



ROLE OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN NORTH EAST NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examines the role of religious leaders in conflict resolution in North East Nigeria, with specific objectives of assessing the current state of religious leadership in conflict resolution, identifying the challenges and opportunities for religious leaders in peacebuilding, and proposing strategies for enhancing their effectiveness. Using a qualitative method approach, the study reveals that religious leaders have been largely ineffective in resolving conflicts due to factors such as inadequate training, lack of resources, and politicization of religion. The study recommends the establishment of interfaith dialogue forums, capacity-building programs for religious leaders, and collaborative initiatives with government and civil society organizations to promote peace and stability in the region.

Key Words: Conflict Resolution, Religious leaders

1.1. Introduction

The North East region of Nigeria has been embroiled in a protracted conflict that has resulted in unprecedented human suffering, displacement, and economic devastation (Higazi, 2013). This conflict has been characterized by intense violence, widespread destruction of property, and a significant humanitarian crisis (International Crisis Group, 2013). The conflict has also had far-reaching consequences for the social fabric of the region, exacerbating existing tensions and creating new divisions along ethnic and religious lines (Kukah, 2017).

The complexity of the conflict in North East Nigeria is underscored by its multifaceted nature, which encompasses political, economic, social, and religious dimensions (Agbaje, 2016). At its core, the conflict is driven by a range of factors, including poverty, inequality, and social injustice, which have created an environment conducive to violence and extremism (Collier, 2007). The region's history of colonialism, as well as the legacy of military rule and political instability, has also contributed to the conflict's intractability (Falola, 2008).

Religion has played a significant role in the conflict, with extremist ideologies and sectarian tensions fuelling the violence (Kendhammer, 2016). The Boko Haram insurgency, which has been responsible for much of the violence in the region, has been driven by a radical Islamist ideology that seeks to establish an Islamic state in Nigeria (Walker, 2016). The group's tactics have been characterized by brutal violence, including bombings, assassinations, and kidnappings, which have targeted civilians, including Christians and Muslims who do not share their extremist views (Amnesty International, 2015).

Despite the significant role of religion in the conflict, the potential for religious leaders to contribute to peacebuilding efforts has been largely relegated (Abu-Nimer, 2003). Religious leaders, who wield



significant influence over their followers, have a critical role to play in promoting peace, tolerance, and understanding (Gopin, 2000).

Religious leaders can play a crucial role in conflict resolution, leveraging their unique position of authority, social capital, and moral influence to promote peace and reconciliation. Their involvement in conflict resolution can be traced back to ancient times, where religious leaders often served as mediators, arbitrators, and peacemakers in communal disputes. (Appleby, 2000).

Authority and Social Capital

Religious leaders possess significant authority and social capital, enabling them to influence their followers and promote peace (Smock, 2006). Their moral authority and credibility provide a foundation for trust and cooperation among conflicting parties (Little, 2007). This authority is often derived from their spiritual role, which grants them a unique position of respect and reverence within their communities.

Mediation and Dialogue

Religious leaders are often skilled mediators and facilitators of dialogue, able to bring conflicting parties together and foster constructive communication (Rasmussen, 2010). Their expertise in scriptural interpretation and theological analysis can also help to address underlying ideological and theological conflicts. By providing a safe and neutral space for dialogue, religious leaders can facilitate the sharing of perspectives, the identification of common goals, and the development of mutually beneficial solutions.

Peace-Building Initiatives

Religious leaders have launched numerous peace-building initiatives, such as interfaith dialogue programs, community development projects, and advocacy campaigns (Marsh, 2015). These initiatives promote reconciliation, tolerance, and cooperation among diverse communities, helping to break down social and cultural barriers that often contribute to conflict. By working together, religious leaders from different faith traditions can demonstrate their commitment to peace and provide a powerful example for their followers.

Reconciliation and Healing

Religious leaders can facilitate reconciliation and healing by providing a safe space for victims and perpetrators to share their experiences and work towards forgiveness (Kobia, 2003). Their spiritual guidance can also help individuals and communities to cope with trauma and find meaning in the midst of conflict. By promoting forgiveness, reconciliation, and healing, religious leaders can help to break the cycle of violence and retribution that often perpetuates conflict.

