

**RELIGIOUS BIGOTRY: A THREAT TO NATIONAL UNITY IN THE PLURALISTIC
CONTEXT OF NIGERIA AND THE WAY FORWARD**

Yusuf J. Luxman (Ph.D)

Department of Systematic Theology and Dean of Post Graduate Studies

Gindiri Theological Seminary (GTS) Plateau State Nigeria

An Affiliate of University of Jos luxmanyusuf1@gmail.com, 08133159519

ABSTRACT

National unity in the pluralistic context of Nigeria has continued to be a grave concern in the discourse on the broader concept of peaceful co-existence and national development. The quest to achieve this national objective has often been threatened by non life-giving factors. This paper focused on religious bigotry as one of the threats that has constantly marred attempts to achieving this national goal. Sociologically, religion which is considered as one of the ultimate factors for integration and social cohesion is ironically viewed as one of the threats to national unity and development. The supposition is attributed to the religious bigotry exhibited by the major religions in Nigeria coupled with the complexity of plurality in the Nigerian context. Following an examination of the attempts made by the Nigerian government and spirited organizations to curb the scourge of religious bigotry in Nigeria, the paper called into question the potency of these approaches. Through an African notion on humanness entrenched in the African system of thought, the paper proposed a distinctive approach that has the capacity to neutralize this threat. This is achieved through a systematic review of relevant literature that unpacks views on the subject under consideration. The systematic review of the relevant literatures covers the concept of religion in national unity, concept of religious bigotry, concept of national unity and the complexity of the plurality in the context of Nigeria. The way forward is informed by the distinctive African notion of humanness irrespective of the religious diversity identified within the pluralistic context of Nigeria. The paper concludes that the approach to curtail the scourge of religious intolerance in Nigeria is not monolithic and that cogent African concepts can be explored and served as panacea to national unity irrespective of the religious diversity in Nigeria.

Key words: Religious, bigotry, threat, National, unity, pluralistic, context and Nigeria

Introduction

The quest for national unity in the pluralistic context of Nigeria has continued to be opposed by discriminate human factors which based on classes can be described as political, social, ethnical, cultural and religiously masterminded at the detriment of the said national objective. While acknowledging the distinguished human factors, this paper focused on religious bigotry as one of the

grave threat that seems to have been militating against national unity and social cohesion in Nigeria. Taking into consideration the pluralistic context of Nigeria and the contentious atmosphere it presents, the paper examined the conceptual disposition of national unity and its place in the quest for peaceful co-existence and national development in Nigeria.

Following the conceptual understanding of religion and its ideals in initiating and maintaining national unity, the paper identified the irony it expresses especially when religious ideologies are described as threats to national unity in Nigeria. The assertion is based on the questions on religious bigotry identified and demonstrated by major religions in Nigeria. To fully understand the challenge and threat of religious bigotry to national unity, the paper brought to bear the various theoretical understanding of religious bigotry, its nature, causative agents, consequences to nation building, and the various responses to curtail its effects.

The urgency in contributing towards curbing the scourge of religious bigotry in Nigeria calls into question the potency or viability of remote and immediate approaches employed by the Nigerian government, social and religious organizations as measures towards curtailing the menace. The interrogation on the remote and immediate responses by government and other spirited bodies is aimed at constructing an alternative approach which is entrenched in the African system of thought regarding the broader scope of the African ethical values and human dignity as the fundamental bond for national unity and social cohesion in every human community.

To affirm the potency and viability of the African notion and the role it plays in providing wholeness, unity, tolerance and peaceful co-existence within the African community, relevant African notions are cited, systematically studied and applied with the aim to provide the way forward on the subject under consideration. The elements that constitute the way forward to this paper starts with an x-ray on current responses and approaches by government, spirited individuals and bodies in fighting this threat to national unity in Nigeria. An analysis or examination of these responses is aimed at identifying the potency of these approaches in order to forestall national unity and social cohesion in Nigeria irrespective of the pluralistic nature of the Nigerian society. The distinctive African approach is utilized and applied in response to the destructive tendency religious bigotry pose to national unity and peaceful co-existence in Nigeria.

