Religious Conflicts and Education in Nigeria: Implications for National Security

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Abstract
The persistent religious conflicts and insecurity in Nigeria has given meaningful Nigerians a cause for deep concern in recent times. Many of them wonder why religion which used to be the cohesive factor and core of national unity, peaceful co-existence and national development has become a tool for political manipulation, violence, destruction of lives and property in Nigeria in contemporary time. This paper examines education as a catalyst for resolving conflicts and enhancing national security in Nigeria. The paper first of all defined the terms that are used in this presentation. It also makes a review of some religious conflicts experienced in Nigeria together with their causes and the effects. Furthermore, the paper examined education in Nigeria as a catalyst for sustenance of national security. The paper utilized both secondary sources and observation methods for data collection and presentation. Finding from the research reveals that religious conflicts and insecurity are endemic in Nigeria in the last two decades. The Muslims and Christian adherents have fought wars in Nigeria than they had actually fought for peace, thereby threatening peaceful co-existence and national security among the citizenry. The paper recommends among others, that the government should employ meaningful ways such as education and inter-faith dialogue to enhance peaceful co-existence and national security in Nigeria.
Keywords: education, religion, conflict and national security.

1.   Introduction

Nigeria is populated by the adherents of Islam, Christianity and African Traditional Religion. However, the adherents of three religions, especially Muslims and Christians are often engaged in conflicts, leading to lose of lives and property. A day hardly passes without the adherents of these two religions engaging in one conflict or the other. The religious scenario in Nigeria has assumed a violent dimension, leading to suicide bombing, loss of innocent lives and property. The area that is most affected with terrorists attacks is the defunct Northern region. That is, the North and the area called today "Middle-Belt" of Nigeria today. Even if there is a seeming peace, the relationship between Christians and Muslims is marked with mutual suspicion and distrust (Amadu, 1989). These religious crises are more frequent in the North and they sometimes give birth to reprisal attacks in Eastern part of Nigeria. The reprisal attacks by Christians in Eastern Nigeria are directed to all the Northerners without distinction of religious affiliation. That is, both Christians and Muslims are victims of such attacks (Dzurgba, 2006). The Northern Christians particularly suffer death casualties at every twist of events. They loss lives in the Eastern part of Nigeria during reprisal attacks. This ugly situation calls for reflection on education as one of the possible measures of preventing religious conflicts and insecurity in Nigeria.

2. Conceptual Clarifications
The terms that need clarifying are education, religious conflict and national security.

2.1 Education
When education is mentioned, all minds naturally go to western, Islamic and traditional forms of education. Although these form religious education, yet they do not constitute the only forms of religious education. Education is a difficult subject for inquiry, including attempts at definition and conception. This is because there are quite a significant number of definitions which have indicated that education is the oldest discipline in human history. Miall (1992) noted that there is significant number of definitions of education given by various scholars. These definitions are different in length, description, character and degree of definiteness. Therefore, it may not be easy to come out with a definite and universally acceptable definition of education. This notwithstanding, Lannap and Kazi (2003) described education as the oldest discipline in human history which deals with the art of imparting, acquiring knowledge through teaching and learning, especially at school or similar institution. It is the acquisition of knowledge or abilities gained through being educated (Encarta Microsoft, 2007).

Adebayo (1977) sees education as the total process human training by which knowledge is imparted, facilitated, trained and skills developed. Education is therefore stopped to carter for the cognitive, affective and psychomotor development of an individual. Worsely (1975) defines education as knowledge, as a systematic cultivation of the mind and other natural powers of the mind and other natural powers on the acquisition of the knowledge and skill through training and instruction. Gofwen (2004) view education as the imparting of knowledge through instruction to effect discipline and maturity of the mind. Hans (1978) defines education as a

science, when he asserts that:

> Education, as other sciences, is based on facts and observations, which should be ranged in analytical tables easily compared, in order to deduce principles and definite rules. Education should become a positive science instead of being ruled by narrow and limited opinions, by whims and arbitrary decisions of administrators, to be turned away from the direct line which it should follow, either by prejudice of a blind routine or by the spirit of some system and innovation.

These definitions clearly indicate that education is the activity of leading out bearing in mind that there is a point from which its presents proceeds, and a feature towards which the leading is done. Thus, Majesan, (1967) affirms that education is the total process of human training by which knowledge is imparted, facilitated, trained and skills developed. Education is supposed to cater for the cognitive, affective and psychomotor development of an individual. Amadu (1989) corroborated that education being a systematic cultivation of the natural powers of the mind for acquisition of skills through training and instruction, has the capability of imparting knowledge to affect discipline and maturity in the recipient to enable him/her survive as an independent entity. In Nigeria, the development of education can therefore be seen in three major phases: Pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial or post-independent era (Gupta, 1979). Parallel to these historical epochs as relayed by Danfulani (2004) are three cultural streams which have left their marks on education. First is the indigenous African society in which education though relay institutionalized, was inseparable from the way of living and culture of the community.