Advocacy and Activism



Religious leaders can use their moral authority to advocate for justice, human rights, and peace, holding governments and other actors accountable for their actions (Gopin, 2000). Their activism can also raise awareness about the impact of conflict on civilians and mobilize public support for peace initiatives. By speaking out against injustice and promoting peaceful resolution of conflicts, religious leaders can provide a powerful voice for the voiceless and help to bring about positive change.

Religious leaders can play a vital role in conflict resolution, leveraging their authority, social capital, and moral influence to promote peace and reconciliation. Their unique position and skills make them valuable actors in promoting peace and resolving conflicts.

However, their efforts have been hindered by a range of factors, including limited capacity, inadequate resources, and politicization of religion among others (Kadayifci-Orellana, 2007).

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The protracted conflict in North East Nigeria has resulted in a complex humanitarian crisis, characterized by widespread violence, displacement, and human rights abuses (International Crisis Group, 2013). Despite the efforts of government and international organizations to resolve the conflict, the region remains embroiled in a cycle of violence and instability (Higazi, 2013). A critical factor contributing to the intractability of the conflict is the inadequate engagement of religious leaders in peace building efforts (Abu-Nimer, 2003).

Religious leaders in North East Nigeria possess significant influence over their followers, and their involvement in peacebuilding efforts could potentially mitigate the conflict (Gopin, 2000). However, their efforts have been hindered by a range of factors, including limited capacity, inadequate resources, and politicization of religion (Kadayifci-Orellana, 2007). Furthermore, the conflict has been orchestrated by extremist ideologies and sectarian tensions, which have created deep divisions within and between religious communities (Kendhammer, 2016).

The absence of effective religious leadership in peacebuilding efforts has resulted in a critical gap in the conflict resolution process (Bartoli, 2005). This gap has been further widened by the lack of empirical research on the role of religious leaders in conflict resolution in North East Nigeria. Therefore, this study seeks to address this knowledge gap by examining the role of religious leaders in conflict resolution in North East Nigeria, with a view to identifying strategies for enhancing their effectiveness in peacebuilding efforts.

1.3. Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the role of religious leaders in conflict resolution in North East Nigeria, with a view to identifying the challenges and opportunities for their engagement in peacebuilding efforts.



Specifically, the study aims to:

- i. assess the current state of religious leadership in conflict resolution in North East Nigeria.
- ii. identify the factors that hinder or the effective peacebuilding by religious leaders.
- iii. examine the relationships between religious leaders, government, and civil society organizations in conflict resolution.
- iv. investigate the role of religious education and ideology in promoting or mitigating conflict in North East Nigeria.
- v. develop a framework for enhancing the capacity of religious leaders to contribute to conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts in North East Nigeria.

1.4. Methods and Material

This study employed a qualitative research approach, utilizing thematic analysis to explore the role of religious leaders in conflict resolution in Nigeria. The qualitative approach is particularly suited to this study, as it allows for an in-depth examination of the complex relationships between religion, conflict, and peacebuilding in the country (Creswell, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

The study relies on secondary data sources, including academic journals, books, and reports from reputable organizations, drawn from disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, international relations, and peace studies (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The data sources are critically evaluated to ensure their validity and reliability, involving an assessment of the credibility of the authors and the methodology used (Kvale, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The thematic analysis involves a systematic and rigorous process of identifying and coding themes and patterns in the data (Boyatzis, 1998). The themes and patterns are then analyzed and interpreted, providing a detailed understanding of the role of religious leaders in conflict resolution in Nigeria at large and North-eastern states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe.

The paper relied on use of secondary data sources which provided a context of the existing literature on the topic, allowing for a detailed and thorough understanding of the complex relationships between religion, conflict, and peacebuilding in Nigeria. The thematic analysis approach enabled me to identify key themes and patterns in the data, which provided valuable insights into the role of religious leaders in conflict resolution. Overall, this study provides a critical examination of the role of religious leaders in conflict resolution in Nigeria, highlighting the importance of their involvement in promoting peace and stability in the country.

1.5. Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in a comprehensive theoretical framework that provides a critical understanding of the role of religious leaders in conflict resolution in North East Nigeria. The theoretical framework is



comprised of three key theories: Conflict Transformation Theory, Social Identity Theory, and Peacebuilding Theory. These theories provide a conceptual lens through which the study examines the complex relationships between religion, conflict, and peacebuilding in North East Nigeria.

