

IMPLICATIONS OF RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS ON PEACE, NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

Jegede, O. Paul

Department of Religious Studies,
Faculty of Humanities, Management, and Social Science,
Federal University of Kashere (FUK), Gombe
jegedepaul9@gmail.com, 07031890773,

Abstract

The study is an attempt to examine the perennial incidents of religious crises in Nigeria which is ever on the increase, claiming hundreds of lives, destroying properties worth millions of naira. The colossal loss to violent religious conflicts in Nigeria did not end with loss of lives and properties. In fact, its attendant effects on peaceful co-existence, political stability and socio-economic development is beyond comprehension. Hardly can one speak of progress in Nigeria when our social, political, economic and religious systems fail to maintain at least a minimum level of social decorum. At the same time, sustainable and lasting religious peace across the nation have been aborted times without number owing to the recurrent cases of religious conflicts. As those religious conflicts linger on, distrust and suspicion became the order of the day, more especially between the adherents of Islam and Christianity in Nigeria. Though, there are records of occasional conflicts between African Traditional Religion and other religions for a number of reasons. These may include superiority complex, that is, claim of superiority by both Islamic and Christianity over the African Traditional religion and culture, disregard and contempt for African traditional religion and institutions. The paper, therefore, gave an overview of the general concept of conflicts, causes of conflicts in Nigeria as well as implications of conflicts in Nigeria. Historical method was adopted. The work recommended among other things that conscious efforts should be made by the adherents of Islam and Christianity in Nigeria to build bridges of religious understanding and religious respect. And to emulate the adherents of African Traditional Religion (ATR) that are more tolerant, and tolerance as a virtue is recommended in conflict management.

Keywords: conflict, national security and peace.

Introduction

Conflict has far reaching implications for peace, national security and development in any society not just Nigeria. In fact, it has become a useful tool to forment problems resulting to both political upheavals, and

socio-economic instability. Religions, on the other hand, have different orientations. In the words of Max Weber as quoted by A.Giddens:

... each major religion of the world has developed its distinctive orientation towards all aspects of social life.... These differences have had profound consequences for the development of human society all religious groups are continuously shaping and moulding the personalities of their adherents who then as private individuals, staff the economic, political, educational and other institutional systems of society.¹

Religion is a cultural phenomenon, as such, it has played dominant role in the socio-political organization of man though out the course of history. As an institution, it has served to meet certain needs within the society.

It is within the context of the destructive use of religion in the history of several nations that the paper focuses on Nigeria. Without doubt, the greatest threat to peaceful coexistence, economic and political development as well as national security has always been religious conflict.² Nigeria is a country where Christianity and Islam enjoy large fellowship. As such, the country has been divided into two religious camps. It is often claimed that Nigeria has about 180 million people and about half (90 million) are Muslims while the remaining percentage are either Christians or traditionalists.³ Thus it is interesting to note that these two religious bodies (Christianity and Islam) are always competing with each other for religious space. Unfortunately, the political class did not hesitate to wrongly use them to gain both political and economic advantages over their opponents. Therefore, religious conflict becomes inevitable.

Suffice it to say that the wrong use of religion has resulted to wanton destruction of lives and property. During violent religious conflicts, many people have been killed, maimed and wounded. There have also been wide spread disruption of economic activities with negative effects on productivity. Hundreds of churches and mosques, hotels and other related business as well as vehicles, private homes etc, have been destroyed.⁴ In fact, violent religious conflicts create an atmosphere of national insecurity and uncertainty which are inimical to economic growth and development. This is because no investors (both local and foreign) would be averse to investments.

It is also observed that with the country's return to Democracy in May 29, 1999, the outbreaks of religious conflicts have been on the

increase. Not only that, the struggle for power and position in Nigeria has also led to the manipulation of religion and ethnicity by the political elite for selfish reasons as rightly observed in various political appointments of the present government of Muhammadu Buhari. In other words, it will not be incorrect to say there is hardly an appointment that is not tinted with religious inference made to it. This breeds mutual distrust, discrimination and a sense of general insecurity with the society as the case is within the Niger Delta region and the northeastern region.