During the epoch, education was a holistic way of life. Here, the child or young adult develops the aggregate of all the processes, abilities, and attitudes and other forms of behaviour which are of positive value to the society in which he lives (Fafunwa, 1974). The second epoch is the Islamic cultural stream which is religious at heart, with education rarely organized, but hardly differentiated from the all pervading religious way of living. Islamic education like most other forms of education is cantered on enabling individuals who acquire it become the kind of people an Islamic society thinks appropriate for its members (Enoh, 1987). The third epoch is western education, which was introduced by Christian missionaries that brought different individual together and social values (IIori, 2002).The social purpose of Christian education therefore, includes more than individual development. It includes social development, and this, in turn, implies the highest possible development of each individual. In this view, life is seen in its wholeness-the rounded development of the individual who lives in harmony with his fellows. The nature of this harmony requires a philosophy of life, and this rests upon the Christian theistic world view.

2.2 Religious Conflict

Religious conflict is a term that has been variously defined by scholars. These definitions are diverse and they all convey the single meaning of disagreement between the two or more religious groups. Hormby (2006) defines religious conflict as a situation in which religious adherents are involved in a serious disagreement or argument with one religious group and another. This is a situation in which there are opposition in ideas, opinions, feelings and wishes. Olite and Olawale (1999) see religious conflict as struggle over values and claims to scarce resources, status and power in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, inure, or eliminate their rivals. This definition very much suits, or reflects the conflict between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria. Gyuse (2006) further points out that when two or more persons, groups, communities or nations seek to take possession or dominate a particular object of value at the exclusion of others, conflict ensues.

Nnoli (2003) asserts that the concept of religious conflict contradict the peace process arising from perceptions, behaviours, phenomena and tendencies. Miall (1992) also posits that the emergence of religious conflict can be a situation where a clear contradiction exists or is perceived to exist between the participants who view the outcome of such conflicts as extremely important. It would seem that Miall is stating the fact that suspicion fuels the religious conflict. Gotan (2004) cited a traditional definition of religious conflict as the conceived interactions in which two or more religious adherents engage in mutually opposing action and use coercive behaviour to destroy, injure, thwart or otherwise control their opponents. Aliyu (2004) sees religious conflict as "a process of social interaction involving a struggle over claim in resources, power and status, beliefs and other preferences and desire". For Oyeshola (2006) religious conflict is the disagreement, dispute or controversy in ideas or viewpoints held by two or more individuals, communities or religious groups. A religious conflict becomes violent if physical or emotional force is used to hurt or kill people (Sa'id, 2004).

Gotan (2004) inferred that conflict is found everywhere in human interaction and it can occur in the family or the home, place of work, between different ethnic as well as religious groups as it is in the case of Muslims and Christians in Nigeria. Ayandele (1996) also postulates that religious conflict is a universal phenomenon and it

becomes problematic, open, confrontation and violent if appropriate measures are not taken to curtail it.

2.3 National Security

The word security has to do with freedom from danger, anxiety and fear; a situation that shows that a country is not exposed to internal sabotage or external attack (Amadu, 1989). In the broader sense, security is seen as the struggle to secure the most basic necessities of life such as food, fuel, medicine and shelter (Obafemi, 2006). Any social unrest arising from the absence of these facilities can lead to human security problems. National security in the above usage refers to:

> The ability of a nation to prevent all forms of threats to its survival ranging from external aggression to threats of economic, political, military and environmental insecurities, whilst grappling with the challenges of nation-building and good governance (Gbenda, 2006).

National security is the aggregate of security interests of all individuals, communities, ethnic groups and political entities to guarantee safety and security, prosperity of individuals and institutes within a nation. It is the requirement for maintaining the survival of any nation through the use of economic, diplomacy, power projection and political power. As a concept, national security developed in the United States of America after World War II. Initially it focused on military might but now, the concept encompasses a broad range of facets which impinge on the non-military or economic security the nation and the values espoused by the national security (Brown, 2008). Thus, to possess national security, a nation needs to possess economic security, energy security, environmental security, and so forth (Brown, 2008). National security threats involve the conventional foes such as other nation states and non-state actors such as violent non-state actors, narcotic carters, multinational corporations and non-governmental organisations; some authorities include natural disasters and events causing severe environmental damage in this category.

Measures taken to ensure national security include: using diplomacy to rally allies and isolate threats, marshalling economic power to facilitate or compel cooperation, maintaining effective armed forces, implementing civil defence and emergency preparedness measures (including anti-terrorism legislation), ensuring the resilience and redundancy of critical infrastructure, using intelligence services to detect and defeat or avoid threats and espionage, and to protect classified information, using counter intelligence services or secret police to protect the nation from internal threats (Paleri, 2008). Maier (1990) asserts that national security involves the protection and safety of a country's secrets as well as its citizens emphasizing the overall security of a nation and a nation state. Achi (2007) posits 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.

Haftendorn (1991) agrees that national security has external coercion because its distinctive meaning involves freedom from foreign dictation. Alagbu (2007) while recognising the need to segregate the subjectivity, talks of threats to acquire values and subjectively, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked. These views shows that national security is an appropriate and aggressive blend of political residence and maturity, human resources, economic structure and capacity, technological competence, industrial base and availability of natural resources and military might. It involves the ability to preserve the nation's physical integrity and territory; to maintain its economic relations with the rest of the world on reasonable terms; to preserve its nature, institution, and governance from external disruption and to control its borders (Maier, 1990). The capacity to control includes domestic and foreign conditions that the citizenry have the rights to enjoy in the country. Nnoli (1997) postulates that in Nigeria, national security consists of different forms. These include: military security, political security and religious security.