THE PLURALISTIC CONTEXT OF NIGERIA

The concept of plurality presupposes people who co-exist peacefully irrespective of their interests, beliefs, and lifestyles. Pluralism suggests that despite competing interest groups and diverse ideologies living within the same geographical area members can be able to co-exist peacefully and can participate in the governing process within a democratic government (Tyler 2014). Other elements that

constitute a pluralistic context are the multiplicity of language, ethnic groups, cultures and tribes living under a particular governing power (John and Usoro 2016).

The complexity of Nigeria as the most populated Nation State in Africa is attributed to its multiplicity of religion, language, culture, ethnic and political diversity. It is a composition of multiple major and minor tribes which cut across the six geo-political regions of Nigeria (Danfulani 2006).

According to Mwadkwon, Nigeria's complex religio-cultural and socio-political identities have been used as tools to engage in influence pedaling to segregate and marginalize those at the margins of the Nigeria society. This is more prevalent among adherence of the multiple religions resulting to intolerance and violence against adherence of opposite religions. Mwadkwon (2001) further argued that the pluralistic character of Nigeria can be described as one giant tinder box of religious and ethnic intolerance. Such indifferent attitude begins from a simple misunderstanding and consequently, metamorphoses into religious, communal, and ethnic clashes. The religious and ethnic intolerance is further deepened by animosity and resentment. This is often nursed by the oppressed and oppressors within the area where conflict occurs. Whenever conflicts of this nature reoccur, they erupt much more and claim many more casualties.

In the light of this reality, realizing the objective of national unity in contemporary Nigeria becomes seemingly a fantasy and complete illusion. The assertion is attributed to the contentious atmosphere that often resulted to violent attacks and colossal loss of lives and properties. Mwadkwon (2001) argued that, it is as a result of these affiliations, that conflicts are sown. He holds that, in recent decades religious and ethnic affiliation have become major criteria for appointments to key offices, the military, the police force, the civil service, enrolment in schools and the military.

RELIGIOUS BIGOTRY IN NIGERIA

The conceptual understanding of religion depends largely on the perspective and area one is exploring. In other words it means different thing to different people at different context. Religion is further described as an inner consciousness of the human life in relation to his environment. It is a belief system which is entrenched in the value system of a given human community. Within the subject under consideration, religion is seen as strong believe in a supernatural being which is also believed to be controlling human destiny (Nwanaju 2016). The belief system does not only control human destiny, but determines the attitudinal and behavioral disposition of members of a particular religious group.

In Nigeria, African Traditional Religion, Islam and Christianity are said to be the three main religions. As aforementioned, destinies of adherence of each of these religions are controlled by the supernatural being. Their attitudes and behaviors are determined and shaped by each religious precept. It should be noted that before the introduction of Islam and Christianity, ATR was seen to be the religion of the

Nigerian community and since it was the only religion there was a seemingly peaceful co-existence (Atoi and Babale 2021). It is within this Nigerian context, the Igbo, Yoruba and the Hausa people were indisputably considered the major tribes in Nigeria. Religion as practiced in this context influenced community values in the area of communication, socio-political disposition, hospitality and respect for human dignity. Religion played a vital role in setting up a united Nigerian's community, national wholeness, and national unity irrespective of the religious and ethnic plurality. Religion was easily defined, understood and applied towards achieving one national objective.

Religious bigotry simply presupposes an employment of biasness and prejudice which are religiously structured and regarded as the standard for treating adherence of opposite religions and their belief systems. Religious intolerance is perhaps the earliest example of structural bigotry. Many early societies were configured around religious identity and religious group membership. Religious identity therefore provided a favorable ground for exclusion, discrimination, persecution, oppression, and violence (Ekpendu 2016). Religious intolerance remains a strong driver of structural bigotry in the religious pluralistic context of Nigeria. With the introduction of Islam and Christianity in the Nigerian community, intolerance and dehumanization become the order of the day. This is attributed to fundamentalism which is demonstrated in words and practice based on belief systems ingrained in the holy books (Ajaegbu 2012)

Religious plurality in Nigeria postures a contentious atmosphere where religious bigotry is nursed and demonstrated at the expense of national unity and social cohesion. The national disintegration and social exclusion due to religious bigotry experienced today in Nigeria have not only marred the Nigerian national objective but also have become standards for human treatment. Appointing people to public and private offices are carried out on the basis of religious identities. Such partiality serves as an indirect contributor to the emergence of physical and psychological violence in most Nigerian communities (Izuegbu 2021). Hurst argued that the contentious atmosphere as a result of religious bigotry and similar sentiments were what resulted to the 'Biafra'/Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970. The divisions and national disintegration of the Nigerian citizenry can be stressed right from the period of colonization, continued into the Independence era and the consequent emergence of violent conflicts between the Hausa/Fulani in the North, Yoruba in the west and the Igbo in the Southeast each attributed to the complexity caused by cultural, ethnic and political factors. This situation presents an atmosphere of rancor and domination within the Nigerian community (Hurst 2017).

