

Conflicts In Southern Kaduna: Causes And Strategies For Resolution

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Abstract

Nigeria in general and Southern Kaduna in particular have recorded bitter experiences of violent conflicts in various forms like ethno-religious conflicts in particular. Since the early 1980s, ethnic and religious crises have become a re-occurring decimal, especially in northern Nigeria. This study looked at the protracted ethno-religious conflicts in Southern Kaduna, identifying the causes and implications of the conflicts. The structural conflict theory was used as the theoretical framework for the study. The study used the descriptive and analytical research methodology. Data were obtained from secondary sources and the findings show that the ethno religious conflicts in the area in focus is caused by political, economic, social factors, indigene/settlers dichotomy etc. The study adopted the three principles namely: responsible peacekeeping, peace-making, and continuous peacebuilding as strategies to end the conflicts. This study aims at discussing the factors that have fuelled ethno-religious conflicts in southern Kaduna and suggests possible solutions. The study concludes with recommendations including how Government must ensure that political, social and economic development strategies are integrated into the approaches of conflict prevention, management, and peace-building efforts at all levels. And finally proposes ways on how Religious leaders, traditional rulers, security personnel, NGOs, Civil Society Organisations, must all put in their best to end the conflicts.

1. Introduction

Conflicts and are a phenomena that man has experienced from time immemorial. The peculiar nature of The Nigerian state comprising of over 400 ethnic groups and belonging to several religious sects (Salawu, 2010) has made it an enclave that has undergone different kinds and series of conflicts. Nigeria, since independence has remained a multi-ethnic nation/state which has been grappling with the problem of ethnicity on the one hand and other conflicts on the other. The phenomenon of ethnicity and religious intolerance have led to incessant recurrences of ethno-religious conflicts with devastating consequences in Nigeria (Agu, Amujuri and Okwo, 2012, p.224).

Nigeria has recorded bitter experiences of violent conflicts of various forms. Since the early 1980s, conflicts have become a re-occurring decimal, especially in northern Nigeria. Sule (2015) argues that amongst the 19 states that constitute Northern Nigeria, there is virtually none which has not witnessed one form of conflict or the other. The spate of conflicts has been on a steady increase and include: Maitatsine in Kano, 1980; Zuru, 1980; Maiduguri, 1982; Yola, 1984; Ilori 1984; Bauchi, 1984 and Kano, 1984. Others are Kafanchan, 1987; Gure- Kahugu, 1987; Birnin Kebbi, 1990; Katsina, 1991; Tafawa Balewa, 1991; Kano, 1991; Jalingo, 1992; Kaduna Polytechnic, 1992; Kasuwar Magani (Kaduna), 1994; Kaduna, 2000; Jos, 2001; Kano, 2001; Tafawa Balewa (since 2000) and Nasarawa, 2001; Jos, 2004, 2008 and 2010. There have also been the Chamba-Kuteb crises in Taraba State 2013, Tiv-Jukun crisis 2013, Bassa- Igbira crisis in Toto 2012 and a host of others.

Anugwom et al as cited in Yahaya (2011, p.23) further observed that:

Throughout recorded history in West Africa and indeed black Africa in general, Nigeria seems to rank top among the list of unprecedented upsurge of ethnic and religious disturbances in contemporary times. The situation has remained a constant threat to peace in Nigeria. The vigour it has assumed in contemporary Nigeria has therefore continued to threaten the nationalities that make up the country as a single sovereign democratic entity.

Khalid (2004) narrows down his research on ethno religious conflicts to North-Western part of Nigeria, arguing that most of the ethno religious conflicts in the northern part of the country took place in the north west geo political zone. He avers that:

Violent communal clashes in Northern Nigeria have characterized relations between the Hausa-Fulani and Kataf, Kuteb and Jukun; Hausa-Fulani and Mambilla; the Jukum and Tiv; as well as the pastoralist and farmers. The conflicts are labelled 'ethno-religious because what we normally call religious conflicts here often has ethnic, political and economic undertones, while the so-called ethnic conflicts have often been complicated by religious, political and many other social factors and considerations. Among the most widely reported ethno-religious conflict that occurred in the region are: The Maitatsine religious revolt (Kano, 1980), the Muslim-Christian conflict (Kano, 1982), the Kafanchan crisis (Kaduna state, 1987), the Zangon-Kataf Muslim-Christian conflict (Kaduna, 1992), the Sabon-Gari market disturbances (Kano, 1995), and the Sharia-inspired Muslim-Christian violence, episodes I and II (Kaduna and Sokoto states, 2000).

