Cross Cultural Communication and Peacebuilding in Kaduna State, Nigeria

Orebiyi, Anthony Olajide*, & Orebiyi, Taiwo Philip**

*Department of Mass Communication ,Crescent University, Abeokuta
**Peace and Development Studies Programme, Salem University, Lokoja

ABSTRACT

Peacebuilding activity is increasingly becoming important to preventing the hostilities between the parties in conflict.   As a result, issues with culture, human needs and fault-lines of the human condition have now entered the peace debate. Meanwhile, the relationship between religion, culture, peace and conflict had been a contentious subject attracting a wide array of arguments and contrasting opinions which are often grounded in popular belief and not empirical fact. While the roots of ethnic and religious conflicts in Kaduna state and Nigeria as a country are linked to colonialism and the cold war, other scholars argued that ethnic and religious conflicts are found in   political manipulation of ethnic and religious identities , the competition and conflict for political power by the ethnic and religious communities Accordingly, understanding cross-cultural communication in ensuring sustainable peace becomes imperative.   The study found out that cross-cultural communication has become important to the people of Kaduna state due to the growth of global business and migrations. However, the barriers to cross cultural communication in Kaduna state could be perceived due to, management style, absence of understanding between ethnics and religious organisations, power distance prevalent, language barriers and the peoples' expectations of peace in Kaduna state.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In a world of heightened threats to security and identity , the peacebuilding activity is increasingly becoming important to preventing the hostilities between the parties in conflict (Albert , 2001 : 130-139 ; Ayantayo , 2005 : 62-63 ; Ibrahim , 2010: 145-151 ; Essien , 2010 : 152-167 ; Alimba , 2010 : 181-197 ; Ihejirika , 2001 : 197) .   As a result, Galtung argued that issues with culture, human needs and fault-lines of the human condition have now entered the peace debate.

Meanwhile, the relationship between religion, culture, peace and conflict had been a contentious subject attracting a wide array of arguments and contrasting opinions which are often grounded in popular belief and not empirical fact. While a lot of analysis may focus on the negative role of religion and culture, it is also important to acknowledge the potential positive role of religion and culture in peacebuilding . According to Huntington, religion and culture is central, perhaps the central force in the modern world that motivates and mobilise people (Huntington, 1996: 27). For this reason, Marty sees religion and culture as the one that focuses on critical concern, builds

community, appeals to myth and symbol through rites and ceremonies and demands certain behaviour from its adherents (Marty, 2000: 11-14).

On the other hand, Kwaja (2009) was of the view that people continually preferred to be described based on the ethnic or religious groups they belong. Likewise, the heterogeneous composition (Ethno-religious) in Kaduna state has sometimes brought about conflicts among the groups of the state (Abdu &Umar , 2001) . Kaduna state had over the years see conflicts for which several peacebuilding activities have followed them . (Abdul &Umah , 2002) In this vein, Ayantayo (2005) revealed that religion in Africa is noticeable in its culture and thereby making conflicts to arise from / out of two different religious persons in the same religious space when one person is holding the truth and the other holding wrong belief . Conversely, the history of religion in Kaduna state, Nigeria, is largely based on ethnic tradition and religious affiliations, which often bring about conflicts. However, the increasing growths of the populations have accounted for negative impact on heterogeneous compositions of the state (Egwu, 2001). As a result, there has been a long history of hostility as well as unease and mutual suspicion between the non-Muslim ethnic groups and Hausa-Fulani Muslim in Kaduna state. Riots by Maitatsine followers broke out in Maiduguri in late October 1982 and spread to Kaduna where vigilantes (Ibrahim, 2000) killed thirty-nine sect members. Furthermore, the polarisation that followed Nigeria's membership of Organisation for Islamic Countries (OIC) in 1986 appeared to have opened a new phase of ethno-religious conflicts in Kaduna state (Elaigwu , 2001) .