Military security implies the capability of a nation to defend itself and/or deter military aggression. It implies the capacity of a nation to enforce its policy choices by the use of military force. The term "military security", is thus considered synonymous with "security" because both result from the establishment and maintenance of protective measures that ensure a state of inviolability from hostile acts or influences. Political aspect of security is described by Brown (2008) as an important component of national security which is concerned with the stability of the social order. Closely allied to political security are the economic and religious securities which are concerned with the economic and religious aspects of the wellbeing of the citizenry. In Nigeria today, these forms of security have become threats to sovereignty of the nation.

Aliyu (2004) listed global and regional issues that have threatened the Nigerian economic and religious security to include: fundamentalism, corruption, moral decadence, terrorism, environmental problems, among others. There is tension between the preservation of the nation and the rights and freedom of individuals which need

adequate measures to protect the   sovereignty of the nation. Many believe that such measures will adequately address the issues of the rights and freedom of Nigerian citizens, especially where the rule of laws, strict checks and balances seem to have failed. There cannot be national security amidst religious crises and adequate education. This is so because sound education is the ingredient of moralization which helps the citizens of any nation in restoring comradeship, peaceful co-existence and unity among the people (Cole-Onifiri, 2002). The absence of peace and harmonious relationship pave wide way for violence of all sorts in the nation, and Nigeria is not an exception in this regards. Peace implies the entirety of the concentric relationship between individuals and the communities or human beings and the nations (Zafrulla-Khan, 2002).

Based on this consideration, there will only be peace and national security in Nigeria, if the history f religious conflicts are carefully examined in order to address the multifarious security challenges that have engulfed our nation in contemporary time. This would not only prepare ground for economic progress, but fertile land for unity, mutual trust, respect and harmonious relationship among the Nigerian citizenry.

3. Historical Survey of Religious Conflicts in Nigeria

The history of religious conflicts in Nigeria can be traced back to the period of independence in 1960. Before this period there were three major religions, namely African Traditional Religion, Islam and Christianity. The relationship between the adherents of these religions was coordinal and peaceful. Religious crises in the country started after independence but were on tribal and regional basis, motivated by the desire to acquire political and economic control of the nation's infrastructures (Alagbu, 2007). This regional and tribal dichotomy later led to civil war from 1967 to 1970 (Ushe, 2006). As events were unfolding in different parts of the country, a religious consciousness developed. This consciousness became more acute in Northern Nigeria, including the geographical area called today the "Middle Bet". Adherents of Christianity and Islam started talking of political control on religious affiliation. Job opportunities, recruitment into the armed forces and admission into tertiary institutions gradually assumed a religious colouration (Turaki, 1993). This religious consciousness expressed in daily interaction created a crack in the relationship of Christians and Muslims in Nigeria.

The source of Muslims and Christians conflicts in Nigeria has been religious, social and political. The dramas of intolerance by the two religions led to successive conflicts occurring between them, sometimes degenerating into violent open wars or skirmishes. This drama was marked by the 1980 religious crises that started in Zaria involving members of two religions, resulting to the wanton destruction of lives and properties. The same year (2002) witnessed Maitatsine riots led by the Cameroonian Islamic cleric Kukah alias Maitatsine. The conflict led to loss of lives, torching of churches/mosque, business premises in Kano, Bulumkutu in Maiduguri in 1982, Rigassa-in 1984, and a march 1984, and a host of other places like Gombe and Jimeta-Yola in Adamawa State witnessed Muslim-Christian conflicts (Adega, 2001).

Meanwhile, in 1986 Nigeria was rocked by the controversy over its alleged registration as a member of the organisation of Islamic countries (O.IC) by the General Ibrahim Babangida's regime (Atanda, 1989). This crisis generated a lot of controversies and cold blood between Muslims and Christians with the former arguing that governmental action in joining the O.I.C was justified hence the Nigerian government similarly had diplomatic ties with the Vatican. In 1987, Muslim and Christian students of the college of education, Kafanchan clashed. The conflict later engulfed the whole of Kaduna State. This conflicts later spread to other parts of Kaduna State (Musa, 2002). The Zangon-Kataf crises in 1992 which started as a dispute over a marked site between the "Atya and the Hausa's" later spreads to Kaduna metropolis and its environs to take a religious face (Kaigama, 2006). The rate of destruction in this single conflict made the military president Ibrahim Babangida to equate it to a civilian version of a coup d'etat.

The April 22, 1990 coup attempt by Major Gideon Gwaza Orkar was given a religious undertone. This followed the exercising of five states namely, Kano, Borno, Katsina, Bauchi and Sokoto mainly populated by Muslims of Hausa-Fulani and Kamuri origin from the Nigerian Federation. In 2000, the move for the implementation of the Shariah Law led to a bloody clash between Christians and Muslims (Okoye 2000). In 2002, the protest against the hosting of the world beauty contest in Nigeria led to another bloody clash between Muslims and Christians in Kaduna (Kaigama, 2006). In 2004, there was another clash between Christians and Muslims in Makarfi Local Government over an alleged case of the desecration of the Qur'an. The bitter experiences we have to grapple with concern the extension of religious conflicts to the institutions of learning. In 2002, the election of the student union president of the Federal College of Education (F.C.E) Zaria led to a clash between Christian and Muslim students. In the same year, a similar clash was averted in Ahmadu Bello University (A.B.U) Zaria. On 17th March 2006), there was another squabble between Muslim and Christian Girls by the water tank in the female hostel in A.B.U (Nwabudike and Osewe, 2006).

