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**Religion and Peace-Building Education for All
Undergraduate Students: Instrument for National
Stability/Security**

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Abstract

This study argued for the integration of religious and peace building education within the curriculum of undergraduate students in tertiary institutions. The objective was to cultivate among them a thorough comprehension of religion and peace building education. The study utilized a survey methodology as its research strategy. The research findings indicated that the presence of terrorism and conflict crises in societies may be primarily ascribed to a lack of comprehensive understanding of the theological principles advocated by the religions in every society. To attain national stability/security, the implementation of measures centred on peace, peace building and conflict resolution is of utmost importance. The study additionally revealed 15 efficacious strategies for augmenting peace, peace building and fostering discussion, while concurrently identifying 15 fundamental factors contributing to violence. The study proposed that the most successful approach to promoting religious tolerance and peace/peace building is through the provision of fundamental religious ideas and peace building mechanism to students at the university level, irrespective of their chosen academic pursuits.

Keywords: *Religion, Peace, Peace-Education, Undergraduate-Student, National-Stability*

Introduction

Religion and peace hold considerable significance and have attracted the attention of scholars across several academic disciplines on a global scale. According to Anyam and Odey (2015), religion and peace carry considerable significance in the Nigerian context as they play a crucial role in shaping critical junctures and giving rise to disputes or divergences within the political domain. The authors also contend that occurrences of violence and conflicts might emerge as a result of varying religious doctrines, distinct ethnic backgrounds, and divergent political affiliations among individuals. Religion can be perceived as a mechanism that fosters peaceful coexistence, harmonious interactions, social cooperation, and unity, hence acting as a cohesive agent that enhances national stability. The ethical principles advocated by the majority of world faiths endorse the embrace of shared principles or ideals, collective responsibilities, duties, and philanthropic actions.

The emphasis on peace education remains a prominent aspect throughout several global religious traditions, in a manner that is commensurate with their respective significance. Alamu (2010) posits that the achievement of national stability is expected to be realised by promoting peace, a phenomenon regarded to have positive implications

for individuals belonging to many world religions, particularly undergraduate students. The influence of religion and cultural values has been crucial in promoting harmonious coexistence and societal stability across the African continent. The global promotion of peace, harmony, and compassion is not limited to Africa, but rather encompasses various world religions worldwide. These principles are reinforced irrespective of an individual's religious affiliation. Moreover, it is crucial to emphasise that religions serve not only to advocate peace and concord, but also to serve as means for cultivating solidarity among individuals hailing from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds. According to Anyam and Odey (2015), it can be argued that incorporating pedagogical methods in religious education has the capacity to induce a change in attitudes and effectively influence the cognitive processes of young individuals, thereby facilitating the development of religious tolerance. The value of religion holds paramount importance for the human species.

Education has a crucial role in ensuring the stability of a nation. The establishment of a connection between religion, peace, and undergraduate students of various academic levels can be effectively achieved via the use of educational strategies. This assertion is supported by scholarly investigations conducted by Spires (2012) and Adams (2019). The absence of formal education leads to a range of violent behaviours and societal maladies, thereby undermining the stability of human societies. Furthermore, the National Policy on Education (2014) asserts that education in Nigeria serves as a crucial mechanism for fostering substantial and constructive national progress. The World Bank Sector Review (1995), as referenced in the work of Falade (2020), maintains a comparable stance. The aforementioned statement suggests that including religion and peace building education in the curriculum can effectively contribute to national stability, particularly when the younger generations, particularly undergraduate students, are actively engaged in the process.

Literature Review

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the viewpoints of researchers about religion, peace education, and national stability. However, it is apparent based on the available scholarly literature that there is a dearth of research in the field of "religion and peace education for undergraduate students as a means to foster national stability." Given the aforementioned justification, the following sources are analysed to

substantiate the ideas put out by different authors and identify the deficiencies that this study intends to tackle. According to Dopamu's (2017) research, while sharing a Semitic ancestry and originating from the same geographical place, the two predominant religions in Nigeria demonstrate a notable hostility among their respective followers. The study also posits that, within the Nigerian setting, there is a persistent frequency of violent attacks specifically targeting those who subscribe to one of the two religious affiliations.