In Northern Nigeria, for instance, religion and ethnicity are so interwoven to the extent that conflicts between groups in the region tend to be simultaneously interpreted as ethnic and religious conflicts.⁵ The intertwined nature of ethnicity and religion in Northern Nigeria is explained by the different levels of penetration of Islamic Jihadists and Christian missionaries in various parts of the region.

Similarly, a thorough examination of Islam and Christianity also makes it clear that the tolerance levels of Muslim and Christians in the Southern and Northern parts of the country is at variance. In the South, the tolerance level towards Islam is on the high side. This could be attributed to their level of exposure, high level of literacy, and even inter-marriages between Muslims and Christians where possible.⁶ Unfortunately, in the Northern parts of Nigeria, the tolerance level is next to zero toward Christians and Christianity.

Judging from the above, the occurrence of violent religious conflicts has done more harm than good to Nigeria and Nigerians. Therefore, urgent steps must be taken to curb its excessiveness, volatility and threat to both human and national security. Moreover, the Nigerian state has the constitutional responsibility of providing security and welfare for its citizens. To this extent, section 14(b) of the 1999 constitution of Nigeria states that, “the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government”.⁷ It is however, unfortunate that the ruling government has not been able to fulfill her constitutional responsibility judging from the prevalent of violent religious conflicts across the country, more especially in the Northern parts.

Clarification of Terms

Religion:

Religion is a popular term that has been given different definitions by scholars in different fields of human endeavor. Yet, it is an important feature of human history that cannot ordinarily be under played. In the view of H.O. Anyauwu, religion is human interaction with the

supernatural in order to cope with life's crises...⁸ T.I. Okereke submitted that religion is a link between man and God. In his view, it is the sum total of man's relationship with God and the transcendent.⁹ In the words of T. Omoregbe, religion is essentially a relationship, a link established between two persons namely a human person and a divine person believed to exist. In other words, religion is man's relationship with the supernatural.¹⁰

In the same vein, there is an interaction between religion and the society within which it functions. Religion performs a variety of functions. The first is on the individual as it affects social behavior. The second is that religion interacts and influences the other facets or social institutions in the society, namely, Polity and economy. These institutions also influence the religious institutions, the effect of which affect in a fundamental way, a people's way of life.¹¹

Conflict:

The word conflict is derived from two Latin words *cou* meaning "coming together", and *fligere* meaning "to strike". Therefore, conflict means a state of opposition or hostilities, a flight or struggle. It is a clash of opposing principles, the opposition of incompatible wishes or needs.¹² Conflict, according to Rummel, is the balancing of vectors of powers of capabilities to provide effects.¹³ Kirk sees conflict as a state of antagonism, that is, the result of disagreements that arise between two or more people or group of people that have either produced or threaten to produce loss of life, freedom, land, property or livelihood, or cause mental or physical abuse.¹⁴

Oppression, no doubt is at the root of many of the most serious, enduring conflicts not just in Nigeria but the world at large. That is, where there is oppression, there is violent conflict.¹⁵ In any conflict situation, threat, fear, anxiety, and general insecurity become the order of the day. Indeed, oppression usually occurs when a stronger force or group tries to override another group's interest. When this type of situation arises, the more powerful group or force would attempt to frustrate the needs of the weaker group.¹⁶ This is why conflict occurs at community, state, regional and national levels. It is therefore worthy to mention that when there is conflict in one part, the other part cannot be said to be conflict-free. As such, a largely sectional conflict can spiral to other parts if it is not well managed.¹⁷

Conflict has a long tradition that is as old as mankind. It can be attributed either to inter-religious or at times, intra-faith competitions. The Christian scripture is replete with various atrocities committed in the name

of God. In the Judeo-Christian account, Cain and Abel had conflict which led to the murder of Abel by Cain. The Jews, all through their history had conflict within themselves and with other nations. Also, in the early church, and till today, conflict is the order of the day. More so, the history of the spread and consolidation of Islam is characterized by more, gruesome heinous acts. Islam had to launch itself violently to overthrow the extant status quo as a survival imperative, and thereafter, its expansion beyond its cradle in Makah at every point was characterized by conquest.¹⁸ Conflict exists where there are social interactions among individuals. Therefore, it is an indispensable feature of intra or inter-group relations.