The violent conflicts between Christians and Muslims have spread to the secondary schools. In 2002, there was a struggle between Christian and Muslim girls in Queen Amina College Kaduna over an alleged case of the abuse of the Holy Quran. In 2005, there was a similar uprising between Christian and Muslim students in Kufena College, Wusasa Zaria. In 2006, another similar uprising occurred in Technical School, Malali Kaduna.The religious conflicts are experienced in some other States of Northern Nigeria. In 2001, Bauchi state witnessed a clash between Christians and Muslims following the introduction of the Sharia legal system. In Plateau State, a governmental appointment led to a bloody clash between Christian and Muslims in Jos town, in 2001. This culminated in the Yelwa-Shendam crisis of 2004. In reaction to the killings in Yelwa-Shendam, there was a bloody clash in Kano State between Christians and Muslims in the same year. The conflict that caused a national uproar was the 18th February 2006 religious riot of Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State. The uprising was provoked by a Danish News Paper that ridiculed Prophet Mohammed (Haruna, 2006).

The baffling nature of the religious crisis in Nigeria is the reprisal attacks in other parts of the nation, especially the Eastern part of the country. The offload of death bodies from Maiduguri crisis in Onitsha Town of Anambra State led to the hunting and killing of Northerners. Roadblocks were mounted and places of Islamic worship were destroyed in February 2006. It was a replay of what happened in Abia State in reaction to the 2000 Shariah riot of Kaduna. The death casualties were both Muslims and Christians from the North (Obafemi, 2006). Many issues have been raised as the possible causes of the religious conflicts in the nation. Among them are; partiality of the media in reporting events to the favour of one religion (Haruna, 2006), illiteracy that deprive many Christians and Muslims of the knowledge of the peace and harmony which is core to their faith, Islamic jihad to suppress Middle Belt Christians from gaining political control, resistance of oppression by some groups that feel alienated in the nation, lack of job opportunities that pushed some people to seek employment in religious conflicts, the introduction of the manipulation of religion for selfish political gains (Gotan, 2004).

The effect of religious conflicts in the nation cannot be over emphasized. The conflicts on religious grounds have smeared the relationship of Christians and Muslims. There is mutual suspicion between the two parties. Settlement in some parts of the nation is done along religious line. Christians build houses and live were they have a dominant population and likewise the Muslims (Auta n.d). The death casualties that have been recorded due to religious conflicts are remembered with bitterness. So many homes have lost their bread winners, institutions have lost their experts and the nations have lost a good number of resource persons due to religious conflicts. Property worth millions has been burnt down due to religious conflicts. Companies and factories have folded up because of insecurity arising from the fear of religious conflicts. Above all, the conflicts have exposed most of the youths to violence, whereby increasing the number of armed robbers in the highways of the nation. These and other related conflicts have occurred between the Muslims and Christians in Nigeria due to intolerance, religious bigotry and fundamentalism, poverty and unemployment among others (Apeku, 2008).
Achi (2007) lamented that the religious conflicts in Nigeria left a lot of people dead and homeless. In Northern part of Nigeria, the conflicts are usually between Muslims and Christians. While in the Southern, the conflicts are between the traditional worshippers and Christians. The Muslims and Christian conflicts only started as the result of reprisal attacks from the North (Achi, 2007). This development in which the Christians are neither tolerated as brothers and sisters by their Muslim fellows or the Muslims are not accepted by their Eastern Christian fellows has left much to be desired in Nigeria in modern time. The general feeling of rejection by another religious group dominates the scene, leading to violent posture, aggression, killing and destruction from either side of the divided (Gotan, 2004). Consequently, the idea of forming militia by both religious groups was conceived as visible (Apeku, 2008). This militant groups left behind tribal ethnic and religious landmarks that are still threatening the national security of Nigeria (Aliyu, 2004).

The questions one may wish should be addressesd are: How can the mutual relationship between the three major religions in Nigeria be restored back in the midst of these countless crises? Are the suggestions made to resolve the problem implemented by the government? Why is religion used as a tool of manipulation by politicians in Nigeria? These unanswered questions and many other related ones indicate that rapprochement is the only solution for resolving religious conflicts in contemporary Nigeria. Gofwen (2004) posits that rapprochement is not just about a purposeless dialogue but a dialogue that is carried out through education to reconcile the adherents of different religions who are still living with the hurt of past religious conflicts. Christians in Nigeria, especially, the Northern part should take the bold step towards reconciliation with their Muslim brothers. It will benefit us more to work together as brothers and sisters than to dialogue with guns, knives and bombs.

4. Educational Experience in Nigeria
Education in Nigeria is consisting of three types, namely traditional education, Islamic education and Western education.