Adeleye (2021) examines certain literary resources related to peace education, religion, and conflict management in Nigeria. The study's findings suggest that disputes in Nigeria frequently emerge as a result of inadequate understanding of the dogmas and doctrines linked with the predominant religions in the nation. Subsequently, he put up the proposition that the establishment of peace inside the Nigerian state necessitates the prioritisation of conflict resolution through peace education, to be facilitated by religious leaders from both the Islamic and Christian religions. Adeleye's advice does not represent the exclusive viewpoint within scholarly discourse. The significance of peace education has been underscored in several scholarly investigations, as evidenced by the research undertaken by Anyam and Odey (2015), Umaru (2014), and Ushe (2015). Nevertheless, the aforementioned articles fail to sufficiently address the importance of peace education in Nigerian universities specifically for undergraduate students.

Numerous researchers, Mahata (2009), Okoro, Onodugo, Agu, & Chinedu (2018), Onuh (2021), Olayinko (2022), have emphasised the importance of peace education in fostering stability within Nigeria's socio-economic systems. While the aforementioned researchers have made notable contributions to the existing body of information regarding the possible role of peace education, their investigations have not specifically focused on its potential as a means to foster national stability within the realm of undergraduate education. Sulaiman (2012), however, offers a contrasting viewpoint in comparison to the previously cited researchers. The author argues that prioritising the incorporation of religious education, as opposed to peace education, is essential in Nigeria's pursuit of desired outcomes such as peace, security, and sustainable development. Onah (2017) has a similar perspective to Sulaiman, as observed in academic discourse. Onah asserts that the achievement of essential peace and enduring progress in Nigeria hinges upon the efficient implementation of theological pedagogy, as she examines the country's political and religious milieu.

Furthermore, the author posits and recommends that the propagation and rigorous observance of the ethical principles inherent in the diverse religious traditions in Nigeria will lead to the attainment of peace and serenity within the country. The present proposal aligns with the findings of Ajah's (2016) research on the correlation between religious education and the process of nation building in Nigeria. This study presents the author's perspective on the notion that a civilisation devoid of a religious underpinning is fated to experience downfall. From this standpoint, it may be argued that both scholars have made noteworthy contributions to the understanding of the societal implications of religion. Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that the researchers did not particularly investigate the impact of undergraduate students on promoting national stability.

Abubakar (2021) also recognises the constructive impact of religion in cultivating harmony and advancing societal integration within the specific framework of Borno State, Nigeria, as documented in a distinct scholarly study. While acknowledging the significance of his work, it is crucial to highlight that he did not conduct a comprehensive analysis of the subject under scrutiny from the wider standpoint of first-year university students. According to Olorunnisola (2019), the attainment of harmonious cohabitation necessitates the recognition of the inherent value of human existence. Once again, it is crucial to recognise the substantial significance of this specific effort. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that it does not sufficiently address the problem of Nigeria's current state of violence via the perspective of peace education in relation to all Nigerian university undergraduates. Igboin (2016) posits that the matter of insecurity and instability inside the nation is widely regarded as a persistent transgression of legal norms that necessitates prompt resolution. Failure to address some concerns might lead to a persistent situation of crisis.

Religious fanaticism and fundamentalism can be conceptualised as consequences that emerge within contexts marked by disorder, animosity, noncompliance with legal principles, instances of severe violence, and large-scale massacres, alongside an absence of acceptance towards divergent religious convictions (Anyam & Odey, 2015). Indeed, the identification of a superior religion lacks a rational foundation. The presence of religious fanaticism naturally exposes individuals who follow any religious belief system to the possibility of violence committed by religious fanatics, fundamentalists, and political anarchists. Alamu (2019) asserts that the ascendancy of zealots and bigots in Nigeria commenced

in the late 1970s, with Kano emerging as a major and burgeoning centre for their endeavours. Religious conflicts in Nigeria have emerged as an enduring issue, characterised by a range of violent manifestations including banditry, kidnappings, killings perpetrated by herders, massacres, and widespread damage of valued assets. The occurrences are predominantly motivated by religious hostility.