Religious bigotry is fueled in Nigeria with the rise of religious fundamentalism taking roots in the respective belief systems of the major religions in Nigeria. Structurally, the major religions in Nigeria antagonized and demonstrate tendencies of superiority on the basis of religious ideologies Bagaji (2015). For example, Boko Haram fundamentalists claim to be more pious than other Islamic sects in Nigeria. It is a sect that is against Western education and their aim is to enforce their brand of religious

ideology and belief system in a country that is religio-cultural and socio-politically diverse. While responding to the continual expression and demonstration of religious bigotry by other religions. Christian speeches and actions seem to be retaliatory in nature.

There is no gainsaying that the inter religious bigotry and the contentious atmosphere expressed by the major religions in Nigeria have succeeded in traumatizing the Nigerian citizens. This seems to have spelled doom on the peaceful co-existence of the Nigerian community. The scourge of religious bigotry seems to make impotent the Nigerian institutions which are established and saddled with responsibility to curb threats to national unity and to maintain national integration and social cohesion (Kwaja 2009).

CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF NATIONAL UNITY

The conceptual understanding of National unity has led to the emergence of words or terms that are synonymously reflected. These include national cohesion, national integration, nation building and social harmony. According to Zamare and Karofi (2015), national unity can be described as a process of unifying a community irrespective of their religio-cultural and socio-political affiliations. He further described national unity as a relationship that exists between different communities' despite their ethnic, religious, political and cultural diversities. It is a state of mind that is religiously and ethnically deconstructed with the sole aim at forming a national unity that is cohesive, mutual and formidable political entity among people within the same political entity.

Thus, national unity is seen as a process where members of a nation develop mutual contact, cooperation and consensus towards achieving a collective goal and objective for the purposes of achieving holistic development of a given nation. While such community geared towards a distinctive harmonious living, it acknowledges the diversities, respect and tolerates every orientation and disposition with the aim to harness and translate them into strength. In other words, One may describe diversity as element of division and disintegration, national unity in such community is regarded as value system that adds beauty and strength (Zamare and Karofi 2015).

Sociologically, nationally unity represents the responsibilities of each members of a small or larger community called to contribute his or her quota in uniting and developing the community in all aspect of the human life within the community. This is done by educating citizens to respect each other irrespective of their diverse religious, social and cultural orientation. Conceptually, national unity as argued by Zamare and Karofi (2015) discourages any attempt to undermine or treat citizens based on their religious beliefs and that national goals and objectives should be geared at neutralizing indifferent attitudes that may likely express and demonstrate ethnic, religious or tribal sentiments that are detrimental to national goals and objectives.

CONCEPT OF NATIONAL UNITY IN NIGERIA

The concept of national unity in Nigeria is not completely distinct from the aforementioned general conceptual understanding of national unity. However, the complexity of the Nigerian context due to the religio-cultural and socio-political diversities and the contentious atmosphere they pose to peaceful co-existence, national unity in Nigeria has continued to be a grave concern in the broader concept of national development. As complex and contentious as Nigeria is, it should be noted that since independence it had been united by a common colonial experience. In spite of her ethnic, political, geographical, religious and cultural differences, Nigeria was said to be nationally united. Taking into account the pluralistic context of Nigeria, Nigerian system of government, Nigerian national goals and objectives, and other institutions saddled with the responsibility to attain national unity and development, highlights on some of the threats to national unity in Nigeria is crucial (Adetoro and Omiyefa 2016).

Following the contentious atmosphere posed by the pluralistic character of Nigeria, the political disposition in Nigeria has been worrisome. Due to multiplicity of political parties, politics in Nigeria is characterized by dissonance and bitter rivalry among members of the political class. In the quest to assume political leadership offices, political elites have adapted irregular instruments contrary to legal instruments officially provided by government with the aim to provide equity and fairness in all electoral processes. The potency of political instruments and institutions are threatened by domination and suppression of the vulnerable and people at the margins of society. Due to influence peddling by political elites and other elements of political partisanship, employment requirements are compromised thereby negating institutional provisions resulting to deficiency in the electoral processes and mismanagement of the Nigerian pluralistic character (Imhonopi 2013).