4.1 Traditional Education

Traditional education is the type of education practiced in various communities which make up Africa today. This was the system of socialization of individuals into the cherished cultural heritage of the pre-literate society. Fufumwa (1974) assets that, the aim of traditional education in Africa was to enable the individual learn how to be able to live useful form of life both to himself and the community to which he/she belongs. He state thus:

> …through this indigenous system of education, a child was able to learn the particular type of his/her parent's profession from the neighbour who was an expert…no parents who engage in a profession, trade or craft would want him/her child to be without an education. He would be considered as denying the child the means of livelihood.

The traditional system of education was centered round a philosophy that was indigenous. This was the philosophy of functionalism or the philosophy of pragmatism as it is called in the modern time. It was the philosophy based on doing things practically for the purpose of immediate utility. Gotan (2004) explains that, the functionalist or pragmatist philosophy was significantly and indigenous system of education because:

> …through the pragmatist philosophy, things were learnt by observation, performance, practice for efficiency and perfection. This system of learning was carried out through apprenticeship system, which was the main methodology of training or educating the youths in traditional society.

This system of educating people in preliterate society was further collaborated by Callaway (1964) who states that Apprenticeship system was teaching learning situation whereby, a learner was attached to an expert for a fairly long time for the purpose of receiving training. Majesan, who studies the Yoruba education, explains that under apprenticeship system, children and adults were attached to various experts of trades, crafts and specific professions to receive training. He states:

> …these apprentices who were attached to their masters or teachers stayed with them and through repetitive practices became masters of the professions. One the masters were satisfied that their clients have achieved the standard requires, they allowed the learners to be on their own and start practicing.

This system of training people to specialized in specific profession still exists, even the modern system of education, where we have tailor, typist mechanics carpenters, doctors, welders, photographers etc apprentice over   Africa. The traditional system of education had cardinal objects, which were grouped broadly into seven aspects. These include: physical training, development of character, respect for elders, per groups and those in authorities, intellectual training, vocational training, community participation and promotion of cultural heritage. They physical training was the aspect, which aims at the physical fitness or development of the individual. And it was carried out through physical exercises such as jumping, climbing trees, swimming, and boxing, shooting of bows and arrows and playing of various other games. The development of character in traditional system of education was meant to train the youths and adults morally, socially, and intellectually. This took place with the help of the parents, peer groups and the entire community members. Majesan (1967) in his study of Yoruba education confirmed that:

> …Character development of children in Nigerian society was the co-responsibility of every member of the society…every one participated in the development of the children's character. Thus, children were taught codes of manners, conventions, customs, morals, superstitions and taboos. They also learned burial rituals as well as other rites and practices in Tiv land. These helped the youth to be humble, courageous, preserving, and generous, keeping secretes of the community and how to be of good report at all times. This character training was closely related to respect for elders, peer groups and those in authorities.

Fafunwa (1974) confirming the above presupposition of Majesan asserts that in traditional system of education, children were taught how to respect elders and those in authorities, particularly, the chief cult leaders, diviners, relatives (especially uncles, aunties and other neighbours. Particular ways of greetings were taught to children. In some communities, they were expected to lay flat on the ground in the course of greeting, while, some, were expected to squat before the elders. Failure to do so was interpreted to mean disrespect. The intellectual training was not through bookish or formal way, but rather, it was done through observation, participation, imitating, recitation and demonstration. Children were taught local history, geography, plants and animals, counting, arithmetic, genealogy, legends, poetry, proverbs, riddles, story relying and storytelling, initiation rituals, burial

rites, prophetic statements and acrobatic display. The intellectual training usually combine physical training with character-building and manual activity with intellectual training. This type of training made training made traditional education an integrated experience in African society.

Vocational training was the type of traditional education that was job-oriented or for direct employment (Rumu, 2010).

This was through agricultural education, trade and crafts, and other specific professions. Through apprenticeship system, children learnt practical farming, fishing, hunting, carving carpentry, building, drumming, cooking, barbing, poetry, hair-dressing, dyeing, mat-making, glass-making wine-tapping and wine-selling, trading amongst others. There were also adults who were professional doctors (herbalists), witch doctors, professional shrine-keepers, soldiers, tax-collectors, police, traditional people who circumcise children and so on. The whole of these professions were carried out through apprenticeship system, which was based on attaching learners to experts for the purpose of receiving adequate training through regular practice and close supervision. However, with the impact of western education in Africa, and Tiv land in particular, traditional system of education has metamorphosed into modern educational system. And this led to the rigid compartalisation of curriculum, content and methodology of modern system of education in the society.

4.2 Islamic Education

Islamic education is not indigenous to Nigeria, for Islam originated from Arabia and not in Africa. Though Islam penetrated North Africa quite early in its history, it never lost completely its Arabian character. In Nigeria, it was towards the end of the eleventh century, around 1085 AD that a Muslim dynasty began to rule in Borno. Elsewhere in West Africa, the advent of Islam was delayed by several centuries. In the Hausa participate; Islam started taking hold in the later part of the fifteenth century. Even so, the region did not enjoy enthusiastic reception. What happened was that individual Muslim scholar, perhaps drawn to the Sudan by gold or slaves, penetrated in isolation or small bands in the larger town and cities and established centres of Islamic studies in the midst of a predominantly traditional religious adherents. Probably, the initial setback suffered by Islam was on account of its insistence on Arabic as the only language understood by Allah and the sole medium through which the faith could be disseminated. As it were, even the few Hausa kings who initially accepted the religion held onto it just nominally.