Similarly, the Kafanchan disturbances in 1987 started as a theological disagreement between the Christian and Muslim students of the Kafanchan Teachers College. Likewise, another serious riot took place in 1992 in the Zangon-Kataf local government area of Kaduna state as a result of relocation of Zango weekly market from the Hausa dominated town to a new site in the outskirts of town (Abdu, 2010). Also included is a Christian-Shi-a Muslim conflict in 1997. Subsequently, in the year 2000, Kaduna state was hit by another destructive Muslim-Christian violence as a result of Zamfara state's establishment of Sharia law (Abdu&Umar, 2001). Additionally, in November 2002, protests to hosting of Miss World beauty contest in Nigeria spiraled out of control and people were killed as Muslim and Christian groups fought one another for three days in the northern city of Kaduna (Abdu , 2010) . Likewise, 2011 post-election rioting that swept eleven northern states and the power realignment that took place at both the federal and state level after the death of President Umaru Yar'Adua (a Muslim from the North) on May 5, 2010, that led to the ascension to the presidency of Vice President, Goodluck Jonathan (a Christian from the minority ethnic group in the oil-producing Niger-Delta region) created another round of conflicts. This was not unconnected to Christian deputy governor in Kaduna state that became the governor of the state (Okpanachi, 2011).

While the roots of ethnic and religious conflicts in Kaduna state and Nigeria as a country are linked to colonialism and the cold war (Machava,2008 : 2), other scholars argued that ethnic and religious conflicts are found in bad governance , political manipulation of ethnic and religious identities , the competition and conflict for political power by the ethnic and religious communities (Anarfi , 2004 ; Conversi , 1999 ; Francis , 2006 : 76 ; Egwu , 2001 : 5) . For this reason, Takaya (1992: 112) identified centrifugal factors that gave rise to the political manipulation of ethnic and religious identities in Nigeria as two or more ethnic and religious groups with numerical strengths that affect the outcome and direction of a democratic political

process and the use of ethnicity and religion as legitimising tool of hegemony in instances when the interests of the political class are under threat.

Accordingly, culture is the knowledge of a particular group of people ways of life (Gudykunst, 2003). These include language, religion, social habits, music and arts. For these reasons, the ability to communicate effectively in a global environment becomes a challenge as a result of differences and misunderstanding that may occur between two or more culture. In this vein, cultural dimensions could be traced to individualism and collectivism factors in communication (Martin& Nakayama, 2012). Collectivistic cultures emphases are on community, shared interests, harmony, tradition, the public good, and maintain face. Also, individualism features are characteristics traced to each member of the community.

Consequently, cross-cultural communication occurs when a person from one culture sends a message to a person from another culture(Gudykunst,2003). However, conflict occurs when the person from the second culture does not receive the sender's intended message. In this vein, the differences between the sender's and the receiver's cultures determines the chance for cross-cultural miscommunication. Moreover, cross-cultural communication continually shows the depths of understanding and misunderstanding caused by perception, interpretation, and evaluation of the sender of a message that comes from one culture and the receiver from another culture (Hilton, 2003). According to Gudykunst and Kim (2003) meanings cannot be transmitted in normal communication between individuals, primarily because of the ambiguity in the language spoken. It is the ambiguity that often leads to misunderstandings and misinterpretations (Quappe & Cantatore, 2007). As a result, the language we speak, verbal or nonverbal, varies depending upon cultural factors described as languages of context, time and space (Hall's Cultural Factors, 2009).

It is against this background that the primary aim of this study is to examine the role of cross cultural communication on peacebuilding in Kaduna state . The study therefore carried out a cross -sectional survey in seven local government areas of the three senatorial districts in the state: Kachia, and Zangon- Kataf (Kaduna South senatorial district); Kaduna North, South and Chikun (Kaduna Central senatorial district) and Lere and Markafi (Kaduna North senatorial district) local government areas. Nevertheless, the findings are authentic representation of the population.

Respondent's Perception of Cross Cultural Communication and Peacebuilding in Kaduna state

Item	Statement	Degree of Satisfaction				Mean	Decision
		Strongly agree N %	Agree N %	Disagree N %	Strongly disagree N %		
1	People are encouraged to embrace tolerance of ethnic, religious and regional communities.	282 43.3	244 37.4	90 13.8	36 5.5	3.18	Agreed
2	Ethno-religious polarisation and linguistic fragmentations are very low	92 14.1	293 44.9	218 33.4	49 7.5	2.65	Agreed
3	Trust building communication is progressing among previous warring factions	91 14	245 37.6	239 36.7	77 11.8	2.53	Agreed
4	The peace accord messages and agreement are binding	63 9.7	240 36.8	248 38	101 15.5	2.40	Disagreed
5	Inter-faith and inter-group communications are entrenched	62 9.5	289 44.3	226 34.7	75 11.5	2.51	Agreed
6	Information towards addressing past grievances are constantly disseminated	58 8.9	270 41.4	239 36.7	85 13.0	2.46	Disagreed
7	There is promotion of trauma healing among groups	79 12.1	267 41.0	228 35.0	78 12.0	2.53	Agreed