Ethnically, Nigerian national goals and objectives have continually been threatened by grave sentiments of ethnicity. Consequent to unresolved conflicts between one ethnic group and another, continued discrimination and domination of other ethnic groups, Nigeria seems not to realize its national unity. Most violent crises that resulted to colossal loss of lives and properties in Nigeria are attributed to ethnic clashes. An example of such ethnic conflicts was the civil war that erupted in Nigeria from 1967-1970 which claimed more than a million lives (Bagaji 2015). Aftermath ethnic violent conflicts, most survivors are traumatized and left with animosity, resentment, and rancor. Its re-commemoration through war symbols which are said to be imaginative and informative are most likely threat to existing Nigerian institutions responsible for achieving national unity (Arbuckle 2010). There is no gainsaying that because of the unfavorable atmosphere presented by ethnic intolerance in Nigeria coupled with the religious bigotry as earlier captured in this paper, more cogent responses or approaches must abound if national unity can be achieved in Nigeria.

Economically, Nigeria is described as the giant of Africa. Apart from being the largest country in Africa in terms of population, Nigeria is endowed with diverse mineral resources which provide adequate sources of income for its populace. Enshrined in almost all manifestos of the political parties in Nigeria is the acknowledgement of this national cake, renewed and unique commitment to ensuring equitable distribution of the generated national funds. In most post elections, this has continually become a mirage and a fantasy. The assertion is based on the corrupt disposition of most political office holders, harsh economic condition and widening of the gap between the rich and the poor in Nigeria. The non equitable distribution of the Nigerian cake has contributed in national disintegration and devaluation of national unity in Nigeria (Ola, Mohammed and Audi 2014).

NIGERIAN RESPONSE TO THREAT OF RELIGIOUS BIGOTRY

As an independent and sovereign nation, achieving a united nation is always made the top priority in all arms of the Nigerian government. It is made one of the Nigerian national objectives reflected in the functions of its national constitution and institutions. This desire is recorded, re-read and applied each time it is nationally or internationally opposed by an individual or group of people. In view of the pluralistic nature of the Nigerian society, the proactive measure and the threats it may likely pose to the national unity, the violent conflicts that erupted and the colossal loss of lives and properties, the Nigerian government has proposed several approaches to curtail these threats to national unity. Few fundamental Nigerian approaches towards curbing threats to its national unity include the following (Atoi 2021).

Federation: While acknowledging the diversities of religion, ethnicity, politics as the elements that constitute the context of Nigeria, Nigeria as an independent nation has to explore relevant approaches to ensure national cohesion and peaceful co-existence and not divided based on these affiliations. One of these measures is the employment of federal system of Government. Conceptually, Federal system of government is that doctrine and a form of government where the component units of arms of government and institutions function and participate in power sharing and in a cooperate manner and in conversation with the elements that constitute the pluralistic context of Nigeria (Amah 2017).

In spite of the sharing of powers the different arms of government, the principle of having a single independent authority is applied to serve as the instrument saddled with the responsibility to coordinate with subordinate arms and not become a tool to satisfying any religio-cultural or socio-political sentiment of a particular region at the detrimental to national unity (Jude and Ika 2013). Although these are well spelled and documented, yet the Nigerian government is still experiencing continual introduction of new threats to its national unity. This is expressed in the way and manner in which power at all levels are misused and channel towards achieving ethnic or religious sentiments.

The single independent authority which is to manage subordinating authorities is being influenced by either political or religious objectives at the detriment of national objective (Yusuf 2017).

Other elements that constitute the federal system of government include the establishment of the Nigerian constitution which spells relevant principles and provisions that have the capacity to manage religious plurality and the threats it pose to national unity. Dignity of humanity is ultimately acknowledged, documented and applied as basic instrument for tolerance and respect for human dignity irrespective of all human constructs that negate fundamental national objectives. To curtail religious intolerance among the major religions in Nigeria, the constitution further contains provisions for freedom of worship where every citizen is allowed to practice his or her religion without being harassed or molested. Antecedences have proved that the rise of religious fundamentalism presents an atmosphere where people are forced to practice particular (2017).