Peace:

According to A.R. Ofunleife while citing J. O. Awolalu defines peace as a condition of tranquilized conflict.¹⁹ It is the sum total of all that man may desire; an undisturbed harmonious life.²⁰ It is a condition required for socio-political as well as economic development and administration effectiveness.

National Security:

There is no single universally accepted definition of national security. The varieties of definitions provide an overview of the many usage of the concept. The concept still remains ambiguous, having originated from simpler definitions which initially emphasized the freedom from military threat and political coercion to later increase in sophisticated and include other forms of non-military security as suited the circumstance of the time.²¹

However, a typical dictionary definition, in this case from the *MacMillan Dictionary*,² defines the term as, the protection or the safety of a country's secret and its citizens, emphasizing the overall security of a nation and a nation-state.²² In the view of Walter Lippmann, he submitted that, "a nation has security when it does not have to sacrifice its legitimate interests to avoid war, and is able, if challenged to maintain them by war".²³ Harold Lasswell examines national security from that of external coercion as freedom from external or foreign dictation.²⁴ Thus, a secured nation state is one that is able to protect and develop itself so that it can develop its core values, meet the needs of its people and provide them with the right atmosphere for self-improvement.²⁵

National security according to the former president of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, is the aggregation of the security interest of the

individuals, political entities, human associations and ethnic groups that make up the nation. He posits that such mental well-being and freedom to pursue the attainment of legitimate objectives without hindrance, as affirmed as in section 14(b) of 1999 constitution.²⁶

A Glimpse of Religious Conflicts in Nigeria

The Nigerian version of conflict is both tribal and religious. Nigeria is a multi-ethnic nation, blessed with a triple religious heritage namely; African Indigenous Religion, Christianity and Islam. In Nigeria are different levels and forms of religious conflicts. These include intra and inter-religious conflicts. Intra-religious conflict often exists within a particular sect like Maitatsine riot of 1980 in kano and Izala versus Tijjaniyya brotherhood in Gombe in 1987.²⁷

It is practical knowledge that religious conflicts have assumed new dimension in Nigeria today. The attempt of the writer in this section is to examine chronologically the various trends of religious conflicts in Nigeria with approximate dates and time. Although, lack of adequate statistical data has made it extremely difficult to estimate the exact number of religious conflicts in Nigeria and their resultant fatalities,²⁸ the collective assumption is that the incidence of the religious conflicts has grown exponentially since the return of democratic rule in 1999. However, statistics on religious crises across the country show that at least (95) ninety-five per cent of them occurred in the Northern parts of Nigeria and a microscopic few in other parts of the country.²⁹ A summary of violent religious conflicts in Nigeria reveals the following:³⁰

Dates	Locations	Principal Actors
May 1980	Zaria (kaduna State)	Disturbancies in Zaria during which property belonging to mainly Christians were destroyed
December 18-28,1980	Yan-Awaki Ward in Kano (kano State)	Riots by Maitatsine sect, 4,177 people died, extensive destruction of property
October 29-30,1982	Bullumkutu, Maiduguri (Borno State)	Kala-kato and Maitatsine sects 118people died, extensive damage to property
February 27-March 5, 1984	Dobeli Ward, Jimeta-Yola (Gongola State)	Maitatsine sect, 586 died, wanton destruction of property
April 26-28, 1985	Pantami Ward. Gombe (Bauchi State)	Maitatsine sect, 105 died extension destruction of property.
March , 1986	Ilorin (Kwara State)	Muslim and Christians clashed during a Christian procession at Easter.
May, 1986	Ibadan, University of Ibadan (Oyo State)	Demonstration by Muslims in which they burnt the figure of the Risen Christ in the chapel of Resurrection, University of Ibadan
March, 1987	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kafanchan (kaduna State) 	Clashes between Muslims and Christians at the college of Education, Kafanchan; loss of some lives and the burning of some mosques by christians and natives of kajes.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Katsina, Funtua, Zaria, Gusau and Kaduna (kaduna State) 	Waves of religious riots in which Muslims burnt down numerous church buildings and damaged property belonging to

