International Journal of Applied Research and Technology
Vol. 10, No. 6, June 2021, 31 – 37.

Esxon Publishers

The Economic and Educational Impact of Ethno-Religious Conflicts on Christian Youths in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

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(Received: 27 June 2021 / Accepted: 29 June 2021 / Published: 30 June 2021).

Abstract

In Kaduna State, ethno-religious violent crises have been a continuous phenomenon from the Kafanchan crisis of 1987 to this presented day since it is for Fulani herdsmen and farmers clashes. The adverse economic and educational effects have not been limited to the destruction of lives and properties but even the economic and educational prospects of youths in the state. The case of the Christians has been exceptional because of the religious dimension of these crises. This paper examined the economic and educational impact of those elhno-religious crises on the Christian youths in the state. Data were collected from 746 respondents with a structured questionnaire through a stratified random procedure across churches in all the local government areas of the state. Statistical analysis of the data'was carried out with the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS), IBM version 26. The procedures adopted include descriptive statistics. Results revealed thai the crises have greatly affected the economic and educational prospects of Christian youths across the state. Among others, the study recommended the use of inter-faith groups and policy for reducing the effect of ethno-religious crises in the state and encourage the provision of economic opportunities and quality education for youths.

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Introduction

Religion has three major functions in society according to the functionalists: it provides social cohesion to help maintain social solidarity through shared rituals and beliefs. It provides social control to enforce morals, norms in helping to maintain conformity and control in a society and it offers meaning, purpose to answer any existential questions (Thompson, 2018). Intra and inter violent conflicts is therefore not idea based on its principles. Violent crisis could therefore be seen as what Collier and Hoeffler refer to as greed and grievance arguments advanced by.Thompson (2018) and Saygi (2020). The author explained that Greed stands for the claim, that combatants in conflicts are motivated by opportunistic reasons such as cost/benefit calculus, alternative income and risk. On the other hand, grievance refers to the idea that people at the opposite, rebel over issues of inequality, discrimination, authoritarianism, deprivation along others and that these are the causes of violet conflicts or wars. On violets crisis, Barkindo (2018) observes that Politicians ride on the back of ethnic, religious and regional identity to get to office, encouraging division and consequently leading to violent.

The obvious instability and deficiency in the democratic process encourages religious and ethnic crisis. The various ethno-religious crises from the Kafanchan crisis of 1987, the Zango Kataf, 1992 crisis to the present Fulani herdsmen and farmers clashes in the state, could be traced to deficiency in governance. The adverse effects of these ethno-religious crises on the economic development and outlook of youths in the state cannot be overemphasized. On this phenomenon, Omanumi (2017) estimated that the Fulani herdsmen and farmers clashes in the country have caused a loss of 814 billion in three years. Omotosho (2014), posited that the survivors of most conflicts are in very pathetic condition because of the shock of the incidence and added that women are seriously traumatized because of rape, some saw their dearly husbands and children being slaughtered in their presence and they could not help Ukwayi and Okpa (2017). Alagbu (2010) after examining the effects of conflict psychologically on women and children stated that children and women suffered most because their children were being forced to become criminals.

From a study, Nuzhat (2014) reported that violent crises have resulted in pervasive poverty and lack of adequate religious knowledge and understanding between religious groups which causes religious conflicts and recommended that poverty must be addressed first as a human security measure in order to prevent, reduce and or solve the problem of elite manipulation of the people. The cyclical adverse effects of violent crises go beyond the immediate killings (Odeh, 2014), economic deprivation of some individual involved (Barde, 2016). It prevents economic development through disinvestments and resultant lack of economic opportunity to youths in the state (Achi, 2015). Violent conflicts in the state have been devastating in terms of material and human resources in the state (Herbert and Husaini, 2018). The loos of economic opportunities for youths are enormous as described by Ajibefun (2018) who observed that economic and social activities seem to be fast deteriorating and Zenn (2017) who asserted that companies, films, and industries are destroyed during violence; it takes owners of these businesses time to rebuild their destroyed business centers. Their employees spend this long period without work and those conflicts with their attendant effects made some investors to relocate their businesses to other peaceful areas while others closed down completely (Paul, 2019). And generally, foreigners will not want to live in a country where there is no guarantee of lives and property. Gambo, (2019) thus stated that lack of infrastructure is a contributing factor but that insecurity is the major cause of low foreign direct investment and Umar (2015) reported that ethno-religious conflict adversely affects development of local governments in Kaduna state This paper therefore investigated the impact of ethno-religious conflict on the economic life of Christian youths in Kaduna State.