While records indicate that by the seventeenth century, the Islamic Madrass or 'makarantun ilmi', the Islamic schools of higher learning, were complementing the Koranic school in Kano and Katsina, with their tentacles spreading down south to the yorubaland, the general acclamation was unimpressive (Sithole, 1968). It was not until Shehu Usuman Dan Fodio stormed northern Nigeria with his stormed diplomacy that the faith began to thrust itself upon the local communities, especially those that took the blast of his marshal axe. So from 1804 onwards the north saw the multiplication of Koranic schools. The growth was so phenomenal that by 1900 AD. Lord Frederich Lugard counted about 20,000 Koranic schools, with a total enrolment of approximately 250,000 pupils. By 1961 Ad the figures stood at 27,600 Koranic school with about 423,000 pupils on the roll (Worsely, 1975). By assessment one could say that, except for the moral lessons they were meant to impart, Islamic education as exemplified by the Koranic schools in Nigeria has contributed only marginally to the development of the persons and communities subjected to it. Eminent Nigeria scholars of Muslim persuasion have had cause to complain about the Islamic system of education fed to this country. The Koranic schools came under severe criticism as a result of what they had turned out into the society. Writing about these schools Haroun Al-Rashid had this to say:

> …There is no yardstick for measuring the quality of education the boys are getting. Often times the teachers who establish these schools are not themselves educated, let alone qualified to teach. Since they do not have independent source of income, they live on what the children were able to gather from their daily rounds of begging. As we shall see in the chapter on beggars, Koranic schools are the breeders of beggars in the north of Nigeria (Crampton, 1976).

The same author quoted the late Alhaji Aminu Kano as viewing the curriculum of the Koranic schools as:

> …arbitrary in form, bookish in style hopeless in promoting social ideals and usefulness, it has done nothing but make the work in the schools lifeless and killing. The Koranic school has succeeded in promoting drudgery and loading the child's mind with fantastic facts which he or she never understands. Consequently, the child becomes mentally disabled and the products of such schools are a mass of static adolescents who make a static society (Crampton, 1976).

Alhaji Aminu Kano also saw the Koranic teachers as:

> …only good in impeding the intellectual and physical growth of the pupils, instead of educating them to recognise their nature and help them adjust, the Koranic teacher appears to be a menace in children's world and in the educational field; for not only is he hopelessly ignorant of these modern conceptions but is not ready to accept them (Adamu, 1986).

Apart from this, the Madrass which could pass for higher schools of Islamic education in Nigeria did not evolve to the level of universities comparable to Western tradition or the medieval Islamic universities of North Africa. The Nigerian approach was so half-hearted and hypocritical that despite his fervent zeal and passion for Islamic education in Northern Nigeria, the late Sardauna of Sokoto Sir Ahmadu Bello found himself establishing a university in the North patterned after the Western tradition than the Islamic system (Crampton, 1976). Certainly his action could not have been and oversight but a conscious decision to identity with a superior culture after considering that whatever benefits Islamic education might have held out to other nations, its experience in Nigeria had not been for progress. In contrast to the utilitarian education in traditional Nigeria society, Islamic education came into remove initiative from the citizens and foisted in its place the dependent mentality which made its products a liability on the society they were supposed to improve. If Islamic education in Nigeria must be given credit, it should be in the field of politics and commerce.

Unlike Christianity which discouraged its Nigeria adherents from active participation in the political and economic life of the nation, the Muslims have all along approached these sub-sectors on positive notes. Islam had taught the faithful to see themselves as superior to the infidels and should not subject to the latter's authority. This was clear from the policies of the nineteenth century jihadists who not only fought to covert people but appointed, on conquest men of their inner circles to rule them. Similarly, the adoption of Arabic business, acumen ha not only made the upper northern states more economically buoyant but placed them to this day at an advantage over the middle belt zone that is predominantly agrarian (fadeiye, 1993).

4.3 Western Education
Although Christianity pre-dated Islam in origin, its arrival in Nigeria was about three centuries after Islam. It is indisputable that the first contact of European Christian missionaries with West Africa dated back AD. 1515. But their effort in planting Christianity was short-lived and fruitless because, as in the case of Islam, its initial acceptance was poor. The Oba of Benin who played host to these first missionaries saw no need for any change in faith, being already the custodian of his people culture. The religious instruction class which started in his palace quickly phased out when apathy and ill-health invalidated the missionaries. The interim period between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries witnessed the traffic in slaves. It was only in the early part of the nineteenth century when Europe no longer needed slaves as a result of their industrial developments that abolition movement brought back the second batch of missionaries to Africa. This second arrival of missionaries to Nigeria also gives birth to Western education in the country. Education was used by the various missions as a vehicle for evangelism; so their initial concept of education for Africans was rudimentary enlightenment just enough to enable the coverts read the scriptures and moral instructions. The incipient policy was to teach the Africans in their vernacular. Majority of the missionary organization were so fanatical about this that they were hypersensitive to secular educations. In the words of Henry Townsend (Crampton, 1976):

> …what I want is a man who can read the scripture in his own tongue and preach the gospel among the heathen as a brother; I do not want a youth confined by intellectual culture, till he becomes an individual of superior caste and must carry with him whenever he goes the comforts and show of civilized life (Hiskett, 1974).