Statement of the Problems

Nigeria is characterised by its varied society, which encompasses a wide range of diverse and distinct cultural heritages. The political alignment and socio-economic concerns of individuals may give rise to religious discord. The prevalence of terrorism, conflict crises, banditry, abduction, armed robbery, and several other criminal activities has witnessed a notable increase in Nigeria. The majority of instances of violence exhibit religious undertones, while a subset is motivated by political factors. The socio-economic state of the country culminates in several factors. To effectively address the various crises at hand, it is imperative to harness the natural benefits associated with the fields of religious studies and peace building education. To achieve these objectives, the study proposes the implementation of mandatory religious and peace education as a core curriculum for all undergraduate students throughout tertiary institutions.

Aims and Objective of the Study

The research aims to investigate the potential of introducing religious and peace education as a means to reduce the occurrence of conflict crises in Nigeria. Specifically, the study focuses on implementing religious pedagogy at the undergraduate level to promote understanding and knowledge in the areas of religion and peace education. The objective of instructing and acquiring knowledge in this particular field is to foster a comprehensive comprehension of the predominant religious practises in Nigeria, while also instilling in undergraduate students the skills necessary for promoting peace and engaging in constructive discussion. The study addresses the following research questions.

Research Questions

1. What is the rate of conflict crises experienced in Nigeria?
2. What are the strategies of ensuring peace and security in Nigeria?

Hypothesis

Ho: There is no significance difference in the mean ratings of the conflict crises experienced in Nigeria and the strategies of enhancing peace, security and national stability

Methodology

The research methodology utilised in this study entails the use of a questionnaire as a means of gathering factual information and collecting data. The objective of this assessment was to collect empirical data from a designated sample of undergraduate students, tertiary education instructors, and administrative personnel affiliated with the school.

The research encompasses a significant university community. The sample population comprised a total of 540 participants, consisting of 313 undergraduate students, 192 university professors, and 35 administrative university staff members. The possibility of producing extraneous information emerged as a result of the extensive magnitude of the sample. To tackle this issue, the researchers utilised the YaroYameni approach to determine the optimal sample size, yielding a total of 230 participants. The sample consisted of 133 individuals enrolled as undergraduate students, 82 individuals serving as undergraduate professors, and 15 individuals employed in administrative roles. The researchers employed a proportionate stratified random sampling methodology to choose the participants. The suitability of this technique is based on its incorporation of the relevant attributes that are relevant to the investigation. Furthermore, the selection of each section was determined by its proportion to the total population, as indicated by Uzoagulu (2015).

Competency levels were evaluated using a four-point Likert scale, which consisted of descriptors representing different extents of competency. The descriptors included "very great extent" (VGE) assigned a value of 4, "great extent" (GE) assigned a value of 3, "low extent" (LE) assigned a value of 2, and "very low extent" (VLE) assigned

a value of 1. The grading rubric for research question two encompasses a range of response alternatives, including strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. The measurement instrument employed in this study underwent a thorough authentication procedure, which entailed the assessment and validation by three experts specialised in the subject of peace and conflict resolution management. The errors detected have been corrected.

Twenty copies of a questionnaire were distributed to a cohort of 20 individuals at the University of Calabar. This group consisted of 12 undergraduate students, six university lecturers, and two university administrative personnel. The objective of this distribution was to evaluate the dependability of the data collection tool. The assessment of the study instrument's dependability was conducted utilising Cronbach's Alpha (α). The obtained dependability coefficient of 0.83 is consistent with the selected data gathering instrument, as determined by the study. A total of 230 copies of the questionnaire were distributed for the purpose of this study, and they were promptly administered and collected, indicating a commendable response rate. The study employed the mean (\bar{x}) and standard deviation (SD) to address the research questions based on the acquired data. Furthermore, the null hypothesis was examined using the application of analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at a significance level of 0.05, with 227 degrees of freedom. The assessment of the level of perceived instability in Nigeria was based on the upper and lower limits of the mean. Thus:

3.50 – 4.00 very great extent (VGE) =4,

2.50 – 3.49 great extent (GE) =3,

1.50 – 2.49 low extent (LE) =2

1.00 – 1.49 very low extent (VLE) =1.

