. The two Nigerian battalions deployed were about 1,500 officers and men.

### 3.4. Sample Size

In most cases, the population of study is usually too large to be managed with a given time in a study. Thus, a representative sample is necessary. Sample is the subset of a population selected to represent the general characteristics of the entire population. In this study, 14.6% of 1500 (the study population) was sampled. Therefore, a total of 220 respondents were sampled in the study with one hundred and ten respondents in NIBATT 36 and 37 respectively.

### 3.5. Sampling Technique

The purposive sampling technique was adopted for this study. Purposive technique involves a process where the researcher deliberately chooses respondents whom he/she considers knowledgeable on the phenomenon under study (Babbie, 2007). The technique helped in locating officers and men of the Nigerian Army with detailed information on the role of information management in its operation in Liberia.

### 3.6. Sources of Data Collection

The study adopted structured instrument, questionnaires and interview guide to gather primary data while secondary sources of data covered Nigerian Army Signal Messages, Nigerian Army part one and part two Orders, letters, periodicals, reviews, reports, journal articles, online articles, and relevant books. Efforts were made to glean information from these documents which detail the role of information management in PSOs. This is clarified in the table 3.1 below:

**Table 3.1: Showing Sources of Data Collection**

<b>Primary Sources</b>	<b>Secondary Sources</b>
Questionnaire survey	Nigerian Army Signal Messages
Interviews: Key informant and in-depth	Nigerian Army Part One and Part Two

interviews	Orders
	United Nations Documents on PSO
	Letters
	Periodicals
	Reviews
	Reports
	Journal Articles
	Online Articles
	Books

**Source:** compiled by the author

### **3.7. Method of Data Collection**

Data for this study was collected through a questionnaire survey, key informant interviews, in-depth interviews and secondary materials.

#### **3.7.1. Research Instrument**

A copy of questionnaire and an interview guide were utilised to collect information from respondents. The questionnaire comprised twenty (20) items which were drawn based on the study objectives. The interview guide contained eight (8) structured questions based on the research objectives.

#### **3.7.2. Questionnaire Survey**

A total of two hundred and twenty (220) copies of a questionnaire was administered to officers and men of the Nigerian Army who participated in PSO in Liberia between 2003 and 2016. Two hundred copies of the questionnaire were returned and analysed. The administration of

questionnaire was to understand how information management by the Nigerian Army during the PSO in Liberia was challenged. It also centred on roles, nature, trends, patterns and processes of PSOs. This validated the information sourced from Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and In-depth Interviews (IDIs).

### **3.7.3. Key Informant Interview (KIIs)**

Two (2) KIIs were conducted with the Commanding Officer of NIBATT 37, Colonel S. O. Aliyu and the Military Assistant to the Force Commander, Major Abdul Aziz Saidu. These discussions focused on roles and nature of information management in PSOs, trends, patterns and processes of information management in PSOs and the methods of information acquisition and dissemination during PSOs. Information gathered from the KIIs validated the survey and IDIs.

### **3.7.4. In-depth Interviews (IDIs)**

Eighteen (18) in-depth interviews (IDIs) were conducted with heads of military units during PSOs in Liberia between July 2015 and July 2016. The discussions centred on the research objectives and explored the roles and nature of information management in PSOs, trends, patterns and processes of information management in PSOs, the methods of information acquisition and dissemination during PSOs and how information management by the Nigerian Army during the PSO in Liberia was challenged. This was used to validate information gathered from KIIs and questionnaire.

## **3.8. Method of Data Analysis**

Data gathered from the questionnaire were quantitatively analysed using descriptive statistics in percentages and tables. The qualitative data generated through KIIs, IDIs, and documents were coded and subjected to content analysis.

### **3.9. Ethical Considerations**

The researcher ensured ethical standards for conducting research using human subjects/participants including respect for respondents' privacy, issue of confidentiality, avoiding research fraud through data integrity and use of appropriate analytical tools with a view to ensuring high level participation, truthfulness, reliability and quality information.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND DECISION MAKING BY NIGERIAN ARMY IN UN-PSO IN LIBERIA

#### 4.1. Background Information to the Conflict

In Liberia in 1989, Charles Taylor led a violent attack on then President Samuel Doe, the root of the conflict could be traced to decades of perceived historical inequalities between Liberian ethnic groups and the emergence of Samuel Doe to power in 1980 (Iweze, 1993; Vick, 2003; Oluwadare, 2014). Between late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the American-Liberian took over the socio-economic and political domains in Liberia (Oluwadare, 2014:105). Although a minority group, the Americo-Liberians entrenched themselves in power as they institutionalised the structures of marginalisation, alienation and domination. Sesay explains this hegemonic dominance in his argument that the minority Americo-Liberians, constituting a mere five percent of the Liberian population in 1980, and with no economic or political power, succeeded in taking power through a coup in April 12, 1980.

Thus, deep rooted socioeconomic and political exclusion deepened grievances among the majority indigenous peoples leading to mobilisation against the Americo-Liberians. As such, Samuel Doe, on April 12 1980, through a military coup, put an end to five decades of domination by the Americo-Liberians and set up a military government. While the Americo-Liberians constitute about five percent of the population ruled for over a hundred and thirty years (130), dominance of political, economic, social and resources and it was a true absolute monopoly of power over the majority who were indigenes (Dunn, 1998).

Initially, indigenous population celebrated and supported the overthrow of a government they considered hostile. Apart from executing President Tolbert and key elements of his administration which signalled the end of historical oppressions and injustices for the indigenous peoples, Doe promised two things that endeared him to the people: one, a national election to usher in a new democratically elected government and a democratic constitution to take place in 1985; and two, to end inequalities and systemic corruption, and engage in equal redistribution of the wealth of the nation among the people.

These sets of promises were mere camouflage as Doe threw them out shortly after. Rather than engaging the roots of the historical injustices and inequalities, Doe joined the fray of the Americo-Liberians before him and propagated ethnic politics, establishing a system that benefitted the Krahn—the ethnic group to which he belonged. Whereas Doe attempted to establish a draft constitution to reintroduce self-planned civilian government in 1985 eventhough he (Doe) successfully created National Constitutional Committee under Amos Sawyer leadership in 1981. He also opposed the report of the committee and transmuted into a transitional caretaker administration making himself the head and civilian president in Liberia in 1994 by undermining special election commission under National Democratic Party of Liberia (Sawyer, 1992). Under these conditions, feelings of disaffection were allowed to thrive as the actions and inactions of the Samuel Doe led government resonates with a long history of monopolising power by the Americo-Liberians and gave impetus for new conflicts.

Not long after did the disaffection with Doe’s style of government trigger the already established Taylor-led NPFL insurrection in 1989 that turned into ethnic violence as the affected persons appealed to ethnic consciousness and threatened the peace of the entire country. By May 1991, more rebel and splinter groups had emerged to join the fray with the NPFL and the Yomi Johnson’s INPFL. Soldiers and refugees of the Krahn ethnic stock who fought in AFL formed the so-called United Liberation Movement of Liberia (ULIMO) that was led by Raleigh Seekie, who was a deputy minister of finance in the government of Samuel Doe (Damrosch, 1993:170). While the rebel groups fragmented, they complicated the conflict, displaced large number of the population and generated external interest.

Intriguing statistical findings on the conflict have shown that majority of the Liberians were internally displaced (Damrosch, 1993; UNDP 1994) with majority of them, estimated at about 7000,000 fleeing to the Capital, Monrovia, in search of refuge at the peak of the crisis (UNDP, 1994). To reduce these human sufferings and possibly end the conflict, different Liberian groups including prominent individuals and leaders of the Muslim and Christian bodies under the Inter-Faith Mediation Committee made efforts to mediate in the conflict. Meanwhile, little or no effort was made by the UN and OAU to douse the tension when it began (Damrosch, 1993). On its part, the OAU was hindered by lack of political will and paucity of resources as was the case in the Chadian crisis in 1981 where the organisation was deemed to have failed or under-



performed its conflict management role. As it were, **ECOWAS took the initiative to wade into the conflict.**

#### **4.2. External Involvement and Military Intervention**

The question of addressing conflict issues and promoting peaceful co-existence is deeply rooted in different cultures of the world but specifically in Africa. Inspired by the question of preserving and defending peace as well as eliminating destructive threats to human life, the ECOWAS leaders responded quickly to save the situation in Liberia at a time. This called for the multinational force to be invoked if Article 41 fails to root out the conflict and if peace and security remains threatened. Yet, Article 52 in chapter eight allows intervention at the regional level (Salami, 2013:780), which gave impetus and legitimacy to the existence of ECOMOG. Under such arrangements, the UN charter provided the umbrella for sub-regional bodies like ECOWAS to function and became a strong tool for peacebuilding project in Liberia.

ECOWAS leaders were quite aware of this provision and led Nigeria then foreign minister, Ike Nwachukwu, to claim that ECOWAS acted on behalf of the UN. Thus, ECOWAS leadership was therefore commended by the UNSC for exploring the conflict management approaches endorsed by the UN and adapting it in its sub-regional threats. This followed a detailed explanation by ECOWAS delegation to the Council to explain the efforts of the sub-regional body to restore peace in Liberia and the entire sub-region. There was a conference held at Bamako which adopted a peace plan for Liberia (UNSC, 1992). In all, ECOMOG was necessary towards achieving the peace plans.

Although basing its decision to intervene in Liberia on two major grounds: concern about refugee flow and the dislocating effects on neighbouring countries and on humanitarian grounds, Charles Taylor did not buy the idea of ECOWAS intervening in his country; this for him was a ploy by the Sub-regional leaders to protect their colleague—Samuel Doe—and prevent him (Taylor) from assuming political power. Consequently, he denounced ECOMOG and the ECOWAS leaders' mediation efforts particularly referring to ECOMOG's presence in his country as a direct attack on its territorial integrity and sovereignty. Taylor did not see ECOMOG as a peace force (**ECOWAS, 1990**).

The non-acceptance of ECOMOG by Taylor was not the biggest obstacle encountered; rather it was the opposition of some ECOWAS' member countries that counted mostly in countering the notion of a peacekeeping force and providing a negative image of the cease-fire monitoring group. Specifically, Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire were in the forefront of those francophone countries that condemned the decision to send ECOMOG forces in Liberia (Greenwood 1993). As a result, the ECOMOG deployment in Liberia was criticised as lacking impartiality, legitimacy and effectiveness and that it also became part of the conflict challenges in Liberia.

Nevertheless, Nigerian Foreign Affairs Minister and a member of the ECOWAS delegation to UNSC, Major General Ike Nwachukwu, in his address to the Council rebuffed the claims and insisted that ECOMOG has been an example of collective self-supporting mechanism in a sub-regional conflict (UNSC, 1992). Nevertheless, the Military Public Information Officer (MPIO) of the Nigerian battalion claimed that the mission in Liberia is scaling down, a scenario that was occasioned by Security Council Resolution 2239 (SCR2239). Discussing military hierarchy, structures of information management and the shrinking mandate, he noted that:

Before now, we had battalion, sector, NAICON headquarters and Force headquarters. Now, the UN has introduced a draw down, which is a plan to withdraw completely from Liberia as such most structures are collapsed. This has not only affected the mandate, it has also affected the nature of information management since the hierarchy is now the battalion and the Force headquarters.

Corroborating the Nigerian MPIO, the Military Assistant to the UN Force Commander at the Force Headquarters added by saying that:

We used to have about 15 military observer team sites spread across the country. Each of these team sites had between 10-15 military observers. But right now, due to the UN draw down plan, these numbers have been reduced to 6 team sites and each team site having between 8-10 military observers.

Earlier, the mission began with a military strength of about 15,000 troops and by mid-2016 the troops had been reduced to about 2,800 and based on the above stated UN draw down plan, it is expected that by late 2016, the troops will further reduce to 1,204 troops. Basically, interviewees were in consensus that as the period of field study, the mandate of the UN peace support mission in Liberia revolved around the protection of civilians, protection of UN personnel and facilities,

assisting security forces of the government of Liberia to take charge of some aspect of the provision and protection of infrastructure and defence of human right as much as the mandate allows.

Since the military component of PSOs involves different national contingents, it creates a different nomenclature for information coordination and management. Whereas these national contingents in most cases come with their own doctrines, their own interpretation of rules of engagement and with the command and control lines routed back to the participating countries ministry of defence or defence headquarters, there is a different flow of information coordination and management. Information management in the military as a concept can be categorised into three main areas. The first relates to how information use affects the general outcome of the mission. Key considerations in this context include but not limited to information on logistics, intelligence, weather, personnel and legal issues. The second operation component talks about the mode of conveying information to the relevant decision makers. This involves hardware and software; communication links, satellites, cables, and procedures, formats, and filters for information transport and retrieval.

Lastly, the third functional area could be viewed, in actual term, as information operations. It includes procedures to guarantee the operational security of information, electronic warfare, deception and disinformation, as well as techniques for the physical destruction of the enemy information systems (Avruch et al, 2000). This third area which also includes public affairs, psychological operations (PSYOP), and civil affairs and how it relates to the mandate of the mission are specifically the preoccupation of this study.

Besides, Nigerian Army forms a large contingent of both ECOMOG and UNMIL and the participation of the NA in the operation in Liberia was informed by the foreign policy and defence policy objectives of Nigeria.

#### **4.3. Nigerian Army Involvement in Liberia Peace Support Operations**

Over the years, the Nigerian military has been considered competent and able in tackling flash points of violent political conflicts in Africa and beyond. Throughout Africa, therefore, the Nigerian Military have played compelling roles in peace keeping operations.

The Nigerian Army were deployed as the largest contingent of ECOMOG to save the West African sub-region from anarchy as well as restore peace and order in Liberia. Initially, NA contributed 756 officers and men out of the first 2,500 ECOMOG forces required to restore peace to Liberia, leaving the remaining 1744 for other troop contributing states (Iweze, 1993; Vogt, 1993). Subsequently, Mali and Togo withdrew from the arrangement of contributing forces. This action has often been interpreted as lack of financial power on the side of Mali and Togo to fully contribute troops the PSO in Liberia.

Nonetheless, this appears to be a mere camouflage as the real reason behind their withdrawal may be attributed to the age long rivalry between Anglophone and Francophone Africa (Atkinson, 1997:4). Their withdrawal laid the responsibility on the Nigerian Army as there were constant requests for troop reinforcement in the mission field. To this end, as at October 1990, NA produced about 5000 out of the 6000 soldiers and men in Liberia. Between 1991 and 1993, the number of troops rose to 12,000 and NA contributed 10,000 soldiers and men. In this regard, the Nigeria contingents did not only dominate ECOMOG, they also played critical roles in the ECOWAS peacebuilding project albeit with enormous cost – both human and material. Thus, NA has achieved significant success in the PSO in Liberia.

The success of the Nigerian Army in PSOs, specifically in Liberia, may have been informed by its experience in such operations since the 1960s. Although power and scope of each PSO mission varied from the other, the mandate of the NA has remained largely the same. To achieve the tasks, strategic pre-deployment training is required to gain skills for prosecuting the assignment. Often conducted in Nigerian Army Peace Keeping Centre, Jaji, Kaduna State, Nigeria, the training seeks to equip officers and men with the best conflict management tool possible. Drawing attention to this, one of the commandants of Nigerian Battalion observed that:

Tasks such as observation techniques, surveillance and supervision, negotiation and mediation, presence patrolling, investigation of complaints and information gathering require additional training for troop efficiency and this is done in Kaduna before troops set out for PSO.

In this connection, what is particularly important for this study is the training on information gathering for troop efficiency. This indicates that information gathering and management is

crucial in Nigerian Army decision making in PSOs. This provides the ground to interrogate information management in the planning and implementation of PSO in Liberia.

#### **4.4. Information Management as a Critical Tool in Nigerian Army Decision-making in the PSO in Liberia**

While Nigerian officers who responded to this study were in consensus that in PSO, troops information management must be of high quality and that commanders must use it to the fullest for efficiency, scholars of military science and particularly military strategy and information management corroborate such claims by arguing that information does not only reduce uncertainty in the processes of decision making but that it forms the foundation for action (Clausewitz, 2012; Espejo and Watt, 1998). By action, these scholars tend to refer to the decisions that follow when a military commander has information that is valuable to the military operation he is conducting. Therefore, the information/action connections are critical in decision making and military operations. This is because the capacity to make informed decision by way of converting information to action emanates from the ability to preserve a vast repertoire of information that would be readily available for use in time of need, and the ability to educate the people concerned on the availability of data within an institution and why and when to deploy such information. As a matter of fact, it is a time-honoured requirement that soldiers avail to the leadership observation and information at their disposal which could aid effective decision making. This suggests that information is power in the battlefield.

In 1915, George Scriven, a military strategist, claimed that success in military operations is not dependent only on having the best possible information, but the ability to exploit it to the maximum. In other words, information gathered need to be analysed and properly applied to arrive at a desired conclusion. Scriven maintained that if the service of information of a commander is better than that of his opponent, it is an advantage he needs to exploit to gain upper hand and capitalise on the information limitations of the adversary (Cited in Norton, 2002:1).

By superior knowledge, Scriven implied providing the correct, analysed and timely information to decision makers in usable format. Hence, information management profoundly influences capabilities of all personnel at the operational and tactical levels. Whereas information

management is fundamental in the planning and decision making processes of PSOs, it is also central to a commander in visualising his battle space (Norton, 2002:2), because information that a commander does or does not have is what drives decisions and determines troops' security and indeed, that of the public. Producing timely, accurate, relevant and useable information in PSO is achievable if information hierarchy system is followed. If neglected, it could result in loss of critical assets including officers and men.

In the Nigerian Armed Forces, the leadership saddled with the task of planning and executing PSOs whether (ECOWAS), (AU) /or global (UN) understand the significance of information management in their decision making to guarantee effective operations. A careful examination of the situation and the information available informs how the military hierarchy respond to situations from their command in Nigeria. In the mission field, the critical nature and role information plays compels all personnel in operation to ensure information is passed to the right authorities for decision making. This implies that personnel in operation should possess the capacity to get the right information at the right time and to the right person (field commander) to enable him/her make an informed decision for the security of the mission as well as national security (Australian Government Department of Defense, 2010). Timeliness and objectivity of information are therefore taking seriously in information management for military operations. In this context, a Nigerian battalion field commander in NIBAT 36 pointed out that:

If information does not get to you timely, it will hamper decision making and it will as well hamper situations for the defence headquarters. For instance, if there will be trouble in town tomorrow and you waited till an hour to the incident before you informed the commander, what again can he do? In fact, to even take decision whether to deploy men or not will be hampered because that timeliness was wrong (Interview, 2016).