		Christians. Many lives were lost.
February, 1988	Kaduna, Kaduna Polytechnic (Kaduna State)	Religious riots, ostensibly among students destroyed the foundation walls of the Christians chapel.
April, 1991	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Katsina (Katsina State) 	Religious violence spearheaded by Mallam Yahaya Yakubu, leader of the Fundamentalist Shi'ite sect in Katsina. It was a protest over a blasphemous publication in fun-times. Several lives were lost and property destroyed.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tafawa Balewa (Bauchi State) 	Started as a quarrel between a Fulani man and a Sayawa meat seller in Tafawa Balewa. Escalated into a full blown violence and later took the colouring of a religious war in Bauchi. Several lives were lost and property valued over hundreds of millions of Naira was destroyed.
October, 1991	Kano (Kano State)	A peaceful procession initiated by the Izala sect to holt Rev. Reinherd Bonke from having a crusade in Kano, later degenerated into very bloody religious violence. Thousands of lives were lost and property valued at millions of Naira was destroyed.
May, 1992	Zangon Kataf, Zaria, Kaduna, Ikara (Kaduna State)	A communal feud between the kataf and the Hausas later took the dimension of inter-religious was btw Muslims and Christians in other major cities of Kaduna. Several lives and property were destroyed.
January, 1993	Funtua (Kaduna State)	The Kalakato religious sect assaulted the village

		head and burnt down a police vehicle. Lives and property were also lost.
February 2000	Kaduna	Conflict engulfed the city between Christians and Muslims over the implementation of sharia law. Thousands of lives and property worth millions were destroyed.
Sept. 28 th , 2013	Zangang	Muslim militia attacked a Christian village, hacking to death fifteen residents and burning down their homes.
Sept. 17 th 2013	Borno	Boko Haram dressed in Military Uniforms attacked and burnt people majorly Christians, living 143 ppeople dead.
July 27 th , 2014	Communal attack by youth groups in Muslim and Christian neighbourhood on Mosque and church in the University of Jos.	Muslim extremists thrown a bomb into a Catholic Church, eight people were injured while five worshippers were killed.
July, 2014	Borno, Maiduguri	Twenty-seven Christians were massacred by Islamists in an attack on three churches.
June 29 th , 2014	Chibok, Maiduguri	At least, fifty-four people were massacred by Boko Baram in attacks targeting churches with grenades and guns.
Jan. 12 th , 2014	Maikatako	Muslim terrorists attacked Christians on a Sunday morning, killing at least eight and maiming others.
Sept. 23 rd , 2015	Yola	241 Women And Children Were Murdered By Boko Haram in two villages.

Causes of Religious Conflicts in Nigeria

Several reasons have been given for re-occurrence of religious conflicts or violence. Although, a good number of these causes have socio-political, economic as well as governance undertones, yet, they are not immune to religious conflicts alone but, they cut across other forms of violence. In Nigeria, among the causes of religious conflicts are marginalization, oppression, and government influence, uneven distribution of wealth and resources, division in government, nepotism and socio-religious bigotry. When values, norms, beliefs and ideologies are tempered with, conflicts are bound to erupt.³¹

Chris M.A. Kwafa also submits that the fragile nature of the institutions of the state in terms of their ability and capacity to manage multi-diversity, corruption, the increasing divide between the poor and rich, gross violation of human rights, environmental degeneration, contestations over land, among others, as the underlying causes of violent religious conflicts in Nigeria since the enthronement of democratic rule in 1999.³² In the view of Nathaniel D. Danjibo, the inactiveness of governance has precipitated the recurring sectarian violence in Nigeria.³³ A.O. Omotosho opines that the scorn of literature or publications by both Christian and Muslim elites have also contributed to religious crises in the country.³⁴ Achunike submits that wrong perception of other people's religion or faith, wrong religious orientation, low literacy level of religious adherents, selfishness on the part of religious personalities, pervasive poverty, and government involvement in religious matters, among others, are major causes of religious conflicts in Nigeria.³⁵

