

ETHNO RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN BAUCHI STATE NIGERIA

BY

Abdulazeez Nuhu Garkuwa: Department of Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution, National Open University of Nigeria, Abuja; E-mail: abdulazeezngarkuwa@gmail.com

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Dr. Iroye Samuel Opeyemi: Department of Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution, National Open University of Nigeria, Abuja; E-mail: siroye@noun.edu.ng

Abstract

Conflicts are inevitable to human existence Bauchi state as a multi ethics and multi religious state is not exempted. The worry some of such conflicts are its consequences, wanton destruction of lives and properties, involvement of youth in criminal activities sowing the seeds of distrust which translate into slow economic development among others. Tackling of such menace is imperative to any civilize society. The paper identified the ways through which the complicit will be manage. The study adopted simple random sampling technique where 120 people were sample out from the population of 180 people affected by the conflict this is in line with the table of determining sample size by Crejcie and Morgan. Quantitative method of data collection was used. An adapted questionnaire was used in the study. The questionnaire has a reliability index of .70. Descriptive survey research design was used, the result of the study revealed among other thing that the conflict is caused by Ethno political power struggle, Religion Fanaticism, Intolerance which has the mean of not less than 3. 00 and the effects of Ethno religious conflict is that it resulted to wanton destruction of lives and properties, impacts economic stability, encourage high rate of crime and resulted to mutual distrust at the mean of 3.54 and above. On the way of managing the conflicts the following was is agreed upon Adherence to teaching of religion texts, Genuine and workable reconciliatory action, Derogatory terms, Justice and fairness from Government with the mean of 4.03 and above. The following recommendations were also made among other thing: There is need by the government to involve relevant stakeholders in the areas where the conflict occurs in discussing the way out of the conflict, religious leaders should ensure that their followers Adhere to original teaching of religious texts.,
Keyword: Ethno-religion, Conflict, Management and Strategies

Introduction

Over five hundred (500) Ethic groups belonging to different religions backgrounds and sects Nigeria remain multi ethnic nation, which has grappling and trying to cope with the problem of ethnicity on one hand and religious conflicts on another. over the years the phenomenon of ethno religious conflicts bedeviled the country which gave birth to ethnic militias and warlords which affect the peace and security of the country for decades. Nigeria suffered series of ethno religious conflicts, Bauchi state is not an exception. It is not possible to know the exact number of ethno religious conflicts in the country due to lack of genuine statistical data on it. The fact that there is increase in the number of ethno religious conflicts in Nigeria makes its irrelevant issue of contemporary discussion in the country and lesson for other nations that are multi ethnic and multi religious in their composition. Bauchi State suffered series of such conflicts for over three decades which hinder the development of the state in various aspects of human endeavors, due to the violent nature of such conflicts which often take the form of riot, sabotage assassination, arms struggles, guerilla warfare and many criminal activities.

Ethnic groups according to Nnoli (1978) is a social formation distinguished by the communal character of their boundaries. To him, the key communal factors may include be language, culture or both. In another perspective, Suberu (1996) conceptualizes an ethnic group as a “social collectivity whose members not only share such objectives characteristics as language, core-territory, ancestral myth, culture, religion, and/or political organization, but also have some subjective consciousness or perception of common descent or identity”. This ethnic identity results from contact with other groups. Ethnoreligious conflict has been defined in different ways by different scholars we are going to look at some of this definition as follows, it means a situation 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 (Salawu, 2010). Ethno-Religious conflict is the clash, contention, confrontation, battle, rivalry, controversy or quarrel among ethno-religious groups. Ethno-religious conflict stem from an irreconcilable posture with regards to symbolic values to the groups concerned. These symbolic values, which cannot be compromised, are religion and language (Uhunmwangho & Epelle, 2011). In another definition Chidi (2022) Sees Ethno-religious conflict as a form of conflict produced on the basis of real or imagined distinction rooted in ethnic and religious identities, lines and lens. He further elaborated that Ethno-religious conflicts refer to those involving groups where religion is an integral part of social and cultural life, and religious institutions are representative, possess moral legitimacy, and mobilization potential. Where conflicting groups define themselves along ethno-religious lines and lens, religious identity can create sharp distinctions between parties, and increase group mobilization.