As could be seen, Kaduna State has gone through a number of ethno religious conflicts.

Kaduna is capital city of the Northern region and is a state with diverse cultural and ethnic heritage. The main ethnic groups include the Fulani, Hausa, Bajju, Jaba, Adara, Moro'a, Gbagyi, Gure, Kurama, Numana, Ninzo, Kataf, Koro, Atyap, etc. The name Kaduna originated from the Hausa word "Kada", which means crocodile and 'Kaduna' is the Hausa plural word for crocodiles, many of which abound in The River Kaduna (Iniobong, 2016).

Kaduna is now divided into two settlements: the Christian dominated the south and the Muslim dominated north of which people have taken undue advantage of to foment ethno-religious conflicts. Kaduna which used to be a relatively peaceful town, has witnessed a circle of violence, that has singled it out as one of the most volatile cities in northern Nigeria (Makarfi, 2004, p.5). So far, there have been opposing relationships between the two dominant religions – Christianity and Islam, in the socio-economic and political affairs of the state which further reveals that subsequent upheavals in Kaduna state, often identified as ethno-religious conflicts from 1980 to date, have political, social, ethnic and religious undertones and have resulted to the loss of lives and property worth millions of naira in some towns and villages of Kaduna state. The ongoing conflict in Southern Kaduna could be grouped under, ethnic, religious, economic or political conflicts. It is ethnic and religious because, the major actors are largely from different ethnic and religious platforms. It is also economic because, the major cause of the lethal conflict is associated with livelihood while it is political because, the conflict started after an election in 2011 (Ochonu, 2016; Suleiman, 2011). This study therefore looks at the conflict as an ethno religious conflicts with socio-economic and political implications.

The implications of the ethno religious conflicts have affected the foundations of democratic principles in the country to which end (Olayode, 2007 p.134) avers that:

One of the claims for the enthronement of democracy as well as democratic consolidation in Nigeria lies in the fact that as a centripetal force, democracy is the only institutional arrangement that can guarantee the peaceful resolution or management of ethnic and religious conflicts.

The incessant conflicts in Southern Kaduna therefore stand in direct contrast to the democratic principles which are supposed to galvanise the pillars of peace in the state as a whole. This has in no small way affected the social, political and economic lives of the people.

It is against this background that this study is carried out. The study proceeds with an outline of the objectives and methodology employed. It then moves to the contextual and conceptual discourses of the study with concepts like Southern Kaduna and ethno religious conflicts. The study then discusses the theoretical framework that serve as the foundation of the study. It proceeds to outline and discuss the influencing factors of the Southern Kaduna conflicts. The outcomes and implications of the Conflicts were also analysed and then the strategies for the resolution and management of the Conflicts were also discussed followed by a conclusion and some recommendations.

2. Statement of the Problem

Ethnic and religious conflicts have extremely and negatively affected the socio-economic and political development of Nigeria as a nation. This has negative effects on the country's national security, stability and integration. One of the main obstacles to the country's drive towards achieving greater height in Africa and among the Comity of nations is the manipulation of religion and ethnicity.

Kaduna State has its ethno-religious peculiarities. These peculiarities that ordinarily ought to be harnessed as strength have over the years been the State's albatross. Interestingly, however, the latest round of conflicts in southern parts of Kaduna State has been largely between herders and farmers. These have led to a wanton and malicious destruction of lives, property, farmlands and farm produce. Ethno-religious conflicts in Southern Kaduna have become one of the major indices responsible for the divisions among the people. The central issues continue to revolve around people, social equality, citizen's rights and participatory democracy.

3. Objectives

The incessant conflicts in Southern Kaduna have attracted the attention of all and sundry - academics, government, civil society organisations, faith-based organisations and international communities. , the main motivating factors and objectives of this study are:

- o To delineate the influencing factors that have fuelled the ethno-religious conflicts in southern Kaduna
- o To understand the outcome and implications of the negative endemic trend
- o To outline the possible strategies that can be employed to manage, mitigate and if possible eradicate this nefarious development and lastly to make recommendations that can enhance sustainable peace in the area

4. Methodology

The research methodology adopted for this study is the descriptive survey approach. In view of the complexities that a study of this nature usually attracts, especially the security implications, only secondary data were sought from Text Books, Journals, Magazines, and Newspapers, Periodicals etc. in Libraries and the Archives as well as the Internet.