Primarily, since time is a factor in both planning, preparation and decision making in military operations, timely and quality information is required for the military hierarchy to analyse the information, set agenda and arrive at a final choice to safeguard the defence infrastructure and the public. Both Agenda Setting and Decision Making Theorists are usually interested in the output produced by their decisions and actions.

Nonetheless, in the mission field, what often generates confusion for commanders is the fear of getting overwhelmed not for non-availability of information but that of inability to understand

and make it available for positive use (decision) given that the Army stresses qualitative nature of information as a vital tenet essential to conduct decisive operations. Whether in war or in PSO, attaining information superiority is a well thought out plan that helps in providing the primary source of operational advantage. Norton argued that critical capabilities, when you have information superiority, become the operational advantage of better decision-making. In this sense, relevant information is vital in taking decisions and ensuring superiority over the adversary. In this regard, a Nigerian officer stated that:

Among the Nigerian battalion and in the level of the UN, when information is gathered, it will be passed to ASA, that is, Appropriate Superior Authority and when he gets it, he must process it because there are some steps taken on such information before he acts on it. After processing it and ascertaining its validity, he makes his decision through the structures of command (Interview, 2016).

The above labels information management as the science part of control since it narrows the gap between present and missing information to inform adequate decisions. In this connection, important information is all information of relevance to the commanders and personnel in the exercise of command and control. Survey result show that the role and nature of information management in decision making is critical in PSOs. This is clearly reflected in the respondents' view on the critical role of information in peace support operations

**Table 4.1: Critical Nature of Information Management to PSOs**

<i>Items</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>D</i>
Information management in PSOs includes document management, record management, digital access management, learning management system.	80 (40%)	108 (54%)	4 (2%)	8 (4%)
Information management in PSOs includes intelligence, logistics, personal, legal issues and weather	78 (39%)	120 (60%)	0 (0%)	2 (1%)
Information management process in PSOs includes communication like satellites, cables and procedures.	76 (38 %)	106 (53%)	18 (4%)	10 (5%)
Information management is crucial to either the success or	74 (37%)	118 (59%)	6 (3%)	2 (1%)

failure of PSOs.				
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**Source:** Fieldwork, (2016)

While the above table revealed that majority 188 (94%) of the respondents emphasised information management in PSOs to include document management, record management, digital access management, learning management system, the core interest is on how majority 192 (96%) of responses noted that adequate information management in PSOs delivers the mandate and has visible benefits. Adequate and timely information accessibility and dissemination is therefore critical in decision for military commanders.

Consequently, Army commanders often begin their analysis with their mandate and the maps or charts available to him before his men develop the intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) mechanisms required to provide the commander detailed information (ICRC, 2013). At that early stage, accurate information provided by maps and charts inform the personnel generally about locations of legally protected persons, objects, installations and areas and helps the commander and his personnel thought process and appreciation on the mission. Non-availability of this basic information could negatively impact on the military operations. In Liberia, when the first troops arrived, they had no maps that should have provided basic information and this had severe consequences on both the troops and the mission itself. One respondent maintained that non-availability of maps at the commencement of the mission in Liberia significantly affected the mission and that it was a situation Charles Taylor cashed on to demand the withdrawal of ECOMOG from the country as corroborated by Iweze (1993:221).

As such, relevant information derived from proper management of information is the mainstay of any military operation. Information management systems cannot be developed in isolation of the mandate of the military operation and the mandate itself should not be developed without relevant information, i.e. information management. That is, both information management and the mandate are mutually dependent. In war situation, the information gathering and decision making procedure should continue to emphasise continues delivery of information especially about the enemy; so too, the PSOs gather information and reach decisions based on the mandate of the mission. The Commanding Officer of NIBATT 37 noted that in the current situation in Liberia:



the mandate of the peace support operations is essentially to build the peace having achieved it; the protection of UN personnel and facilities as well as protection of civilians, assisting security forces of the government of Liberia to take charge of some aspect of the provision and protection of infrastructure and civilians and defending human rights as much as the mandate allows (interview, 2016).

Mandate, according to Boutros Boutros-Ghali (1992), informs a peace operation and refers to the broad objectives and specific instructions that define limit and guide the operations. Since PSO mandates are to build peace and secure infrastructure, information management becomes crucial. In this sense, the above quotation noted the importance of having a stable plan for information management in PSOs since the lives of civilians, provision and protection of critical state infrastructure; UN facilities are involved in the mandate. This implies that whether in war or PSO, information management is central and crucial to military success. The commanding officer of NIBATT 37 who drew the similarities and dissimilarities of information management in war and PSO posited that information management in both situations determine your plans and decisions. He claimed that it is the foundation of any operation.

Drawing their point of convergence, the commander asserted that in both situations, you are gathering information to be better informed, to be aware of your immediate environment, situational awareness, and you are gathering information to make future plan both in war and PSO. This view highlights and properly situates the critical role of information management in decision making. This is corroborated in the literature of information management and decision making where Ajayi and Omirin (2007:109) claim that in a situation where the relevant information required for planning are not available, the situation potentially leads to poor planning, miscalculated priority needs, incorrect decision making and defective scheduling of activities. This position points to the centrality of information management and its accuracy, which bring about what Clausewitz referred to as heroic decision (1942:5).

Although heroic decision is not easily achievable by military commanders, yet, information, as claimed by Francis Bacon is power and as such, the control of such information leads to greater power. Often, Clausewitz's heroic decision is driven by information superiority; which is the capacity to avail one's forces with quality, accurate and timely information to meet their information needs in a comprehensiveness and unrivalled manner than trumps the capabilities of the adversary. Undoubtedly, information superiority gives a field commander an advantage over

his adversary, because he is armed with superior intelligence that is capable of guaranteeing victory. This makes the ability to find, process and share valuable information to troops in military operations responsible for checking threats to a battalion mandate. In situations where the information management framework breaks down and fails to produce advanced information within the intelligence community, it is most likely to have grave implications on national security or on the mandate. Best (2011) observes that this was one among the reasons that made the September 11 terrorist attack in the US easy for the terrorists. He claimed that the agencies within the intelligence community had clues to the impending attack but retained them in their files; an act which negatively impacted prompt decision making to foil the terrorist attack.

Most times, what leads to excessive control of information is the attempt by military authorities to protect such information from getting to the adversary. Yet, field officers need to always enjoy the privilege of the need to know, the need to have, the need to hold, and the need to share. The information officer of NIBATT 37 alluded to this and argued that in the Army, information system is categorised or prioritised into need to know, need to have, need to hold, and need to take. These are ways of managing and protecting information. Explaining this, he gave an instance of a clerk who ideally should have a file since as the chief clerk, there is always a need for proper documentation of information in his possession. So, in like manner, the information officer claimed in the military, the need to have, know, hold or take is very necessary without which military operations could be threatened. In military parlance, the need to take does not mean he/she needs not take it to his/her house; no, he is to take it to the appropriate authority and that is the way it works. The officer therefore claimed that:

If I do not have the authority to know, I have no business being inquisitive about the information. It is just like doctor patient confidentiality principle. If I make a report, I can tell a soldier to take it to city A and give it to Mr. B. That is the need to take; not need to know the content inside. He does not have that need to know.

While the idea behind these systems of control or managing information is for it not to get into unwanted hands, it could threaten the mandate in PSOs especially at the level of peace enforcement. Whereas the commander has the final say, in this age of revolution in the information technology, excessive control of information from other officers could jeopardise operations since technical problems can overwhelm the network to a point of failure and giving undue advantage to opposing forces. It could still go the other way round.

From above, it could be argued that the problem of information management lies in control of information. To an extent, it challenges and affects the realisation of Clausewitz notion of heroic decision. Sometimes, control could lead to information asymmetry. For instance, the 9/11 case presents a scenario where an adversary launches an attack without prompt response from the attacked which possibly resulted from information asymmetry. For Edward and Gerald (2008) information asymmetry is a situation where one party in an exchange is more equipped information-wise than the other and can use this for its advantage. Although they used this concept in analysing decision making in marketing where a competitor is expected to make a reasoned decision which is highly irreconcilable, a close examination of *Politics of Information Management* by Strassman (1995) indicates it has great applicability in the Army. Thus, in the 9/11 case, the terrorists' success in attacking the US was because, intelligence wise, they had superior information ahead of the US, which explains the basis of the asymmetry. To compound this asymmetry, the little that was within the US intelligence circle failed to reach the military because of bureaucratic inertia, the control structure of the information environment. Apparently, this glaring information deficit that existed on the part of US affected it in reaching Clausewitz's heroic decision that could have foiled the 9/11 attack.

In Liberia, there was consensus among respondents that the hierarchy of information gathering is not strictly defined. It could come from anywhere. But the coordination, control and usage of that information follows the structure of military hierarchy from the UN force headquarters. Although the control of information had troubles at the onset of the mission in Liberia (at the ECOMOG level), leading to information deficit, the UN subsequently harmonised this and ensured efficiency. Nonetheless, the Military Assistant to the UN Force Commander claimed that in the present mission there is no information asymmetry on their part since the mandate is on building and sustaining already achieved peace, although he acknowledged that asymmetry could exist.

Yet, information asymmetry remains a strong factor in and a threat to PSOs. To this effect, understanding the local perspective and position of the conflict is very useful which information necessary to take decisions during operations. This is true because in the military operation in Liberia as averred by the Military Assistant, management of information is the plan and as such it is the framework from which to adopt every decision. Such decisions can only be reached

through a thorough process of analysis of available information which ultimately will assist the commanders to arrive at a sound, logical and professional situational understanding to provide decision support to strategy, to policy, and to acquisition.

Accordingly, when the above is readily available, it addresses any form of deficit in information, bridges any form of information asymmetry and helps in guaranteeing the success of PSOs. Ali (2012) holds that the protracted political instability in Liberia and Sierra Leone was resolved largely due to the role of intelligence support that was accessible to the contributing troops which also helped diplomats in mediating between the warring forces.

However, Hamman *et al* (2014) remind us that there were extreme cases PSOs like that of Liberia under ECOMOG, where *ad hoc* troops arrangements were made in the 1990s and deployment to their mission area was equally made just about the same time. In this context, such *ad hoc* arrangements of troops would affect PSO at the level of support to strategy, since basic information about the environment and the conflict were probably not gathered by the intending troops. This is because such *ad hoc* arrangements may have the tendency of failing to factor in the strategic role proper intelligence gathering can play in providing a better political understanding of a conflict situation between warring parties before deploying troops for peacekeeping operation (Smith, 1994). Such scenario could be laced by uncertainty which proper information management would have dealt with (Clark, 2009).

Given the nature of military operations as captured in this section, the object of information management in decision making is simply to design framework for actions (FM 5-0, 2011:1-1). The Military Public Relations Officer (MPIO) of the Nigerian battalion in Liberia raised this point when he claimed that uncertainty is bound to happen in military operations but could be addressed through a well-informed planning. In this sense, planning is an aspect of decision making. Thus, the administrative officer of the Nigerian battalion added that in PSO, challenges are not avoidable but what information management does is to enable mission members, particularly the top military echelon to update and acquaint themselves with decisions to manage the challenges emanating from the environment. Thus, information management in military operations is the scientific process of analysing the operation variables of the adversary, considerations of local population and terrain, weather and other crucial elements within the mission context to ascertain their impact on operations.

In any operation, there is always an Initial Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB) processing which actually take cognizance of every essential loop-holes that might not be in favour of the Commander of an operational domain (FM 6-0, 2014:9-8). This constitutes an integral aspect of planning processes, guidance; commanders can smoothly convert this point to initiate IPB required within a shortest period. Very cogent to note that IPB outputs help the commander's assessment and decision making, familiarise with the terrain, helps him/her advance projections on threats and approachable forces at various point of intercession in the operational environment.

From the foregoing, the military information management provides support for policy in combat operations, it provides support in fashioning out the best strategy to be adopted in defeating an enemy, and also provides support in the acquisition of the right capability to prosecute a war. This perhaps explain why information is claimed to be the strongest point and tool for decision making because the commander, by the provision of reasoned insight into prospective situations or conditions, relies on information to draw formation (US Joint Intelligence 2-0, 2013). In addition, "without information, the military intelligence is deformed" which is very deadly.

Without the right information at the appropriate time, a commander cannot lead his troop to defeat an adversary. On the other hand, in PSOs, the right information helps contributing troops not only in keeping to the mandate of safeguarding civilians, protecting critical infrastructure and building peace but it also helps them in maintaining the contributing country's national security interest, since the security of the troops are critical to their home country. This is achieved with a proper framework of intelligence sharing. That is why Tode (1997) opines that information sharing is essential in bringing cooperation among PSO actors. This, if properly done, could reduce conflict cost on the contributing country, the receiving country and the military contingents.

**4.5. Nigerian Army Information Management and Reduction of Conflict Cost in Liberia**  
Conflicts and wars are extremely expensive in terms of economic and human costs. The costs of conflicts since the twentieth century if calculated in figures will be far incomprehensible. Since 1990, at least six million people have died in bloody wars. The twenty-first century has not been much different. Roche claims that there were 37 armed conflicts fought in about 30 countries of

the world in 2001 only. These wars, influenced and being influenced by over six million small arms in circulation, have resulted in the death of 500,000 people yearly (Roche, 2003:9). Most of these wars have mounted a responsibility on the international community to respond and reduce this enormous cost of wars through the contribution of troops by its member countries. However, troop-contributing countries have their own costs to bear also.

Thus, one of the most challenging threats faced by troop contributing countries in PSOs is the huge economic and human costs the operation imposes on them. Scholars investigating the costs of conflicts conceive the model as a tool which attempts to calculate the price of conflict to humanity (Hoeffler and Fearon, 2014). They tend to view these costs, not just in relations to the number of the deaths, casualties and economic setbacks incurred by those involved, but also the strategic, social, developmental environmental costs of war. Thus, Stiglitz and Bilmes (2008) in their study of the invasion of Iraq by the Coalition Forces, claimed that the preconceived battle went beyond their analysis and predictions, costly, bloody and greater losses were recorded.

In another study, Gelpi, Feaver and Reifler (2009) claim that the human cost of America's intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan has been unprecedented. Although they argued that public opinion in America on whether to support military intervention is shaped not only by the casualty number suffered but also the likelihood of the mission success; yet, they acknowledged that the human costs have been extremely high.

Certainly, active participation in PSOs by countries like Nigeria has cost a great deal leading to a significant human and material loss. Sule (2013:8) reiterates that the position of Nigeria as a regional power has placed her in a leading role and as the financier of ECOWAS. This, according to him, has resulted in significant financial cost to the country and placed a heavy burden on its economy. To this end, there have been great challenges towards reducing the costs of civil wars and conflicts. In fact, PSOs are attempts to reduce the human cost of civil conflict (Oluwadare, 2014:113). Yet, PSOs have come with unprecedented costs. In this regard, this study takes a step beyond calculating the conflict costs and the advantages of calculating such costs (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004; Hoeffler and Fearon, 2014) to indicate that information management could considerably reduce economic and human costs of conflicts in PSOs.

Several respondents were in consensus that information availability and proper management in peace support operations are critical to achieving mission mandate and reduce cost for both troop contributing countries and host nation. What this implies is that information support at the proper time can potentially safeguard critical infrastructures, human persons and even economic costs during PSO. Since military operations like several other ventures depend on information to survive, information availability and proper dissemination become the life wire of any operation. Unlike the conventional war, PSOs are multinational operations which require adequate sharing of collated information. This is vital and critical to the operations and its absence can severely constrain the mission. Discussing this point, the Information Officer of the Nigerian battalion claimed that:

Peace support operation occurs in a multicultural type of setting and for it to succeed, you need joint information sharing and you must be willing not only to secure the environment you are in but also the lives of all within including soldiers and that is why we operate under the UN. In this manner, the role of information management in safeguarding that environment cannot be overemphasised.

Indeed, the value of information management cannot be imagined in the operations and in reducing casualty figure in PSOs. It was reported that intelligence failure led to the death of Doe. It was documented that Samuel Doe was nipped at ECOMOG headquarters in Moronvia on 9 September, 1990 by Yomie Johnson. General Quinoo, who headed the ECOMOG forces, had invited President Doe to the headquarters for talks and he was assured of his safety. On the said date, Doe had arrived at a period when there was a change of guard duty from sophisticated Nigerian forces to a less equipped Gambian contingent (Iweze, 1993). The Nigerian personnel had withdrawn from the scene when Johnson arrived, overwhelmed, disarmed and killed over 80 men of Samuel Doe who had light weapons and took Doe himself alive but was subsequently killed. Although no ECOMOG personnel were shot in the incident (Vick, 2003) but such carnage can only be attributed to intelligence failure. If intelligence was available and properly managed, probably such casualty would not have occurred.

Whereas the ECOMOG headquarters incident was least expected, other events show that Nigeria had incurred significant costs in the past peace operations. The Daily Sun of Tuesday August 5, 2008 quoted UN, Under-Secretary General, Professor Ibrahim Gambari, as having revealed that seven hundred (700) Nigerian soldiers were killed in one month (January, 1999) in the

peacekeeping operations in Sierra Leone. Professor Gambari who disclosed this in a lecture he delivered at the National Defence College, Abuja, suggested that he was probably divulging an official secret. This comment cannot be taken for granted coming from a high profiled personality from the United Nations. What is important, however, is that such carnage could have been reduced or even eliminated with adequate information management. In a similar development, not only did United Nations Operations in Somalia cost a whopping US\$3.5 billion, it led to the death of eighteen (18) US peacekeepers (Albert, 2011:23). This led to the withdrawal of the US from the mission. For the number of US Rangers that died and the way they were killed could be inferred and traced to intelligence failure. In this sense, since PSO is a multinational operation, multinational information sharing is salient in reducing these costs.

Meanwhile, a major setback for the peace mission in the Balkans was lack of information. While the exact cost of that tragedy remains undetermined in terms of both human and material resources and losses, it is obvious that the Dutch sought this information which would have prevented the attack. In this light, a Nigerian intelligence officer in Liberia claimed that:

If every battalion in UN missions have information relevant to the operation and the mandate, solutions to security situations can easily be reached. In this way, unsurmountable problems get solved faster and the mission is most likely to succeed. This informs why the UN controls the information through its force headquarters.