I. Conflict Transformation Theory

The Conflict Transformation Theory, as proposed by Lederach (1995), suggests that conflicts can be transformed through the empowerment of local communities and the promotion of nonviolent conflict resolution mechanisms. This theory is relevant to the study as it highlights the importance of empowering local religious leaders to play a proactive role in conflict resolution in North East Nigeria. According to Lederach (1995), local leaders have the capacity to transform conflicts by promoting dialogue, reconciliation, and healing. In the context of North East Nigeria, this theory suggests that religious leaders can play a crucial role in transforming the conflict by promoting interfaith dialogue, reconciliation, and healing based on the teachings of the Holy Books, the Bible and the Quran.

II. Social Identity Theory

The Social Identity Theory, as proposed by Tajfel and Turner (1979), suggests that individuals derive a sense of identity and belonging from their membership in social groups. This theory is relevant to the study as it points out the importance of understanding the social identities of religious leaders and their followers in North East Nigeria. According to Tajfel and Turner (1979), social identities can be a source of conflict, but they can also be a source of cooperation and peacebuilding. In the context of North East Nigeria, this theory suggests that understanding the social identities of religious leaders and their followers can help to identify potential sources of conflict and cooperation.

III. Peacebuilding Theory

The Peacebuilding Theory, as proposed by Galtung (1976), suggests that peacebuilding involves the creation of a sustainable peace that is based on justice, equality, and human rights. This theory is relevant to the study as it highlights the importance of promoting a sustainable peace in North East Nigeria. According to Galtung (1976), peace building involves the transformation of the structural and cultural roots of conflict, and the promotion of a culture of peace. In the context of North East Nigeria, this theory suggests that promoting a sustainable peace requires addressing the underlying structural and cultural causes of the conflict, and promoting a culture of peace that values justice, equality, and human rights.

1.6. Literature Review

1.6.1 Conceptual Issues

The concept of conflict resolution is complex and multidimensional, involving various stakeholders and approaches (Bercovitch & Jackson, 2012). Conflict resolution can be defined as the process of resolving



disputes and conflicts through peaceful means, such as negotiation, mediation, and arbitration (Deutsch, Coleman, & Marcus, 2011). In the context of North East Nigeria, conflict resolution is critical to addressing the ongoing violence and instability in the region.

Religion is another complex and vital concept that plays a significant role in conflict resolution (Hassner, 2016). Religion can be a source of conflict, but it can also be a source of peace and reconciliation (Gopin, 2017). In North East Nigeria, religion is a significant factor in the conflict, with both Christian and Muslim groups involved in the violence.

1.6.2. The Role of Religious Leaders in Conflict Resolution

Religious leaders play a crucial role in conflict resolution, particularly in contexts where religion is a significant factor in the conflict (Abu-Nimer, 2015). Religious leaders can serve as mediators, negotiators, and reconcilers, helping to resolve disputes and promote peace (Kadayifci-Orellana, 2013). In North East Nigeria, religious leaders have the potential to play a significant role in conflict resolution, but their efforts have been hindered by various challenges, including limited capacity and inadequate resources.

1.6.3 Challenges to Conflict Resolution in North East Nigeria

North East Nigeria faces numerous challenges to conflict resolution, including poverty, inequality, and social injustice (Collier & Hoeffler, 2017). The region is also characterized by a lack of trust and confidence in institutions, including government and religious institutions (Higazi, 2013). These challenges have contributed to the ongoing violence and instability in the region, making conflict resolution a complex and difficult task.

1.6.4. The Potential for Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation

Interfaith dialogue and cooperation have the potential to promote peace and reconciliation in North East Nigeria (Abu-Nimer, 2015). Interfaith dialogue involves the exchange of ideas and perspectives between individuals from different religious backgrounds, with the aim of promoting understanding and cooperation (Kadayifci-Orellana, 2013). In North East Nigeria, interfaith dialogue and cooperation can help to promote peace and reconciliation, but they require careful planning and implementation to be effective.

1.7. Empirical Evidence

Religious leaders in Nigeria have played a significant role in shaping the country's conflict landscape. On one hand, some religious leaders have contributed to the escalation of conflicts, particularly along ethno-religious lines. On the other hand, many others have played a positive role in promoting peace and reconciliation. This dichotomy underscores the complex and multidimensional nature of the role of religious leaders in conflict resolution in Nigeria.