5. Contextual and Conceptual Discourses

5.1 Southern Kaduna – The Study Area and the Principal Actors

Kaduna State is located in the northern part of Nigeria but in the mostly used categorization system, the geopolitical classification, Kaduna state is classified (sometimes) under the middle belt or the north central zone (Charles, 2017). Kaduna State has twenty-three Local Government Areas, out of which, Southern Kaduna has eleven, while northern Kaduna has twelve. Southern Kaduna refers to the area located to the south of Kaduna city, the capital of the state. The area shares common boundaries to the north and the east with Plateau and Bauchi States respectively and to the south with Abuja – the Federal Capital Territory. At present, the eleven local government areas of Southern Kaduna: Jaba, Jema,a, Kachia, Kagarko, Kaura, Kauru, Lere, Chikun, Kajuru, Sanga and Zangon Kataf constitute one senatorial district out of the three senatorial districts of the state. Southern Kaduna is multi-ethnic and is predominantly occupied by largely non-Muslim ethnic groups (Suleiman, 2015). Senator Danjuma La'ah, a Christian, is the current senator representing Southern Kaduna.



Map of Kaduna, showing a labelled portion of Southern Kaduna.

Source: *Echoes of Hope* (2015)

Virtually all the major actors in the Southern Kaduna mortal conflicts are non-state actors. There are two well-known groups involved in the southern Kaduna conflicts namely Nigerian and foreign Fulani herdsmen on the one hand and indigenous Southern Kaduna citizens residing in the local communities on the other hand (Charles, 2017).

5.2 Ethno-Religious Conflicts

At present every type of natural resource or primordial cleavage causes crisis in Africa; Land, water, forest, religion, ethnicity, power sharing deals in governments, revenue sharing formula, where a local government headquarters will be sited, universities admissions spaces' allocations, etc.; all actively cause conflicts in the continent. Alfred, Ale, and Wununyatu, (2014, p.23) affirm that in Nigeria, ethno-religious crises have become a part of the national history. The above explains why ethno-religious crises have attracted scholars' interrogations profoundly.

In another vein, Ethno-religious conflicts combine both religion and ethnicity as the bases for disagreement (Sule, 2015, p.22) or a state of affairs in which the relationship between members of one ethnic or religious group and another of such group in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society is characterized by lack of cordiality, mutual suspicion and fear, and a tendency towards violent confrontation. Ethno-religious conflicts are notable from other types of social conflicts in the dimension that they involve ethnic groups, which are of different religions and have become "annual rituals" in some states in the northern parts of Nigeria, like, Kano, Katsina, Bauchi, Plateau and Kaduna states, now, Nigeria's hottest beds of religious upheavals. The states have assumed notoriety in harbouring violent ethno-religious effusions which constitute serious threat to lives and property (Salawu, 2010, p.5).

Like Okey Okechekwu asserted, in an article in the Thisday Newspaper of January 7th 2014, ethnicity per-se like religion or any other natural difference does not on its own cause conflict but religious or ethnic chauvinism as against what he called ethnic awareness and ethnicity that cause conflict. (2014, p.1)

The first of these concepts is 'ethnic awareness'. The second is ethnocentrism, while the third is 'ethnic chauvinism'. Ethnic awareness is simply your knowledge of the fact that you are from a particular ethnic group. Ethnocentrism refers to a conspicuous love of all things pertaining to one's ethnic roots, as well as attachment to same without disturbing others about their own preferences. Ethnic chauvinism, on the other hand, revolves around the use of position, force or influence to drive only the economic and other interests of a particular ethnic group.

As Metuh (1994, p.73) has noted with particular reference to Nigeria “most inter-religious conflicts usually develop into inter- ethnic conflicts even where they began as a purely religious disagreements. The reverse is the case: namely, some socio-ethnic conflicts are defected and fought out under inter-religious banner”. It is hardly surprising because there is a very strong correlation or overlap between ethnic and religious boundaries in Nigeria's plural setting. According to Egwu as cited in Sule (2015, p22) “this tendency for the boundary between the two forms of identity to collapse during moments of conflicts ...has been captured in the phrase 'ethno-religious violence.'”