While the intelligence officer posits that in multinational operations like in the UN, if required information is available to legitimate parties in the operation, it will solve difficult security situations and guarantee success of the operation is true giving his submission of available UN template, structure and channel used in gathering and sharing information, there are situations troop contributing countries hold on to sensitive information and not willing to share. In Afghanistan, the American officers did not share any intelligence information about the missions among partners and stakeholders for the mission to be successful and though it was argued to be immoral due to high risks involved but information management has achieved goal (Soeters, 2017:6).

Nevertheless, the Military Assistant to the UN Force Commander claimed that in Liberia, information sharing between contingents flows easily since it targets realising the mission. He



indicated that different contingents are bound to share information and that it is part of the PSO to interact and share information that is critical to the mission. He pointed out that:

there is no way you would say you'll interact with only your contingents and there is no way will share information with only your contingents because it is structured to be so. The nature of the work is in such a way that you are expected to respect members of every contingent, share information with them and work with them effectively. Information is so sensitive that it becomes team business.

As important as this position is, it negates the place of national interest of troop contributing countries in PSO. Some of the cases cited above reveal that some contingents withhold sensitive information from legitimate partners even when such partners are assigned high risk missions. The military assistant says it as if nations are most times willing to expose their military doctrine. On the other hand, the Signal Officer of NIBATT 37 indicated that despite the joint operations and joint information sharing, there is still internal coding within each country's contingents. This shows that teams can send information specifically meant for their contingents. He noted that:

Though there is need for information transparency, contingents still have their internal communication signals that others might be unable to intercept and this is done so that others will not know the information you have passed across. Such information is for the consumption of your battalion.

This position is corroborated in the literature of PSOs which shows that military contingents sometimes chose who to share information with. Yet, the advantages of information sharing are so glaring in all combats and operations. Literature revealed that information sharing among military intelligence is common among certain groups than others as cited in Aldrich (2004); Svendsen, (2008) and Soeters (2017).

Under such circumstances, information sharing or poor information management could result to a costly experience. At the launch of the mission in Liberia, a strong rivalry existed between Anglophone and Francophone West African forces. The multinational intervention force was weighed down by abnormal appointment of DFC in Guinea. The Guinean contingents had frequently complained of being assigned difficult tasks, a situation they interpreted as a deliberate attempt to eliminate the Francophone forces by the Anglophones (Iweze, 1993:226). Under this atmosphere, information sharing may be difficult since trust appears to be missing. Yet, the MPIO of NIBATT 37 claimed that:

In an integrated mission like we have here, you have people from different backgrounds, though it is part of the core principles of UN to respect diversity because the UN is an entity that has variety of diversity, people from different culture, religion, and trainings.

Whereas the military information officer acknowledges diversity, he was silent on the idea of mistrust in such multinational missions and the implication of such on the entire mission. The MPIO added that:

Sometimes you find out that communication can be difficult with some personnel from different countries because probably they don't understand the language you speak or you don't understand what they speak. Such occasions create a little challenge but these are mitigated against by ensuring that most of the people go through what we refer to as pre-induction training.

What is important in the above is the tendency for linguistic differences to undermine information management and the experience became so expensive for the mission. Feld (1959) argues that the sharing of information in security and military organisations has never been unproblematic. This informs the argument that competition and rivalry between contingents often constitute the background for restrictions on information sharing, indicating a lack of participation and support of other legitimate groups efforts (Wilensky, 2015; Soeters, 2017). Despite the pre-induction training cited by the MPIO, sometimes contingents may hide under the camouflage of linguistic difficulty to maintain national secrets or contingents military plans. In this way, contingents have the tendency to interact and engage with those they are close to in terms of interests and linguistic similarity. As such, they develop strong ties with those like themselves, whereas they develop weaker ties with those who are different from them. The problem of this form of relationship is that in situations such as the PSO, it might result in selective action with regards to information sharing in a way that affects the entire process of information management and the peace support operations in general.

The ultimate question will be why hoarding information in PSO when the idea behind the PSO is collective success and common good through collective information sharing? Costas and Grey (2014) claim that information sharing affects power balance among the information containers in the operation. Although information sharing could be encouraged in the PSO by the information managers And this is what the UN LOTUS is about, it could be improved to achieve success in

PSOs since proper information management leads to better performance and can potentially reduce conflict cost.

From the foregoing, it is clear that information management can reduce human cost of conflict. Similarly, adequate information management could reduce economic cost of war and the attendant PSO. The two most common ways of gathering information in military operations, the covert operations and the open source, are expensive. These two sources are captured by a respondent this way:

We have so many means of gathering information. One of it is through the locals via patrol. Second, is through intelligence unit. We have the Intelligence Officer whose primary role is to gather information and in gathering information, he could disguise to get information. We can equally get information from the force headquarters because we work in conjunction with other services.

Both sources of information gathering involve economic cost and both are expensive. However, information sourcing is much cheaper than the cost of prosecuting PSOs. It involves economic costs because sometimes, you must buy information to enable you execute your job. Another respondent captured the idea of buying information this way:

In peace support operations, you have to persuade the information containers to get information. You will have to buy information with your money sometimes because they can decide not to avail you information or tell you anything. It is you that is looking for information not them, so the logic of spending money.

Whereas information sourcing involves money as the officer above has claimed, it is moderate and devoid of the tendency to initiate conflicts or escalate existing one. The point to underscore is that Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) has proved to be useful in PSOs since it meets the intelligence requirements of policy makers and field commanders in peace operations. In a study on intelligence gathering in UN peacekeeping, Dorn (1999) points out how field operation can be effectively coordinated with the support of intelligence collected through overt platforms such as visual display / observational method, via patrol cues and sometimes authorised flights can be used. Open communication with belligerent forces, local populations, and the utilisation of newspaper and public documents that are not classified. While this measure helps in curtailing information asymmetry in PSO that paves the way for peace building efforts, it reduces drastically the economic cost of covert information gathering and executing PSOs.

This section has demonstrated that adequate and efficient information management in PSOs creates conditions for standardisation in operations and actions, reduces operational cost in both human and economic costs, creates predictability and leads to a successful peacebuilding operation. Nevertheless, this could be realised with strong support of information technology. Such infrastructure could aid information management in minimising economic and human costs of conflict.

**INFORMATION MANAGEMENT OF THE NIGERIAN ARMY IN PEACE  
SUPPORT OPERATIONS IN LIBERIA**

**5.1. Trends, Patterns and Processes of Information Management in PSO in Liberia**

Over the years, Nigerian military has moved from one stage of gathering and managing information to the other. Therefore, there are sweeping trends in the discourse of information management which have appeared as front burners in the debate including those related to information management, knowledge hub, professional skills, and the use of ITC for global expansion in the realm of information technology. Meanwhile, developments have triggered increased drive for advancements in the management of information. Accordingly, a number of changes are occurring in the information environment: change from information to knowledge, commercialisation of access to information, digitalising information sources such as e-Library and upgrading system to high-tech compatible inventions. Newman et al in the year 2001 make a projection that “the information profession would undergo the most radical transformation compare to others between 2000 and 2010”. However, it is commonplace for individuals and institutions to be resistant to change irrespective of whether it is positive or not(Rutkowski, 2000).

According to Jones (1998), information management has three major components: development of complex information system, the use of terminal interfaces with multiple features, and lastly the productive application of artificial intelligence. For exemple, military peace support operation information system would have, partly, characterisations conflicting parties, fighting and killings, and also, characterisations of the people involved, the stakeholders available for non-violent management of the conflict.

This development is connected to the two other trends highlighted as it is also driven by the conviction that terminal technology, in itself, is insufficient when handling a multi-complex information hub.

### **5.1.1. Trends of Information Management: Information Containers in PSOs and their Control**

The consistently expanding specialised and ecological multifaceted nature of current universally arranged warfare presents numerous deterrents to authorities in different fields of assignments as they endeavour to secure their information resources. A container could be portrayed as an archive of information resource. A container is generally depicted as some sort of innovation resource, for example, programming, equipment, or an information framework. Furthermore, it can likewise portray individuals, paper, USB sticks or CD-ROMs. A container is in this way any kind of advantage where an information material is transported, put away or handled. It can be a solitary innovation resource, (for example, a server), a gathering of innovation resources, (for example, an information framework or a system), or a man who knows about an information, (for example, the situation where an armed force Commander in a military operation knows the classified plans for the widgets/gadgets), or basically a bit of paper with information imprinted on it.

As indicated by Stevens (2005), while talking about the subject of information containers and their control, there are three vital points to consider in the dialog. Initially, the manner by which an information resource is ensured or anchored is through control actualised at the advantage holder level. For instance, to secure the client database on a server, a layered gathering of controls (managerial, physical, and specialised) are connected to the server, for example, just allowing approved people to get to the server room (a physical control) and restricting access to regulatory consents on the server to framework directors (a specialised control in use).

Furthermore, how much an information resource is ensured or anchored depends on how well the actualized controls and the holder, line up with and think about the security necessities (or goals) of the advantage. It is not the same as only executing the standing or accessible arrangement of controls given by the container, which may arbitrarily protect the information resources it underpins (Stevens, 2005). In the third point, Stevens contends that any dangers or threat to the holders on which the information resource is put away are coincidentally exchanged to the information resource. Thus, dangers related with the holder ought to be precisely learned while thinking about destruction to the information resource. For instance, if an information resource is warehoused on a server that is in a room that does not restrain get to, it is vulnerable to

revelation, modification, misfortune, or demolition by a performing artist utilising physical access. The estimation of the server for this situation is most likely irrelevant as it can be supplanted rapidly or its function can be moved to another server. All things considered, the information kept on the holder is significantly harder to replicate if traded off, and may have genuine impact on the organisation (Stevens, 2005).

In Liberia, the UN contingents employ the use of LOTUS, Microsoft Outlook, Publisher and several others. The UN Signal Manual indicates that PSOs are provided with such containers for effective management of information. Captain Eric Maza, Nigerian Battalion Intelligence Officer in Liberia claimed the Microsoft Outlook was a more effective information container in Liberia. He noted that:

We use Microsoft Outlook. I think Lotus was more effective in Sudan but in Liberia here, Microsoft Outlook is more effective. Although LOTUS has this compatibility with Microsoft Office but here, Microsoft Outlook has proved to be effective in retaining and controlling information. It works in a way that every member of the UN contingent has his/her account.

In addition, Captain Maza noted that:

Using these applications once you send a mail, it is received by the appropriate party. Though sometimes when you are operating a language maybe a barrier, so maybe information meant for operations officer might end up getting to me so I will just have to copy it and send it back to him. Usually, intelligence and operations work hand in hand.

The point to underscore is that the information container may have effect on the overall information management and the security situation of the military space. In line with this, Stevens (2005) is of the view that the nature of the container of information asset, that is, the type may significantly affect the security required and security strategies given to its asset. And laws and regulations that follow information assets depend largely on the format in which they are stored.

However, in respect to the protection of the containers, it is the duty of the owners of information asset, while army commanders would be responsible in the case of peace support operations. They are responsible to safeguard the information asset as it is stored, transported or processed. From the foregoing, the literature has established that the commanders or custodians are responsible for information asset control and management (Stevens, 2005; UN Signal

Manual, 2015). Therefore, when the information asset (administration of the information system or server) is in the care of the custodian to manage, he is responsible for the asset and its protection. To this end, Stevens holds that it is a mistake for any organisation to accept responsibility of protecting the asset for ownership. In addition, there are evidence in the existing literature that military science is now responding custodians' information relevant to the information technology.

However, the information asset can be said to live in a new container. This also means that the new manager can be deemed, even temporarily, as a custodian. As such, the user is obligated to protect and care for the information asset while in her custody.

Although the above discussion have focused mainly on the generality of information containers, especially in business, it would be wrong to consider information containers and their control as a critical element only in this unique situation. In a comparative view to that of the intelligent officer referred, the MPIO noticed that:

In UN tasks, they make utilization of Lotus for group information social occasion, handling and dialogs. It is an UN introduced application; a framework. We have it here. The CO has it, the operation officer has it. Additionally the strategic or logistic office has it. In this way, whatever issue he has he advances it to them and they answer him quickly.

The above reaction recommends that cutting edge propels in innovation, in a general sense contrasted with more seasoned advances, now furnish military faculty with extraordinary arrangement of information to comprehend, examine and follow up on information as per what is going on in the war zone.

This uncovers the pattern of information management in the Nigerian Army. To comprehend these patterns, we consider the correspondence frameworks of the NA and how they have changed after some time. The three Services of the Nigerian Armed Forces (Army, Navy and Airforce) as of now work singular correspondence frameworks in the high recurrence (HF), high recurrence (VHF), ultra-high recurrence (UHF) and private programmed branch exchange frameworks (PABX). Because of the activity of individual administration correspondence frameworks, endeavours at joint activities have uncovered non-interoperability of gear. This was



seen at two effectively led joint activities, to be specific, Operation SEADOG in 1985 and OP TAKUTE EKPE held in May 2004.

To redress the insufficiency in correspondences, the VSAT organise, prescribed by the DISCON Committee, settled a portion of the correspondence necessities of the Armed Forces in the region of viable charge and control and also organisation of the powers. It likewise facilitated the scattering of ongoing information required for operational arranging and knowledge gathering. The VSAT framework is reasonable for consolidating the current Armed Forces Communication gear and furthermore meets the prerequisite of the Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) essential for information tasks for the predominance of the electromagnetic range. By and by, there was no formal information management framework in the Nigerian Army even as at 2013, in spite of its sentiment with computerisation that stretches back to the late 1970s.

As at the time was the simple way of overseeing information, particularly the storage of information or records in file organisers, while dispersal was helped out through wire, Signal Dispatch Service or sprinters. At that point additionally, sorted out information management was believed to be confined to the security and insight divisions of the NA, for example, the Nigerian Army Corps of Military Police and the Directorate of Military Intelligence. This was on the grounds that these units are professionally engaged with the procurement, stockpiling and general management of information for proficient obligation execution in help of national security. Albeit different units do procure, store, recover and spread information, these functions were not viewed formally as information management as the theme is moderately new and postdates the presentation of PCs. All things considered, the significance and estimation of the information held inside the Service is shockingly underestimated.

It was not until the late 1970s that PC and IT were acquainted with the Nigerian Army starting with the activities of the PC sellers who were just intrigued by profiting by emptying processing gear on the Nigerian Army not disapproving of whether or not they were required around then. Furthermore, later on, came the endeavours of the Nigerian Army Finance Corps (NAFC) to automate, computerise and modernise the method of payment in the organisation.

In 2013, the Directorate of Army Data Processing prevailing with regards to setting up the database for officers and soldiers and it is still during the time spent mechanising the Nigerian

Army weapon records as at the time this exploration is being led. The Directorate plans to modernise, store and acquiring equipment, preparing support, military tasks and training, research and warfare improvement process. The Directorate has likewise been dynamic in empowering IT mindfulness in the NA, through the preparation of the two officers and warriors in PC task, equipment and programming courses and in addition information innovation.

In this connection, the changing information climate has continued to shape military operations in PSOs as observed in Liberia. Information from the survey revealed that the changing information environment and Nigerian Army adaptation has the potential to entrench information management in PSOs. This is captured in Table 5.1 below:

**Table 5.1: The Changing Information Environment and the Nigerian Army Adaptation**

<i>Items</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>D</i>
The problem of information management in PSOs is the large number of disparate information management system.	20 (10%)	100 (50%)	32 (16%)	48 (24%)
There is poor quality of information, including lack of consistency, duplication and out of date information during PSOs as a result of the changing information environment.	24 (12%)	60 (30%)	32 (16%)	84 (42%)
The movement from manual to technology in information management provides little coordination system during peace operations.	20 (10%)	60 (30%)	36 (18%)	84 (42%)
There is little recognition and support of information by senior management in PSOs	24 (12%)	58 (29%)	30 (15%)	88 (44%)
There is limited resources for deploying, managing or improving information systems during PSOs	22 (11%)	72 (36%)	42 (21%)	66 (33%)
Internal politics impacts on information management in PSOs.	26 (13%)	76 (38%)	36 (18%)	62 (31%)

**Source:** Fieldwork, 2016

Table 5.1 above shows that majority 100 (50.0%) of the respondents stated that the problem of information management in PSOs is the huge volume of disparate information management system while the minority 48 (24%) noted otherwise. The result also revealed that majority 84 (42%) of the respondents disagreed that there is poor quality of information, including lack of consistency duplication and out of date information during PSOs while 24 (12%) strongly agreed. Findings demonstrated that majority 84 (42%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that there is little coordinating system during peace while minority 20 (10%) of the respondents unequivocally concurred that there is little coordination framework amid peace support operations. Furthermore, result demonstrated that larger part 88 (44%) of the respondents have contrary view that there is little acknowledgment and support of information by senior management in PSOs while 24 (12%) of the respondents concurred with the inquiry.

The outcome additionally uncovered that larger part 72 (36%) of the respondents opined that there are restricted assets for sending, overseeing or enhancing information systems during PSOs while 22 (11%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the question. Result also indicated that majority 76 (38%) of the respondents agreed that internal politics impacts on information management in PSOs, while 26 (13%) of the respondents strongly agreed.

From the foregoing, it could be argued that information management in the Nigerian Army has evolved over the years and the containers and control of information has equally followed the changing trend even in PSOs, yet the role of information management in military operation remains the same. Thus, the military, including the NA, has developed information systems to embrace the ever-changing trends of the information management environment.

### **5.1.2. Patterns of Information Management: Developments of Information Systems**

Information systems have a solid presence in ways that lead to development. Information systems are associated with how people do their function and recreation events. The concept of development is utilised as a part of various ways. For some, development is principally connected with monetary or economic development (Walsham, 2005). With regards to developing nations, the term is regularly utilised as a part of a more extensive sense, portraying development freely as the perfect of enhancing individuals' circumstances.

Avgerou (2008) portrays IS in developing nations as being unmistakable from standard IS inquired about by its thoughtfulness regarding the setting of IS development and by examining the developing part of IS development. Consequently, IS examined in developing nations ought to have the capacity to give significant commitments to learn how to verify, built situations around IS. Walsham and Sahay (2006) give an outline of the contemporary research on IS in developing nations. Based on a grounded hypothesis technique by breaking down an arrangement of diary and meeting papers, they built up an order approach for writing around there. This order comprehensively recognises IS explored commitments into the accompanying classes: (i) key difficulties for ICT utilise (ii) the part of innovation, (iii) hypothesis and system.