Part of what constitutes the Nigerian government's response to religious bigotry is the establishing of the judiciary to reduce the scourge of crimes against the dignity of life. It is interpreted and applied in various levels of the Nigerian court systems yet the rate of crime in Nigeria is prevalent. The impotency of this response is expressed in the superiority and manipulative tendencies of most political elites. When the system is supposed to interpret and apply the laws in order to uphold justice and the rule of law, it is used to vilify the justice it is expected to represent. Law breakers during and aftermath religious conflicts are protected by the law at the expense of equity and justice (Ayodeji and Odukoya 2014).

From the foregoing, it can be argued that the Nigerian responses as good and well documented as they seem to lack the potency to curtail religious bigotry in Nigeria. Almost all the instruments put in place by the Nigerian government to mar this ugly situation are called into question because they have the potentials of rather exacerbating the menace.

THE WAY FORWARD

In view of the seemingly non life-giving approach or response to religious bigotry by the Nigerian government, this paper proposed an alternative approach that is afro-centric in character. The African approach as highlighted earlier is entrenched in its indigenous knowledge and values system. Within the African belief system and religio-cultural experience on human life is considered as the instrument that gives meaning to every human community.

AFRICAN INDIGENEOUS KNOWLEDGE ON TOLERANCE

African indigenous knowledge is the accumulation of African religio-cultural experiences which have become symbolic for discovering and responding to realities of life within the African context. Although these principles were orally documented yet they are imaginative and communicative in the African quest to building peace and harmonious living irrespective of the diversities that characterized the human African context. Understanding Christianity and Islam within the pluralistic context of Nigeria is a deliberate conversation between their belief and value system with African indigenous knowledge. The need for such contextualization is due to the increasing emphasis on polarization of the human community due to search for discovering and responding to realities of life. Mbiti (1993) and Sindima (1995) argued that the inadequate contextualization of Christianity and Islamic may succeed in promoting a dysfunctional interaction within Africa. It is unfortunate that Indigenous Africans who have embraced Islam and Christianity have become more and more disembodied from indigenous systems of thought and ideas of tolerance and humanness (Strozenberg 2015). The majority of adherents of Islam and Christianity perceive African indigenous epistemologies on tolerance and functional relationship for a common good of both the small and larger community (Gifford 2015).

Agitators of indigenous knowledge argued that failure to take cognizance of indigenous perspectives on tolerance has the unfortunate potential to perpetuate conflict as culture functions as a “control box” (Tafese 2016). The assertion is based on the notion that in the traditional African system of thought there is a locus for unification of the African people’s thoughts and ideas about life. Highlights on indigenous knowledge for tolerance and peaceful co-existence are rooted in the African religio-cultural experiences for maintaining harmonious relationships in the community. According to Tutu (1999) indigenous knowledge for conflict resolution takes root in the understanding of humanity as being ultimate in the quest for reconciliation in the African polity.

AFRICAN CONCEPT OF HUMANNESS

The concept on being human is based on the African understanding of what it means to be human. Within the African notion of being human, Intolerance dehumanizes and robs the community of its humanity. While highlighting the African religio-culture experience, John Mbiti (1995), recognized that the African worldview embodies humanity as resource for dialogue and peaceful co-existence. In African system of thought, what affects one, affects all. Agitators in various human inquiries have underlined the role of dialogue as the social and humanistic source for an African moral and ethical vision of tolerance, peaceable, equitable and justice every human communities. As delineated by Gifford, dialogue within the African notion is therefore not optional because every member of the African community is called to contribute towards the peaceful co-existence of the community life.

For example, the expression of Ubuntu, an African value system belonging to Nguni group of languages. It can be best translated as humanist or being human. It is explained in the words of Tutu (1999) that

Ubuntu is a bond and soul force that drives almost the entire facet of human and societal life in African societies and that binds the relationship within the African community. While responding to threats that deny fullness of life in all sphere of life, African writers (religiously or politically) are called upon to define, employ and apply this African Philosophy as a medium to curb all human factors that directly or indirectly jeopardize human life.. The relevance of this African philosophy cannot be underestimated (Magesa 2004). This assertion stemmed from the idea that since love, tolerance and commonality based on human origin, essence and being are considered elements of the African life then the African notion as proposed becomes relevant in curbing the scourge of religious bigotry in Nigeria (Tutu 1999).