In Nigeria, there were ethno-religious conflicts that claimed so many lives and property (Mohammed, 2004). Notable among such crises are the maitatsine religious disturbances in parts of Kano and Maiduguri in the early 1980s; Jimeta-Yola religious disturbances (1984), and Zango Kataf crises in Kaduna State (1992). Others are Kafanchan College of Education Muslim-Christian riots; Kaduna Polytechnic Muslim-Christian skirmishes (1981-1982); and the cross vs the crescent conflict at the University of Ibadan (1981-1985). Yet other early ethno-religious conflicts include the Bulumkutu Christian-Muslim riots (1982); Usman Danfodio University Sokoto (1982); and the Muslim-Christian Clash during a Christian procession at Easter in Ilorin, Kwara State (1986). Based on the above facts therefore, there is need for proper management of such conflict whenever it happens. Conflict Management is concerned with the processes for controlling and regulating a conflict to ensure that it does not escalate. It is also concerned with techniques involved in the avoidance, prevention, containment and satisfactory resolution of the catalytic factors in a conflict (Uhunmwangho & Epelle, 2011, p4). Conflict management is an umbrella term for the way we identify and handle conflicts fairly and efficiently. The goal is to minimize the potential negative impacts that can arise from disagreements and increase the odds of a positive outcome (Coursera, 2023). Conflict Management is the use of processes, tools, and skills to find creative and respectful ways to manage disagreements and disputes. It includes the ability to resolve conflict collaboratively through effective communication skills, such as active listening and assertive speaking. Conflict management is the approach and strategies geared towards achieving a positive outcome and resolution amongst the parties involved in matters relating to conflicts. These strategies and approaches are dependent on the type of conflict that exist.

Statement of the Problem

Ethno religious conflicts in Bauchi state has been the major concern to stake holders, wanton destruction of lives and properties worth billions of Naira, spread of insecurity, discrimination of inhabitants, mutual distrust, slow economic development above all affect the economic stability of the state. spread of arms in the hands of youth which led to thuggery activities of Sara-suka, theft, robbery and other forms of violence. The afore mentioned problems could be assuming as the reasons for ethno religious conflicts in the state, these are some of the problems which could be associated with ethno religious conflicts growing impacts generally, yet Impacts of ethno religious conflicts are still obscure This is the concern of most researchers who are interested in improving peaceful co-existence. To this ends this study aim at investigating ethno religious conflicts in Bauchi state Nigeria as well as proper ways of the management of the conflict.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the ethno religious conflicts and management strategies in Bauchi state. The followings are the specific Objectives.

1. To Examine the causes of ethno religious conflicts in Bauchi state.
2. Assess the Effects of ethno religious conflicts in Bauchi state.
3. To Determine the ways of managing ethno religious conflicts in Bauchi state.

Research Questions

1. What are the causes of ethno religious conflicts in Bauchi state?
2. What are the Effects of ethno religious conflicts in Bauchi state?
3. What are the ways of managing the ethno religious conflicts in Bauchi state?

Methodology

The research design employed for study is descriptive survey, Survey research investigate the existing situation and attitudes based on information collected directly from the participants. This kind of research method is usually concern with how, what, and why.it interpreted and establishes the course of action, attitudes and beliefs. Descriptive survey is a process of data collection to test hypothesis or to provide answer to research question (Gay, 2012). The Area of the study is Bauchi state due to the fact that the state witnessed series of ethno religious conflicts. The population of the study comprised of 180 people affected by the conflict, simple random sampling technique, was used to select one hundred and twenty (120) respondents. This is in line with Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of determine sample size. Adapted questionnaire was used for data collection, the questionnaire was validated by the experts and made the necessary corrections. The instrument was pilot tested for reliability index and it was found to have .70. reliability index. The researcher administers the instrument to participants with the aid of self-employed research assistants who are conversant with the study area, ethical issues were observed during data collection the participants were given the questionnaire to tick options. Descriptive statistics using mean and standard deviation were used for computation of data.

Results

Research Question One: What are the causes of ethno religious conflict in Bauchi State?

Table 1: Causes of ethno religious conflict in Bauchi State

Item	No.	Mean	Std. Dv	Remark
Ethno political power struggle	120	3.73	1.30	Significant
Religion Fanaticism	120	3.70	1.17	Significant
Intolerance	120	3.75	1.29	Significant
Phenomenon of indigene versus settler	120	3.91	1.32	Significant

Source field work 2023

The table above showed the responses of respondents on Research question1 with four items sort the opinions on causes of ethno religious conflict in Bauchi state. Ethno political power struggle the mean is 3.73 with standard deviation of 1.30 which indicate significant level. On the religious fanaticism the mean is 3.70 with standard deviation of 1.17 which is significant on intolerance the mean indicates that 3.75 with standard deviation of 1.29 which is also significant on indigene versus settler phenomenon the mean is 3.91 with standard deviation of 1.32 which is significant.

Research Question Two: What are the effect of ethno religious conflict in Bauchi State?

Table 2: Effect of ethno religious conflict in Bauchi State

Item	No.	Mean	Std. Dv	Remark
Wanton destruction of lives and properties	120	4.05	0.75	Significant
Economic instability	120	3.91	0.95	Significant
High rate of in security	120	3.54	1.20	Significant
Mutual Distrust	120	4.20	1.02	Significant

Source field work 2023

The table above showed the responses on research question 2.