Progressions in information system are an essential piece of the dispersion and usage of information innovation. In numerous nations, for the most part in the more industrialised nations, advances have truly been unequivocally connected with improvement. Information frameworks make no exemption, and they are likewise observed by numerous as a vital supporter of improvement in the Global South. The new advances that are changing our reality are not a panacea or an enchantment projectile. Be that as it may, they are, without question, hugely ground-breaking apparatuses for development. They make occupations. They are changing instruction, human services, business, legislative issues and then some.

In Africa, the development of IS has been quick in ongoing decades. We can see utilisations of information wherever in our society: in military operations, the instance of Liberia, industry, human services, instruction, horticulture, travel, and financial activities, among others. In this manner, a mechanical unrest, which means primarily information systems, is reshaping the society (Castells 1996). In PSOs, military contingents have assimilated social methods of information frameworks where local people have grown such systems to impart security circumstances. This could be derived from the reaction of the Military Intelligence Officer of the Nigerian Battalion in Liberia. He noticed that:

One good thing I like about Sudan, I think Sudan has extraordinary compared to other insight frameworks on the planet. As we are going here now, a dairy cattle rearer will draw out his Turaya and he is calling, so individuals have recently gone here. The frameworks, similar to news, ventures exceptionally far. They are exceptionally security cognizant not at all like Liberians.

What this suggests is that while advanced science and innovative progression rules the military circle and their operations in created nations, developing nations even in the military setting are additionally adjusting social modes to refresh information frameworks. In any case, the socio-social setting in numerous nations has as a rule experienced issues in following the speed of innovative changes. When we consider information framework improvement, it uncovers a huge information hole between industrialised nations and developing nations (e.g. Boer and Walbeek 1999). In western nations, we are allowed to discuss the information age or system society, however in developing nations access to ICT is still exceptionally restricted.

African nations, and in addition the World Bank, United Nations, and numerous global organisations, also scientists inside formative informatics (e.g. Woherem 1992, Korpela 1992, Odedra-Straub 1996), have held onto IT as a device for improvement. This can incorporate both financial development and human improvement, which implies growing the assortment of decisions that the general population have and make development more participatory and equitable (Human Development Report 2001). Heeks (1999a) recommends that ICT can assume a part as correspondence innovation, as opposed to being an information processing or creation innovation. The key message of the 1998/1999 World Development Report for Africa (World Bank 1999a) is that most nations on the mainland need to do considerably more, significantly speedier, to expand interest in training, fabricate limit and exploit new advances to enhance their insight base which is a facilitator of improvement (Kiangi and Tjipangandjara 1996). It is one way to advance majority rule system: Power isn't cash of few, yet information in the grip of many (Olivier 1996, p. 183).

In this manner, the targets while executing new information systems are many. The execution must run with insignificant interruption, it must guarantee acknowledgment from the end-users, and convey the substantial advantages (e.g. enhance the organisation and management, profitability, effectiveness) on time and inside the arranged costs (Lopez and Vilaseca 1996). Waema (1996) affirms that perfect financial improvement could be said to exist when it benefits the general population and when it is supportable. For developing nations, the bounce to an information society can be an effective process, if the accentuation isn't on innovation itself, however in individuals. Be that as it may, the regular view is about relative disappointment instead of relative accomplishment in the usage of, particularly expansive scale, computer-based

information system in developing nations (Walsham 1992). The operational viability has been far underneath starting desires, if not uncontrollable failure.

The impacts of information systems have been low in Liberia according to personnel of the Nigerian Army interviewed. Responding to the question on IS in information management in Liberia, Captain Haruna Saliu, the Military Public Relation Officer (MPIO) claimed that the UN has made good efforts in ensuring proper information systems yet this has grave challenges. Captain Saliu noted that sometimes one may have need of utilising the systems to send across urgent information and most times the impacts have been low. He stated that:

Yes, that is a big problem. Sometimes the locations are without network systems. So, you discover that it will get to like two or three days before the main information gets to where it is supposed to be, because of distance and absence of communication systems.

Stressing the argument further, the MPIO noted that at other times, you discover that most of the places are without even mast. “There is a place one has to spend like three to four hours on water, you understand; in such a place, it takes high take information systems to produce required results. It is evident from the above that the effect of information systems in military operations required to achieve mandates as in PSOs have not been perfected yet, the NA has made some progress in this respect.

### **5.1.3. Processes of Information Management: Usage of Sophisticated Facility and Application of Artificial Intelligence**

Generally, there are three forms of sophisticated terminal interface, user interface, administrative interface, and programming interface. According to Schneiderman (1992), at a time, computer use was limited to experts in the field of computing and the interfaces comprised offline punch cards, batch printouts and jumper cables in patch boards.

Most Army personnel, in contemporary times, are constrained to work with the computer and quite a number of them do not have computer background or experience of working with a computer and thus, have little knowledge of how to use the device. The low level of computer literacy could be as a result of the users’ life-style (Schneiderman, 1992). Another downside of this limitation for users is that it creates a number of challenges in terms of learnability and

understanding of computer software and how they could be applied in the performance of their daily activities. Nevertheless, suitable design of a user interface could substantially improve user learnability and training duration. For the system itself, a good design could reduce error rates, improved speed performance and user satisfaction. It also has positive influence on the retention capacity of users in terms of understanding the system's operational procedure. Meanwhile, sophisticated systems are already replacing the antiquated designs of the past.

Furthermore, a system administrator has a rather complex task. It is a challenging task that requires persistence, understanding, expertise and experience. It is akin to the job of a doctor or psychologist who works in the emergency ward of a health centre; or a mechanic working in a very challenging environment. When instruments fail, the doctor or mechanism may have to improvise and work with limited resources. She has to become very inventive and find a way to navigate the crisis. So too, the system administrator has to be deeply knowledgeable about the workings of a computer. He must find innovative ways to troubleshoot the sometimes erratic behaviours of a machine and understand that solutions might not exist in the copybook. He needs to do all this and, on top of everything, learn a hundred new things a year. Being an administrator is as much a state of mind as it is about being knowledgeable.

The above description of the system administrator suggests that he is privy to in-depth knowledge on the activities within an organisation. However, this description only suits business industry. The military in particular, exchange information in a different manner. The information setting is shrouded with all kinds of security codes to prevent sabotage, leakage and security situation. What is uppermost in military agenda is how the information environment can be secured. Given that the military system administrator must be critical, tactical and proactive to know what information goes where and who receives what information, compacts are made to exist to distinguish the information hierarchy. Let us return to the *I-need- to-know* framework of information sharing in the military. Responding to this study, the MPIO of the battalion in Liberia averred:

There is I Need to Know Bases. There are some information that are purely for the commanding officer and the staff officers. It depends on the information. There are information meant for only the commanding officer and the staff officer. For instance, information meant for our signal officer who is in charge of

communication might not be revealed to logistics officer because it is of no importance to him.

This information pattern suggests that some officers might not be privy to know what is happening in other departments within the military environment. This shows that information management is a sensitive issue in the military. On the other hand, a system administrator working in a business organisation might have a different role.

Nevertheless, the system administrator is expert in the field of *infotech* saddled with responsibilities that vary from one organisation to another, and they are usually wide-ranging. Designated roles may include installing, supporting and maintaining computer systems or the servers. They are also to prepare for and respond promptly to service outages and other problems. System administrators also do scripting, training and supervision of system operators and so on. They could be called upon when the organisation's technical support staff members are unable to address the emergent problem. While the system administrator's role in the business sector might be tasking, in the military, it is much more about information security. Such administrator in the military would have to decrypt several encrypted codes and even code other information to prevent it from getting into the wrong hands. Considering this in line with information management, one of the Nigerian Officers in Liberia stated that:

Looking at technology, there are better ways information can be managed. They can be coded. Whenever information is supposed to be passed, it should not be passed in clear languages. Information should be passed in coded languages. So, that only those of the I Need to Know bases (those that can decrypt such information) can have access to it.

Although the officer spoke in the general sense of coding and decrypting information he was also specific about the utilisation of technology. The point made is that information could be kept secret from those who are not knowledgeable on decrypting the passed information. In this sense, artificial intelligence is not sufficient for unlocking coded information. Discussing further, the officer claimed that usage of sophisticated facility and application of artificial intelligence has been responsible for military victory in history. He linked it to how victory was gained over German forces during the Second World War by simply utilising sophisticated military facility. The military Captain noted that there is more advanced facility in the present time and that the



NA has the right people to use this for peace operations whether in Liberia or Nigeria North East Region. He noted that:

When we look at World War 2, sophisticated military facility was used to win the Germans, we have more modernised once now. We can have such modernised facility and we can use them. We can equally have some aircrafts, drones and other things that can have photo imageries and some sensors that can give updated information. Basically, I think ICT is very important when it comes to information management.

The underlying argument above is that usage of sophisticated military facility and the application of artificial intelligence are critical to information management in military operations including PSOs. This reinforces the argument that the system administrator requires to go the extra mile to deliver on his/her job especially in the military.

Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) have for quite a while been a fundamental part of the computer business. They are basic to the way that computer, programming, and framework configuration has created. An API is an arrangement of instruments, conventions and schedules for developing programming applications. As indicated by Shneiderman (1992), an API communicates a product segment in connection to its operations, data sources, yields, and basic writes. For instance, an API can help the consolidation of new updates into existing applications (a purported module API). An API can likewise encourage, remarkable applications with information sharing, which could help with incorporating and enhancing the application's functions. APIs are generally created as a library that contains particulars for information structures, schedules, factors, classes and protests. In different cases, quite SOAP and REST benefits, an API is essentially a detail of remote calls presented to the API purchasers (Shneiderman, 1992). The particular of an API could take an assortment of structures. Cases incorporate International Standard, for example, POSIX, seller documentation (e.g. Microsoft Windows API), or the libraries of a programming dialect, e.g., the Standard Template Library in C++ or the Java APIs. These advancements encourage military operation.

Nevertheless, the use of sophisticated facility in military operation will invariably lead to mission success. But the facilities are often damaged during conflict, and may affect the success of the mission. Threats to the information architecture are real, global in origin, multi-layered, and evolving. They come from individuals and associations motivated by religious, ethnic, cultural,

social, political and military benefits. Information vandals, as some of them are called, attack INFOSYS out of excitement or to exhibit their capability. The global nature of communication and information networks produces weaknesses as a result of greater access to these networks and infrastructure from different locations across the world. The threats that computers, networks and systems are faced with differ in relation to technical capabilities, motivations or the nature of hostility (during conflict or peacetime).

The bottom line is that both tactical and strategic threats exist towards all forces, and these originate from multidimensional sources—both old and new, and the military continuously faces these threats even in times of relative peace. A range of options are also available to the enemy with which they could attack or influence the opponent's INFOSYS and operations. Attacks could be built to have delayed impact, such as controlling a programme, corrupting a database or other forms of direct strike to degrade or physically destroy. These issues were a source of concern to the Nigerian army contingents in Liberia. Responding to the study, the military assistant to the Force Commander stated that:

Sometimes they get cut off [communication infrastructure] and it take days before they can be re-connected for obvious reasons because the infrastructure in the country especially telecommunication infrastructure in the country is very weak and everything is actually centralized in Monrovia. Outside Monrovia, the facilities are actually poor (MAFC).

This type of situation can lead to frustration and confusion among the army contingents. Such challenges can even impact the use of computer, considering its role in the military operation. Over time, the military have adapted or designed computers to do an expansive array of tasks, to include: analysing intelligence; organising prudent data for military commanders controlling smart weapons; or communication. In fact, in recent years, the military have been exploring the artificial intelligence exhibited by computer machines to aid military operation.

The existing literature on artificial intelligence has shown that the field is far older than many people would have imagined. Some development of artificial intelligence recorded in the 1950s includes the General Problem Solver, the chess playing program, and the creation of the computer language LISP. Most researchers in the present day still make use of the LISP computer artificial intelligence programmers' language.

However, the 1960s and '70s recorded development in the field of AI. According to Hanson (1987), the achievements made include: the first artificial intelligence computer controlled robot designed by G.W. Ernst which contained a mechanical arm coupled with a robber shoulder and grabber; work advance on Chess playing game; the commercialising services of artificial intelligence (Alexander, 1991).

Therefore, it is evident from the foregoing that usage of sophisticated military facility and the application of artificial intelligence enhances information management—a facilitator of either the success or failure of military operations. In Liberia, evidence revealed that the UN puts in place different facilities to enable the military achieve their mandate in the PSO, nonetheless, impacts of sophisticated military facilities have been low in the over-all success of military engagements in the mission.

## **5.2. Military Information Acquisition and Dissemination in the United Nations PSO in Liberia**

### **5.2.1. Sourcing and Availability of Information in PSO**

The Cold War witnessed the rise of what later came to be known as new conflicts in the literature of Peace Support Operations. This development led to the notion of peacekeeping as the available tool for managing conflicts (Franzen, 2005). Aside managing conflicts, peacekeeping also has the capacity of engendering lasting peace in conflict torn areas without necessarily leading to a resumption of conflict/war. Consequently, Tharoor (1995) claims that peacekeeping is an instrument of intervention because the world is reluctant to trail the path of going to war, the outcome of which is always devastating. Like every military operation, PSO also relies on information for effective security of the environment while peacekeepers try to strengthen the host nation capacity to deliver security for its people. Based on this, how such vital information will be sourced before and in the course of the PSO becomes the main focus of the contingent Field Commander. More importantly, also, is the availability of such vital information which enhances the capacity of the contingent to nip impending conflict/crisis in the bud. It is one thing to need a piece of information and another to have it readily available.

In Liberia where information were gathered based on the Force Commanders physical information design, empirical evidence indicates that vital information which supported the contingent's mission of protecting life, property, and fundamental human rights were sourced essentially through overt sources. This was revealed to the researcher by the Military Assistant to the Force Commandant, who stated that:

Basically, the force in particular gathers information extensively from the field through the military observers. The military observers are deployed around the country and they are deployed in the midst of the civilians. They are not armed, so they have more access to the civilians and they carry out daily patrols. Besides the military observers, we also have the contingents who carryout daily patrol.

This is consistent with the standard practice of information acquisition which according to the Field Manual of the US Department of the Army (2007:1-1) which states that soldiers have a duty to avail their commanders information at their disposal that could help the commanders make effective decisions. Since PSOs cannot succeed entirely on its own without support from the host nation which it seeks to stabilise by engendering peace, the contingents rely on the support of the locals for vital information to effectively carry out the mission of peacebuilding. This in effect explains why patrols became an effective method of sourcing information as pointed out by Military Assistant Force Commandant. It establishes a kind of synergy between the locals and the contingent. This synergy is now known as the doctrine of Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC), a tool of stability in PSOs. As used by the NATO in Kosovo, CIMIC involves communication between military and civilian stakeholders within a comprehensive environment to support the military commanders plan (NATO, 2013:2-1). In the case of Liberia, the CIMIC doctrine as a viable tool of sourcing information was deployed by the Nigerian contingent as they liaised with the locals through unarmed patrol. This act shrunk the distance between the locals and the contingent which would not have existed if the contingent had approached the locals with arms to seek their cooperation by diverging vital information for their mission. This effectively created the much needed tranquil atmosphere suitable for a friendly interaction that led to the acquisition of useful information that aided PSOs.

This act of using patrol to source for information in PSOs in a way suggests that the UN PSOs have come to appreciate the value of foot patrol as used in community policing to prevent crime while also gathering local intelligence. As Wakefield (2006:45) posits, the idea of foot patrol

espouse community engagement, which may involve the active consultation with communities. Just as foot patrol creates an atmosphere which brings about community engagement and active consultation with the communities, so also does the PSOs patrol which deploys military observer brings the locals close to the unarmed officers deployed for patrol. It is apt to claim that the deliberate act of deploying military observers without arms largely accounts for the effectiveness of this method, because it takes away apprehension in the locals, which makes it easier for the locals to divulge useful information that helped in achieving the aim of the PSO. That is why vertical interoperability, an interaction that takes place between the peacekeepers and the local population (Rubinstein *et al*, 2008) is central in protecting the civilian population from warring forces in PSO.

Elsewhere, Captain Haruna Mohammed Saliu, the Battalion Military Public Information Officer (MPIO), also narrated how patrols served useful purpose in information acquisition for his battalion. According to him:

Information gathered from the field, we have patrols that use to go on long and short trend patrols, so whenever they gathered information affecting my field, I also put it in the record and forward to my Commanding Officer. And there are issues that are purely technical. It is meant mainly for the consumption of the battalion, they also make it available to the commanding officer.

Again, the MPIO narrative further stresses the value of patrols in gathering information for PSOs. The patrols in question are not carried out because the contingents feel that is the best approach to conduct military operations. This is a deliberate act which is in conformity with UN design, by the UNSC which stresses that PKOs should include first-hand information via observatory methods, over-flights, patrols and the informed consent from other partners or parties (United Nations, 2008). What is instructive about the MPIO narrative is how the information that has been sourced in long range patrols aid decision making in PSOs considering that what is made available to him is forwarded to the commander which informs the type of action that he would take. This synergy between the patrol team, the MPRO, and the commanding officer clearly brings to light the important role that information plays in decision making in military operation as discussed in previous section.

Using patrols to source for information as observed in the activities of the Nigerian contingent in Liberia further affirms its importance as indicated by the UNODC (2006). According to UNODC

which viewed information acquisition through patrol from a criminal justice perspective while in the process, the criminal intelligence is the patrol officer (UNODC, 2006:11). With regards to PSOs, patrolling bring the military observer closer to the scene of crime and as indicated in the foregoing, and also places him/her in a vantage position to have access to useful information. The PSO patrols that were carried out in Liberia assisted the Nigerian contingent in eliciting useful information for which support peacekeeping operation as affirmed by both the Military Assistant to the Force Commandant and MPIO. What has not been said, which is most probable, is the possibility of those patrols also scaring away warring forces on the approach of the military patrolling officers who are in search of useful information.