Frequent and persistent ethnic conflicts and religious clashes between the two dominant religions (Islam and Christianity) present the country with a major security challenge (Okah, 2014, p. 5). Conflicts according to Ibrahim and Igbuzor (2002), have arisen as a result of new and particularistic forms of political consciousness and identity often associated with ethno-religious identities. As Adagba et al (2012) have noted, claim over scarce resources, power, land, chieftaincy, local government council, control of markets and sharia among other trivial issues have resulted in large scale killings and violence among groups in Nigeria.

Scholars like Khalid (2004) maintain that the conflicts in the north western part of Nigeria take the form of Muslim/Christian communal clashes and farmers/pastoralists dispute, and they are fought along both ethnic and religious divide.

In Nigeria, so far the universalistic religions like Islam and Christianity did not succeed in containing or transcending the tensions of parochial and ethnic rivalries. On the contrary, the universalistic religions have sometimes reinforced the parochial loyalties. In fact, Khalid (2004) argues that:

The difference between the Hausa-Fulani and the Bajju or Kataf in the North was in time no longer simply that one group was Hausa-Fulani and the other was Bajju or Kataf. There arose additional distinction that the Hausa-Fulani were mainly Muslim and the Bajju or Kataf mainly Christian.

This negative line of division led (Mazrui, 1986) to conclude that, far from Islamic and Christian universalism diluting or transcending ethnic parochialism, the two global winds of Islam and Christianity helped to fan the flames of ethnic suspicions.

Indeed, all the inter-religious violence that took place in the North-West zone,

the Sharia inspired conflicts inclusive, could be subjected to ethno-religious interpretations. At least five major ethno-religious violence took place (two in the North-West, two in the North-East, and one in the South-East Zones) over the introduction of Shari'ah legal system between February 2000 and June 2000 alone. In each instance the conflict was remarkably similar (Khalid, 2004). The conflicts resulted to extensive destruction, thousands of deaths, and massive property losses. Akowonjo (2011) as cited in Owutu (2012) buttresses this point further when he said:

Ethno-Religious Conflicts have the tendency of creating crisis over the question of citizenship, hostility between indigenes and settlers, dehumanization of women and children, e.g. rape, child abuse, child neglect, deepening of hunger in the society, atmosphere of political insecurity and instability, declining confidence in the political leadership and apprehension of the system.

The pastoralists/farmers conflict is the major type of conflict that have hit the southern Kaduna in recent past. This conflicts take the form of competition over ownership and control of natural resources, especially land, between the Hausa/Fulani herdsmen and the local farmers which has led the conflict to take an economic dimension. Lots of farm produce were destroyed by the herdsmen leaving hunger and poverty as a product of the conflicts. Indeed, the conflicts between pastoralists and the farmers arise from differences in perception of land resources, the institutional tools for utilizing the land resource base, and the very process of land utilization between the two systems (Housea et al, 1995,p.1) as cited by Khalid (2004).

5.3 Theoretical Discourse

The Structural Conflict Theory was adopted to explain the ethno-religious conflict in Southern Kaduna. This theory has two main sub-orientations. The first is the radical structural theory represented by the Marxist dialectical school with exponents like Marx and Engels, V.I. Lenin, etc. the second is the liberal structuralism represented by Ross (1993), Scarborough (1998) and the famous work by Johan Galtung (1990, p. 292) on structural violence. The main argument of the structural conflict theory is that conflict is built into the particular ways societies are structured and organised. The theory looks at social problems like political and economic exclusion, injustice, poverty, disease, exploitation, inequity etc. as sources of conflict (Ademola, 2006). The structuralists maintain that conflicts occur because of the exploitative and unjust nature of human societies, domination of one class by another etc. Structural theory is remarkably strong on the immediate and underlying factors that lead to conflict. It presents a large number of such factors that make the emergence and escalation of internal conflicts possible (Brown, 1996 as cited

in Ademola, (2006, p.44). While economic and social factors are more common, political and institutional factors (the structure of the state, discriminatory political institutions, intergroup politics and elite cohesion or fragmentation); security factors (national security dilemma, regional military environment, refugee regimes, cross-border criminality, and civil-military relations); as well as ethnic factors are equally as critical. According to Ademola (2006, p.44), structuralists present factors such as those listed above as the major motivating factors that explain the emergence of destructive conflicts between individuals and groups.