Similarly, religious intolerance, fundamentalism and extremism are co-pilots of the vehicle of religious conflicts in Nigeria simply because they form the base upon which other sources of religious violence rest. Religious intolerance simply means hostility towards other religions, as well as the inability of religious adherents to harmonize between the theories and the practical aspect of religion.³⁶ It encompasses bigotry which is the obstinate and intolerant devotion to one's opinion and prejudices, especially the expression of intolerance and animosity towards persons of differing beliefs.³⁷

Religious conflict exists where there is disagreements between adherents of the one or different religion(s) over doctrinal issues or unjust treatments carried out against member(s) of a particular religion by members of the same or another religion. To this extent, religious conflicts can be defined as any disagreement that occurs between adherents of the same or different religious group(s) over incompatible religious interests

or contradictory doctrinal issues or values which is often interpreted in religious terms.

D. Akowoyo opines that indigene-ship and settler-ship division is another cause of communal or religious violence in Nigeria. Often time, there is a sharp difference between people considered as “indigenous” in an area and those regarded as “settlers”. The settlers are repeatedly being discriminated against in the predominantly Christian areas of the north.³⁸ Again, the problem posed by the high rate of poverty and unequal access to resources is also seen as a cause of religious conflict in Nigeria. Despite the oil resources accruing to this country, at least two thirds of Nigerians live on less than \$1 per day.³⁹

The use of religious symbols is another source of religious conflict in Nigeria. Muslim women insist on the use of the *Hijab* even where the regulatory regime prohibit their use.⁴⁰ Also, following the prohibition of the use of head scarves by female law students in the Faculty of Law, Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, a Christian lecturer, Dr. Andrew Akume, turned back a female student who was on *Hijab* from attending his lecture. His action provoked the Muslim Student’s Society (MSS), thus, they mobilized themselves and issued a *fatwa* (i.e. Islamic death sentence) on the said lecturer, thereby forcing him into hiding.⁴¹ This act led to religious tension on the campus just as it led to stain relationship between the governments of Kaduna (ABU) and Benue States (where the man came from). Not only that, the inscription of Arabic symbols on Nigerian currency denominations has also been vehemently opposed by Christians in Nigeria, who associate it with Islam and an all embracing Islamization agenda by northern Muslims. Muslims, on the other hands, have also opposed the use of the “cross” as a symbol on public hospitals sign and bill boards and other hospital accessories.⁴²

Inordinate ambition of politicians in Nigeria is another cause of religious conflict. An average politician in Nigeria sees politics as short cut for wealth. As such, politics is pursued with a “do or die” attitude. The major aims of such politicians are not to serve, but to amass ill-gotten wealth for personal use and for future election campaigns. Such politicians are ready to use any means, including religion, to achieve their selfish ambition. In fact, religion has become a tool that is easily used to manipulate innocent Nigerians during elections. This fact is succinctly buttresses by O.E. Alana that:

Today, religion has become one of the important weapons which selfish leaders use to manipulate and divide the

people. Their misuse of religion has led to ugly riot and loss of lives and property.⁴³

Judging from the foregoing, it is quite clear that some of religious conflicts often experienced in Nigeria are by-products of politics rather than religion.

Implications of Religious Conflicts on Peace, National Security and Development

The aftermath results of religious conflicts is not limited to religious matters alone, rather the consequences can be felt in all spheres of human endeavour be it political, social, economic as well as cultural landscapes of the nation. The following are the visible implications of religious conflicts on Nigeria and her citizens.

(a) Wanton Destruction of Lives and Properties

The greatest harm of religious conflicts is that they leave in its wake magnanimous loss of lives. In Nigeria, violent religious crises, more especially between the Christians and Muslims have claimed thousands of lives and properties worth hundreds of millions have been destroyed. For example, between 1980 -1992, a total of (26) twenty-six religious riots was recorded and death toll put at 6,775, official figures.⁴⁴ According to Christian Social Movement, twenty-four riots occurred between 1993-2006 with casualty put at well over 5000.³⁹ Likewise, between May 29-June 2, 1999, a violent religious clash in Warri, Delta State led to the loss of more than 200 lives. In Lagos State, and same year, Yomba and Hausa traders clashed in Ketu market, resulting in the death of over 100 people.⁴⁵

In the same vein, violent religious conflicts have often resulted to set back on infrastructure. Social infrastructures like schools, hospitals, health facilities/centres, etc. are often time the target of destruction. In most cases, the task of rebuilding destroyed properties becomes the daunting task of both the Federal and State governments.