The Objectives of the study were to: examine the impact of ethno-religious conflict on the economic life of Christian youths in Kaduna State and identify the impact of ethno-religious conflict on the academic life of Christian youths in Kaduna State

Research Questions

i In what way does ethno-religious conflict have impact on the economic activities of Christian youths in Kaduna State?
ii What is the impact of ethno-religious conflict on the academic development of Christian youths in Kaduna State?

Research Hypotheses

H_{01} Male and female Christians do not differ significantly in their opinions of the way ethno-religious conflict impact on the economic activities of Christian youths in Kaduna State.

H_{02} There is no significant difference in the opinions of members of different churches on the impact of ethno-religious conflict on the academic development of Christian youths in Kaduna State.

Materials and Methods

The study adopted ex-post factor approach with a structured questionnaire as the main instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was face validated by experts in educational measurement and curriculum studies in terms of clarity of items, appropriateness of language used and relevance to the objectives of the study. Sample selection was carried out with the stratified random procedure across the different churches within the 23 local Government Areas of the state. The respondents comprised of all Christian youths within 18 and 35years age bracket. A total of 760 respondents were selected. But 14 of the respondents could not return the copies issued to them. Data collected were analyzed with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), IBM version 26. Statistical procedures used were basically descriptive. Decision on expressed opinion was based on a midpoint average of 2.50.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 showed the opinions of the respondents on the impact of ethno-religious conflict on economic lives of the Christian Youths. From the expressed opinion, there is no doubting the fact that ethno-religious conflicts have negative impact on the economic lives of Christian youths in the state as indicated with mean scores for items in Table 1. Among the economic loose is the destruction of property which in item 1 of the table shows 362(48.5%) and 374(50.1%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that property worth millions are lost, leading to hunger. Only 10(1.3%) of the respondents disagreed with the suggestion with the mean score was 3.47. Apart from destruction of property, lives were sometimes lost as shown by 444(59.5%) and 302(40.5%) of the respondents who strongly agreed and agreed respectively that sometimes the financially strong youths were killed in the conflicts, thereby leading to the loss of bread winner of the family. None of the respondents had a diverse opinion on the suggestion.

As part of the negative economic impact, 215(28.8%) and 519(69.6%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that during such conflicts, all market activities usually stop. Only 12(1.6%) of the respondents disagreed with the opinion and strongly disagreed, with the mean score of 3.27. The respondents agreed that the aftermath of some of the ethno-religious conflicts that led to some disabled youths who can longer cater for their economic needs and therefore end up as street beggars. Among the economic deprivation created by the ethno-religious conflicts are loss of property including houses accompanied by major destructions which in some cases lead to joblessness among the youths. At the level of the state, 272(36.5%) and 473(63.4%) strongly agreed and agreed respectively that resources which could have been used for the advancement of the society are redirected and expended on rehabilitation. Also, that the resulting economic deprivation makes some youths to become economically dependent on others in the society. These are expressed with high mean scores for items 5 to 9 on the table. And in the last item of the table, 548(73.5%) and 190(25.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that ethno-religious conflicts close channels for self-empowerment to the youths in the state.

From the mean scores on table 2, respondents were of the view that ethno-religious conflicts have major negative impact on the academic life of youths in the state. These ranges from closure of schools which 328(44.0%) and 418(56.0%) strongly agreed and agreed respectively that usually accompanied such conflicts. None of the respondents had a divergent opinion on this suggestion. Apart from closure of school, 222(29.8%) and 512(68.6%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that some of the youths who usually participate in such conflicts often drop out of schools. Part of this development is the accompanied silent killings which create fear and make some of the youths to drop out of school. This is indicated with mean score of 3.19 for item 3 of the table 2. Apart from the direct disruption of the youths' academic activities, 138(18.5%) and 521(69.8%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively with the suggestion that death of a bread winner through ethno-religious conflicts usually put an end to the educational careers of some youths. On the other hand, only 87(11.7%) of the respondents disagreed with this view. The impact of these ethno-religious conflict is not limited to the individual youths as seen in the response to item 5 of the table where 160(21.4%) and 577(77.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively with the suggestion that sometimes the students express their ethno-religious sentiments in violent clashes during unionism in the respective institutions which often result to some buildings in the schools being burnt down completely by such students. These are indicated in item 6 with mean score of 3.05 as shown in table 2.