Following from the above assumptions, the structural conflict theory is apt and relevant for the appreciation of the incessant ethno-religious conflict in Southern Kaduna. It offers deep insights to the interlocking factors that sustain the conflicts being basically because the Southern Kaduna is divided along the lines of religion and ethnicity, and the socio-cultural factor of indigenes and settlers dichotomy. It presupposes that once conflicts occur, they lengthen and become challenging to restore peace on account of a number of factors stated above.

5.4 Factors influencing the conflicts in Southern Kaduna

The conflicts under review span about half a decade and predate all the current governments in place—both at state and federal levels (Charles, 2017). The conflicts, according to the current Chief Security Officer of Kaduna State, “began in the aftermath of the 2011 presidential elections when foreign Fulani herdsman (and perhaps some local ones) passing through Southern Kaduna were attacked with (sic) some of them killed and their cattle stolen” (Ajijah, 2016; Ochonu, 2016). The other factors are:

a. Political Factor

It appears that among the conflict influencing factors is the role of political operators who invoke ethnicity and religious mobilization to gain political relevance. Indeed, it has been observed that most of the ethno-religious crises in Kaduna state can be traceable to politics and politicians (Onwe, 2014)

b. Economic Factors

Individual's and community's claim over ownership or use of land, water resources, and other tangible or intangible interests continue to provoke conflicts between ethnic groups in this area.

c. Social Factors

Disagreements over cultural, ethnic, ritual and social practices could likely provoke violent conflicts.

d. Indigene/Settlers Dichotomy

Indigeneship/Settlers problems have become problems all over the country, not only in Kaduna state. Yahaya (2011) argues that, there have been patterns of migrations which is well defined at this point in time. He goes further to posit that even though the Hausa/Fulani have lived in Shagamu for over a hundred years, not many of them are in the local government council or in the Ogun State House of Assembly. In Abia, Enugu and Anambra States, Hausa-Fulani people have lived there for a long time, also not many are recognized as indigenes of any local government council area. In Kano and Adamawa States, many Ibos have likewise lived there for generations, but many of them are not recognized as indigenes. Even the names of individuals immediately disqualify them. Similarly, in Jos and Kaduna, many Yoruba families claim to have lived there for over four generations, but are yet to be accepted as indigenes.

Such scenario is also the case in Southern Kaduna where some Hausa/Fulanis are insisting that they are indigenes because their parents, grandparents and great grandparents migrated to the area some three hundred (300) years ago, the local indigenes are insisting that they (Hausa/Fulanis) are only settlers to the area and not indigenes.

Every Nigerian could live anywhere in the federation. However, many activities of government, and the constitution still remind us that we need an identity called indigene-ship. As an illustration, it does not matter how long a man has lived in Kaduna, for instance, his daughter who is admitted to the Federal Government College, is required to go to her local government area council in a different state to get a certificate of indigene-ship even though she may never have been there.

As indigenes organize for the control of their polity and economy, so do the settlers press for their rights of participation in the processes. Beyond a threshold, settler communities threaten indigene position of hegemony and control. While the settler gets *defensively aggressive* in its relations with the indigenes, the indigenes get *aggressively defensive*, often resulting in violence with the full mobilization of ethno-religious loyalty and commitment (Yahaya, 2011, p.122).

e. Failure on the Part of Government

The government has failed in the following ways:

- i. Insincere reports of Panels set up to investigate past conflicts continue to gather dust while government appears unconcerned, with no single person being prosecuted to serve as deterrent to others.
- ii. Inability of government to pay adequate attention to early warning

signals conflicts.

- iii. Inability of government to effectively check corrupt practices of officials and ensure equitable distribution of the economy and wealth in Kaduna state.