(b) Implication on Economic Stability

The reoccurrence of religious conflicts have untold effect on the economy of the nation. It is not only lives that are being lost, but sources of livelihood, goods etc, are being destroyed or carted away, leaving victims economically handicapped. Violent religious crises with their attendant effects also make investors to relocate their businesses to other

peaceful areas that are safe haven for their growth. Owing to religious conflicts, many businesses have been closed up in Nigeria.

In other to revamp the economic, former president, Olusegun Obasanjo, on assumption of office in 1999, made it the priority of his government to woo foreign investors into the nation's economy. His passionate appeal yielded little or no result. This is because the security of the investors and their investment could not be guaranteed. The apprehension of the international community was confirmed in 2000

Kaduna riot where foreigners in the state had to flee in their numbers.⁴⁶ The Kaduna Chambers of Commerce and Industry in the same year cancelled its trade fare as a result of religious tension. According to Tell Magazine, it is claimed that the trade Association lost about 600 million naira.⁴⁷ Jos religious upheaval also witnessed exodus of businesses to neighboring states that are safe for their investments.

(c) Political Implication

Nigeria is a multi-ethnics and multi-religious nation. As such, peaceful co-existence is *sine qua none* to the development and national security of the country. Yet, this is not the case as the nation has continued to experience violent religious conflicts tainted with political undertone, more especially between the Christians and Muslims in the country. Despite the fact that Nigeria is a secular state, the interference of religion in political affairs is second to none. Religion has continued to destabilize the peace of the nation. The Muslims, in the northern parts, with a claim to numerical advantage have severally attempted to nationalize the Islamic faith to the highest level of the nation's governance through various means like the Shariah Debate, OIC saga, and the introduction of Shariah in some northern States by the Northern governors. The Christians, especially those living in the North, move against these attempts, emphasizing the constitutional secularity of the country, and that any attempt to introduce Shariah at the Federal level of governance amounts to the breach of the constitution.

The problem of the religious factor in politics of a heterogeneous cultural society such as the modern Nigeria has become more complex with the entrenchment of two virile missionary-oriented world religions, namely; Christian and Islam. In the word of A. Ekwenife:

.... The common good which is the hall-mark of political activities, is not of the time imperiled by myopic, self-seeking, callous, and avaricious politicians and leaders of

all shades, who often mask their real intention under zeal for their different religious and cultural traditions...⁴⁸

Judging from the foregoing, the problem of religious disturbances in Nigeria has had unfold negative effect on the social, economic as well as the political development of the nation.

(d) Social Implication

Religious conflicts have successfully bred suspicion and lack of mutual understanding owing to the fact that proper understanding between Christians and Muslims have not been effectively addressed, hence, it has often led to violent confrontations. As a result, some cities in Nigeria today, especially in the northern parts have been split down the middle with Christians living in one part while Muslims live in the other. For example, Kaduna city is divided into two, with Christians living South of the river Kaduna and Muslims, living in the Northern part. Similarly, in Jos city, there are some areas where Muslims fear to settle. Whenever conflicts ensue between the Southern and Northern sections, the polity and social landscape of Nigeria became heated up, leading to chaos and religious tension.

Judging from the above, the gross display of intolerance between Christians and Muslims, and lack of religious respect and understanding will always be a cog in the wheel of progress, national development and a conflict-free society until the adherents of Christianity and Islam imbibe the spirit of tolerance in conflict resolution. As such, peaceful coexistence, national security and purposeful development are undermined.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made; directed at individual adherents of the Christian and Islamic religions in particular, religious leaders and the government who are perceived as the principal facilitators of violent religious crises in Nigeria:

1. It is advisable that every individual knows the tenets of his or her religion, and be watchful of the teachings of their religious leaders, because, it was observed that self-seeking and ambitious leaders often capitalize on the ignorance and gullibility of their fellowship to manipulate them to foment trouble with people of other religions.