In true African community, the individual does not pursue his or her own good at the expense of the common good of the community. In other words, an individual recognizes that he or she can attain his or her own good only by promoting the good of others. Describing the elements of the Igbo culture in Nigeria, Ugwu (2023) explain that power is held by small and larger communities not by an individual. That notwithstanding, the community's consciousness by individual members does not negate the rights and dignity of the individual. Similarly, within the Yoruba space-time Ofuasia while arguing the dispositions of the western world view and the challenge of religious bigotry in Nigeria proposed an African notion of tolerance in violent context. This entrenched in Orisa propriety in the Yoruba religio-cultural experience which symbolizes and projects humanity over religious, ethnic, tribal and political constructs as human agencies that can be threat to peaceful co-existence in pluralistic context of Nigeria (2020).

The distinctive African ethics as expressed in the nomenclature of Ubuntu and the Igbo concept of humanness is a contextual symbolic expression that can be favorably used as medium through which the Biblical concept of love and unity can be more appealing in the context of Africa. It also has the capacity to foster tolerance and peaceful co-existence in a pluralistic context such as Nigeria.. Ubuntu is very difficult to read into the western language. It speaks of the very essence of being human. When we want to give high praise to someone we say “yuu nobuntu, He or She has Ubuntu”. This means that they are generous, hospitable, friendly, caring, and compassionate. It also means my humanity is caught up inextricably bound up in theirs. We belong in bundle of life” (Tutu 1999).

In view of the religious and ethnic intolerance in the context of Nigeria, Pokol's concept of *Suum-ngi* among the Kadung (2015) people of Plateau State, Nigeria, offers an African peace building model through an analogy of two yam tubers as the origin of humanity. Although in the ground, it was one

tuba of yam that sprouted and developed into a yam. At harvest time, the yam that is exposed to the heat of the sun will taste very bitter, while the part that is covered over in the ground retains its sweetness. Although they looked and tasted differently, they had the same origination. The Kadung people according to Pokol interpreted this as the origin of humanity. The Kadung people referred to the sweet yam as female, while the bitter one was seen as male. By application, this concept states that ethnic groups such as Muslims and Christians and adherents of African Traditional Religion (ATR) who constitute the warring communities in Jos, despite their differences, all originate from the same God.

From the forgoing, the African notion offers a distinctive alternative approach to curbing the religious intolerance. Following the relevance of the African indigenous knowledge stemmed within its religio-cultural experience as expressed in the Ubuntu, Igbo concept, Orisa from the Yoruba and Sumgi respectively, the African concept of humanity expresses and demonstrates an approach that has the potency to curtail the scourge of religious bigotry and enhance national unity in the Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

The contentious atmosphere pose by the pluralistic nature of Nigeria and the threat of religious bigotry against national unity can be tamed by exploring alternative notions. The seemingly impotency of the Nigerian approaches to curtailing religious bigotry and other agencies that deny fullness of life and the continued quest for peaceful co-existence irrespective of pluralistic nature of the Nigerian context, this paper through an exploration of a common African notion of humanness enshrined within the African religio-cultural experience proposed a cogent alternative concept of human tolerance that can contribute toward achieving national unity in Nigeria.

REFERENCES

- Adetoro, R. A. and Omiyefa, M. O. 2016. "Unity in Diversity in Nigeria's Nationhood: Which Way Forward?" *International Journal of Scientific Research*. Vol. 2. Issue. 8. Pp. 482-484.
- Ajaegbu, O. O. 2012. "Religion and National Development in Nigeria" *American Academic & Scholarly Research Journal*. Vol. 4, No. 4. Pp.1-7.
- Amah, A. I. 2017. "Federalism, Nigeria Federal Constitution and the Practice of Federalism: An Appraisal" *Beijing Law Review* Vol. 8 pp. 287-310.