6. Outcomes and Implications of the Conflicts in Southern Kaduna

The outcomes and implications that the incessant Southern Kaduna ethno religious conflicts have on the people and the land could be grouped into three major dimensions – social, economic and political dimensions.

a. Social Implications

Ethno-religious conflicts in Southern Kaduna have resulted in the destruction of property and death of hundreds of people; men and women. The conflicts have resulted in the irreparable loss of human resources that could have helped in the development of the area. The sad elimination of the breadwinners of such families has led to increase in unemployment, hunger and abject poverty, and this could directly lead children of such families to go in to practices that are despicable and demeaning such as prostitution, begging and stealing. Sadly, still, where both parents were eliminated, the children have been forced to assume parental roles at such tender ages which also have its negative social implication. In most cases the wounds left in the psyche of affected people might not be obvious, but are often said to be mentally, psychologically and emotionally far reaching. Such children could grow up with their minds fixed on hatred and set for revenge. Ethno- religious conflicts create internally displaced persons as thousands of people suddenly become refugees in their country. Refugees' camp life is usually appalling, that is in terms of camp structure displaced, security, food and service distribution, health delivery etc. The consequences of these are high death rates occasioned by diseases and starvation (Owutu, 2012).

b. Economic Implications

The economic effects of the incessant Southern Kaduna conflicts have left millions if not billions of Naira lost to the conflicts. Houses, Shops and goods have been burnt down as well as the wanton destruction of Farmlands and farm produce. Ethno-religious crises discourage growth in the sense of industrialization. This is because; no businessperson or industrialist wants to invest where the safety of their investment is not guaranteed (Arukwe 2004) cited in Yahaya (2011, p.136).

c. Political Implications

Ethno-religious conflicts have serious consequences on the nation's political development. It affects our democratic values and norms and also delays viable

political transition and consequently decimates the aspiration of producing a nation state. The Nigerian political evaluation has been characterized by periodic instability instigated mostly by the elites and politicians and have also contributed to the electoral violence that we have witnessed in the past and in recent years. For instance, in the 1964 general elections, the violence instigated led to the 1966 military coup and political instability, which culminated in the civil war. Yet, the conflicts that occurred in 1983, 2003, 2007 and even in the 2011 general elections are obvious indications that politicians have not learnt any lesson from their mistakes of the past. It therefore seems that most politicians are particular about the issue of who takes what, rather than how democratic norms and values would be entrenched in the nation.

The political future of Southern Kaduna depends on the level at which the two major religious components can tolerate each other. They must accept to live together and seek those things that will bring about the unity of the geopolitical area rather than look out for divisive variables.

Most of the political elites do not have their immediate family – children and spouses – in those areas where they fuel the conflicts. It is speculated that they take their families abroad and leave the masses to kill themselves. This leaves the area underdeveloped and destroys the very fabric of democratic principles. Yahaya (2011, p.137) buttresses this point further when he avers that, 'the religious polarization of Muslims and Christians poses serious challenges to democratization in Nigeria.'

7. Strategies for the Resolution and Management of the Southern Kaduna Conflicts

Three models of conflict resolution have been adopted for this study and prescribed to help mitigate and possibly end the ethno-religious conflict in Southern Kaduna as well as heal the wounds inflicted on all the victims, namely: responsible peacekeeping, peacemaking, and continuous peacebuilding (Ugorji, 2016).

a. Responsible Peacekeeping

The current conflict in Southern Kaduna requires a higher, concerted and more coordinated intervention mechanism led by responsible peacekeeping operations teams. According to Ramsbotham, Woodhouse & Miall (2011) as cited in Ugorji (2016),

peacekeeping is appropriate at three points on the escalation scale: to contain violence and prevent it from escalating to war; to limit the intensity, geographical spread and duration of war once it has broken out; and to consolidate a ceasefire and create space for reconstruction after the end of a war”.