Furthermore, aside deploying unarmed military observers to source for information among the locals in Liberia, sourcing information by the Nigerian contingent did also include the use of clandestine method, but in a manner, that was cost effective. The signal officer of the Battalion who spoke to this researcher claimed that:

There are people that are allowed to go out in mufti and mingle with the civilians that you cannot differentiate between, so that it would be easy for them to get information. If you use uniform to go there, you are just like an identity, you can easily be seasoned out, and it would be difficult for somebody to even come close to you to give you information.

Like the previous methods, this method which involves covert action was also utilised to source information for PSO in Liberia. Within the context of PSO as used by the Nigerian contingent, this method which has the semblance of a covert method was not deployed in that manner as commonly used in spying and espionage, even though scholars tend to justify such methods as being compatible with democracy and American ethic (Lefever, 2004:20). Such covert methods which have the tendency of receding to unilateral militarism cannot be deployed in PSO because it contravenes the ethics of peacekeeping operation whose design is purely targeted at restoring peace through peaceful methods.

Deploying officers to source for information by disguising themselves among the locals in PSO is done in a manner that is in tune with OSINT as espoused by its leading exponent, Robert Steele. Such method becomes necessary because not all unarmed patrols can work effectively in sourcing information from the locals. Some locals might still not be comfortable with unarmed uniform military observers among them especially when the contingents are perceived not be

neutral in their mediation approach by the locals as it was the case with ECOMOG when it first intervened in the war in Liberia (Shilue and Fagen, 2014; Oluwadare, 2014; Draman and Carment, 2003). Since the best information in PSO comes from the communities themselves, the surest approach to elicit information from the locals is to build a relationship of trust with them with them (United Nations, 2015) as military observers disguise themselves amongst them. If the disguise method is not adopted, there is a great possibility that some locals who sympathise with the rebels may decide to hold back vital information on noticing the presence of military observers. What this method does most effectively is to create a sense of friendliness convenient enough for vertical interoperability between the locals and the contingents.

Having gone through the methods the Nigerian contingent utilised in sourcing information in PSOs in the Liberia, it is instructive to note that they all align with OSINT, both the overt and somewhat covert methods. As an intervening party in a crisis who needs information to achieve the objective of peace in a war torn nation, OSINT is, in most cases, the preferred option to adopt. That is why Charters (2001) who made a case for OSINT argues that, it meets nearly every policy maker, including intelligence commanders for effective peacekeeping, either before a conflict breaks out, during it, or the post-conflict resolution/reconstruction. Evidently, the Liberia situation further affirms the Charters contention. Again, considering that much of the information that came to the Nigerian contingent were sourced from open sources, this also buttresses the position of other OSINT exponents who argued that it makes available most of all the information needed for military operations, including PSOs.

Given the nature of PSOs which is designed as a tool for maintaining global peace between warring forces, OSINT method which does not use coercive approach in sourcing information is the preferred method which can help in eliciting information that can assist contingents on PSOs to achieve UN objective of providing international peace and security through its troops.

While looking at the methods the contingent used in sourcing information, it is equally apposite to state that information is not usually easily available for them to access. When this happens, it affects the core objective of the PSOs. In the Liberian case, not much of this was experienced as revealed in the empirical evidence because Liberians were said to be cooperative with the Nigerian contingent. This was affirmed by Captain Eric Maza when he made the following submissions:

Liberians are open people, though, they have their peculiarities. If they have pressing issues with anyone they will come and tell you; eh! Men this is my problem. They behave like North Americans. In Liberia people do that and they would not be apprehensive except if they know they are part of the wrong doings.

This cooperation assisted the contingent in protecting areas that are notorious for rape, armed robbery, burglary, and theft. This was not the reality in other areas where this officer was deployed for PSOs. Further describing his experience in Nigeria in the same interview, the officer had this to say:

The experience is different from the one I had in Nigeria when Boko Haram insurgency started, when you do patrol to get information, the locals will not want to tell you because they were sympathetic to Boko Haram. Indigenes were among them until when Boko Haram got out of hand that was when they were now willing to share information.

Furthermore, the officer also narrated his experience in Sudan as follows:

In Sudan also, it is even worse, the moment they see blue beret, they are already apprehensive, they do not like the contingents. It was a very hostile place for the peacekeeping forces. Even when you go on patrols, you must carry APC (Armoured Personnel Carrier), you must be battle ready, even their soldiers and police were not cooperative.

The foregoing further reiterates our contention above that not in all cases unarmed military observation would work effectively in sourcing information. As Captain Eric Maza stated in the Sudan situation, there was this sense of apprehension on the side of the locals when they see the blue beret. In this context, the mufti approach utilised in the Liberian mission would aptly come handy in eliciting information from the locals to support the operation. Again, when an environment where the PSO is conducted is averse to both vertical and horizontal interoperability (Runinstein, 2008:540) as indicated in the account above, the issue of availability of information in PSO becomes a problem. This perhaps explains why the crisis in Sudan has protracted unnecessarily, while a twist in events occurred in the Nigerian situation when the locals saw the need to pass useful information to the combating troop.

In the light of the above submission by the NIBATT 37 Intelligent Officer, one would conveniently agree with studies that contend that the role of relevant data cannot be underrated during planning and decision making in military operations (Ajayi and Omirin, 2007:109). In other words, this also suggests that information is central to decision-making, because informed



decision(s) in PSO can only be taken by a force commander when there are useful information to aid such decisions.

Accordingly, availability of useful information to the Nigerian contingent in the Liberian PSO helped greatly in bringing the crisis in that country to an end. This however was when horizontal interoperability began to take shape among the troops contributing countries later on. In contrast, non-availability of information from the locals to the contingent did not help in ameliorating the Sudan crisis, thereby making it difficult to establish a stable environment favourable for negotiating an enduring settlement to the country's crisis can proceed. However, at some point, as indicated in the interview, holding back useful information also dealt a heavy blow on the Nigerian Army's efforts in combating Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. Put together, these scenarios show what availability or non-availability of information to the contingents in PSO can do to the mission.

### **5.2.2. Synergy in Military Information Acquisition in PSO**

Since violent civil conflicts became a visible phenomenon across the globe, national governments have struggled to tackle it without recording much success. Their inability to squarely address these violent conflicts necessitated the idea of third party intervention/involvement through the deployment of multinational forces, which is often under the UN auspices. This gave rise to hybrid peacekeeping operations which in some cases starts at the sub-regional level as seen in the example of ECOWAS Mission in Liberia (ECOMIL). With the upsurge of conflicts, this cooperation among nations and multilateral institutions aimed at helping nations in conflict has expanded to include other regional and global institutions like the UN, EU, and AU. This dimension to peacekeeping operations is contemporarily known as partnership peacekeeping or multidimensional approach to peacekeeping which entails collaboration on active military operations between two or more multilateral institutions or various bilateral actors (Williams, 2015) to stabilise countries wracked with violence.

The partnership peacekeeping has seen more peacekeeping operations conducted in Africa as the continent is reputed to have hosted more operations and peacekeepers than any other region in the world (Holt and Shanahan, 2005). Interestingly, Liberia happened to be one among the host

nations and recipient of the ECOWAS-UN PSO partnership. Expectedly, since PSO is conducted in a theatre that is multicultural in nature as contingents from different countries converge in another country, such a hybrid arrangement is most likely going to throw up challenges concerning synergy in information acquisition among the contingents considering that each contingent may have its internal *modus operandi* and is led by its own Force Commander. As Unsal, Varoglu, Basar and Varoglu (2017) point out, one of such challenges could be difference in leadership styles. With respect to PSO in Liberia, the MPIO, when asked whether the Nigerian contingent's information management strategy is different from other peace support forces, said:

You know, whenever you find yourself here, you have to work in line with the regulations of the UN. Whenever you leave Nigeria you have to now work under a new umbrella of the UN and they have a unanimous way of operation. The way we operate am very sure if you go to Ghana Battalion you will see the same thing only that the name of the contingent differ.

What can be gleaned from the forgoing is that irrespective of a particular contingent leadership style, such does not apply to the UN PSO which operates in a network centric environment that needs collaboration among the various contingents for the operation to function effectively. This design is a deliberate attempt to bring the various contingents together so as to accomplish UN's mandate in Liberia. So, putting aside individual contingent's strategy in military operation and fusing into the UN framework of PSO was the ideal way to achieve this mandate. It is convenient to argue that such collaboration is necessary because PSO is not a conventional war where the contingents perceive themselves as adversaries who should not collaborate with each other, but an operation other than war whose mandate is targeted at stabilising hostile regions, terminate conflict, and rebuild infrastructure of war-torn states (UN, 2003).

The UN umbrella under which the contingents operate encourages cooperation among them as a respondent stated. Such cooperation thrives more when the contingents synergise in acquiring information. An academic study on integrated mission, this kind of synergy is referred to as horizontal interoperability. According to Rubinstein et al (2008:540), in the Liberian context where the interaction was between the contingents, the way it played out was an issue the researcher interrogated. While airing his view, the Military Assistant to the Force Commander at the UN Force Headquarters in Monrovia explained how the whole system of information gathering and coordination operates. According to him:

There is no way you would say you'll interact with only your contingents. You'll have interaction with all contingents as the work arises and it is just the nature of the work so in all situation, you find out that you interact with everybody, so many people from different countries, different contingents, you find out that it is not just one entity that provides and seek report, it is all involving.

The same view was also expressed by a couple of officers that responded to the interviews. Their positions are very much in tune with NATO doctrine of need to share which replaced the need to know (NATO, 2011). The import of this kind of interaction among multinational forces which leads to sharing vital information in PSO is predicated on the assumption that it minimises a situation where participating troops who are on the same mission will be seen working at cross purposes when there is no information sharing among them concerning the mission which they are part of. It is on this basis that Rubinstein *et al*(2008:540) posited that “ the ability to work with others in the mission and to work with local populations is essential to the mission working smoothly...”

In a situation where such synergy by way of horizontal interoperability does not exist, there is the tendency that the main aim of the mission could be defeated. The Balkan implosion as detailed by Soeters (2017) is worth mentioning here. In Bosnia, the major powers, the U.S., U.K, and France decided not to grant the numerous air support request made to them by the UN Dutch troops that was deployed to monitor cease-fire put in place to allow peaceful negotiation. The reason for this denial as later revealed by the then Dutch Minister of Defense, Joris Voorhoeve, was because General Ratko Mladic men had taken hostage of some British and French personnel and threatened to harm them in the event they did otherwise (Soeters, 2017). This vital information which was not communicated to the Dutch military that was in need of air support, which would have assisted it to improvise ultimately led to the massacre that later occurred. Similarly, it has also been argued that this synergy which was conspicuously missing within the U.S. intelligence community accounts for the ill-fated September 11 terrorist attack (Lefebvre, 2003; Sims, 2006; Lahneman, 2010).

As it later happened, the Bosnian incident led to the call for a stronger intelligence capability with shared military information in multinational PSO in the Balkans (Aldrich, 2004), which to a large extent, is what happened in the Liberian mission. When vital information reaches those in need, it facilitates coordination amongst contingents which in turn improves the efficiency of the

contingents. That is why some scholars have argued that information sharing interactions predict the efficacy and success of the teams more accurately than the total number of all interactions of other kind (Gill and Thompson, 2017:81-82). Had the super powers toed this line in the Bosnian incident, the effect of the subsequent implosion which struck the country would not have occurred, or rather, its effect less consequential if it ever happened. Aside the cost to human lives, the Bosnian incident clearly shows how national interest can imperil a sincere course in PSO even if such interest is not worth losing human lives.

While information was available in the Balkan situation but was only held back for reasons of national interests, the Liberian case at the initial phase of the mission under ECOMOG had problems of pre-deployment information let alone sharing. Salami (2013) aptly captures this when he stated that the multinational forces arrived Liberia without a Force Headquarters on ground, a piece of information they were not armed with to prepare them for the challenges ahead. Worse still, they had no sufficient intelligence report about situation in Liberia as there were no maps to help the forces in gathering intelligence let alone share among themselves (Iweze, 1993). These were the issues that affected intelligence gathering and stalled horizontal interoperability in the ECOMOG led PSO in Liberia in the initial stage.

With the intervention of the United Nations in the Liberian crises, the contingents had to work under a network centric environment. An environment that is seamless in nature. This design encouraged harmonious working relationship and collaboration among the various contingents in the PSO which also impacted positively in information sharing. To this end, Major C.U. Uba stated that:

It is polled together at the OMIL headquarter. What we get we give to them, what other people get from their various areas of responsibility; they give to them at the top there. At the top there, there are people tasked with the duty of processing, reducing and extracting whatever vital information there is to pass down again.

This clearly shows that synergy in information acquisition in the Liberian PSO was two-fold: bottom up and up bottom. However, there were times when this network centric arrangement encountered failures which affected the process of acquiring information. The failure could either be human induced or as a result of cultural diversity. The latter aspect would be discussed elaborately in subsequent section under a theme that would treat how cultural diversity among

the contingents in the Liberian PSO created challenges (Unsal Sigri *et al*, 2017:183). Although we touched the leadership aspect a bit, but there is still the need to examine it a little backward to the era when the first batch of the contingent was deployed under the ECOMOG family to really understand how getting a nation to play the leadership role among the ECOMOG troops contributing nation was a problem. Let us look at how national interest brought about breakdown in synergy as it concerns information acquisition in PSOs in Liberia.

While responding to a question on whether the information strategy of the NA is different from other contingents, a Nigerian Captain who served in Mali at one time but was later redeployed to Liberia made the following submission:

Well not completely the same because you know, in as much as you are in UN operation, and there are things you do not need to expose to other people because today they are your friends tomorrow they may be your enemies. So, there are some things you do not need to come out with.

What the forgoing says most appropriately is that there is always the place of national interest no matter the nature of the operation. When the super powers denied the Dutch contingent valuable information which would have averted the massacre that occurred in the Balkan crisis, they acted on national interest in a PSO to protect their nationals that were held hostage by Ratko Mladic. The tendency of such situation occurring informs Jankowski's contention that individuals who control information do not have a strong incentive to share it because sharing information means giving away a valuable resource (Jankowski, 2017:69) which could be used against them. The contention of the Captain on the need for downplaying transparency in information sharing stems from this. Although this may not be in tune with the UN regulations, nations will have to take measures to protect their national interest in the event they find themselves in a situation where an act of transparency in PSO could cost them an unimaginable harm.

Although some scholars have observed that trust is critical to information sharing and effective collaboration in multinational and multiagency PSO (Gill and Thompson, 2017). This is based on the fact that PSO is a mission that seeks to stabilise conflict areas through peaceful means. The question is: should a nation expose its vital military strategy in PSO on the basis of trust? What happens when those it exposes itself to in PSO as friends become her enemies tomorrow? No event captures this submission more accurately like the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact Hitler and Stalin signed, which paved the way for German assault of Poland and Soviet incursion

into Eastern Poland. As it later turned out, Hitler reneged on that peace pact by invading the Soviet Union (Stahel, 2015). Like Captain stated, friends have become enemies. The same was the case with the Soviet Union which went into alliance with the Western allies to defeat Hitler in the Second World War, only to become arch enemies with the West in protracted Cold-War. This was another situation of friends becoming enemies. Any information strategy a nation shares with another as friends can be readily used to overcome when such relationship deteriorates.

Although these scenarios were not PSO, but it lends credence to the submission of the Captain on friends becoming enemies and why a nation must not expose itself to others on the basis of trust in PSO as Gill and Thompson suggested. This pessimism explains why to some extent, the Kantian notion of perpetual peace which the UN is so resolute in pursuing as it strives hard to safeguard international peace and security cannot be totally reconciled, because nations will have to do everything, including hold back vital information to protect their national interest.

Information sharing was also stalled in the Liberian PSO through the deployment of internal communication signals. In an interview with the Signal Officer of NIBATT 37, he stated how the internal coding operates when he made his submission in the following words:

Though there is need for information transparency, contingents still have their internal communication signals that others might not be able to intercept...It is a Nigerian system, not only in the Army, to look for one of the three major Nigerian languages to be using to communicate within themselves to keep other people aside.

In addition, the Signal Officer also noted that:

If you still want to make it further, even within the contingent, let us assume now, I want to communicate with NIBATT 36, since we are from the same country and if I do not want others to know what we are doing, it is just for me to code the message in my own way and give the person in NIBATT 37 the code that he is going to use to decode that message.

The act of cryptography or sending coded messages to own forces in war time such that the enemy cannot decode those messages is a norm which dates back to ancient times. This strategy earned the Romans victory in the Gallic Wars, which subsequently resulted in the formation of *Pax Romania* (Gilliver, 2003). The same strategy was deployed in decrypting information from

the Germans in a radio transmission that gave Britain victory over the Germans in the Battle of the Atlantic (Gardner, 1999). Like the Gallic Wars, Britain victory with its Western allies conveniently established another known as *Pax Americana*, which incidentally reigns to date. In conventional warfare in modern times, nations still find cryptography a useful method in military operations.

However, as useful as this strategy is, including the use of language that an adversary does not understand as the Nigerian contingent did in the Liberian PSO is a contravention of UN's regulations as contained in its Peacekeeping Missions Signal Manual (United Nations Peacekeeping Missions Military Signals, 2015:5). This regulation views Peace Support Operations as operations other than warfare with benign disposition intent on restoring peace; which is why it needs to be conducted under a transparent atmosphere that is devoid of secrecy.

In addition, the UN Military Signal Unit focuses its attention on ensuring information and communication interoperability between vital components of the military and police headquarters at Force, Sector, Battalion, and Independent Unit headquarters level (Ibid:11). This network centric arrangement establishes the basis for horizontal interoperability as it relates to synergy in information acquisition. When contingents decide to go against this by introducing strategies that break the chain of information sharing, such action can defeat the essence of the PSO when the coded information is one that is vital to averting an impending implosion.

Arguably, troops contributing countries may have valid reason(s) to rationalise their action for implicitly defying UN regulations with respect to sharing information as contained its manual, one of which could be protecting its national interests. In this case, it is proper to state that the UN is conscious of this (United Nations Peacekeeping Missions Military Signals, 2015:5). Having said this, it is quite clear that what the regulation seeks to achieve is nothing more than provide an atmosphere where interoperability among contingents participating in the PSO can be fully attained. However, while coding information and communicating in a language that is intent on concealing information contravenes UN regulations, troops contributing countries do also have the right to guard their national interests, especially when they perceive that the information in their possession will not serve their national interest if it is released. Perhaps a blend lessening secrecy and information security would be the best approach.