To determine the level of insecurity and strategies for enhancing peace and security in Nigeria, mean of 2.50 was a determinant range, while any mean ratios below 2.50 decides the level of insufficiency for the instrument of the study.

Results

The results of the findings were drafted in a tabular format based on the research questions and hypothesis being tested and answered respectively.

Research Question One

What is the rate of conflict crises experienced in Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean Rating and Standard Deviation on the Level of Conflict Crises Experienced in Nigeria

S/N	Conflict Crises in Nig.	Undergraduate student	University Lecturers	University Admin. Staff	Overall	Dee
		- SD1	- SD2	- SD3	-	SD4
		x1	x2	x3		x4
	Conflict is prevalent in northern Nigeria	2.31 0.91	2.40 0.32	1.98 0.84	2.23 0.69	LE
	Terrorism is present in Nigeria	2.46 0.94	2.38 0.06	2.03 0.93	2.29 0.83	LE
	Kidnapping is present in Nigeria	2.12 0.97	2.26 0.78	2.10 0.86	2.16 0.87	LE
	Banditry is present in Nigeria	30 0.92	2.20 0.95	2.35 0.87	1.95 0.91	LE
	Communal crisis is present	1.51 0.95	2.32 0.85	2.01 0.67	1.95 0.82	LE
	Killing of Christian in North	2.15 0.66	2.37 0.77	2.11 0.73	2.21 0.72	LE
	Misunderstanding of religious doctrines	2.30 0.95	2.31 0.68	2.33 0.75	2.31 0.79	LE
	Misinterpretation of religious doctrines leads to conflict crisis	2.05 0.93	2.08 0.70	2.04 0.81	2.30 0.81	LE
	Ethno-religious conflict exists in Nigeria	2.13 0.86	2.41 0.83	2.15 0.78	2.23 0.82	LE
	Inter-tribal conflict is prevalent in	2.19 0.90	1.97 0.78	1.99 0.69	2.05 0.79	LE

	Nigeria						
	Boundary and tribal war occur frequently	1.20	0.98	2.06 0.84	1.79 0.74	1.68 0.85	LE
	Inter-religious conflicts are observed	1.53	0.93	2.03 0.87	2.09 0.91	1.88 0.90	LE
	Intra-denominational crises are observed	1.65	0.94	2.07 0.85	1.87 0.88	1.86 0.89	LE
	Intra-religious conflicts are observed	2.04	0.83	2.09 0.74	2.06 0.76	2.06 0.78	LE
	Favoritism of policies against unpopular religion are observed	2.18	0.73	2.21 0.61	2.16 0.73	2.15 0.68	LE
	Grand Mean (\bar{x})	1.94	0.89	2.26 0.75	2.07 0.80	2.09 0.81	LE

The outcome of the presentation in table 1 showing the mean response of undergraduate students, university lecturers and university administrative staff respectively indicates a mean range of 1.20 - 2.48, 1.79 -2.35 with grand mean of 1.94, 2.26 and 2.07 respectively indicating the adverse and significant present of conflict crisis in Nigeria. Similarly, the overall grand mean of 2.09 reveals that violent crisis in Nigeria is a perennial issue and requires urgent attention. Moreover, the SD of 0.89, 0.75, and 0.80 respectively for the three categories of the respondents are close, thus indicating homogeneity in their responses. This implies that religion and peace education is a necessary tool to instil adequate knowledge of the three main religions practice in Nigeria on the undergraduate students for optimum understanding and religious tolerance and strategies of peace building.

Research Question Two

What are the strategies of ensuring peace and security in Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean rating and standard deviation on the strategies of ensuring peace and security in Nigeria?

