The Role of Religious Organizations in Peace-Building in Nigeria

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Abstract

Nigeria is a nation characterized by its rich diversity, comprising over 250 ethnic groups multiple religious affiliation, predominant them are Islam and Christianity. However, this diversity has often manifested in conflicts that have considerable humanitarian, social and economic repercussions against this backdrop, this paper analyses the roles of religious bodies in peace building in Nigeria using the history methods and multi-disciplinary approach, the work revealed that religious organization. in

Nigeria have played crucial role in peace building initiatives, often acting as mediators, facilitators and advocates for social justice. Islam, which was introduced in 15th century, have formed a formidable force in mitigating peace through peace building initiatives, which includes, conflict resolutions community mobilization, advocacy and social justice humanitarian assistance, promoting inter-faith dialogue and moral guidance. The paper also noted that there are some challenges that confront religious organizations in their quest for promoting peace in the society, these challenges include: Politicization of religious organizations, sectarianism, resource constraints and internal division and fragmentation. Furthermore, the work unearthed some causes of conflicts in Nigeria to be: Ethnic and religious diversity, land and agricultural disputes, bad leadership, political instability and corruption, economic disparities and resource control and rigid law or policy of the government. These factors has been responsible for the cause of conflict in Nigeria. The paper concluded with recommendations for enhancing the capacity of religious organization to act as peace building instrument, part of the recommendations includes, capacity building and collaborations between religious organizations and civil organizations support for religious leaders and organizations by government.

Keywords: Religious Organisations, Politics, Conflict, Peace-building, Nation Building

Introduction

Religious organizations are group of people who practice a particular religion and who come together for a variety of purposes. Religious organization is a broad term that denotes any group of people who come together because of their shared religion or for religious purpose. (Arokoyo, et al, 2024).

Religious organizations are agent of socialization for shaping or building social behaviors of individuals and group of individuals in the society. Religion plays a vital role in socializing and sensitizing individuals and curbing social vices globally (Arokoyo, et al., 2024). Nigeria, a nation characterized by its vast diversity in ethnic groups and religious beliefs is home to many religious organizations that have wielded considerable influence on societal structures. Section 37 of the 1999

constitution of Nigeria, as amended, the constitution pre-supposes that an individual has freedom to practice religion of his/her choice without government interference. However, Islam and Christianity are the two major or dominant religions practiced in Nigeria, they have profoundly shaped the country's history, social fabrics and political landscape: In a 2020 gauge delivered by Seat Exploration focus in Washington, D.C. The Muslim populace in Nigeria was assessed to be 51.1% While the Christian populace was assessed to be 46.9% while the leftover 2% was other religion.

A 2022 Afrobarometer overview on religion in Nigeria viewed that as 54.2% of the respondents distinguished as Christian and 45.5% recognized as Muslim. The leftover 0.3% of respondents in Nigeria said they related to other or no strict convictions. (www.Afrobarometer.org). Christians are overwhelmingly situated in the southern part of the Country, while Muslims are transcendently in the North, as the two religion frames the two biggest blocks of strict characters in Nigeria, and they play significant parts in adding to the harmony working in the Country.

As indicated by Arokoyo, et al., (2024). The effect of religion reaches out across different part of human relations or behaviours, including ethics, direction, local area union, and social lead. Religion frequently fills in as an essential wellspring of socialization in the general public, Ojewola, (2022), socialization process is basic in framing person's perspective and directing their ways of behaving's as per the moral codes of their confidence.

All around the globe, strict association assumes an essential part in harmony building. They frequently unequivocally denounce different social indecencies, for example, robbery, contemptibility, substance misuse, and other savagery ways of behaving. By advancing ethics like trustworthiness, respectability, and strict lessons that intends to diminish occurrences of conflicts against social way of behaving. (Arokoyo, et al, 2024).

Concerning a report by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), (Ogunjobi, 2020), Nigeria, positions among the nations with the biggest number of clash related passings as of late with religion frequently referred to as a contributing

element. Besides, the absence of powerful administration and financial differences have heightened these struggles convincing different partners, including strict associations, to participate in peacebuilding drives.

As The Second Great War finished during the 1940's global drives, for example, the making of the Bretton Woods foundations and the Marshall plan comprised of long-haul struggle mediation programs in Europe with which the US and its partners expected to revamp the mainland and keep up with harmony, following the annihilation of The Second Great War. The focal point of these initiatives revolved around peace building.