Wanton destruction of lives and properties mean of 4.05 standard deviation 0.75 significant. Economic instability the mean is 3.91 standard deviation of 0.95 on High rate of in security the mean is 3.54 standard deviation of 1.20 which is significant on Mutual Distrust the mean is 4.20 standard deviation is 1.02 which significant.

Responses on research question 3: What are the ways of managing the ethno religious conflicts in Bauchi state?

Table 3: Ways of managing the ethno religious conflicts in Bauchi state

Item	No.	Mean	Std. Dv	Remark
Adherence to teaching of religion texts	120	4.10	0.92	Significant
Genuine and workable reconciliatory action	120	4.30	0.66	Significant
Derogatory terms	120	4.40	0.83	Significant
Justice and fairness from Government	120	4.03	0.90	Significant

Source field work 2023

The above table showed the responses on research question 3 on Adherence to teaching of religion texts the mean is 4.10 standard deviation 0.92 significant on Genuine and workable reconciliatory action the mean is 4.30 standard deviation is 0.66 which is significant on Derogatory terms the mean is 4.40 standard deviation 0.83 significant on Justice and fairness from Government the mean is 4.03 standard deviation of 0.90 which is significant.

Discussion of Findings

Based on the responses from items of research question one it is observed that the respondent was agreed with all the items as the cause of ethnoreligious conflict in the area. This respond is in line with the idea of Uhunmwuango & Epelle, 2011 who maintained that Ethno-religious conflict stem from an irreconcilable posture with regards to symbolic values to the groups concerned. These symbolic values, which cannot be compromised, are religion and language. In Nigeria, there were ethno-religious conflicts that claimed so many lives and property (Mohammed, 2004). Notable among such crises are the maitatsine religious disturbances in parts of Kano and Maiduguri in the early 1980s; Jimeta-Yola religious disturbances (1984), and Zango Kataf crises in Kaduna State (1992). Others are Kafanchan College of Education Muslim Christian riots; Kaduna Polytechnic Muslim-Christian skirmishes (1981 1982); and the cross vs the crescent conflict at the University of Ibadan (1981-1985). Yet other early ethno-religious conflicts include the Bulumkutu Christian-Muslim riots (1982); Usman Danfodio University Sokoto (1982); and the Muslim-Christian Clash during a Christian procession at Easter in Ilorin, Kwara State (1986). Based on the above facts therefore, there is need for proper management of such conflict whenever it happens.

On second research question which is on the effect of ethnoreligious conflict all the respondent agreed on the items in the questionnaire because the mean score of all the items are above 3.00. Ethnoreligious conflict has been defined in different ways by different scholars we are going to look at some of this definition as follows, it means a situation 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 (Salawu, 2010). Ethno-Religious conflict is the clash, contention, confrontation, battle, rivalry, controversy or quarrel among ethno-religious groups. Ethno-religious conflict stem from an irreconcilable posture with regards to symbolic values to the groups concerned. These symbolic values, which cannot be compromised, are religion and language (Uhunmwuango & Epelle, 2011).

The third research question which is on the ways of managing ethnoreligious conflict in the area, the respondent also agreed on all the items stated in the questionnaire because none of the mean is less than 4.00. Conflict Management is concerned with the processes for controlling and regulating a conflict to ensure that it does not escalate. It is also concerned with techniques involved in the avoidance, prevention, containment and satisfactory resolution of the catalytic factors in a conflict (Uhunmwuango & Epelle, 2011, p4). Conflict management is an umbrella term for the way we identify and handle conflicts fairly and efficiently. The goal is to minimize the potential negative impacts that can arise from disagreements and increase the odds of a positive outcome (Coursera, 2023).

Conclusion

Based on the results of this study the following conclusions were established. Ethno political power struggle cause Ethno religious conflict, Religious fanaticism causes Ethno religious conflict and intolerance causes Ethno religious conflict. Also, Indigene versus settler phenomenon causes Ethno religious conflict, ethno religious conflict resulted to wanton destruction of lives and properties, impacts economic stability, encourage high rate of crime and resulted to mutual distrust as well as to ensure peaceful coexistence there is need for adherence to teaching of religious texts. Genuine and workable reconciliatory action should be ensured. Avoidance of derogatory terms. Justice and fairness from the government.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made to tackle the spread of Ethno religious conflicts in Bauchi state.

1. There is need by the government to involve relevant stake holders in the areas where the conflict occurs in discussing the way out of the conflict.
2. Religious leaders should ensure that their followers Adhere to original teaching of religious texts.
3. Justice and fairness is required from the government while dealing with the culprit.
4. The communities where the incidence of the conflict occurred should set up a peace committee to include all the ethnic tribe in the area.

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