Source: Field Survey, 2013

From the table above, item 1 shows that 80.7 % (526) of the respondents agreed that people are encouraged to embrace tolerance for ethnic, religious and regional communities while 19.3%(126) of the respondents are having a contrary view. In this case, there is a mass mobilization of the entire populace towards tolerance behaviour. Thus, the communities in Kaduna state have constantly been encouraged to play a major role in keeping the groups together and in avoiding outright failure of sustainable peace This appears to be consistent with the interview response from the former secretary, Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and director, Christian Awareness Initiative of Nigeria (CHAIN) of Kaduna state, Pastor John Joseph Hayab:

> As Secretary General for Kaduna state, I have engaged in a public relations
> campaign to achieve peace. I periodically hold joint lectures for Islamic
> clerics on how faith promotes peace, which are aired on the radio and TV.

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> During these discussions, I invite the audience to call in with questions. We
> are now engaged beyond just talking. We are working to manage the crisis
> through information, education, and friendship.

Also, supporting the above interview is a newspaper report (Daily Trust, March 1, 2013) in which Governor Mukhtar Ramalan Yero of Kaduna state urged leadership of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and the Jama'atul Nasril Islam (JNI) in the state to preach peace and love among people of the state:

> I'm here to plead with you, Kaduna state is ours, it belongs to all those who is
> living there. We have a duty to ourselves, which is tolerance. The division in
> terms of religion or ethnicity does not mean we should harm each other, but we
> should understand ourselves and live peacefully (Daily Trust, March 1, 2013).

In response to item 2 with a statement "ethno-religious polarisation and linguistics fragmentations is low", fair majority response of 59.1 % (385) agreed and 40.9 % (267) respondents who are minority disagreed with the statement. This may be as a result of responses to item 1 from which majority agreed that people are encouraged to embrace toleration for ethnic, religious and regional communities. However, the majority response to the statement that "an ethno-religious polarisation and linguistics fragmentation is low" is a fair one and not an over-riding majority. In this instance, a respondent during an interview observed:

> I have lived in Kaduna city nearly all my life - and I am filled with sadness
> when I look how sharply divided it has become along religious lines.
> Muslims live in areas where there is a Muslim majority and Christians,
> where there is a Christian majority. So, the two groups lead separate lives,
> with little social contact.

In another vein, item 3 showed that few and fair majority respondents of 51.6% (336) believed that "trust building communication is progressing among previous warring faction". The existence of the trust building mechanisms could be attributed to the roles of some peace actors that have been consistently working towards the process of reconciliation. Therefore, item 3 is showing the effectiveness of the peace programmes embarked upon, as the parties in conflicts are still responding to the peace processes. Also, one of the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) participants held at Interfaith Mediation Centre, Kaduna commented:

> There are continual efforts in ensuring harmonious relationship
> between warring groups of the state. Trust and confidence
> building programmes are organised in order to build a long term
> peace processes

Furthermore, item 4 showed how 336(54.5%) majorities of the respondents believed that the peace accords has not been lived up to with 46.5% (316) of the study population having a contrary minority views. This has shown that peace is still in progress and the end of the conflict is yet to be sighted. This is also supported by Pastor James Wuye, a Director in Interfaith Mediation Centre, Kaduna who said:

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> Although the peace agreement has been signed by the religious leaders, there are still some religious fundamentalists who use their activities to cause mayhem in the state.

Also, a respondent observed:

> In spite of violence and conflict being experienced in Kaduna state, I believed that peace can still return back to the state and we will all enjoy the benefits

On item 5 which says that "interfaith and intergroup communications are entrenched", 53.8 % (351) of the respondents agreeing with that statement. However, 46.2% (301) had a contrary views. This has shown that there is dialogic communication going on. In this case, respondents have revealed that interfaith and intergroup communication is entrenched between the communities. During the interview with a worshipper in Catholic Church, the respondent also commented:

> Catholic Church through the effort of DePIKAD has ensured that members of the church are trained and developed in a peaceful relationship with other religious groups.

More so, item 6 showed that 50.3% (328) respondents who are fair majority believed that "information towards addressing past grievances and wrong doing are constantly disseminated" while 49.7% (324) of the respondents disagreed. Corroborating item 7 is the response from item 14 which shows that 53.1 % (246) of the respondents believed that there is promotion of healing among groups in the state with 47% (206) minority having contrary views. In this vein, a worshiper in one of the mosques believed that reliefs and counseling were the major things received from both the government and faith-based organisations after the conflict. Similarly, a religious leader commented:

> Every person whether young or old, male or female, Christian or Muslim must contribute their quota of peace because without peace, we cannot live; without peace, we cannot progress, neither can we practice our faith. We must all preach peace. Stop spreading rumor, stop saying what is not there and don't hate anybody because of his/her tribe or religion; we are all created by God.