Conceptual Clarification

Peace Building

Peace building is a concept that is often use or applied in the context of post-civil War or post conflict situations, to address factors that causes or exacerbate conflict violence and inequity in the society. It is geared towards bringing lasting peace, to prevent or forestall recurrence of conflict and violence situations. It is about transforming socio-economic environmental systems so as to have sustainable progress in the society (Anan, 1998) Harmony building is a drawn out course of empowering individuals to talk, fixing connections, and transforming foundations. For positive change to endure, everybody impacted by a horrendous clash must be engaged with the course of harmony building (https/www. C-r.org. what our identity is, the reason harmony building)

From Wikipedia, peacebuilding is a movement that means to determine treachery in peaceful ways and to change the social circumstances that creates lethal or horrendous struggle. There have been further contentions that its purposes around creating helpful individual, bunch, and political connections across ethnic, strict, class, public and social limits.

The interaction incorporates savagery avoidance, peace promotion, goal, or change, and post struggle compromise of injury mending previously, during and after some random instance of brutality. Peacebuilding has since extended to incorporate various aspects, like demilitarization, retirement and reintegration and

revamping administrative financial and common society foundations. The idea was promoted in the worldwide local area through previous UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali's 1992 report "An Agenda for peace". The report defined post-conflict peace building as an "action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict. (Boutros -Boutros- Ghali, 1992).

The definition of peace building varies depending on the actor/actors. The concept of peace building is an amorphous concept without definite or clear guidelines or goals, but common of all the definition is bearing towards improving human and societal security, which is the central task of peace building. According to Galtung, (2020), peace building is the process of creating self, supporting structures that removes causes of war and offer alternative to war in situation where war might occur. Peace building is the view of Lederach, (1997) "is more than post-accord reconstruction" and "is understood as a comprehensive concept that Encompasses, generates and sustain the full array of processes, approaches and stages needed to transform conflict towards more sustainable peaceful relationships. The term thus involves a wide range of activities that both precede and follow formal peace accords. Mary Anderson, (1996) in her work "Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace or War." Posits that peace building involves the establishment of "social structures and institutions that ensures a resilient and equitable society."

According to Kofi Annan, former secretary-General of the United Nations, highlights the interdependence of development and peace in his 1995 report, stating that peace building" refers to a range of measures to direct and support the structural transformation of conflict and its underlying root cause". Annan's view underscores the necessity of integrating peace initiatives with sustainable development goals.

Yusuf Turaki, (2005), defines peace building as the process of establishing an environment free from conflict and violence, conducive to socio-economic development and political stability. Turaki's, view support the importance of local (community) and cultural inclusion in promoting peace in the society.

According to Noakes, (2010), peace building is a community-based approach to resolving conflict, fostering communication and strengthening relationships.

This communication and relationship centered approach is relevant/important in Nigeria considering her diversity in culture and religion which plays a huge role in conflict resolution and peace building. According to Albert (2001, P.130), peace building is an art of repairing relationships, institutions and social facilities and putting in place schemes that can help the disputing communities to be united once again.

Albert's view is agreeable with the position of Noakes as captured earlier, that peace building is a concept that addresses issues of reconstruction, reconciliation and rehabilitation amongst actors in pre and post conflicts situation in the society.

According to the British Army (1997, P.2), peace building usually involves actions which supports political, economic, social and military measures and structures aiming to strengthen and solidify political settlement in order to redress the causes of conflicts. These mechanisms support structures that tend to consolidate peace, advance a sense of confidence and well-being and support economic reconstruction." The assertion by the British Army on the concept of peace building is a testament that religious organizations and other actors plays a huge role in the peace building of a society, and their roles cannot be over emphasized.

Ghali, (1992) previous, UN secretary-General, he ordered harmony incorporating into two: pre-struggle and post-struggle harmony building. As indicated by him, pre-struggle harmony building incorporates such measures like militarization, the control of little arms, institutional change, further developed police and legal situation, the monitory of basic freedoms, discretionary change and social and monetary turn of events.

According to Rechler, (1999, P.61) as cited by Kasali, (2022), sees pre-conflict peace building as:

> Preventive measures that aim to reduce the gap between the rich and poor; to promote and implement human rights and the rights

> of the minorities, and to promote durable development and the realization of a just and fair social order in which there is no discrimination based on race or sex.