2. Religious leaders should endeavour to make their preaching persuasive rather than inciting or insulting. They should mind and weigh their utterances and actions.
3. Dialogue should be used as an effective weapon in conflict resolution, not only between Christians and Muslims, but among all religionists, internally and externally (inter and intra). When dialogue is adopted with full determination for peaceful coexistence, violence can be excluded to a great extent.
4. It is imperative for Christians and Muslims in Nigeria to unite and identify what they need, that is, peaceful co-existence, and to join forces to get it, for the good of the nation. The common people in the North in particular should wake up to this reality if they want to rid themselves of violence and develop the region.

Conclusion

The basic interest of this work is on religious conflicts and its implications for peaceful coexistence, national security and development in Nigeria. In Nigeria today, no issue is as important as how to find lasting solutions to ever increasing rates of violent religious crises that have been a clog in the wheel of progress in all spheres of human endeavours. The perennial religious crises between the major religions (Christianity and Islam) in Nigeria have resulted into dwindled economic fortune as well as social and political instability. In fact, these incessant conflicts have to a large extent ridicule Nigeria in the comity of nations, as no individuals or corporate body would want to invest in where security and safety of their investment is not guaranteed.

Notes and References

1. A. Giddens, *Capitalization and Modern Social Theory: An Analysis of the Writing_of Marx Durkheim and Max Weber* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 10.
2. Richard A. Ogunleye, “Religion, Peace and Conflict: An Assessment of the Role of African Religion towards conflict management in Nigeria”, in *Religion and Governance in Nigeria*, (eds.) Jacob K. Ayatayo et.al (Ibadan: Dept. of Religious Studies, Unibadan, 2012), 103-104.
3. J. Ishaku, “The Media and Ethno-Religious Conflicts in the Middle Belt of Nigeria”, in *Ethno-Religious and Democracy in Nigeria* (eds.) E.E.O. Alemika and F. Okoye (Kaduna: Human Rights Monitor, 2002), 223-240.
4. *Constitution of the Federal of Nigeria*, 1989.
5. Della Thompson, (ed.) *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English 9th Edition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 279-280.
6. O. N. King, *Christians and Muslims in Africa* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 13.
7. Ruldolf Rummel, *Understanding Conflict and War*, vol.2 (Grand Rapids: Sage Publications, 1976), 26.
8. H.O. Anyanwu, *African Traditional Religion from the Grassroots* (Lagos: Minder Publishers, 2004), 34.
9. T. I. Okereke, *New Perspective in Moral Education* (eds.) Nduka and Ihuoma (Ibadan: Evans brothers, 1983), 44.
10. T. Omoregbe, “The Role of Religion in National Unity: Focus on Nigeria”, in *Tamberi: Kano Journal of Education*,_vol. 3 (Kano: federal College of Education, 1999), 23.
11. Awolalu, “The Yoruba Philosophy of life”, 21.
12. M. Kukah, *Religion, Politics and Power in Northern Nigeria* (Ibadan: Spectrum Books Ltd., 1993), 25.
13. J.O. Awolalu, “The Yoruba Philosophy of Life”, in *Presence Africaine* (1970): 21.
14. Andrew J. Kirk, *Mission under Scrutiny: Confronting Current Challenges* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd Ltd, 2006), 114.
15. A.E. Ekoko and L.A. Amadi, “Religion and Stability in Nigeria”, in *Nigeria Since Independence* (eds.) J. A. Atanda et. al. (Ibadan: Heinmann Education Books, 1989), 145.
16. Rene Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, translated by Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: John Hopkins University, Press, 2009), 78.