However, this attitude was totally at variance with the expectations of the converts and the aspirations of the educated liberated slaves for their countrymen. To them, secular education was the gateway to the secrets of European science and technology, which was not achieved by half hearted approach. That sharp resistance to mission's half baked education policy pushed the missionaries to introduce grammar schools to train the children of their converts. The CMS set the pace by opening the first school at Badagri in 1859. It was followed up by that of the Methodist in 1877. What is worthy of note is that up to 1882 the colonial government had not indicated any interest in educating the people in their colonies. Efforts by the missions were only subsidized with grants-in aid from the government. The first venture of government in education was in 1909 AD which saw the emergence of King's College, Lagos. When Lord F. Lugard settled in the North as the first High Commissioner, he specifically instructed the Christian missions to direct their education programmes to the non-Muslim areas. This was not because Lugard cared for the preservation of Islam. Rather, the opposition of the northern oligarchy

to secular education played in tune with the British interest to hold indefinitely to power in Nigeria. If the bogus north wanted to slumber a little while, why disturb the sleepy dog? By 1913 there were barely twenty five primary schools in the whole of the northern region with a total enrolment of 951 pupils. As the government began to invest in education, Lord Lugard decided to control the quality of education being offered to Nigerians.

The emergence of the elitist class after the World War I was already causing him concern and irritation. At one point he could not hide his feelings about the African elites. The educated African is loud and arrogant. Education seems to have produced discontent and impatience of any control and an unjustifiable assumption of self importance in the individual (Ayandele, 1996). In terms of higher education, Yaba College which later became the nucleus of the University College of Ibadan was established in 1948. The Ibadan university college emerged from the Asquith Report for an inter-varsity council on Higher Education in the colonies. In 1959 the Federal government appointed the Ashby Commission to Investigate Nigeria's manpower need for the following twenty years-1960-1980. Three Nigerians, namely, Professor K.O. Dike, Sir, Kashim Ibrahim and Dr. Sanya Onabamiro were members. Their report was submitted on September 2, 1960, simultaneously with that of Professor Harbison on high level man power need for Nigeria by 1970. Based on these submissions, five Universities, Ibadan, Ife, Nsukka, Lagos and Zaria were established. Though these institutions were patterned after European and American systems that were totally devoid of the creative and initiatives that should have placed Nigeria on the path of technological breakthrough, neither was it considered expedient cultural realities, contextual to Africa. In the end Nigeria universities have largely been turning out people who could not be self reliant (Ekoko, 1989).

5. The Contribution of Education in Resolving Religious Conflicts and Restoring National Security in Nigeria

The major problem about education is how it can be tailored towards taming religious conflicts and enhancing national security in Nigeria. Education is an instrument "per excellence" for effective national peace and security in any nation. However, it is important to stress that much education takes place both in formal and informal settings where people are taught the principles of peace and security. In many countries of the world, to achieve effective development, there has to be investment in the education of the citizenry towards the realization of the importance of peace and security. Thus, as part of the five main national goals of the national policy on education, emphasis is laid on a free and united strong nation with religious education given to all citizens. This type of education is imparted to achieve national peace and security in the society. In Nigeria, religious education should include practicing what is preached, creating fear of God, commitment and dedication in the citizens (Gunut, 2004).

The religious education at this level should stop preaching only violence and disunity, which are common features of most religious groups today. Rather, religious education, whether Christian, Muslim or traditional should go on teaching honesty, fair play, justice, love, unity and contentment which are all actual virtues of peace and security.There are many children in Nigeria who are not opportune to obtain religious education that could educate them on the need of peace and national security. Christian parents at home could also stress the importance of peace, conformity and believe by ignoring differences within their religious backgrounds. As they grow, there must clear understand and can grow to understand their full role in the sustenance of peace and national security.

It is pertinent to state that religious education can tailor the teaching of national peace and security into their curricular. Thus, the teaching of objects like "peace studies and conflict resolution", have a religious education background. The efforts of preventing conflicts cannot be realized if political office holders not imbibe the basic concept of religious leadership, which is to maintain national peace and security. In this regard, the example of Martin Luther king Jr, the African American Civil Right Leader readily comes to mind. Ehusani (1996), sums up his activities in these words:

> Martin Luther king Jr, the African American Civil Right leader and Nobel Prize was a prophet, a visionary and a dreamer for the American society. He was sustained by the Christian virtues of faith, hope and love, and he applied the Christian principles of justice, fairness and equality to the American society of his day. He denounced the injustice of racism, conflict and spear-headed the massive peaceful segregation. He died in the struggle, yet his life was consistent with his faith. The greatest legacy of Dr. King is perhaps the famous speech he delivered at the Lincoln memorial, Washington D.C on August 26, 1963, titled: "I have a dream".