Part of the negative impact of ethno-religious conflicts included the loose of resource teachers who are sometimes killed during such conflicts. In response to item 7 of the table, 164(22.0%) and 582(78.0%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed with this suggestion and none of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the notion. The mean score was 3.22. Among such negative impact is the loose of educational facilities for teaching and learning to refugee camps for displaced people by such conflict as shown in item 8 which recorded a mean score of 3.11. Where such facilities are not converted to refugee camp, fear of attacks would not allow students to concentrate effectively during teaching and learning activities in schools located at places of such conflicts as shown to be strongly agree and agree by 175(23.5) and 571(76.5%) respectively. In item 10 of the table, 143(19.2%) and 526(70.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively with the suggestion that even when schools re-open in such locations, the academic activities are rushed, thus affecting teaching and learning negatively. In the last item of the table, 197(26.4%) and 549(73.6%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively with the suggestion that some of the Christian youths were killed while on their way to or from school. The observations of the respondents' opinions here mean that ethno-religious conflicts have negative impact on the academic life of Christian youths in the state.

The result in the table 3 revealed that the male and female respondents did not differ significantly in their rating of the impact of ethno-religious conflicts on economic activities of Christian youths in the state. On the table, the observed t-value for the test is 0.194 obtained at 744 degree of freedom while the critical value is 1.96. The observed level of significance in the test is 0.846 ($P > 0.05$). These observations did not provide enough evidence for rejecting the null hypothesis. The null hypothesis that male and female Christians do not differ significantly in their opinions of the way ethno-religious conflict impact on the economic activities of Christian youths in Kaduna State is therefore retained. The mean scores showed that both male and female respondents have the same view of the negative impact of the ethno-religious conflict on the economic activities. The result of the test revealed that respondents differed significantly by their church groupings (Table 4). The observed t-value for the test was 3.299 obtained at 744 degree of freedom with a p-value of 0.001 (<0.050). The observed t-value (3.299) is higher than the critical value of 1.96 at the same degree of freedom. These observations implied that the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the opinion of members of different churches on the impact of ethno-religious conflict on the academic development of Christian youths in Kaduna state is therefore rejected. This study found that the destruction of properties and loos of lives were not the only adverse effects of violent ethno-religious crises in the state. Occurrences of the phenomenon tended to put a stop to most economic activities like market operations, creates joblessness and even closes channels for self-empowerment to the youths in the state. The resultant effects are that youths to

become dependents instead for championing economic growth in the society. The findings here are in line with Odeh, (2014) who reported that violence is intended to hurt the targeted person or group, physically, mentally and emotionally. The findings are consistent with Folarin, (2017) who opined that malice or cold attitude to each other already underscores conflict which means implicit hostility and that it may not be obvious to a third party, but the disagreeing or unfriendly parties already understand that there is a state of discontent between them. The finding here agreed Ibrahim (2015) who stressed the danger of ethno-religious conflicts in northern Nigeria especially in Kaduna state which they described as a pluralistic society with a fairly large consensus of agreeing to live together which is mostly seen among the youths even in public places, and that government must preside as people in the state sit together to discuss their differences. The report stated that in most cases the damage done by these conflicts are reflected in not only the disruption of educational activities in the state, but also on the life of many youths. This is because many youths were found to be most of the victims of such conflict as school dropouts due to lack of concentration, focus, psychological trauma of past conflict or due to financial challenges caused by the conflict. They lack such prospects of employment since most foreigners will prefer where their investment would be safe.

The study moreover tested for significant difference in the opinion of the members of different churches on the impact of ethno-religious conflict on academic development of Christian youths in Kaduna State. The aggregate opinions of the respondents grouped according to their denominational affiliations were used for this test. The result of the two samples t-test reveals a significant difference in their opinions. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. From the mean scores of the groups it was found that all were of the view that ethno-religious conflicts have adverse effects on the academic development of Christian youths in the state. The finding here agrees with the report of Ibrahim and Toure (2013) who stressed the danger of ethno-religious conflicts in northern Nigeria especially in Kaduna state which they described as a pluralistic society with a fairly large consensus of agreeing to live together which is mostly seen among the youths even in public places, and so the government must preside as people in the state sit together to discuss their differences. The report stated that in most cases the damage done by these conflicts are reflected in not only the disruption of educational activities in the state, but also on the life of many youths. This is because many youths were found to be victims of the conflict as school dropouts due to negligence, lack of concentration, focus, psychological trauma of past conflict or due to financial challenges caused by the conflict. Also, the wound left in the psyche of those who lost their parents might not be obvious but are often said to be mentally and emotionally far reaching and that these youths may have a fixed mind on hatred and set for revenge.