- Arbuckle, G. A. 2010. *Culture, inculturation, and theologians: A postmodern critique*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press.
- Atoi, N. e. & Babale, Y. K. 2021. "Religious Intolerance and the quest for Progressive Change in Nigeria" *Journal of Contemporary Research*. Vol. 18. No. 4. Pp. 200-220.
- Ayodeji, G. I. and Odukoye, S. I. 2014. Perception of Judicial Corruption: Assessing its Implication for Democratic Consolidation and Sustainable Development in Nigeria" *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*. Vol. 16, No. 16, pp. 67-80.
- Bagaji, A. S. Y., M. S. Etila, E. E. Ogbadu, and J. G. Sule. 2012. "Boko Haram and the recurring bomb attacks in Nigeria: Attempt to impose religious ideology through terrorism?" *cross Cultural Communication* 8/1. Available at: <<http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/cc/article/view/j.ccc.192367002012080>> 1.1370/>. [Accessed: 13/7/2023]
- Danfulani, U. H. D. 2006. "The Jos peace conference and the indigene/settlers question in Nigerian politics." (Draft) ASC, Leiden/University of Jos, Nigeria. [Accessed: 14/7/2023..
- Ekpendu, C. I. 2016. "An Evaluation of the Role of Religion in the Development of Nigeria" *Developing Country Studies*. Vol. 6, No. 10. Pp.82-87.
- Hurst, R. 2009. "Nigerian Civil War 1967-1970." BlackPast.Org. Available at: <<https://www.blackpast.org/gah/nigerian-civil-war1967-1970/>>. [Accessed: 13/7/2023]
- Imhonopi, D. 2013. "Leadership Crisis and Corruption in The Nigerian Public Sector: An Albatross of National Development" *The African Symposium*, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 78-87.
- Izuegbu, S. C. 2023. "Religious Bigotry: A Challenge to Security and Development in the Contemporary Nigeria" *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 11, No. 2, pp. 1-15.
- John, E.O. & Usoro, U. I. 2016. "Plural Society and the Challenge of Democratic Practice in Nigeria" *Developing Country Studies* Vol. 6. No.1 pp. 139-149.
- Jude, M. A. and Ika, M.G. 2013. "The Implication of Executive –Legislative Conflicts on Good Governance in Nigeria" *Public Policy and Administration Research* Vol. 3. No. 8, pp.30- 32.
- Kwaja, C. 2010. "Analysis: Nigeria's surrounding crisis in Jos." *Global Post*. Available at: <<https://www.pm.org/>>. [Accessed: 20/02/2017].

- Mbiti, J. S. 1993. "Peace and Reconciliation in African religion and Christianity." *Dialogue and Alliance* 7, 17-32.
- Magesa, L. 2004. *Anatomy of inculturation: Transforming the church in Africa*. Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books.
- Mwadkwon, S. D. 2001. "Religion, the settler question and the emergence of ethnic conflicts in Nigeria: A survey of Jos." *Swedish Missiological Themes: Special Issue on the view from Jos: Nigerian research on religion* 89/1, 55-73.
- Nwanaju, I. U. 2016. "Religious Bigotry and Good Governance in Nigeria" *Public Policy and Administration Research*. Vol. 5 No. 7. Pp. 62-69.
- Ofuasia, E. 2020. "On Religious Tolerance in Yoruba Society: An Exploration of the Pluriverse Alternative" *Alternation Special Edition*. Vol 30 PP 50-72.
- Ola, A, Mohammed, A. and Audi, M. S. 2014. "Effect of Corruption on Economic Development in Nigeria" *Global Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences*, Vol. 3, No. 3, pp. 209- 215.
- Pokol, B. J. 2015. *Peacebuilding in Nigeria: A missio-political critique of the Church of Christ in Nations relationship with Plateau State within the context of violent conflict in Jos, Nigeria (2001-2010)*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg.
- Michael Bergunder 2014. "What is Religion?" *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*. Vol. 26 pp 246-286
- Sindima, H.J. (1995). *Africa's Agenda: Legacy of Liberalism and Colonialism in the Crisis of African Values*. London: Greenwood Press.
- Strozenberg, F. (2015). Ubuntu: Alterity as Perspective for Peace. *Sociology Study* 5(1), 1 54 –59
- Tutu, D. (1999). *No Future without Forgiveness*. New York, London: Doubleday
- Tyler, T. 2009." Governing Pluralistic Society" *Journal of Law and Contemporary Problems* Vol. 72. Pp. 187-191.
- Ugwu A. 2023. "An Igbo Dualistic Concept of the Human Being: A Discourse" *A Journal Publication of the Association of Philosophers in Nigeria* Vol.1 No 1 PP. 55S-75.
- Yusuf, A. M. 2017. (A Conceptual Analysis of the Rule of Law in Nigeria" *Bayero Journal of International Law & Jurisprudence (BJILJ)*. PP. 101-127.