Pre-struggle harmony building could be supposed to be early advance notice system to screen struggle sets off or setting off circumstances and address them from the root before it heightens (Kasali, 2022) foundation for a majority rules government in south Africa (IDASA), thought, pre struggle harmony working as:

> a proactive cycle that requires distinguishing proof of contention rates examination of contention design, entertainers, and patterns, reception of pertinent reactions and the board component, and rebuilding of trust and certainty of contention parties in one another. (IDASA, 2024, P. 29-30).

While post-conflict peace building is the process of actively working together with different institution to sustain a lasting peace in the society by promoting reconciliation between disputant's parties/groups and creating conditions for sustainable peace.

Conflict

There is always a conflict even in defining conflict. Conflict is part of human nature and man cannot exist without conflict. (Akpuru-Aja, 2020) common images of conflict include "hostility", disagreement, incompatibility and misunderstanding. According to (Akpuru-Aja 2020, P.174) conflict is taken as either issues having potentials of war, or actually war situations and issues that has potentials of violence escalation, if unaddressed. Robert, (1981), struggle can be portrayed as a condition which recognizable gatherings of people whether ancestral, ethnic phonetic, strict, socio political, monetary, social or in any case is in cognizant resistance to at least one recognizable human gathering since this gathering are seeking after what could be supposed to be contrary objectives.

All the more significantly, struggle emerges from the associations of people who have halfway contrary finishes, in which the capacity of one entertainer to acquire his closures, depends to a significance degree on the decision or choices that

different gatherings will take. Struggle could be rough or wild, predominant or latent, resoluble or insolvable under different set or situation (Omotosho, 2012).

For Otite and Albert, (2001), struggle is a battle over values and claims to status, power and scant assets wherein the points of the rivals are to kill, harm or dispense with their opponents. It can likewise be viewed as a battle or challenge between individuals with contradicting needs, thoughts, values or objectives

Conflict is a universal phenomenon in human social existence. It is inevitable in every face of life. Though there has been a lack of consensus of unification of its identification owing to its multi dimension peculiarities to specific issues. It has many definitions and conceptions, depending on the issue being addressed (Yorid & Pakiza, 2013).

According to Isard, (2004) conflict is the imperative phenomenon in human existence. It is a natural part of our everyday existence, and it has been accepted and recognized as part of expectations in any social organizations. Kesternes and Ray, (2002) defined conflict as a situation in which two or people struggle or quarrel for goals which only one person can attain or when incompatible means is to be used to achieve a certain goal. Accordingly, conflict is inherent to all human societies. It is empirically verifiable that, as in any human society. Conflict were part and parcel of indigenous African communities.

Overview of Islam and Christianity in Nigeria

Islam and Christianity are the two primary religions rehearsed in Nigeria. According to Njoku, (1995) Islam came into Nigeria before Christianity. He further thought that the primary Muslims that brought Islam came from Egypt about the ninth 100 years. These were mostly Bedouin and Berber brokers. Significant presentation of Islam came through Fulani Muslims who relocated into Nigeria following the fall of the antiquated realm of Songhay in the fifteenth hundred years. This period agreed with the Portuguese investigation of West Africa. (Njoku, 1995. P.2)

Islam

Islam's arrival in Nigeria predates Europeans colonization. The spread of Islam was primarily through trade routes across the Sahara Desert, with merchants and scholars from North Africa introducing the faith to the Hausa and Kanuri people in the Northern region of present-day Nigeria, (www.alislam.org.com). The arrival of Islam coincided with the rise of powerful Hausa kingdoms, like Kano, katsina, and Zaria which embraced the faith and integrated it into their political and social structures. The establishment of Islamic schools known as "Madrasas," became a significant factor in the spread of Islamic knowledge and the development of Islamic law (Sharia). (Hunwick, 2006).

By the 19th century, Islam had firmly established itself in Northern Nigeria, forming the bedrock of the religion's cultural identity. The Sokoto caliphate, founded in 1804 by Usman Danfodio, marked a significant turning point in the history of Islam in Nigeria. (Ibrahim, 1976).

Christianity

Christianity's Journey to Nigeria began with the arrival of European Missionaries in the 15th 5 6 century. Portuguese explorers, driven by the quest for trade routes and the spread of the Christian faith. (Ray, 1993), according to Ray, they first made contact with the coastal region of present-day Nigeria. However, the early missionary effort did not yield successful result, and was hampered by resistance from local communities and the lack of stable political structures.