Implications of findings

The findings of the study have implications for government policy makers, politicians and the general public. The findings revealed that violent crisis is inimical to economic and educational progress and development of the society and youths in particular. This calls for an adoption of effective ethno-religious policy that will integrate all religious and ethnic groups in the state for peaceful coexistence. Peace is known to be a positive factor of economic development of any society.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study showed the adverse economic and educational effects of ethno-religious crises on Christian youths in Kaduna state. These included the incidences of loose of lives, properties and prospective of economic wellbeing through loose of jobs, investment opportunities and forceful deprivations. Government as the major control of security and means of violence, is expected to formulate policies that can help to create harmony among different religious and ethnic groups in the state for improved economic development. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made: There is need for improve on interfaith and inter-ethnic groups committee by state government in the state. Adherents of the different faith should be made to toe the line of peace by their faith leaders as a policy in the state.

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Tables

Table 1: Opinions of Respondents on Impact of Ethno-Religious Conflict on Economic activities of Youths in Kaduna State

Sn	Impacts of ethno-religious conflicts on economic lives	SA		A		D		SD		Mean
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1	Property worth millions are lost, leading to hunger	362	48.5	374	50.1	10	1.3			3.47
2	Sometimes the financially strong youths are killed in the conflicts	444	59.5	302	40.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	3.60
3	The market activities are stopped	215	28.8	519	69.6	12	1.6			3.27
4	Some that survived serious injuries end up as street beggars	267	35.8	455	61.0	24	3.2	0	0.0	3.33
5	The loss of houses to the conflict creates harsh economic conditions	204	27.3	542	72.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	3.27
6	Sometimes bread winners to families are trapped and killed	300	40.2	446	59.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	3.40
7	Destruction during conflicts creates joblessness	204	27.3	542	72.7					3.27
8	Resources for the advancement of the society are mostly expended on rehabilitation	272	36.5	473	63.4	1	0.1	0	0.0	3.36
9	Because of the conflicts, more youths become dependents	211	28.3	535	71.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	3.28
10	Most of the channels for self-empowerment to the youths are closed	548	73.5	190	25.5	8	1.1	0	0.0	3.72

Table 2: Opinions of Respondents on Impact of Ethno-Religious Conflict on academic development of Christian Youths in Kaduna State

Su	Impacts of ethno-religious conflicts on educational lives	SA		A		D		SD		Mean
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1	Conflicts lead to the closure of schools	328	44.0	418	56.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3.44
2	Youths that participate in such violence often drop out of school	222	29.8	512	68.6	4	0.5	8	1.1	3.27
3	Silent killings make going to school unsafe to the youths	141	18.9	605	81.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	3.19
4	Death of bread winners put an end to the educational career of most of the youths	138	18.5	521	69.8	87	11.7	0	0.0	3.07
5	Sometimes the students express their ethno-religious sentiments in violent clashes of unionism	160	21.4	577	77.3	9	1.2	0	0.0	3.20
6	At times, schools are completely burnt down	115	15.4	554	74.3	77	10.3	0	0.0	3.05
7	Sometimes some of the resource teachers are trapped and killed in the violence	164	22.0	582	78.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3.22
8	At times school for educational activities are converted to refugee camps	157	21.0	511	68.5	78	10.5	0	0.0	3.11
9	Fear of a violent attack affects students' concentration in the teaching and learning activities	175	23.5	571	76.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	3.23
10	Even when schools re-open, the academic activities are rushed, thus affecting learning negatively	143	19.2	526	70.5	77	10.3	0	0.0	3.09
11	Some of the Christian youths are killed while on their way to or from school	197	26.4	549	73.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	3.26

Table 3: Two Sample t-test on impact of Ethno-Religious Conflict on Economic Activities of Christian Youths in Kaduna State.

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	t-value	DF	p-value
Male	355	3.40	0.370	0.020			
Female	391	3.40	0.364	0.018	0.194	744	.846

(t-critical = 1.96, p > 0.05)

Table 4: Two samples t-test on Impact of Ethno-Religious Conflict on the academic development of Christian Youths in Kaduna State.

Church status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	t-value	DF	p-value
Pentecostal	316	3.14	0.351	0.020			
Mainline	430	3.23	0.367	0.018	3.299	744	.001

(t-critical = 1.96, p > 0.05)