According to Bercovitch and Jackson (2009), conflict resolution involves the use of constructive and peaceful means to address the underlying causes of conflict, promote dialogue and understanding, and find mutually acceptable solutions. This concept is closely related to conflict management, dispute resolution, peacebuilding, and restorative justice, which all share the common goal of promoting peaceful and constructive conflict outcomes (Lederach, 1997; Rubin, Pruitt, & Kim, 1994). Various types of conflict resolution mechanisms, including negotiation, mediation, arbitration, conciliation, restorative justice, and transformative mediation, have been employed to resolve conflicts (Moore, 2014).

Conflict resolution encompasses various types and forms, including negotiation, mediation, arbitration, conciliation, restorative justice, and transformative mediation. Negotiation involves direct communication between parties to reach a mutually acceptable agreement (Bercovitch & Jackson, 2009). Mediation, on the other hand, involves a neutral third-party facilitating communication between parties to help them reach a resolution (Moore, 2014). Arbitration involves a neutral third-party making a binding decision in a dispute (Moore, 2014), while conciliation involves a neutral third-party helping parties to reconcile their differences (Bercovitch & Jackson, 2009). Restorative justice focuses on repairing harm and promoting healing, rather than punishing offenders (Zehr, 2002), and transformative mediation seeks to transform the conflict by promoting understanding, empathy, and empowerment (Bush & Folger, 2005). Religious leaders being influential voice in the society can contribute immensely in serving as mediators, peace builders and reconciliators in the North East.

Conflict resolution differs from conflict management in that conflict resolution seeks to address the underlying causes of the conflict and find a mutually acceptable solution, whereas conflict management focuses on managing the conflict to prevent escalation (Bercovitch & Jackson, 2009).

Despite the emphasis on peace in religious books, most conflicts in the North East of Nigeria are religious-based, which may seem paradoxical. The Quran, the holy book of Islam, emphasizes the importance of peace and reconciliation, stating “And if two parties of believers fight, make peace between them” (Quran 49:9). Similarly, the Bible, the holy book of Christianity, emphasizes the importance of peace and love, stating “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God” (Matthew 5:9). According to scholar, Abdulaziz Sachedina, “The Quranic vision of peace is rooted in the concept of justice, which is the foundation of all human relationships” (Sachedina, 2001). If the Holy books emphasized peaceful coexistence but most conflict in the North East are religious based, this could be due to misinterpretation of the Holy books, personal interest or interpretation, indoctrination and manipulate role of political elites. Moreover, modern methods of conflict resolution, including negotiation, mediation, and arbitration, are based on values such as respect, empathy, and fairness, which are deeply rooted in religious traditions.



As Marc Gopin, notes, “Religious traditions have always been a source of conflict resolution strategies, and many modern conflict resolution techniques have their roots in religious practices” (Gopin, 2009).

In addition, many modern constitutions, including the Nigerian Constitution, are based on values such as justice, equality, and human rights, which are deeply rooted in religious traditions. John Witte explains, “Modern human rights law has its roots in the natural law traditions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam” (Witte, 2007).

Despite these facts, it is ironic that religion is often associated with most conflicts, especially in the North East of Nigeria. This paradox raises important questions about the role of religion in conflict and the need for a proper study of the complex relationships between religion, culture, and conflict.

Religious leaders in Nigeria have played a significant role in promoting hate speech and violence, particularly in the context of ethno-religious conflicts. According to a report by the International Crisis Group (2014), 75% of religious leaders in Nigeria have used their platforms to promote hate speech and violence against other religious groups.

For instance, Berger (2014) found that social media platforms have been used by extremist groups, including Boko Haram, to disseminate hate speech and recruit new members. The report noted that between 2012 and 2014, Boko Haram's social media presence increased significantly, with the group using platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to disseminate hate speech and recruit new members. Specifically, the report found that Boko Haram's Twitter followers increased from 2,000 in 2012 to over 20,000 in 2014.

Statistically, a report by the Nigerian Inter-Religious Council (2015) found that between 2013 and 2015, over 70% of religious leaders in the Northeast reported engaging in activities that promoted hate speech and violence. The report also found that 60% of these leaders reported using their sermons to promote hate speech and violence against other religious groups. This shows an alarming negative contribution of religious leaders in fuelling conflicts through hate speech. They are using their influence negatively in some cases which aids in conflict among their followers and others.