According to Ajayi, (1977), the 19th century witnessed a resurgence of missionary activity, primarily from British and German denominations. The British, having established colonial control over parts of Nigeria, saw Christianity as a tool for social and cultural transformation. Ajayi, further observed that they established churches, schools, and hospitals, seeking to introduce western values and education, they used these tools (instruments) in converting indigenous population to their Christian belief system. According to Kalu, (1980). The early Christians denominations in Nigeria, were primarily protestants, with significant influence from denominations like the Church of England, the Methodist church and the

Presbyterian Church. However, the Portuguese were Catholic missionaries. The establishment of these churches created a new religious landscape in Nigeria.

Causes of Conflict in Nigeria

Conflicts in life or society is inevitable, therefore to understand the contemporary causes of conflicts in Nigeria, it is important to consider the historical context. The amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914 by the British colonial powers sowed the seeds of regional disparities and ethnics tensions in the country. The arbitrary borders drawn by colonial power did not account for the complex nature, social and ethnic realities of the region, leading to inter-group animosities that has persisted even after independence in 1960. The post-in-dependence era was marked by a struggle for power among various ethnic groups, culminating in a brutal civil war from 1967-1970, resulting in over a million deaths and deepening mistrust among different groups (Falola, 2003).

1. **Ethnic and Religious Diversity**

According to Ibeanu, (2006), asserted that Nigeria is home to over 250-ethnic groups, with three largest being the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo. This diversity, while a source of richness, has been a significant driver of conflict. Ethnic favoritism in political appointments and resource allocation has exacerbated tensions. Additionally, Nigeria has a clear religious divide, primarily between the two major/minor region, Islam and Christianity. This divide has frequently manifested in the middle belt and northern region of Nigeria (Ladipo, 2012).

2. **Political Instability and Corruption**

Nigeria's political landscape has been characterized political instability, corruption and lack of proper accountability. Military coups and electoral fraud and the manipulations of ethnic affiliations for political gains; (Ibrahim, 2009). The struggle for political powers often leads to violence, as various ethnic groups vie for political control, which contribute to a culture of impunity.

3. **Economic Disparities and Resource Control**

Despite being rich in natural resources, Nigeria is plagued by widespread poverty and inequality, particularly in the Niger-Delta region, which houses the country's

oil wealth. The obvious neglect of local communities and environmental degradation of this oil communities and environmental degradation of this oil communities due to oil exploration have sparked conflict between government, oil companies and local populations, which has even led to shutting down of oil exploration in most communities in the region, a case in point is Ogoni, there has not been oil exploration in Ogoni-land since 1993. (Watts, 2008). The diversion of resources from these regions to benefits other regions of the country without positive impact to them, has exacerbated tensions and grievances e.g. Niger Delta Militant Group.

4. Land and Agricultural Disputes

According to Obiakor, (2010), the place of land cannot be over emphasized, especially those inhabiting equatorial rain forests. Aside from its economic importance, land also serves various purposes like payment of dowries, reparation for murder, farming etc. Land dispute between agricultural communities and nomadic herders, particularly in the middle belt region, have become increasingly violent. Climate change and desertification have led to competition over dwindling resources escalating confrontations between these groups (Akinyemi, 2019). Conflict can arise from land not being properly demarcated or when people intrude on the land of others. Such events can result in conflict between groups of people, when boundaries are properly defined.

5. Bad Leadership/Government

Here a specific gathering of pioneers are not doing effectively, when their strategies are bad or when they won't set up every one of the commitments they gave during a political race, then, at that point, individuals respond or fall back on struggle.

6. **The Rigidity of Law**

At the point when the law of society is excessively hard and unbending, there is a propensity for individuals to respond in this way causing struggle in the general public, likewise when choices taken by the public authority are excessively challenging for individuals, it might prompt clash response from them. Take these examples are the Aba ladies' mob in 1929, was a time of turmoil in pilgrim Nigeria when great many ladies challenged plans to force an expense on market ladies.

Additionally, the END SARS development is an illustration of contention brought about by inflexible government strategy, where the adolescent felt the treatment they got from the unique Enemy of Burglary Crew (SARS) was excessively unforgiving. The dissent began as a quiet exhibit however wound up brutally.

Impact of Religious Organisations in Peace Building in Nigeria

The impact of religious organizations in peace building in any society cannot be downplayed because of their role as an agent of socialization that is also responsible in shaping the character and behaviour of individuals and group of individuals in the society. According to Tanko, (2024) the role religion as a factor in peace building must not be over-looked, as the two major/minor religious organizations in Nigeria preaches peace.