17. Richard B. Gregg, *The Power of Non-Violence* (New York: Schocken Books, 2001), 54.
18. Guy Franklin Hershberger, *War, Peace and Non-Resistance* (Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1999), 34.
19. Lissi Rasmussen, *Religion and Properties in Northern Nigeria* (Copenhagen: Academic Press, 1990), 84.
20. O. Awowede, "Shariah War", in *Tell Magazine* (March, 2000):6
21. J.I. Eliagwu, "The Challenge of Unity in a Heterogeneous Society: The case of Nigeria", in *Development Studies Review*, vol. 2, No. 1 (Oct, 1987), 78-82.
22. Definition of *MacMillan Dictionary*_(Online Version), MacMillan Publishers Limited, accessed on 27th Sept. 2016.
23. Walter Hippmann, *U.S. Foreign Policy: Shield of Republic* (Boston: Little Brown, 1943), 49.
24. Harold Lasswell, *U. S. National Security: A Reference Hand book* (Chicago: ABC, 2010), 281.
25. Eliagwu, "The Challenge of Unity in a Heterogeneous Society: The case of Nigeria", 81.
26. Eliagwu, "The Challenge of Unity in a Heterogeneous Society: The case of Nigeria", 82.
27. Rotgak. I. Gofwen, *Religious Conflicts in Northern Nigeria and Nation Building* (Kaduna Human Rights Monitor, 2004), 65-66.
28. N. Nzongola, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Africa* (London: Seed Books Ltd. 2006), 54.
29. Chris M.A. Kwafa, "Strategies for Building State Capacity to Manage Ethnic and Religious Conflicts in Nigeria", in *Journal of Pan African Studies*, Vol. 3(2009), 107.
30. Hilary C. Achunike, "Religious Practices in Nigeria as sources of Social Conflict", in *Journal of Liberal Studies*, vol. 12 (2008), 287.
31. S.B. Mala, "Fundamentalism in religion: A Naughty Child of a Difficult Mother", in *Orita: Ibadan Journal of Religious Studies* (XVII/2, 1985): III.
32. Anwar M. Barkat, (eds.) *Conflict, Violence and Peace*_(Frankfurt: Drukerei Otto Lembeck, 1970), 13
33. Nathaniel D. Datibo, "Islamic Fundamentalism and Sectarian Violence: The Maitatsine and Boko Haram Crises in Nigeria", in *Peace and Conflict Studies Programme*, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan (nd), Available on <<http://www.ifranigeria.org>, accessed on July 21st, 2016.

34. A.O. Omotosho, "Religious Violence in Nigeria causes and Solution; an Islmic Persepective", in *Swedish Missiological Theme* (2003), 15-31.
35. A. Maduguba, "Anarchy in the name of Religion", in *The Guardian Newspaper* (25th Feb, 2000, Lagos), 19-20.
36. S.G. Egwu, "Political Economy of Ethics and Religious Conflicts in Nigeria", in *Ethics and Religious Rights of Nigeria*_(ed.) F. Okoye (Kaduna: Human Rights Monitor, 1991), 92.
37. Egwu, 107.
38. D. Akowonjo, "Ethno-Religious Conflicts and National Security in Nigeria", A paper presentation at the 6th Annual Security Conference of Institute of Security, University of Lagos, Nigeria, 8.
39. Gofwen, *Religious Conflicts in Northern Nigeria*, 65-66.
40. Gofwen, *Religious Conflicts in Northern Nigeria*, 101.
41. Gofwen, *Religious Conflicts in Northern Nigeria*, 108.
42. A. Sheriki, "The Nigeria Society and Religious Conflicts: A Retrospective View", in *Religion and Service to Humanity* (eds.) E.A. Odumuyiwa and M. Opeleye (Ilorin: NASR, 1993), 33-39.
43. O. E. Alana, "The Relationship between Christians and Muslims and Afrelist in History with Particular Reference to Nigeria", In *Studies in Religious Understanding in Nigeria* (Ilorin: NASR, 1993), 205-207.
44. *Tell Magazine*, September 17, 2007, 30.
45. James W. Douglas, *The Non-Violence Cross: A Theology of Revolution and Peace* (London: Macmillan Publishers, 2008), 38.
46. S. Boko, "World Recession and Growth of religious Intolerance in Nigeria", in *Religion and Peace in Multi-Faith Nigeria* (ed.) J.K. Olupona (Ile-Ife: Obademi Awolowo University, 1992), 148.
47. O. E. Alana, "The Relationship between Christians and Muslims..", 100.
48. A. Ekwenife, "Politics and Religion Intolerance: The Nigerian Situation", in *Religion and Politics and Politics in Nigeria*, (eds.) R.D. Abubakar et al. NASR, 1991, 108.