S/N	Strategies towards Peace and Security in Nig.	Undergrad. Students	University Lecturers	Admin. Staff	Overall	Dec
		- SD1	- SD2	- SD3	- SD4	
		x1	x2	x3	x4	
	Churches are vigorously teaching peace processes	2.65 0.68	2.76 0.81	2.80 0.87	2.74 0.79	LE
	Seminars and workshops are often organize for peace building	3.25 3.73	2.72 0.83	3.13 0.92	3.01 0.82	LE
	Governments are involved in peace strategies and programmes	3.20 0.81	2.83 0.75	2.74 0.93	2.89 0.83	LE
	Traditional rulers are not left out in pursuit of peace	2.78 0.73	3.92 0.67	3.01 0.98	3.24 0.79	LE
	Primary students are taught religious knowledge	2.70 0.76	2.73 0.78	2.91 0.95	2.78 0.83	LE
	Organise team work with emphasis on peace building	2.61 0.71	3.08 0.71	2.78 2.91	0.82 2.78	LE
	Organizing of workshops/seminars on religious and peace education	3.21 0.82	2.89 0.80	3.16 0.86	3.09 0.83	LE
	Local government agencies for peace and religious tolerance	2.89 0.65	2.79 0.75	3.04 0.67	2.91 0.69	LE
	Provision of extension education aimed at religious tolerance	3.07 0.74	3.20 0.72	3.02 0.85	3.10 0.77	LE
	Training and retraining of religious and peace education teachers	3.06 0.73	3.12 0.77	3.21 0.90	3.13 0.80	LE
	Organise short-training and retraining to enable teachers	3.13 0.69	2.75 0.92	3.07 0.97	2.98 0.86	LE

	understand modern peace building processes						
	Sensitise the public about the need for religious tolerance and peace building	2.76 0.66	3.16 0.85	2.89 0.92	2.94 0.81	LE	
	Create a synergy between government and the public on peace building and religious tolerance	2.75 0.78	2.96 0.79	3.05 0.94	2.83 0.81	LE	
	Organise field day for talk on religion and peace building	2.89 0.74	3.02 0.65	3.11 0.82	3.01 0.74	LE	
	Rural and urban areas are involved in talks on religious tolerance	2.26 0.87	2.76 0.72	2.95 0.74	2.80 0.77	LE	
	Grand Mean (\bar{y})	2.88 0.74	2.96 0.77	2.99 0.88	2.95 0.85	LE	

Table 2 above shows the mean and standard deviation responses of undergraduate students, university lecturers and administrative staff on the strategies for ensuring peace and security in Nigeria. The result shows that the overall mean (\bar{x}) and standard deviation (SD) scores range between 2.74 and 3.13 and 0.69 and 0.86 respectively for the three groups. Moreover, the grand mean of 2.88, 2.99 of undergraduate students, university lecturers and university administrative staff respectively, with overall grand mean of 2.85 which were all above the benchmark of 2.50 indicates that they all agreed to all the strategies investigated. Hence, these strategies were found to be viable enough for improving peace, security and stability in the country.

Table 3: ANOVA comparison of the mean responses of undergraduate students, university lecturers and university administrative staff on the strategies for ensuring peace and security in Nigeria.

Respondents	Df	Sum Square (SS)	Mean Square (MS)	f-cal	Critical Value	Signature	Dec
Between group 2	2	0.69	0.345	0.227	3.32	NS	Do not Reject
Within Group		2.27	343.83	1.52			Reject
Total		229	344.52				

The results gathered from the three groups of respondents show a similarity index derived from a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and the results indicate that the calculated f-ratio of 0.227 is less than the f-table value (critical value) of 3.32. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, since the computed F table is considered not significant. This implies that the three groups do not differ significantly in their opinions regarding the strategies for ensuring peace and security in the country. Hence, religious and peace education for all undergraduate students will enhance peaceful co-existence in Nigeria.