In order to create space for the other forms of conflict resolution – mediation and dialogue for example-, there is need to contain, reduce or minimize the intensity and impact of violence on the ground through responsible peacekeeping and humanitarian operations. The peacekeepers' role should be to separate the fighters, contain its intensity and protect the civilians. In addition to this role, this study lays emphasis on ethical responsibility. By this, it is expected that the peacekeepers should be adequately trained and guided by ethical deontological codes so as to neither do harm to the population they are expected to protect nor become a part of the problem they have been sent to manage.

b. Peacemaking

Many forms of peacemaking initiatives – negotiation, mediation, settlement, and tracks of diplomacy (Cheldelin et al., 2008; Ramsbotham et al.2011; Pruitt & Kim, 2004) as cited in Ugorji (2016) have emerged over the years and have been used to resolve different kinds of conflict. For ethno-religious violent conflicts in Southern Kaduna, this study proposes two levels of peacemaking processes. Track 1 and track 2 diplomacy, or multi-track diplomacy. The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) provides a summary of these forms of peacemaking initiatives. Track 1 diplomacy designates official discussions typically involving high-level political and military leaders and focusing on cease-fires, peace talks, and treaties and other agreements. Track 2 diplomacy has to do with unofficial dialogue and problem-solving activities aimed at building relationships and encouraging new thinking that can inform the official process. Track 2 activities typically involve influential academic, religious, and NGO leaders and other civil society actors who can interact more freely. The second level of peacemaking processes that this study proposes is multi-group or intergroup mediation programs organized for specific individuals, communities, businesses, organizations, ethnic or tribal group associations, religious groups (represented by religious leaders) who are involved in, connected to, or have fallen victim of, the ethno-religious conflicts in Southern Kaduna. The mediation programs should be facilitated by a reputable civil society organization (CSO) with expertise in ethno-religious conflict resolution in general and multi-group mediation in particular.

c. Continuous Peacebuilding

The underlying assumption of this study is that using military might and the judicial system alone to resolve conflicts with ethnic and religious components, especially in Nigeria, will rather lead to further escalation of the conflict. The reason is because military intervention and the retributive justice that follows neither have within themselves the tools to uncover the hidden animosities that fuel the conflict nor the skills, know-how and patience required to transform the “deep-rooted conflict by eliminating structural violence and other underlying causes and conditions of deep-rooted conflict” (Ugorji, 2016). For this reason, a

paradigm shift from retributive policy to restorative justice and from coercive policy to mediation and dialogue is needed. To accomplish this, more resources should be invested in peacebuilding initiatives, and they should be led by civil society organizations at the grass root levels.

8. Policy Recommendations

Bearing the reality of violent ethno-religious conflicts in Southern Kaduna in the last few years and the attendant effects on the economic and social lives of the people and of the area, all the necessary institutions should perform their functions responsibly. Therefore, to ensure peace, unity and social equilibrium and to mitigate as well as possibly curb ethno-religious conflicts in the area, it is hereby recommended follows:

- i. All practices that are capable of strengthening ethnic and religious differences must be eliminated by government and structures must be put in place to monitor such practices and punish perpetrators of violence.
- ii. Government must ensure that political, social and economic development strategies are integrated into the approaches of conflict prevention, management, and peace-building efforts at all levels.
- iii. It is pertinent that the Nigerian security system should be restructured, adequately retrained and re-equipped to meet up with the current realities in the country. The security strategy must have to change from reactive approach to proactive approach.
- iv. The embellishment of a constitutional framework for democratic and participatory governance at the grass root level and the legal frameworks that will permanently address the issues of settlers/indigenes phenomena in the country will not only help in solving the existing conflicts but will also go a long way in eradicating ethno-religious conflicts in the area.
- v. Collaborations and negotiations have to be adopted in resolving the many issues and perceptions that always lead to ethno-religious crisis. People, religious leaders and traditional leaders and stakeholders (NGOS and Civil Society organisations) must be encouraged to always come together to dialogue, negotiate and reach compromises on putting a possible end to the conflicts.
- vi. It is also essential to say that the promotion of good governance at all levels of governmental authority but most especially at the grass root remains the greatest antidote to the problems of ethno-religious conflicts in the area. In the absence of good governance, the ruling elite recourse to ethnic, religious and regional appeals, thereby inflaming primordial identities of the masses.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, it can be concluded that ethno-religious conflicts in Southern Kaduna have the propensity to break down the peace and harmony of the entire state. The conflicts have brought about serious and grave effects in the lives of the people – displacing a good number of them, making them widows, widowers and orphans, making them go hungry by reason of the wanton destruction of their farms and farm produce, all of which have caused untold hardship and brought about abject poverty. The study equally concludes that strategic means of mitigating and possibly eradicating this menace must be taken, the remote and immediate causes of these conflicts must be properly studied to forestall future occurrence.

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