Another example is being Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South African, who under the tyranny of the Apartheid

government spoke out boldly and without fear against the government of the day. In respect of his activity, Kukah (2002) says; "Archbishop Tutu…brought a greater sense of urgency to the struggle and thus raised the confidence level of black people by speaking a language and codes that they could understand. The leadership of Tutu embodied black people and served as a symbol of black leadership potential". These are Christian leaders that every religious leadership should emulate. Hence, leaders of Nigerian two dominant religions are called to foster peace, love and unity, if for nothing else, for the fact all accept that God is love, and that it is love that can bring justice and national security. But to work for justice, peace and security constitutes an idea common ground for sincere, open and constructive dialogue and effective collaboration among the adherents of the religions. Manus (1992) quoting Crampton (1976) advises that:

> Every religious group is called upon to respect and appreciate whatever wisdom and goodness is contained in the tenets and traditions of the religious groups. Each one of them should be convinced that all these positive values and traditions put together at the service of the nation will contribute both to the unity of the country.

It is on this note that, Manus (1992) quoting the then Catholic Bishop of Ilorin, John Onaiyekan who stressed that:

> True religion does not consist only in prayers, ablutions, sermons, fasts and religious favour alone. All these are useless with God and worse than useless to humanity if they are not accompanied by a true spirit of justice, honesty, humanity and universal love which lead to true peace.

All religious groups in Nigeria should be re-educated on the need to live in harmonious relationship with one another to enhance national security. It should be noted here that Nigeria national security has two meanings, in a military regime-it means the maintenance and protection of the person of the current despot from harm or embarrassment be it physical, sexual, spiritual, verbal or written. While in civilian regime it is defined as the assurance and maintenance of the political and economic power of the ruling class within the two most dominant nationalities. In idea sense therefore, national security could be describe as the ability of the Nigerian State to successfully pursue her national interests, being able to protect the core values of the State and be able to maintain same through victory in case of a war. It views individual, national and international security from a holistic perspective as there are interplays between all three. If the individual is not secure the State cannot be secure, and if the State is under attack from an external source the State and the individual cannot be secure. The dilemma in Nigeria is that, the State has become so powerful as to become a threat to the individual and nationalities. The deportation of Shugaba, the frequent arrests of Fawehimi as a societal risk, the assassination of Rewane, and the assault on Odi, has created ambiguities and confused the perception of our security operatives as to the need to see the State as made up a collection of citizens instead of dominant groups. These elements within State organs jostling for power, position and advantages have created a state of instability through their action or inactions (Miall, 1992).

The paradox of Nigeria's security is that instead of the State being the framework of lawful order and the highest source of governing authority, it now constitutes the greatest threat to herself. The political and historical development of Nigeria since her inception could explain, yet not excuse, the virtual abandonment of sovereignty to a military and political cabal within the State. It is this usurpation of sovereignty by this group and the exercise of the authority it confers without legal recourse to the populace in lieu of an acceptable referendum and constitution, that makes an overview of the Nigerian State and its national security perspective a nightmare., because the State has become the greatest source of threat to its own survival as there are no core values to defend except corruption.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

From the foregoing discussion, we tried to examine education as an agent of resolving the religious conflicts and insecurity in Nigeria. We pointed out that religious conflicts do not augur well for national security, peaceful co-existence and sustainable development of any nation. We also said that religious conflicts occurs when there is opposing idea, opinion, feeling and wishes between two or more religious groups. This tends to erosion of social and political stability of the nation, leading to national insecurity. The experiences of religious conflicts in Nigeria have shown that discrimination, religious bigotry and power tussle are some of the major factors responsible for persistence religious violence in Nigeria. The wanton destruction of lives and properties, which the government in some instances has to provide relief materials, running to millions of naira that could be used for national development are humiliating stories to be told. Such atrocious amount of money could be use for the development of infrastructures and education of youths in Nigeria. Nigerian citizens should be made to realize

that conflicts only deprive people of the needed education, peaceful relationship, national security and sustainable development. Thus, for Nigeria to experience sustainable peace and national security, all hands must be on deck. Based on these facts, the paper makes the following recommendations:

i.   Religious education should be taught in primary, secondary and higher institutions of learning in Nigeria. This will help in educating the youths on issues of peace, violence, national security and how to present them.
ii. Muslims and Christians should be called upon to engage in meaningful inter-faith dialogue as it is capable of bridging the gap between the two faiths. This dialogue should not be monologue where only one party is the inter-locator, evaluator and final arbiter as Gbenda (2006) has rightly posited thus:

> Dialogue should not just be a conversation involving two persons, but the exchange of ideas or view or opinions and amiability. It has to do with exchanges of religious experiences by those who have faith in their religious traditions for mutual enrichment therefore, it is willingness to question one's self-understanding and openness to understand others and understand others and to resolve misunderstanding and break down barriers, hostility and conflicts for peaceful co-existence.

The good thing about dialogue is that it has never been tried and proved wanting as an instrument for the resolution of conflicts and ensuring peace and security.

iii. Muslims and Christians should look at their areas of convergence or shared values rather than those of their differences.
iv. Muslims and Christians should be encouraged to imbibe the virtues of peace.
v.   Dialogue and reconciliation centres should be established at local, state and geo-political zones in the nation where matters of religious differences between members of different religious will be discussed.

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