Major Findings

1. All undergraduate, university lecturers and administrative staff indicated that conflict is prevalent in Nigeria; and as such, it requires proper education at the undergraduate level to educate the minds of the youth for proper management of violence and religious tolerance to ensure peace and security.
2. The study found that the 15 factors identified were viable strategies for enhancing peace and security in Nigeria

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study indicate that the 15 items examined were predominantly categorised as having a low level (LL). Consequently, there is a clear necessity to enhance the existing strategies aimed at promoting peace and stability. This underscores the importance of incorporating religious and peace education into the curriculum for undergraduate students. This finding aligns with the perspective of Lan Harris (2014), who posits that numerous studies indicate a universal human inclination towards desiring peace and security within all societies. The individual provided additional clarification, asserting that peace comprises both the attainment of meaningful livelihood and the establishment of security. Similarly, James (2014) emphasises the importance of incorporating peace education into school curricula. This approach aims to foster a sense of dedication to peace education as a means to cultivate a peaceful mindset and bolster individual self-esteem. By educating students about the consequences of war, the perils of injustice, and the advantages of peace, schools and colleges can serve as agents of peace.

With respect to research question two, the findings indicate that the 15 instruments examined in this study demonstrate efficacy in fostering peace and security. This statement aligns with the research conducted by Lan-Harris (2014) and James (2014). Additionally, Uka (2017) posits that religion inherently encompasses ethos and moral values, which, when effectively internalised, can foster and advance social unity. The presence of doctrinal difficulties and dogmas within the major religions in Nigeria highlights the significance placed on concepts such as love for one another, good will, and social solidarity. Regrettably, the emphasis placed on cultivating love and affection inside religious communities does not always extend to individuals outside of these exclusive social circles. This is the underlying cause for the perpetuation of religious violence inside the Nigerian society. This scenario highlights the importance of incorporating religious and peace studies as a fundamental requirement for undergraduate students in Nigeria. Such inclusion is crucial for facilitating the internalisation of religious principles and fostering a comprehensive understanding of various religious practices.

Religion encompasses the belief in a transcendent entity or entities, and individuals engage in diverse expressions to manifest their religious convictions. Given this perspective, the acknowledgement and reaction to religion vary in terms of human practicality, hence shaping the presence of multiple religions within human society. The necessity of religion and peace education is underscored by the following reasons. This can also prevent the emergence of plurality in Nigeria's religious landscape. According to Agi (1999), there is support for the notion of religious pluralism, which posits that the differences observed among religions are not solely a matter of determining what is true or false, but rather a fundamental aspect of navigating the various religious traditions present in human society. Consequently, comprehending this perspective is crucial in providing a foundation for the study of religion and peace education at the undergraduate level.

There is a pressing requirement for a comprehensive nationwide campaign aimed at fostering awareness among Nigerians on the profound importance of sensitising them to the diversified religious landscape of Nigeria. This strategy is most effectively implemented within the context of undergraduate education. In response to this philosophy, Agbor (1999) elaborates on the notion that every individual possesses the entitlement to freely exercise their religious beliefs, as outlined in the Nigerian constitution. This constitution, being the sole legal and authoritative source, explicitly prohibits the state from

endorsing any particular religion as the official state religion. To adhere to this need, it is imperative to incorporate religious and peace education into undergraduate curricula, as evidenced by the findings of this study inquiry.

In agreement with the aforementioned statement, Aghemelo and Osumah (2009) argue that, from the colonial era to the present, our legal records consistently indicate that the government has consistently upheld a policy of religious neutrality. Therefore, the maintenance of religious neutrality relies on the education of undergraduate students, as they represent the future of the nation and bear a responsibility to promote awareness of the importance of religious neutrality. In the light of this assertion, the harmonious coexistence within a multi-religious community such as Nigeria can be achieved inside a secular state that upholds the principles of religious freedom. It is imperative that religious leaders receive comprehensive education in their respective worldviews and effectively transmit these beliefs to their followers. Hence, the responsibility of imparting religious and peace education should not solely rest on colleges, but should also extend to religious leaders.