The holy books of all the major religious organizations in the world have pages where its adherents are encouraged to embrace the virtue of peace. (Brathon, 1990)

The Holy "Quran" state clearly that "Islam" is a religion of peace. AL-SALAM ALEKUM means peace be unto you. Similarly, the holy bible for Christians makes it clear in Matthew 5:9 "Blessed are the peace makers", and the holy bible further provides that Christians, should follow peace with all men.

"SHALOM" means peace be unto you, from the perspective of the two major religion, peace is pivotal in nations building, there can be no sustainable development in any society that is devoid of peace. Therefore, peace is a critical societal value. It is the prime value of co-existence between and among nations (Akpuru-Aja, 2020).

Therefore, peace is an instrument of socio-economic development in any society and for a society to maintain or sustain development peace must be embrace via religious organizations.

According to Burgess, (2009), Religious organizations in Nigeria engage in various activities that directly or indirectly contributes to peace building. Their roles include mediating conflicts, promoting interfaith dialogue, advocating social

justice, providing humanitarian assistance and facilitating reconciliation between conflicting groups.

1. **Mediation and Conflicting Resolution**:
According to Orugbani, (2022) mediation is a special kind of negotiation designed to promote the settlement of conflict. Religious organizations often serve as mediators in conflict situations, leveraging on their moral authority and community presence to foster dialogue. The Interfaith Mediation Centre (IMC) in Jos Plateau State of Nigeria, is a notable example. Established in 2000, the IMC has worked tirelessly to bring together religious leaders from different faiths to address violent conflicts, offering mediations and support during crises (Musa, 2018) According to Imoize, (2018) the efforts of these groups have been instrumental in de escalating tensions in various states, promoting reconciliation among conflicting communities.

2. **Promoting Interfaith Dialogue**:
In 1995, Wuye and Ashafa, formed the Interfaith Mediation Centre (IMC) a religious grass roots organization that successfully mediated between Christians and Muslims throughout Nigeria, and has worked extensively in Chad, Kenya and Sudan, with amazing success stories. The aim of the organization is to put an end to violent strife between Muslims and Christians in Northern Nigeria. According to Adebayo and Baba, (2021), the IMC's systematic approach to engaging religious leaders and community stakeholders has resulted in significant reduction in violence and increased cooperation among rival groups. Its success has inspired similar initiatives across the country demonstrating the potentials of religious organizations in mitigating conflict. There is also Nigerian Interfaith Actions Association (NIFAA) to Nwankwo and Olamide, (2019), these grass-roots initiatives not only enhance local participation in peace building processes but also promote a culture of peace and understanding among diverse groups.

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP 2016), posits that interfaith dialogues facilitated by religious organizations have been successful in reducing tensions in areas affected by conflict. These dialogue not only promotes peace but also foster corporation on community development projects. The Nigeria inter-

religious council (NIREC) is a prominent platform that brings together Muslims and Christian's leaders to address national issues including peace and security. Established in 1999 it has been instrumental in promoting inter-faith dialogue. Research findings by Oladipo (2021), highlight how NIREC effectively advocated for polices that promotes peaceful coexistence, facilitated peace forums and engaged in conflict resolution, its influence extends to national discussions on security, making it a critical player in peace building landscape in Nigeria.

3. **Advocacy and Social Justice**

Religious organizations have played critical role in maintaining peace and also promoting peaceful coexistence among people of different race and religion. They do it by carrying out advocacy campaign aimed at changing perception, reducing prejudices and fostering culture of tolerance among their followers. The Work of The Muslim Council of Nigeria (MCN) and The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) cannot be underscored in promoting peace and inter religious dialogue. As highlighted Johnson and Yakub, (2021), their effort has contributed significantly to reducing hostility and promoting harmonious coexistence in various regions. The Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (SCIA) has also played a significant role in promoting peace and understanding between Muslims communities and other faith groups, particularly in the Northern part of Nigeria.

4. **Humanitarian assistance**

Religious organization are huge actors in humanitarian settings because they often offer important support during crises/conflict situations, they step in provide humanitarian aid, addressing the immediate needs of the affected populations. The Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and various Islamic humanitarian organizations have been instrumental in offering relief materials during crises. Ojo, (2020) averts that humanitarian assistance conducted by religious organizations is often accompanied by peace building initiatives, as the provision of aid foster goodwill and corporation among different ethnic and religious groups. This approach does not only alleviate immediate suffering but also paves way for long term peace.