On the leadership aspect, it is imperative to state that the age long Franco/Anglo traditional rivalry did pose serious problems to horizontal interoperability among the troops contributing countries at initial phase of the Liberia Civil War (1989 to 1997). Nigeria and her West African neighbours in (Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso) were equally mired in crisis of confidence (See Drama and Carment, 2003). Nigeria was vehemently opposed by these countries from the stand point of dominance, and ECOMOG which was led by Nigeria was perceived not to be neutral in the cease-fire it initiated. As studies have shown, these countries alleged that ECOMOG under Nigeria's leadership was tied to financial interests in the government of Doe (Shilue and Fagen, 2014). This is one aspect of the leadership problem. Another incidence was the case of gross indiscipline levied against a Ghanaian battalion commander who defied the ECOMOG Chief of Staff, a brigadier from Nigeria, when the brigadier ordered him to bring the parade to attention and hand over to him (Salami, 2013). The case of indiscipline on the part of the Guinean contingent which could not be controlled by the Deputy Force Commander who complained of being assigned demanding duties as a deliberate attempt by the Anglophone countries to eliminate them (Iweze, 1993) did also affect the PSO in Liberia.

What can be gleaned from the forgoing narratives is the fact that there was no synergy among the international forces in Liberia, let alone sharing information. The regional dynamics that ensued made it problematic for the synergy, and also the purpose of mission which was to monitor a complete cease-fire and halt destruction of lives and properties (Salami, 2013). In other words, horizontal interoperability which is at the core of PSO and healthy for sharing information was conspicuously missing on account of lack of sound leadership which a network centric PSO environment needs. This kind of problem is not peculiar with the Liberian PSO.

The empirical study of Unsal Sigri *et al* (2017) indicates that Operation Althea in Bosnia Herzegovina which took over from the Stabilisation Force (SFOR) had similar challenges as some contingents of the European Union Force (EUFOR) narrated their experience. One of the respondents who commented on how different leadership style created ambiguities in the management of the processes across the multinational units posits that an organisation with dual chain of command is a huge problem linked with the size of each national contingent. Another respondent remarked that the success of a multinational operation is tied to the capacity of a nation to assume the leadership role (Unsal Sigri *et al*, 2017:193). This was exactly the case in



Liberian PSO as aptly captured above. Arguably, it constituted the *raison d'être* for the first PSO lack of impressive progress under ECOMOG as expected, despite the relative gains that were recorded.

### **5.2.3. Information Delivery and Control in PSO**

It was Sir Francis Bacon who stated that information is power. Arguably, there is no setting where this assertion is truer like in the military circle (Army Field Manual, 2011:4). Given this role, the U.S. considers information to be an element of national power along with diplomatic, economic, and military (Joint Doctrine, 2014; Bokel, 2003); commonly known as DIME when arranged in the order of Diplomacy, Information, Military, and Economic. Its conception as an element of national power is founded on the all-important role information plays in helping a nation achieve its national objectives. These objectives are better achieved with high level of certainty when the right information is securely stored and transmitted in real time (Joint Doctrine, 2014). It is on this basis that the struggle for control over information or gaining information superiority between a nation and its adversaries (state or non-state actors) therefore becomes a serious issue considering that information superiority is what gives dominance on the modern battlefield (Norton, 2003).

Accordingly, nations that take the issue of national security seriously never think twice when it involves protecting their information domain from adversaries both in peace and in war time. Same is applicable in PSO where information facilitates the missions work. That is why the issue of delivery, dissemination, or transmission and control of information in PSO is an area the contingents accord a lot of attention. As an integrated mission like other PSOs, the Liberian mission adopted the normal regimented military hierarchy of command in delivering information within the theatre of the mission. The structure is either top-bottom or bottom-top. The submissions of the Battalion Intelligence Officer aptly capture it:

Information can come in the form of directive. It can come from the Force Headquarters down to us like this is what you should be on the lookout for and you'll know that you will give report on what you see on that. This information gives you a direction with which to work with.

What this submission says most appropriately about PSOs is that the UN is fully in charge of the mission and not the various contingents. This is in alignment with the UNPKO principles and guidelines (2008) which reserves the power to order deployment of troops to crisis regions in the hands of the Security Council, which also spells out the specific mandate of the deployed troops. This power is derived from the UN Charter. What the contingents are expected to look out for during the mission is spelt out by the Security Council. The directive of the United Nations to the contingents is very essential to the mission because it stems from the report of the fact finding missions and commissions the UN dispatches to investigate the disputes and solutions to its pre-deployment of troops, which gives the mission focus, and also helps in achieving its core mandate.

This however does not erode the vital role the contingents play in PSO despite the coordination role of the UN through the Security Council. Their activities in brokering cease-fire by halting hostility, setting the path to the peace process, and sourcing the much needed information on the situation of the conflict region with respect to the positions of the warring parties in the course of the operation cannot be undermined. This explains why the former UN Secretary General, Dag Hammarskjold made the remark that peacekeeping is not a job for soldiers, but only a soldier can do it.

How then does this information get to the relevant authorities in PSO? Information gathered from the survey represented as Table 5.2 illustrates what concerned officers do with the information they have gathered through different means.

**Table 5.2: Information Delivery and Control in PSO**

<i>Items</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>D</i>
I always consciously share information that I have gathered in PSOs when I am told to do so	40 (20%)	120 (60%)	12 (6%)	28 (14%)
I never share information that I have gathered in peace support operation	42 (21%)	70 (35%)	24 (12%)	64 (32%)
I communicate information gathered through PSOs only	54 (27%)	100 (50%)	20 (10%)	26 (13%)

when directed to and through the channel specified				
I communicate information gathered in PSOs when I feel it is necessary and considering whom I am communicating to	58 (29%)	108 (54%)	10 (5%)	24 (12%)

**Source:** Fieldwork, 2016

The above table shows that majority 120 (60%) of the respondents agreed that they always consciously share information that they have gathered in PSOs when they were told to do so while 12 (6%) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the question. The result also shows that majority, 70 (35%) of the respondents noted that they have never shared information that they have gathered in PSO while minority 24 (12%) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the item. Higher number of the respondents 100 (50%) agreed that they communicate information gathered through PSOs only when directed to and through the channel specified by a higher official while 20 (10%) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the question. Results also revealed that majority 108(54%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they communicate information gathered in PSOs when they feel it is necessary and they do consider whom they are communicating to while 58 (29%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the item.

Furthermore, according to a member of the Nigerian contingent who spoke to this researcher, the PSO has a bottom-up method of disseminating information. The Military Assistant to the Force Commander stated that disseminating information is:

bottom up while coordination is top-down. Basically at the grass root like I said, on the military side, you have the military observers, they report straight to the military headquarter, which is the Chief Operation Officer, from the COP then to the DFC to the Force Commander, from the FC to Joint Operation Centre, from JOC to Special Representative to the Secretary General.

The foregoing submission by the interviewee is slightly different from that of the Battalion intelligence officer. The former talked about coordination where the UN takes charge and issues directive on what to look out for during the mission to the contingents, indicating its control of the entire mission, while the latter talks about information dissemination of information which comes from the deployed troops all through to the hierarchy of the UN. This bottom-top method of disseminating information has a semblance of horizontal interoperability which is essential for

PSOs to work smoothly given that there is interaction in terms of communication taking place in stages as stated in Military Assistant to the Force Commander during the mission.

However, this interaction transcends the usual horizontal interoperability that takes place among actors participating in peacekeeping which Rubinstein *et al* (2008) talked about as it includes the UN hierarchy. The inclusion of the United Nations hierarchy in the information chain is instructive because, the UN is not only a body that coordinates the PSO, it is an institution that also uses the information available to it from the contingents to find enduring resolutions to the issues that led to the deployment of troops by the Security Council. This role is played by the Special Representative of the Secretary General who is officially, the head of the mission and also coordinates all diplomatic and political activities concerning the PSO.

In a way, a breakdown in the above structure of disseminating information will be counterproductive to the entire mission. It is also essential to stress that as central as the UN leadership is in the information chain and to the PSO, so also is the troops that perform the main task of collecting information and passing it across the various channels of the operation network which finally gets to the UN headquarters. This is what the Nigerian contingent did in collaboration with others. As stated by the UN (2008), the UN has no standing army or police to deploy in time of crisis. The Secretariat depends on contribution of troops and police and other personnel from its members who are not under any obligation to do so. These are the people who ultimately make the feasibility of attaining the actual mandate of the PSO possible through their role in enforcing cease-fire and exchange of valuable information regarding the mission.

Aside disseminating information in the theatre of PSO among the contingents, the need to control the process of disseminating information also arises. This becomes necessary so as to prevent a situation where valuable information meant for the contingents may slip into the hands of warring forces and is used to foil its plans or intentions. To this end, military operations tend to apply the essential principles of information security, the common one of which is the need to know principle.

In alluding to this, the NIBATT 37 Information Officer in the Liberian PSO made this remark with respect to the protection of information among personnel in the following words:

In the Army, information system is categorized or prioritized into **need to know, need to have, need to hold, and need to take**. These are ways of managing and protecting information. For example, a clerk has the need to have a file because as the Chief Clerk, there is always some information in his possession. So, it is needful to have the file.

Adopting the principles of need to know, have, hold and take in military operations is aimed at limiting damage. The military takes such precaution with the aim of making the process of releasing classified information to officers more cumbersome, believing that the possibility exists that some trusted insiders who have been bought over by an adversary may want to access information they do not have the need to know, have, hold, or take for infamous intentions. In the event this happens, strict adherence to the principle that place restrictions on accessing information limits or averts the damage that may occur. Although this may be commonly associated with warlike situations, PSOs also limit the tendency of exposing their plans, intentions, capabilities, weaknesses, and vulnerability to belligerent forces during the operation.

Considering the relevance of information to peace operations, one of the approaches to guaranteeing information superiority in order to gain complete advantage ahead of adversaries is by strictly adhering to these principles. By so doing, effective control over the dissemination of information and ensuring its safety in the process of delivery can be guaranteed as information is only released based on requirement, and not because of an individual office, position or security clearance which he/she secured to allow them access to the information.

However, there may be instances when strict adherence to these principles, especially the need to keep of information can cost serious damage instead of limiting it, especially when information is held back on account of national security. The Balkan scenario detailed by Soeters (2017) which the researcher cited earlier on provides a compelling example of what can happen when there is strict control of information. Although not explicitly stated, but one could easily deduce that the reason why the major powers—the US, Britain and France decided not to grant the numerous air support request made by the UN Dutch troops was based on national interest. If the information concerning the French and British hostages was relayed to the Dutch troops as the reason for not granting the air support request they made, that would have given it room to improvise and nip the massacre of about 8000 Bosnian in the bud. This act later became the first

act of genocide in Europe since WWII (Soeters, 2017). This kind of excessive control of information under the need to keep has a tendency of undermining PSO as seen in Bosnia.

The 9/11 terrorist is another case in point. Although not necessarily PSO, in a way, one can also argue that the application of the need to keep principle accounted for the September attack. As Best (2011:2) succinctly points out while referring to the conclusion of the two Congressional intelligence committee report, the failure to piece together all earlier intelligence about the plot and the plotters constituted the central obstacle to gaining advance information on attack. The considerable clues existed but these were basically shelved in the individual files of the various agencies. In other words, the problem was not lack of information per se, but the inability to make that information available for positive use. The unfortunate incident of the 9/11 further reiterates the strong observation of Scivens that victory on a battlefield is not just dependent on having superior information, but the exploitation of it to its maximum use (cited in Norton, 2003:1). This also draws our mind to the important fact that information superiority may be very essential in warfare or PSO, relaxing its excessive control as emphasised by the principle of need to keep and applying the doctrine of need to share will in some instances do a lot of good to military operations.

Another dimension to information delivery and control in PSO is the importance of the contingents being in charge of the information domain. This includes updating the locals about the entire operation, liaising with local media outfits to ensure that airs healthy information about the mission, and projecting the activities of the multinational force in positive light. While responding on what his core responsibilities are, the Military Public Information Officer made the following submission which gave an insight into how the Nigerian contingent managed the information domain. According to him:

My primary responsibility is to project the good image of the Battalion and to ensure comprehensive coverage both pictorial and videos of all events within the time under review. As the MPIO, the information I possess is purely the information meant to project the good image of the battalion and I also coordinate with the media people here in Liberia in order to check what they are reporting about the contingent.

The foregoing submission is in tune with the magic bullet theory which sees information carrying a persuasive effect once its intended message reaches its target. Both in conventional

warfare and PSO, winning the media war is a critical component of military operation which helps to devoid the airwaves of information that might be antithetical to what the forces are doing. This becomes necessary in a situation where the multinational force is perceived to be impartial, to find our factors inhibiting PSO operations (NATO, 2001). In the case of Liberia, Hunt (2006) asserts that there was loss in public confidence after the crisis. This therefore necessitated the use of UNMIL to disseminate information through direct means such as UN radio broadcast posters, advertisement, fliers and face to face communication (Mentes and Browne, 2012).

This further buttresses the response of the MPIO on image making. However, in as much as liaising with local media in Liberia yielded results by way of updating the local and international media about the mission and some segment of the Liberian population, it was discovered that press releases and outcome of conferences end up with local journalists and international media without reaching the local population due to lack of proper coverage, hence the need for a creative and innovative form of disseminating information and peace propaganda (Hunt, 2006).

Gaining control of the information domain as indicated above does not only enhance proper image making for the PSO, it also helps in checking or countering inflammatory information that may hit the airwaves and create an implosion, when the mission is still in a fragile state. It is for this reason that Lehman (2009:6) asserts that in war zones, fast-paced events require frequent updates to stay on top of developments. Failure to the media war in PSO comes with grave consequences as the Bosnian experience reveals. In that case, someone was quoted to have said that: My country was first shattered by the media, then by guns (Avruch *et al*, 2000:36).

### **5.3. Challenges of Information Management in the PSO in Liberia**

As already pointed out, Nigeria has actively participated in PSOs since the 1960s which has come with gains and challenges. Since then, the Nigerian Army (NA) had been deployed to several places in line with the country's foreign policy goals in assisting to resolve intractable conflicts (Nwolise, 2004). Of the 51 United Nations' PSOs, the Nigerian Army has been involved in 25 of them. It has participated in three ECOWAS-led PSOs in West Africa and another three under the defunct OAU. The NA was actively involved in ECOMOG I (Liberia), ECOMOG II (Sierra Leone) and in a 1964 bilateral mission with the then OAU in Tangayinka

(present-day Tanzania). In these missions, the Nigerian Army had cumulatively deployed thousands of personnel. The Military, in this period, also contributed various ranks of personnel from Military Observers (MILOBs) to Chief Operation Officers (COO), Chief Military Personnel Officers (CMPO), Contingent Commanders (Con Com), Units/Contingents and Force Commanders (FCs). Accordingly, one could argue that the NA has been a leading and prominent participant in PSOs in the quest for global peace and security. However, the involvement of Nigeria Army in the PSOs in Liberia came with enormous challenges.

### **5.3.1. Information Management Challenges to Military Capabilities in PSOs**

Information is a fundamental constituent of nearly every activity in the military, so much so that its function has become translucent. This empowers commanders' decision, actions and coordinating ability in the battle field effectively (Mrwebi, 2000). Thus, information is the foundation required for success and its collection and use in the military environment is a matter of great sensitivity. Relying on the categorisation of George Scriven, the function of information management in military science, we draw the connections and value of information management to military capabilities in PSOs. Describing such nexus, Scriven, who in 1915 served as the US Army Chief Signal Officer, further stressed when he reiterated the need to exploit information management in every inch of military operation, maintaining that (cited in Norton, 2002:1),

Scriven points out that the maximum exploitation of available information rather than merely having it is the key to military success. In other words, it suggests that effective use of information is the heartbeat and life wire of military operations. Nonetheless, information management and military capabilities are often challenged in many respects. Discussing military capabilities and information management, the intelligence officer of NIBATT 36 stated that:

Information management is a crucial aspect of military operations. As you can see I am an intelligence officer. My job is simply to gather information both for tactical and operational use. This suggests that the military allocates a special place to information. We also have the capacity and capabilities militarily and otherwise to manage this information, even though we have had some challenges in the peace operations.

Whereas he acknowledged that there are some challenges, he reiterated that information management is very critical in their operations. What appears to be missing is how information



availability or its absence affects their operations in PSOs. Even so, organisations depend on information and on the behaviour of how the information is managed to be useful. To this end, in the present era, the military as an organisation is embracing a period characterised by the accelerating growth of information, information sources and dissemination capabilities reinforced by information technology.

The information age in this study, showed that the information officer of the battalion in Liberia confirmed that the NA has tremendous means to gather and distribute information. Military commanders and personnel acquire most of their information by having conversations with people, either face-to-face, or exchanging informative views through communication devices i.e. on the telephone, and internet. Corroborating this idea, the information officer of the battalion in Liberia expressed that:

You can go out for surveillance to get information and people will even be willing to give you that information. Because they believe that by so doing they are helping you and you are helping them at the same time, even though you will have to give them like incentives. You know Liberians can be very demanding.

The above response reveals that even in critical situations, the military develops the frame for gathering information during peace support operations. Since information is central to their operation and at a point it is so scarce they improvise by going to the people to get the required information. This pattern however has been conventional in military information gathering systems. The view of the information officer also indicated that gathering information comes with peculiar challenges such as expending scarce resources in exchange for information. Thus, one of the biggest obstacles to information management operations in Liberia is resources. Some of the respondents contended that the resources were largely inadequate to support their duties. The challenges accruing from finance, language and other resources have been dealt with in another section under this objective.

Nevertheless, empirical information from the survey shows that information management in the Nigerian Army in the PSO in Liberia is affected by the denial of strategic information. This emanated from various factors including protection of information, the manipulation of information by senior officers under whose custody the Army's information architecture was domiciled and the denial of strategic information. This is captured in the table 5.3 below.