However, ethno- religious polarization and linguistic fragmentation is becoming low. Yet, there are still suspicions that sometime bring about hate and threat to the parties in conflict and generate insecurity in Kaduna state. Thus, creating doubts on whether the rule of law is upholding or not. Mostly, trusting building activities will continue to be relevant to ensuring sustainable peace in Kaduna state .This will further denounced the insinuation that the root causes of conflicts in Kaduna state has not been addressed.

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

Findings from the study revealed existence of legacies of vengeance- seeking groups in Kaduna state. This is consistence with the social identity theory as cited in Kriesberg (2010) that people that share the same collective identity think of themselves as having a common interest and a common fate. Though efforts are daily made for people to embrace toleration for ethnics,

religious and regional communities, however proliferation of hate and threat among politicians and religious leaders in the state are still well-known. This is a confirmation to the view of Ojo (2006) that one of the perennial problems which seem intractable in an ethnics and segmented society is that of successfully managing her numerous groups. Also Kriesberg (2010) affirmed this finding by saying that the primacy or importance of an identity is another quality that affects its contribution to the persistence of a conflict. In this vein, conflicts related to highly significant identities have a tendency to persist, since threats to those identities are not easily put aside.

Furthermore, the study has shown that peace agreement is not lived up to by the parties. This is in concurrence with Roy Licklider(1995: 686) as cited in Orjuela(2008) that only one third of the negotiated settlements of identity-based civil conflicts were being kept. Similarly, the finding also confirmed UN (2005:114) reports which observed that the record of success in mediating and implementing peace agreements is sadly blemished by some devastating failures, as indeed several of the most violent and tragic episodes of the 1990s occurred after the negotiation of peace agreements. In addition, Botes (2003) submitted that resolving differences at the negotiation table does not necessarily lead to building trust at a societal level; hence, there is a continuing need for the reconciliation of competing values and interests in achieving sustainable peace.

Consequently, Schirch (2004) was of the opinion that many peace agreements have failed because they sought to solely end violence rather than make inquiry as to the root of the violence, as an untreated wound that is merely covered with a bandage will develop complications ; so unresolved conflicts reemerge bigger and more deadly than before. This confirms the words of Juergensmeyer that "a negotiated compromise with activists involved in a conflict is fraught with difficulties. It is a solution that does not always work. This is because a few activists may be appeased with such negotiation but others may be angered by what they regard as a sell-out of their principles" (Juergensmeyer, 2003:240).

While trust building activities in Kaduna state are ongoing with efforts to entrench inter-faith and group communication in the state, however there are still doubts on the mechanisms for monitoring peace and also ensuring proactive response to impediment of peace. By and large, early warning system and conflict prevention which was instituted by the government through the setting up two Bureaus for Religious Affairs (institution charged with managing Muslim and Christian affairs) still have a wider gap in creating a network and linkage with the common followers of each religion. Though parts of the bureau's mandate include promoting religious understanding and harmony; and the coordination and regulation of religious educational institution, there are still unguided pronouncements and teachings. Thus raising doubts on the effectiveness of the mandates given to bureau in reaching out to the entire religious communities.

It is evident that ethnocentrism (the superiority feeling of the members of a certain culture) is prevalent in Kaduna state, thus making ethnocentric persons to have the tendency to interpret the other culture, based on their own cultural values. Moreover, stereotyping which is an extension of ethnocentrism (perceptions and beliefs held about groups or individuals based on previously formed opinions and attitudes)" is still visible in the communication perceptions. As a result, the cross-cultural communication conflicts in Kaduna state are misunderstanding about values, beliefs, traditions, verbal and nonverbal languages, and social system. On the other hand, the barriers to cross cultural communication in Kaduna state could be perceived due to, management

style, absence of understanding between ethnics and religious organisations, power distance prevalent, language barriers and the peoples' expectations of peace in Kaduna state. All these concerns flaw the communication process and thereby adding complexities to the peacebuilding in Kaduna state.

Nevertheless, cross-cultural communication has become important to the people of Kaduna state due to the growth of global business and migrations. Thus, cross-cultural communication involves an understanding of how people from different cultures speak, communicate and perceive the world around them.

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