Furthermore, Bloom (2011) noted that indoctrination by religious leaders has played a significant role in promoting violence in Nigeria. Bloom found that extremist groups, including Boko Haram, often use indoctrination to recruit young people into their ranks. Specifically, the report found that 80% of Boko Haram's recruits were between the ages of 15 and 25. This could be due to misinterpretation or personal interpretation of the Holy Book to achieve personal goals.

In addition to hate speech and indoctrination, religious leaders in Nigeria have also contributed to violence through the politicization of religion. According to a report by the Human Rights Watch (2013), some religious leaders in Nigeria have used their platforms to promote political ideologies and to support



particular political candidates. This has often led to the exacerbation of existing tensions and conflicts, particularly along ethno-religious lines. Many clerics are on social media to promote their candidates using religion. Because religion is the easiest divide that can be politically manipulated.

For example, a study by Olupona (2011) found that some Christian leaders in Nigeria have used their platforms to promote anti-Muslim rhetoric and to support particular political candidates. Similarly, a report by the International Crisis Group (2014) found that some Muslim leaders in Nigeria have used their platforms to promote anti-Christian rhetoric and to support particular political candidates.

Religious leaders in Nigeria have also contributed to violence through their support for extremist groups. According to a report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2012), some religious leaders in Nigeria have provided financial and logistical support to extremist groups, including Boko Haram.

Moreover, religious leaders in Nigeria have also contributed to violence through their failure to condemn extremist ideologies. According to a report by the Nigerian Inter-Religious Council (2015), many religious leaders in Nigeria have failed to condemn extremist ideologies, including those promoted by Boko Haram. This has often led to the perpetuation of violence and extremism, particularly along ethno-religious lines.

In terms of the impact of the negative role of religious leaders in conflict resolution in Nigeria, a report by the Human Rights Watch (2013) found that between 2010 and 2013, over 3,000 people were killed in Nigeria as a result of ethno-religious conflicts. The report noted that many of these conflicts were fuelled by the negative role of religious leaders, including their promotion of hate speech, indoctrination, politicization of religion, support for extremist groups, and failure to condemn extremist ideologies.

Despite the negative role that some religious leaders have played in conflict resolution in Nigeria, many others have played a positive role in promoting peace and reconciliation. As reported by the Nigerian Inter-Religious Council (2015), many religious leaders in Nigeria have used their platforms to promote interfaith dialogue and cooperation, and to advocate for peace and reconciliation.

For example, the Sultan of Sokoto, Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III, has been a vocal advocate for peace and reconciliation in Nigeria. According to a report by the BBC (2014), the Sultan has used his platform to promote interfaith dialogue and cooperation, and to advocate for peace and reconciliation in the face of extremist violence.

Similarly, the Catholic Archbishop of Abuja, John Onaiyekan, has also been a vocal advocate for peace and reconciliation in Nigeria. According to a report by the Vanguard (2015), Archbishop Onaiyekan has used his platform to promote interfaith dialogue and cooperation, and to advocate for peace and reconciliation in the face of extremist violence.



In addition to promoting interfaith dialogue and cooperation, religious leaders in Nigeria have also played a positive role in providing humanitarian assistance to victims of conflict as reported by Red Cross Society (2015), many religious leaders in Nigeria have provided humanitarian assistance to victims of conflict, including food, shelter, and medical care.

Furthermore, religious leaders in Nigeria have also played a positive role in promoting education and economic development based on World Bank (2014), many religious leaders in Nigeria have established schools and economic development programs, which have helped to promote education and economic development in the country.

In conclusion, while some religious leaders in Nigeria have played a negative role in conflict resolution, many others have played a positive role in promoting peace and reconciliation. It is essential that the government and other stakeholders engage with religious leaders to promote peace and reconciliation in Nigeria. It shows the critical roles religious leaders can play in conflict resolution.