**Table 5.3: Information Management Challenges to Military Capabilities in PSO**

<i>Items</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>D</i>
Information on the Nigerian Army in Peace support operations is well protected	70 (35%)	114 (57%)	6 (3%)	10 (5%)
Information on the Nigerian Army in Peace support operations is not well protected	66 (33%)	70 (35%)	12 (6%)	52 (26%)
Information management in the Nigerian Army is influenced/ manipulated by senior officers	28 (14%)	56 (28%)	36 (18%)	80 (40%)
Information management in the Nigerian Army during PSOs is affected by denial of strategic information.	14 (7%)	60 (30%)	28 (14%)	98 (49%)

**Source:** Fieldwork, 2016

The above table shows that 114 (57%) of the respondents agreed that Information on the Nigeria Armed Forces in PSOs in Liberia is well protected while 6 (3%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. Results indicated that majority 66 (33%) of the respondents strongly agreed that Information in the Nigeria Armed Forces in PSOs is not well protected while 12 (6%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. Further, result revealed that majority 80 (40%) of them disagreed that Information management in the Nigeria Armed Forces is influenced/ manipulated by senior officers while 28 (14%) supported the item. Findings demonstrated that majority 98 (49%) of the respondents disagreed that information management in the Nigeria Armed Forces during PSOs is affected by denial of strategic information while 60 (30%) of the respondents agreed Information management in the Nigeria Armed Forces during PSOs is affected by denial of strategic information.

What is important in the table above and the figures received and shown is that a connection exists between information management and military capability as well as effectiveness in the Liberia PSO. Whereas majority of respondents dismissed the idea of manipulation and denial of information in the operations, what is germane is a sense or perception of denial or manipulation as well as over protection which could affect the capability of field officers. In this light, military

capability can be affected as witnessed in the Bosnian case where Dutch UN troops capability was affected owing to the denial of sensitive strategic information as well as the manipulation of the information setup which led to the death of 8000 Bosnian (Soeters, 2017), and left the Dutch soldiers in a psychological dilemma.

Furthermore, military capability is widely seen as the ultimate measure of national power. Because countries manage to survive in a geostrategic and hostile environment filled with both external and domestic threats that have almost become a constant. Thus, the ability to navigate through these threats largely depends on the country's possession of effective coercive power.

Moreover, to determine the ability of the force to overwhelm, suppress or defeat the enemy would depend on a meticulous balance of power analysis, the conditions under which operation would take place, and the significant objectives and limitations that regulate the overall interface between both sides. These efforts demand a delicate combat analysis, mock exercises and simulations to assess the level of capabilities, preparedness and relative effectiveness vis-à-vis the opponent's capabilities.

The idea of military ability as the highest output of national power is predicated on the awareness that military organisations of a country have in their disposal the nation's resources which is converted productively, into specific, efficient combat capabilities. These combat capabilities that are created can actually be termed effective or powerful to the extent that they can be utilised either as threat tactics or actual deployment by the country's leaders to subjugate, compel or exert their will on both real and perceived adversaries.

Thus, military effectiveness translates to that final output or product of the resources and support given to the military to develop its capabilities to convert these assets into competent military infrastructure that the nation could easily deploy to promote and defend its interests. However, it could be argued that a country's military may have the best resources available to it in terms of manpower and budgets, yet if it possesses a misguided military doctrine, untrained leadership and unschooled manpower and the wrong organisational footing, such military capability is bound to suffer. In this order, Nigerian officers in Liberia maintained that Nigerian contingents have demonstrated the capability of not just advancing the peace cause in Liberia but that they have properly integrated information management into the peace mission in Liberia.

Thus, in terms of capability, the Nigerian army is one of the leading powers on the African continent, commanding huge numbers of soldiers and equipment. Nigeria, when compared with its neighbours, possesses an overwhelming military might. The substantially large and reasonably well-equipped military is capable of projecting its strength within and beyond the region as well as defending the state against potential threats from external sources. Indeed, this reduced drastically since 1970; its capabilities and mobility have advanced substantially. Likewise, the air and naval forces have not fared any better in terms of size of manpower; however, their firepower has improved significantly both in terms of equipment and sophistication. The navy, for example, extended its operations from sea side defense to anti-submarine combat systems. The point to underscore is that in all dimensions of PSO in Liberia but specifically the aspect of information management, Nigerian Army demonstrated great capability in delivering their mandate. Nevertheless, lack of adequate information management could hamper military capabilities in PSOs.

### **5.3.2. Policies and the Environment of Information Management in PSO**

Simply put, a policy is a carefully thought-out plan of action (or inaction) initiated to realise certain established and desired objectives within a specific situation, guiding the individual or organisation's decision-making (Mackay and Shaxton, 2005). This flows from the enormous volume of information that is processed on daily basis. Although even as enormous information are processed, accessibility in military organisation is very difficult. Responding to this claim, the MPIO of the battalion in Liberia explained how this affects their operation:

There is some information that you cannot have access to because of the structures which sometimes hinder you from carrying out your responsibilities. You must always obey the structures. I cannot jump my CO and now start communicating with the outside world. There are protocols to follow no matter how important it is. We are restricted; not everybody speaks to the press.

It is understandable why there are accessibility challenges in the military settings; it is certain that the information is sensitive, confidential and most classic. The second on the list is email usage policy. Here, the UN LOTUS policy, a system of communication, comes handy as it targets easy communication between United Nations contingents. Often, organisations support

and encourage the responsible use of email services but acknowledge that email is not a confidential means of communication. Email services could be employed improperly and lack full-proof firewall to prevent what the organisation considers as offensive and unsolicited email contents from reaching the users. However, organisations try to minimise abuses of email services by putting in place a number of reasonable measures (Saran and Zavorsky, 2009). Email usage was a key information management policy adopted in the peace support operation in Liberia. Nonetheless, the processes did not come without some challenges. Responding to this study, the Military Assistant to the Force Commander emphasised that:

Sometimes the GSM communication can get bad or the internet communications especially for those in the hinterland. Sometimes they get cut off and it take days before they can be re-connected for obvious reasons because the infrastructure in the country especially telecommunication infrastructure in the country is very weak and everything is actually centralised in Monrovia. Outside Monrovia, the facilities are actually poor (MAFC).

The above challenge may have caused severe consequences in the peace supports operations in Liberia. Yet, the stakeholders need to understand and apply the guiding principles of information management. This involves the capacity to recognise information; know the value, its sensitive nature and how long such information needs to be kept. It is also very crucial that stakeholders know what should be shared, with whom and with what safeguards.

The internet usage policy is the third on the list. The objective of this policy is to formulate rules to ensure that usage of the internet complies with the organisation rules. It also hopes to ensure Information management policy, to protect the organisation against damaging consequences, and to educate the individuals whose duties and responsibilities require internet usage (Saran and Zavorsky, 2009). Hence, the effective implementation of the policy can lessen the amount of time required to find the right information, in the right format.

As Afaha (2015) rightly argues, in post-PSO initiatives in Sudan, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Chad and the Congo, one discovers that countries that obviously did not share the burden of restoring stability and peace to these countries are now the ones feasting and exploiting the resources of these countries. There remains an unremitting interest by scholars—both in Nigeria and elsewhere—to properly understanding the underlying motivations and incentives that have influenced the interventions by Nigeria in external conflicts and their resolution especially in the

Liberian case. This underscores the volume of ideas that have been churned out by several studies to try and provide explanation to this phenomenon over the years.

### **5.3.3. Language, Resources and the Effectiveness of Information Management in PSOs**

For the most part of this study, the issue of information management in PSO appears to occur more frequently than anything else. This is premised on the important role information management plays in military operation. A nation may have the best military hard and softwares, but the capacity to subdue its adversary in time of war is largely dependent on the availability of information at its disposal, and the exploitation of same to the maximum level(Norton 2003). For this reason, Allard asserts that, intelligence is as vital to the success of peace operation as it is to any other military activity (Allard, 1995:67). As vital as information is to military operations, there are factors that could stall its efficacy if not properly addressed, especially in integrated mission like PSO where contingents are expected to work under a network centric environment. These factors include differences in language, culture, national military procedure, and resources. The latter could be finance or infrastructural resources like electricity, roads, communication infrastructure like telephone, internet etc. Under this sub-theme, we will be looking at how culture/language and resources contributed to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of information management in PSO in Liberia.

This therefore means that PSOs are made up of contingents from different countries with different cultural background and military orientations expected to work as one in an entirely different country. Beyond the issue of trying to adapt to the new environment, it is quite certain that the contingents will also be faced with the problem of communicating with each other considering their diverse background; especially if the pre-deployment or pre-induction training did not take care of training in languages other than the one a particular contingent is proficient in. In Liberia where Nigeria, Ghana, India, China, Ukraine participated in the PSO, there were different narrations from members of the Nigerian contingents concerning how differences in language constituted a barrier to information management. While responding to the challenges of information management, Captain Ezekiel Abel made the following submission:

Well, for a start, just like I said earlier on, the first major challenge we have is language barrier. Two, culture, race, and do I call it inferiority complex also

between us as the UN staff and the locals. You find out that not all of them will want to come or get close to you.

The dimension of cultural challenge further amplifies the contention of Rubinstein that PSO creates potential for culturally-based problems in interactions among different organisational actors and with local populations (Rubinstein, 2003) in peacekeeping operations. Certainly, this is to be expected since individuals from different backgrounds with different cultural orientations are assembled together to work for a common purpose. That is why Unsal Sigri et al (2017:184) argue that culture introduces factors that can strongly affect the interactions between individuals from different cultures and between nations.

Considering the sensitive nature of cultural issues on PSO operational effectiveness as cited above, Feldman (2008) avers that in trying to forge a coalition force from different countries, religious values and traditions can create obstacles. In a way, this line of argument further reinforces the stand of Rubinstein. Although none of the contention of Feldman of religious and traditional orientation constituted a challenge to information management in the Liberian PSO, at least none was mentioned. That does not zero the possibility of it happening in PSOs, especially now that religious issues have become the basis of most international crisis.

Major Abdulazeez also expressed the same view concerning the challenges posed by cultural differences in PSOs in Liberia. In his remark, he stated that:

People from different culture, religion, and trainings are in the operation in Liberia. So sometimes you find out that communication can be difficult with some personnel from different countries because probably they do not understand the English you speak or you do not understand the one they speak, and this sometimes creates a little problem.

The problem of lack of effective communication among contingents in PSO arising from difference in language has turned out to be an issue standing in the way of effective information management in PSOs aside the issue of culture. This is so because operational effectiveness is dependent on how well members of the multinational force are able to communicate among themselves on joint task as well as other operations that concern the mission. It for this reason that Rubinstein (2008) posits that challenges like this tend to raise issues of horizontal interoperability at the level of the contingents as well as vertical interoperability when it comes to the contingents interacting with the locals.

Bearing in mind the role of information in military operations, there is no denying the fact that language barrier can stave the core objective of PSO which include monitoring cease-fire and peace agreement, both of which rely on vital information as a component of PSO. Interestingly, Liberia is not an isolated case when discussing how language barrier has constituted a serious challenge to PSO. As their empirical study in Bosnia revealed, Unsal Sigri (2017) were able to explicate how issues of language differences created problems for horizontal interoperability among NATO forces during the PSO, especially with respect to sharing information. While responding to questions on this issue, one of the respondents stated as follows: here, a good many peacekeepers cannot communicate with each other well, because they cannot even speak English fluently. That is why misunderstanding happens frequently, which causes breakdown or lack of coordination during missions (Unsal Sigri *et al*, 2017:193). Once a mission begins to witness breakdowns or lack of coordination this may as well play to the advantage of the warring forces as those responsible with monitoring cease-fire and peace agreement are not united to carry out that task.

Considering how negatively the issues of language and cultural differences could impact PSOs, observers have called for a way to mitigate these challenges. One of such ways is for contingents to have among themselves some persons who understand the common lingua franca in the mission to take up the role of interpreting. Even though language and cultural diversity constituted some problems as indicated above, this suggestion helped in mitigating those challenges at some instances. In his submission on how they were able to cope with other contingents on joint operation, the Intelligence Officer remarked thus:

There are some contingents that do not understand or do not speak English fluently; however they have some individuals amongst them that can interpret. But I do not think there is a troop that is here on this mission that will not have at least one or two.

As Sule (2013) has noted, the Nigerian contingents in Chad (1979-1980, and 1982-1983) who had similar problem of language barrier had to rely on interpreters to communicate with military personnel of the host nation and others from non-English speaking countries. Furthermore, he notes that this problem also occurred in Dafur and Mali, although it was mitigated as some members of the Nigerian contingent had knowledge of elementary French. Even in Liberia where the mission comprised of countries like China, Ukraine, and India the case was not different. One



instance which MPIO narrated was that of the encounter between the Ukrainian Force Commander and the Nigerian Commanding Officer. In his words:

When I followed my commanding officer who escorted also the force commander to Ukrainian helicopter unit closed to airport there, they do not understand English but they have a particular person that understand English among them who always try to translate whatever you are saying. When you are briefing them or when they are briefing you, he interprets it into English from their local language or dialect.

Having an interpreter in PSOs for contingents who are not proficient in the dominant language among their fellow contingents and the locals appears to be the strategy most nations have decided to adopt in order to remedy the language barrier and enhance effectiveness information management during the mission. China, which has assumed a prominent role in contributing troops to peacekeeping, has made it a policy that each contingent from its country must include at least one or two interpreters even though UN officials maintained that language barrier has not affected the performance of Chinese contingent, while it is on record that low ranking Chinese peacekeepers tend to avoid extensive interactions with the other contingents and the locals on account of language barrier (Gill and Huang, 2009).

China has acknowledged this problem and is making frantic efforts to remedy it as it places strong emphasis on language training, especially now that the country is expanding its engagement in PSOs. Based on this, it will be suffice to say that even with interpreters, PSOs will still face issues of effective information management which could only be address properly if the issue of language barrier is seen as big problem to effective information management in PSOs.

While the role of an interpreter helps in mitigating against the problem of language differences in PSOs, it should be noted also that this only ameliorates it as interpreters would not always be at every point of interaction that their service would be needed. In this situation, passing information across would not be the only problem, members of the multinational force would also begin to refrain from extensive interactions with each other as Gill and Huang noted. For this reason, observers have stressed the importance of pre-deployment training in foreign languages for military personnel (Smolarek, Unsal Sigri *et al*, 2017; 2013; Sule, 2013). Although

the Brahim Report did raise the issue of improved training of personnel, however, as comprehensive as that report was, it did not accord same importance it did to improve training of personnel to the issue of training in foreign languages for personnel. While some have called for training military personnel in foreign languages to mitigate against this problem, some have suggested that selecting soldiers from countries who speak the same language can go a long way in addressing the issue of language barrier considering that such trainings in foreign languages cum other pre-deployment trainings can be very costly (Feldman, 2008).

As brilliant as the foregoing suggestion is, it could also be argued that it fails to consider that there are times when the exigencies of a particular conflict situation will not present such a luxury to assemble soldiers that understand the same language for PSO to make information management more effective. To overcome this problem, a study carried out for Febraro (2008) submits that using a common language such as English could help address the problem of language barrier and also engender effective communication among contingents. In a way, this will still not solve the problem especially for countries in African where the estimated number of languages spoken ranges as high as 2000 or even more (Feldman, 2008). This makes training in foreign lingua languages such as French, Portuguese, Spanish, Arabic, and English as Sule (2013) once mentioned, a more realistic way of bringing about effectiveness in information management during PSOs.

Aside language barrier and cultural issues, resources also constituted an impediment to information management in PSOs in Liberia. According to a respondent:

Then secondly, another challenge can be articulated to network. Sometimes the GSM communication can get bad or the internet communications especially for those in the hinterland. Sometimes they get cut off and it takes days before they can be re-connected for obvious reasons because the infrastructure in the country, especially telecommunication infrastructure, is very weak and everything is actually centralised in Monrovia.

Quite frankly, this is to be expected in a country which had infrastructural deficit bedevilling its progress even before the war as indicated in a study conducted by the African Development Bank (2013). According to the report, energy is one area Liberia is disadvantaged relative to the rest of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa and the rest of the world. Implicitly, this would definitely have consequences for other sectors that rely on electricity to function at their

optimum some of which include the telecoms/ICT. The role this sector in enhancing proper and efficient information management during military operation cannot be overemphasised. The network capacity under the erstwhile Liberia Telecommunication Company (LIBELCO) plummeted from 10, 000 telephone exchange lines to 7000 by the end of the war; most of which are in Monrovia (AFDB, 2013), and not effective enough to guarantee smooth communication. This clearly explains why this affected the activities of the deployed contingents in the area of communication.

Funding was another challenge to information management in the PSO in Liberia. Beyond eliciting information from the locals during patrols which helped the mission to a great extent, there are times when intelligent officers need money to buy vital information that would support their mission. It is in this sense that one of the interviewees made the following submission:

For you to get information, you'll have to spend money. Yes information comes with money, so resources is another problem. Let us say now you want to get information from someone, you have to give a penny. It may even take you to that extent to get information. Even if you get to the outside world they will tell you intelligence or information is very expensive.

While expressing the same view, the MPIO also made the following remark that:

You cannot bring a journalist and at the end of everything you just say goodbye, see you next time. Am sure you will not be happy. So it involves resources.

There are times when an intelligent officer will find himself/herself in a tight situation where he/she will have to part with some money in order to elicit useful information during investigation. This is one of the demands of the job. Also at the level of the media, the culture of giving out honorarium to media personnel after press conferences and such occasions is not a new thing to many who seek for their service. It is in this context that resource affected vertical interoperability in the Liberian PSOs between the peacekeepers on the one hand, the local and the press on the other hand. From the outset, the mission in Liberia encountered huge set-backs on account of issues of finance. Nigeria led the peace operation by establishing an endowment fund with an initial amount of \$50 million being proposed at the initial stage of the mission with ECOMOG (Sule, 2013). This could not meet up the needs of the mission in general. Consequently, some countries that contributed troops threatened to withdraw from the mission.

In order to sustain the mission and return normalcy to Liberia, Nigeria single-handedly took up much of the financial burden to keep ECOMOG in Liberia. Considering the internal economic problems in the country, that noble act did not go down well with most Nigerians for some inexplicable reasons. It came at a time when the country was experiencing deep economic crisis in the face of decaying infrastructure and huge foreign debts (See Sule, 2013; Salami, 2013). Even when the government rationalised its actions, the antagonists of the administration of General Babangida criticised the idea of expending huge sums of financial resources in Liberia when the money could have been channelled into creating employment for Nigerians and provide other basic amenities.