The contemporary Nigerian state is currently confronted with a significant predicament of insurgency, namely the Boko Haram group, as well as the issue of herders encroaching upon agricultural fields and villages, resulting in the loss of lives and displacement of individuals from their indigenous habitats. This distressing situation is particularly prevalent in the northern region of Nigeria. The inception of this formidable Islamic organisation since 2009 and its subsequent actions have not only posed a significant challenge to the nation's security, but have also rendered the region the most perilous habitation. The actions undertaken by this sect are progressively leading towards the fragmentation of the nation (Odey & Agi, 2015). The current scenario is fraught with peril, despite the concerted efforts of the Nigerian government to address the issue. However, the outcomes thus far have been insufficient in achieving a resolution. Hence, the optimal course of action, as suggested by this study, is to ensure that young individuals receive comprehensive education on the subject of religious plurality within the nation.

Recommendations

It is recommended that all federal, state, and private universities in Nigeria incorporate a mandatory course on religion and peace education within their undergraduate curricula, namely as a component of General Studies (GSS) requirements.

The imperative for governmental authorities and education stakeholders to collectively address the conflict issue in Nigeria has grown increasingly urgent due to the pervasive and alarming frequency of violent incidents resulting in loss of lives within the country.

The National Universities Commission (NUC) should prioritise the implementation of religious and peace education as a compulsory component of General Studies for students. This is crucial in the light of the pervasive violence in Nigeria, as it has the potential to significantly reduce the frequency of terrorism, kidnapping, banditry, robbery, killings, and religious intolerance prevalent in the country.

It is imperative for the leaders of all religious denominations in Nigeria to prioritise the acquisition of leadership skills through comprehensive training programmes. By doing so, leaders would be equipped with the necessary technical expertise in conflict resolution, hence enhancing their ability to effectively address and manage conflicts.

There is a need to enhance and mandate the roundtable platform, which facilitates the engagement of leaders representing diverse religious affiliations.

The National Orientation Agency and other relevant stakeholders should arrange regular orientation sessions and workshops for religious leaders, focusing on conflict management and resolution.

It is imperative for the Federal Government of Nigeria to prioritise the thorough examination and appropriate handling of reports pertaining to judicial panels of investigation on religious conflict.

Appropriate sanctions and reparation should be delivered to groups or individuals who merit them.

The recent endeavours of the administration are highly valued, as significant measures have been implemented to address the threat posed by the Boko Haram insurgency. The Nigerian military successfully employed advanced weaponry to combat Boko Haram insurgents, resulting in the elimination of approximately 60 militants and the infliction of severe injuries upon their leader. The implementation of this measure should be maintained over a prolonged period of time.

Religious instruction ought to be conducted within a comprehensible environment, ensuring that adherents possess a precise understanding of their leader's teachings. This approach is crucial to avoid conveying erroneous messages and misinterpreting religious principles, which frequently contribute to the perpetuation of conflict and bloodshed.

Conclusion

This study indicates that despite the implementation of various methods by governmental bodies, religious organisations, and non-governmental entities aimed at achieving and improving peace within the nation, the desired level of peace and security necessary for stability has not been achieved. Hence, it is imperative to implement a strategy that emphasises the fundamental principles of religious practice within the country, alongside the instruction of religious tolerance, peace mechanisms, and strategies for peace building at the tertiary level of education. This approach is crucial as it targets the youth population, who possess the capacity to comprehend and implement the advantages of religious and peace education within society.

It is evident that conflict arises as a result of social interactions inherent in all human societies. Insurgency is a prevalent form of conflict that has become characteristic of Nigeria. However, while its current impact may appear dire, historical evidence suggests that it has consistently existed. The detrimental consequences of this phenomenon are progressively worsening, necessitating the implementation of proactive measures to mitigate its impact.

The publication has presented a challenge to the religious leaders, who are seen to be the primary players in the situation, urging them to take notice and respond accordingly. It is anticipated that individuals should actively include their specific audience in an exercise aimed at altering attitudes. The implementation of this technique, by means of instructing individuals on specific fundamental religious principles, would significantly contribute to the advancement of harmonious cohabitation across varied religious and political factions. There is an undeniable consensus that peace serves as the fundamental cornerstone for the advancement of economic and political development within any given civilisation.

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