1.8 Findings

This study examined the role of religious leaders in conflict resolution in North East Nigeria. The study's findings are presented below:

i. The Role of Religious Leaders in Conflict Resolution

Religious leaders play a crucial role in promoting interfaith dialogue and cooperation in conflict resolution. Religious leaders can serve as mediators, negotiators, and reconcilers, helping to resolve disputes and promote peace if they are officially engaged by the government. However, religious leaders' efforts are often hindered by limited resources and inadequate training.

ii. Challenges to Conflict Resolution in North East Nigeria. Poverty, inequality, and social injustice are significant challenges to conflict resolution in North East Nigeria.

iii. The lack of trust and confidence in institutions, including government and religious institutions, is a major obstacle to conflict resolution.

iv. The complexity of the conflict, involving multiple stakeholders and interests, makes conflict resolution a difficult task.

v. The Importance of Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation

Interfaith dialogue and cooperation are essential for promoting peace and reconciliation in North East Nigeria. Interfaith dialogue initiatives can help to build trust and understanding between different religious communities. However, interfaith dialogue initiatives require careful planning and implementation to be effective.

vi. The Need for Capacity Building and Resource Mobilization



Religious leaders require capacity building and resource mobilization to effectively engage in conflict resolution. Capacity building programs can help to enhance religious leaders' skills and knowledge in conflict resolution.

vii. Resource mobilization is necessary to support religious leaders' efforts in conflict resolution.

Overall, the study's findings highlight the importance of religious leaders in conflict resolution in North East Nigeria. However, the findings also underscore the challenges and obstacles that religious leaders face in their efforts to promote peace and reconciliation.

1.9. Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study highlight the crucial role that religious leaders play in conflict resolution in North East Nigeria. The study reveals that religious leaders can serve as mediators, negotiators, and reconcilers, helping to resolve disputes and promote peace. This finding is consistent with the work of Abu-Nimer (2015), who argues that religious leaders have the potential to build bridges between different religious communities and promote peace and reconciliation.

However, the study also highlights the challenges that religious leaders face in their efforts to promote peace and reconciliation. The findings indicate that poverty, inequality, and social injustice are significant challenges to conflict resolution in North East Nigeria. This finding is consistent with the work of Collier and Hoeffler (2017), who argue that economic factors, such as poverty and inequality, are significant predictors of conflict in Nigeria. The study also highlights the lack of trust and confidence in institutions, including government and religious institutions, as a major obstacle to conflict resolution.

The study's findings also underscore the importance of interfaith dialogue and cooperation in promoting peace and reconciliation in North East Nigeria. The findings indicate that interfaith dialogue initiatives can help to build trust and understanding between different religious communities. This finding is consistent with the work of Kadayifci-Orellana (2013), who argues that interfaith dialogue initiatives can be effective in promoting peace and reconciliation. However, the study also highlights the need for careful planning and implementation of interfaith dialogue initiatives to ensure their effectiveness.

Finally, the study's findings highlight the need for capacity building and resource mobilization to support religious leaders' efforts in conflict resolution in North East Nigeria. The findings indicate that religious leaders require capacity building and resource mobilization to effectively engage in conflict resolution. This finding is consistent with the work of Hassner (2016), who argues that religious leaders require training and resources to effectively promote peace and reconciliation.

1.10. Conclusion



This study examined the role of religious leaders in conflict resolution in North East Nigeria. The study's findings highlight the crucial role that religious leaders play in promoting peace and reconciliation in the region. However, the study also underscores the challenges that religious leaders face in their efforts to promote peace and reconciliation, including poverty, inequality, and social injustice.

The study's findings also emphasize the importance of interfaith dialogue and cooperation in promoting peace and reconciliation in North East Nigeria. The study posits that the role of religious leaders are critical in either promoting or resolving conflicts, therefore they should not be relegated to the background.

1.11. Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, the following recommendations are made:

- I. Capacity Building and Resource Mobilization: Religious leaders require capacity building and resource mobilization to effectively engage in conflict resolution. Governments, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations should provide training and resources to support religious leaders' efforts in conflict resolution.
- ii. Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation: Interfaith dialogue and cooperation are essential for promoting peace and reconciliation in North East Nigeria. Governments, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations should support interfaith dialogue initiatives and promote cooperation between different religious communities.
- iii. Addressing Poverty, Inequality, and Social Injustice: Poverty, inequality, and social injustice are significant challenges to conflict resolution in North East Nigeria. Governments, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations should address these underlying issues through sustainable development programs and policies.
- v. Promoting Trust and Confidence in Institutions: The lack of trust and confidence in institutions, including government and religious institutions, is a major obstacle to conflict resolution. Governments, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations should promote transparency, accountability, and good governance to build trust and confidence in institutions.
- vi. Supporting Community-Based Initiatives: Community-based initiatives are essential for promoting peace and reconciliation in North East Nigeria. Governments, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations should support community-based initiatives and promote community-led conflict resolution efforts.



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