As indicated in the interviews, the problem of paucity of funds was not adequately addressed with the re-hatting of ECOWAS as UN peacekeepers. This is not to suggest that the re-hatting exercise was not effective. On the contrary it was. In fact in countries where the re-hatting of ECOWAS forces was done such as Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Ivory Coast, it greatly enhanced the peace processes (United Nations, 2005). However, the unresolved issue of finance remained.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

#### **6.1. Summary**

This study examined, interrogated and explained information management by the Nigerian Army in PSOs in Liberia. This is with a view to showing the role and nature of information management by the (PSOs) in Liberia; the trends, patterns and processes of information management by the Nigerian Army in PSOs; how information is acquired and managed by the Nigerian Army in PSOs in Liberia; and how information management by the Nigerian Army has

been challenged during the PSOs in Liberia. The study engaged this because existing studies have not adequately interrogated Nigerian Army contingent information management in PSOs. While the studies unravelled the PSOs activities and strategies of NA including the challenges encountered, they have not adequately explored the role of effective utilisation of information management by the Nigerian Army engagement in Peace Support Operation in Liberia to execute its mandate and reduce cost of conflicts- human and material while carrying out their duties and fulfilling the mandate.

Adopting the Agenda Setting theory postulated by scholars like Cohen and Grabber, and the Decision Making theory advanced by the likes of Etzioni, Sydney Verba, Gary King, among others, as analytical framework and employing the case study and survey research designs, the study established that information management is critical for military decision making in peace support operations and that adequate and effective information management reduces the cost of conflicts in both human and economic costs in PSOs . The study drew attention to the dynamics of information management in PSOs with particular focus on the trends, patterns and processes of information management. It also details the information gathering and dissemination methods by the Nigerian Army in PSO and identified the challenges faced in sourcing and managing information during the PSO in Liberia.

The secondary sources include: Nigerian Army Signal Messages, Nigerian Army Part One and Part Two Orders, letters, periodicals, reviews, reports, journal articles, online articles, and books relevant to the subject of military information management in PSOs. Key findings of the study are summarised below:

To establish the objective on the roles and nature of information management by the Nigerian Army in peace support operations in Liberia, the study traced the origins of the conflict, which was an engagement that revealed that the root of the conflict which began in 1989 could be traced to decades of perceived historical inequalities between Liberian ethnic groups and the emergence of Samuel Doe to power in 1980. The underlying argument is that the Americo-Liberians consolidated their hegemonic dominance over the political, economic and social domains of Liberia and these entrenched different forms of resistance and conflict. The study showed that Nigerian Army became involved to contain the conflict and prevent its mirror effect

from overshadowing the sub-region. Nonetheless, the involvement was in accordance with the foreign policy and defence objectives of Nigeria.

The study also revealed that whereas information management is fundamental in the planning and decision making processes of PSOs, it is also central to a commander in visualising his battle space. This is because information that a commander does have or does not have is what drives decisions and determines troop's security as well as the public safety. Producing timely, accurate, relevant and useable information in PSO is achievable if information hierarchy system is followed. If neglected, it could lead to loss of critical assets including officers and men. Thus, in the mission field, the critical nature of information and the role it plays compels all personnel in operation to ensure information is passed to the right authorities for decision making.

Finally, on the objective on roles and nature of information management in military decision making in PSOs, the study showed that adequate information management reduces both human and economic cost of conflict in peace support operations. Specifically, it demonstrated that adequate and efficient information management in peace support operations creates conditions for standardisation in operations and actions; reduces operational human and economic costs, creates predictability and leads to a successful peacebuilding operation. The study argued that this can be achieved with strong support of information technology, as such infrastructure could aid information management in minimising human and economic costs of conflict.

On trends, patterns and processes of information management in PSO, the study revealed that information security has compelled information managers/military commanders to utilise different information containers and control mechanisms to prevent sensitive information from getting to the wrong/unauthorised hands. This is because the steadily increasing technical and environmental complexity of current globally networked warfare presents many obstacles to commanders in various fields of assignments as they attempt to protect their information assets. The study showed that in Liberia, the UN contingents employed the use of LOTUS, Microsoft Outlook, Publisher and several others. The UN Signal Manual indicates that PSOs are provided with such containers for effective management of information. It is evident from the study that information management in the Nigerian Army has changed over the years and the containers and control of information has equally followed the changing trend even in PSOs, yet the role of information management in military operation remains the same.

In the course of this study, it is revealed that usage of sophisticated military facilities and application of artificial intelligence is critical in PSOs and in all security environments. It showed that the security information environment is shrouded with all kinds of security codes to prevent being compromised, sabotaged and leaked. What is uppermost in military agenda is how do we secure this environment? Given that the military system administrator must be critical, tactical and proactive to know what information goes where and who receives what information; compacts exist to distinguish the information hierarchy.

The objective on the methods of information acquisition and management in PSO like others above produced three major findings. Result shows that on sourcing and availability of information in Liberia PSOs, information was sourced mainly through open source utilising a veritable resource provided by the locals. This produced a kind of synergy between the locals and the military contingents. This synergy is what has come to be known as doctrine of Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC). In Liberia, the CIMIC doctrine was a viable tool of sourcing information deployed by the Nigerian contingent as they liaised with the locals through unarmed patrols. This act shrunk the distance between the locals and the contingent which would not have existed if the contingent had approached the locals with arms to seek their cooperation.

Furthermore, the study showed that synergy among military contingents of different nations on information sharing is critical for PSOs. The study showed that the UN umbrella under which the contingents operate encourages cooperation among them. Such cooperation thrives more when the contingents synergise in acquiring information and in disseminating information. The import of this kind of interaction among multinational forces which lead to sharing vital information in PSO is based on the belief that it minimises a situation where participating troops who are on the same mission will be seen working at cross purposes when there is no sharing of information among them concerning the mission in which they are part.

In addition, on information delivery and control in PSO, the study showed that in military setting, information is seen as diplomatic, economic and the military. Study revealed that in Liberia, information facilitated the success of the peace support operations. It showed that the Nigerian battalions had the bottom-up method of disseminating information and top-down method of coordinating and controlling information in the PSOs in Liberia.

The objective on how information management by the Nigerian Army was challenged in the PSOs in Liberia revealed that in all dimensions of the PSOs in Liberia but specifically the aspect of information management, Nigerian Army demonstrated great capability in delivering their mandate. Nevertheless, the study also showed that lack of adequate information management could hamper military capabilities in PSOs.

Yet, on challenges, study revealed that policies could challenge the environment of information management. Policies and decisions on information access control could jeopardise a mission since information is often in the hands of a few within the mission. It could lead to some enormous damage.

Findings further showed that one of the greatest challenges faced by the Nigerian contingent in Liberia is that of language; having to work with Chinese and Ukrainian UN contingents in situations where valuable information is lost in translation. Another challenge is that of resources. These challenges limited the effective use of information management by the Nigerian Army contingent in PSOs in Liberia.

## **6.2. Recommendations**

Following the conclusions drawn above on information management by the Nigerian Army in Peace Support Operations, it becomes salient to make the following recommendations to the stakeholders of PSOs, policy makers, the Nigerian Army and information managers to adopt necessary measures in recognising and improving information management in PSOs. Subsequent on the findings therefore, the study recommends the following:

- Since accurate information provided by maps and charts inform the personnel generally about locations of legally protected persons, objects, installations and areas and helps the thought process and initial planning of the commander and his personnel on the mission, initial intelligence should form the basis of decision making in Peace Support Operations.
- One of the most challenging threats faced by troop contributing countries in PSOs is the huge cost the operation imposes on them as both human and economic costs. For a soldier who is a primary actor in the defence of others, what is basic for him/her is safety; safety of the defenders, the soldiers. Since information management has proved a



veritable resource to access this safety, it should be emphasised as a critical tool for reducing both human and economic conflict costs by PSO stakeholders, military commanders and personnel, policy makers and information managers.

- Given the changing security climate and the changing trends, patterns and processes of information management in PSOs, the Nigerian Army hierarchy need to constantly organise conferences and capacity buildings for their personnel to meet up to the ever-changing information environment and how best to employ it in PSOs. Such training and retraining of officers should focus on adequate knowledge of language and culture of the environment, the sensitivity of information and what it does and how it can be used.
- The ever changing and complex information management environment has necessitated the use of ICT for efficient PSOs. Thus, policy makers as well as stakeholders in the security sector need to encourage more utilisation of sophisticated facility in PSOs such as aircrafts, drones and other equipment that can have photo imageries and some sensors that can give updated information about the mission.
- Technology has made information so easily accessible to several actors in the security environment. So, to reduce the instance where information meant for legal or PSO personnel get to the wrong hands, sensitive information should always be coded rather than for such to be passed in plain language.
- Lack of synergy among contingents on the use of information in PSOs has led to some of the worst genocides in history. To this end, synergy on information management among different military battalions in PSOs should be encouraged. This should form part of the military doctrines of different contingents and involving and exposing states interest at the cost of information sharing among contingents should be discouraged by relevant stakeholders.
- The Nigerian Army needs to have a standardised information management procedure in such a way that there is a laid down process of gathering, disseminating and controlling information in PSOs. The Nigerian Army need to establish its information collection plan (ICP). This will enhance the transparency and effectiveness of information management in PSO.

- Knowledge of different languages beyond English should be emphasised in the Nigerian Army. This will enable personnel to interact well with other contingents and enable them intercept sensitive information when passed in such other languages.
- Funding of PSOs should be improved tremendously. This will enhance the peace mission and help officers and men to achieve their mandates in Peace Support Operations.

### **6.3. Conclusion**

Information management is central to the overall success of peace support operations' mission. This is because information management is crucial in harmonising the very complex environment of multinational peace support operations. It is so because, in such environment, adequate information management is required to realise mission mandate to protect civilian and military targets, safeguard critical infrastructure and restore peace to conflict area. Information management is also important in the PSO environment because different kinds of actors are working in different speed and for different purposes in that environment. So, troops need information management to coordinate and manage that environment. Again, it is salient because the different actors working in the environment need to work closely together, yet making sure they are not interfering with the tasks of each other. Since resources—people, money and other assets—required by the mission are getting scarcer, information management becomes imperative given that it is such a tool that can harmonise the effective and efficient utilisation of the little resources and assets needed for actualising the mission.

In this connection, the essence of information management in PSO is to coordinate and manage what resources that is available and utilise it for the overall success of the mission. Peace Support Operation is knowledge-based mission. The currency of that mission is information. So, in addition to the military training and the PSO mandate, participants in military peace operations must be at par on how to use information, how to get it, where to get it and for what purpose it is gotten. Such participants must also be knowledgeable on how to put it together and how to present it to others. Most importantly, it is imperative to understand the place of information management in PSOs by attending to the question: how do you share information with others to create the effect that you are looking for?

So, every PSO needs adequate information management and information managers need to be good in collecting, disseminating, controlling and coordinating information in peace support operations. This study, therefore, has shown why information management is not only critical in Peace Support Operations, but how it is the heart and life wire of every peace mission.

This study argued extensively that it should be the duty of all concerned actors in PSO to collect information while on the mission. When a soldier is on assignment in peace missions, s/he is working with people and as such, the soldier is also collecting information because s/he is interacting with people. Under such circumstances, one question the soldier needs to keep in mind whenever s/he is collecting information or even preparing information is, who is doing what, when, where, how and why? However, coordinating the information and using it for the mission should be harmonised through trained information managers. Therefore, information management need to occupy a central place while planning any mandate for peace mission.

Thus, this study has attempted to identify policies, organisational structures, technologies, and human factors that facilitate and hinder adequate information management in PSO in Liberia. The question on the role and nature of information management in PSO tracks the origins of the conflict in Liberia, the external multinational intervention, the role of the Nigerian Army, the critical nature of information management in military decision making and how adequate information management could enhance the operational efficiency by helping military contingents achieve the mandate while reducing the cost of conflict.

The consequences of poor information management in a multinational PSO could be enormous as witnessed in the Bosnian case. Of course, the idea of information management in PSOs have attracted much attention in the literature but few attempts are made to show how adequate information management could help in reducing the human and economic cost of conflict in PSOs. This provided the rationale for this study. Despite the changing trends, patterns and processes of information management in PSOs, the complex methods of gathering and disseminating information, adequate information management remains the heart and life wire of Peace Support Operations.

In this context, this study has made four important contributions to the subject of information management in Peace Support Operations. One, apart from identifying information management

as a critical resource in military decision making process, this study is a departure from the dominant thinking in the literature of peace support operation and information management which has sought to establish the economic and human cost of PSOs and the benefits of identifying such costs. This study takes a step further by showing how adequate information management can reduce such economic and human costs in PSOs. Two, this study explained the trends, patterns and processes of information management by the Nigerian Army in PSO in Liberia and argued that information security has compelled information managers/military commanders to utilise different information containers and control mechanisms to prevent sensitive information from getting to the wrong/unauthorised hands.

This is a contrast to existing explanation that has only mentioned these dynamics in passing without detailing how the steadily increasing technical and environmental complexity of current globally networked warfare environment presents many obstacles to military commanders and how they were able to surmount such challenge. Three, this study took a step further from identifying open source information gathering in PSO as a cost-effective way of gathering information which is commonly advanced in the literature of information management and peace support operations, to showing how such methods could be applied without initiating further conflicts and encouraging harmonious Civil-Military (CIMIC) relations in PSOs.

Furthermore, existing explanations on information gathering methods in PSOs have often lumped together the information gathering and dissemination method to follow military hierarchy of top-bottom approach. In contrast, this study showed that the Nigerian battalions have bottom-up method of gathering and disseminating information and top-down method of coordinating and controlling information in the PSOs in Liberia. Four, contrary to conventional thinking among the policy makers of PSOs as well as the literature that other factors, like finance in particular, is the most salient challenge to information management in PSO, this study argued that language difference challenges information management gravely as vital information may sometimes be lost in translation

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## **APPENDIXES**

### **Appendix I: List of Interviewees**

Boroh, P. T. 2006. Oral interview, CO ECOMOG NIBATT 36 and CO UNAMSIL NIBATT 4, Abuja, on 24 February.

Owonibi, J. O. 2006. Structured interview on field operations of UNMIL in Liberia, 2003 –2005. 10 February. *Oxford: Clarendon Press.*

Tache, T. J. 2006. Structured Interview. Director, Peacekeeping Department. PKO, DHQ, Abuja on 17 February.

### **Appendix II: Questionnaire Guide**

**Peace and Conflict Studies Programme**

**Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies,  
University of Ibadan,  
Ibadan, Nigeria.**

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire is designed to gather information from you. The information is mainly for research purpose. Please, choose the correct response from the list of questions below. There is no right or wrong response. Your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thanks.

**Section A: Socio-demographic information**

Age.....

Sex: Male ( ) Female ( )

Religion: Christianity ( ) Islam ( ) ATR ( )

Ethnicity: Hausa ( ) Yoruba ( ) Igbo ( ) Others specify ( )

Educational Background: O level ( ) OND/NCE ( ) BSc/Bed/BA ( )

MA/MSC/Med ( ) others specify ( )

Current Rank.....

Years of Experience in PSOs ( )

**Section B:**

S/N	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
1.	Information management in PSOs include document management, record management, digital access management, learning management system				
2.	Information management in PSOs includes intelligence, logistics, personnel, legal issues				



and weather

3. Information management process in PSOs includes communication links, satellites, cables and procedures
4. A good information system during PSOs must deliver tangible and visible benefit

S/N	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
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4. I always consciously share information that I have gathered in PSOs when I'm told to do so
5. I never share information that I have gathered in Peace Support Operation
6. I communicate information gathered through PSOs only when directed to and through the channel specified
7. I communicate Information gathered in PSOs when I feel it is necessary and considering who I am communicating to
8. I always communicate the information gathered in PSOs to the right level through the most appropriate channel

S/N	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
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9. Information in the Nigerian Armed Forces in Peace Support Operations is well

protected

10. Information in the Nigerian Armed Forces in Peace Support Operations is not well protected
11. Information management in the Nigerian Armed Forces is influenced by manipulation by senior officers
12. Information management in the Nigerian Armed Forces during PSOs is affected by denial of strategic information

S/N	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
13.	The problem of information management in PSOs is large number of disparate information management system				
14.	There is poor quality of information, including lack of consistency duplication and out of date information during PSOs				
15.	There is little coordination between information system during Peace Support Operations				
s/n	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
16.	There is little recognition and support of information by senior management in				

PSOs

17. There is limited resources for deploying, managing or improving information systems during PSOs
18. Internal politics impact on the ability to coordinate information management in PSOs

### **Appendix III: Interview Guide**

**Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies,  
University of Ibadan,  
Ibadan, Nigeria**

**Research Topic: An Examination of Information Management in Peace Support Operations by the Nigerian Armed Forces in Liberia**

#### **Interview guide**

##### **Opening**

- i) Brief introduction of the interviewee

- ii) How many years and in what positions have you served/are you serving in PSOs?
- iii) Your current rank/position, tasks/responsibilities

### **Interview questions**

- 1) What do you know about information gathering and management?
- 2) What are the major components of information gathering and management in the Nigerian Armed Forces?
- 3) What are the actors involved in information gathering and management?
- 4) Could you describe the information management process during PSOs?
- 5) How is information acquired by the Nigerian Armed Forces in PSOs?
- 6) What is the hierarchy of information dissemination in PSO? (particularly at the tactical, strategic and operational levels)
- 7) How is information coordinated and managed by the Nigerian Armed Forces during Peace Support Operations? (between the Peace Support Force and the civilian contingents of PSO)
- 8) What are the obstacles to coordination and management of information?
- 9) How much influence does the social media have on information management?
- 10) Are there similarities or dissimilarities in information management in wartime and peacetime
- 11) What are the peculiar information management strategies adopted by the Nigerian Armed Forces?
- 12) Are the Information Management Strategies (IMS) of Nigerian Armed Forces different from other Peace support Forces?
- 13) Do these Information strategies meet the command, control, coordination, and liaison requirements?
- 14) Are you satisfied with the information management system and channels used?
- 15) In the implementation process of the information management during PSOs, what are the challenges confronting the Nigerian Armed Forces?
- 16) Which challenge (s) do you consider the most problematic?
- 17) What barriers do you think will affect the improvement of the information management implementation process by the Nigerian Armed Forces during PSOs?

18) Do you have any desirable future improvements for the management of information in the Nigerian Armed Forces during PSOs?

Distribution of respondents based on units and gender

Camp Abuja

Camp Clara

Camp Lagos

Zwedru