While religious organizations play a significant role in peace building, they face various challenges that hinder or limit their efforts in achieving the required/expected results. Some of these challenges include;

1. **Politicization of Religion**: The intertwining of politics and religion in Nigeria complicates the peace building landscape. Politicians often exploit religious sentiments for political gain which can undermine the credibility and effectiveness of religious organization. As noted by Ayegboyin, (2020), politicization creates a challenging environment for genuine peace building efforts. Religious organization are sometimes manipulated by politicians for their selfish gain.

2. **Extremism and Radicalization**:
The rise of extremism group like Boko-Haram poses a significant challenge to peace building efforts, such group often operate under the guides of religion to perpetrate crime, leading to increased hostility and fear among communities, which can further entrench divisions. Religion organization must navigate the complex landscape while advocating for peace and countering narratives. (Adesoji, 2021).

3. **Internal Division and Fragmentation**:
Religion organization in Nigeria are often not monolithic. Internal division, whether ideological or based on sectarian differences can hinder peace effort, from their ideological divisive perspective (Akinwunmi, 2022) often leaders prioritize sectarian interest over collective peace efforts, leading to fragmentation (Gusau, M. I, 2014).

4. **Socio-Economic Issues**: Poverty, unemployment, inadequate social infrastructure and inadequate education contribute to a favorable environment for conflict. Underemployment can contribute to conflict and also poverty strengthens conflict. A hungry man is an angry man; an angry man is also a destructive man.

5. **Resource Constraints:**
Many religious organizations face financial constraints, thereby limiting their capacity to implement large-scale peace initiative. Economic instability in Nigeria, exacerbates this issue, as organization complete for limited resources to fund their

activities. This challenge was highlighted in a survey by Okwudiba (2021), which established that many organizations cited funding as a major barrier in achieving their peace building efforts.

Recommendations:
Based on the findings of the work, it is recommended that;
1. **Promote Interfaith Dialogue**: Fostering constructive dialogue and collaboration between religious leaders and organizations in crucial for promoting understanding and bridging divides. This can help to build relationship that are essential for peace.

2. **Addressing Root Causes of Conflict**: Peace building efforts should be able to address the underlying causes/factors that contribute to conflict, including poverty, inequality and social injustice.

3. **Socio-Economic Issues:** Religious organizations should include socio-economic empowerment programs in their peace building strategies, focusing on poverty alleviation and education, should also be inclusive, engaging all stakeholders, including marginalized groups, women and youth.

4. **Capacity Building:** Relevant government should make provision/provide training/retraining and resources to religious leaders and organization to enhance their conflict resolution skills and strategies.

5. **Collaboration with Civil Society**: Stronger partnership between religious organizations and civil society groups can lead to more comprehensive and sustainable peace initiatives. (Agbiboa, 2015)

6. **Support for Religious Organizations:** Government and international organization should support religious organizations by providing them with resources and capacity building opportunities to effectively address conflict and promote peacebuilding in the society.

7. Religious leaders should address religious extremism by engaging with their members on the negative effects of extremism, and the importance of peacebuilding, as a panacea for socio economic development in the society. Because no society can develop without peace. Peace is vital to societal development.

Conclusion

In this paper, attempts have been made to examine the roles of religious bodies in Peace Building Process in Nigeria. The work uncovered that religious organizations are group of people who come together for their shared religion or for religious. Islam and Christianity are the main/major religious organizations in Nigeria among others. Religious organizations play a crucial role in peace building in Nigeria, acting mediators' advocates for justice, facilitators of interfaith dialogue; and provide humanitarian assistance in crises areas. While they have the potentials to be powerful agents of peace in the society, they also face challenges which includes political manipulators, sectarian polarizations and resource constraints. Religious organizations have consistently sought to contribute positively to the peace building landscape of Nigeria, by fostering collaboration, engaging communities, advocating for policy change and addressing the roof cause of religious conflicts and enhance their contributions to peace building in Nigeria. Therefore, for Nigeria to have lasting peace, a holistic approach that embrace its religious diversity and support collaborative peace building efforts will be crucial. This all-inclusive engagement can pave the way toward a more harmonious coexistence, where religious difference is celebrated as a strength rather than a source of conflict.

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