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Violent Religious Conflicts in Nigeria, 1980-2019: Causes, Mitigation and Management Strategies

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Abstract:
Nigeria has witnessed cases of violent religious conflicts since its independence from Britain in 1960. Most of these pitted Muslims against Christians and, in some cases, the conflicts were between various Islamic sects. Before 1980, these conflicts appeared to be few and far between and were, more often than not, easily brought under control by security agents. However, from the latter date, they have assumed more frightening dimensions in their frequency, spread, intensity and casualties. This paper examines the manifestations of religious conflicts in Nigeria. It argues that these conflicts are caused and also escalated by a number of factors including but not limited to poor state of a mis-managed national economy, activities of unscrupulous politicians and preachers, poor security system and developments extraneous to the country. The study also assesses extant management systems and submits that in addition to campaigns for religious tolerance among citizens, there is the need for conclusive judicial processes on the perpetrators, implementation of positive economic policies, accessible quality education and better-trained and equipped security personnel. This is a qualitative research which draws its sources from eye-witness accounts, news reports, journal articles and other published materials.

Keywords: Boko-Haram, conflict, conflict-management, Nigeria, religion, violence

1. Introduction

There appears to be a general acceptance by scholars that conflict is an inevitable feature of inter-personal and inter-group relationship (Swanstrom, 2005, p. 7). At the state level, this is the case because the state is made up of groups that are heterogeneous, with competing and, consequently, conflicting interests and values (Mohammed, 2005, p.17). This is when the concept is not viewed only to include incompatibility or difference in issues position.

Nigeria has had its unfair share of conflicts (most of them violent) since she gained her political independence from Britain on October 1, 1960. Beginning shortly after, some of these included the Census and Action Group crises of 1962, the Tiv uprising of 1964, the Electoral crises of 1964 and 1965 and the Nigerian Civil War which lasted between 1967 and 1970, to mention a few. Scholars have conservatively put the casualty figures from these conflicts at some two million people killed. It is interesting to note that from the 1980s, Nigeria (especially the northern part), has witnessed a resurgence of violent conflicts. This time around they became mostly religious in nature, characteristically between Muslims and Christians and, occasionally, between various Islamic groups. A recent development has seen some of these Islamic groups declaring that they are at war with the state of Nigeria and continue to attack state institutions and public places. *Boko Haram*, one of such groups, has, on two occasions, sensationally abducted hundreds of female students from their schools i.e. Government Secondary School, Chibok in Borno State and Government Science and Technical College, Dapchi in Yobe State in 2014 and 2018 respectively (Human Rights Watch, 2019).

One major feature of religious conflicts within the period under study has been the high level of violence and the consequent escalating number of fatalities (Salawu 2010, p. 345). The population of Nigeria appears almost equally divided between Muslims (most of who reside in northern Nigeria) and Christians (most of who reside in the southern part of the country). However, it is not uncommon to find northerners who are Christians and southerners (especially in the southwest, and increasingly in the south–east), who are also Muslims. This is in addition to the large number of people from the various groups who, for one reason or another, have migrated to other areas away from their places of origin.

It may also be necessary to point out that all the violent conflicts in Nigeria, with religious coloration, have taken place in the north. Given that Christians have borne more of the brunt of these attacks, most often blamed on Muslim extremists, there have, lately, been occasional 'reprisal' attacks in the south against Muslims in the area.

2. Conceptual Clarification

A brief explanation of some of the key terms in this paper now suffices.
- Conflict: Conflict is seen as the result of opposing interests involving scarce resources, goal divergence and frustration. It may not be defined simply in terms of violence (behaviour) or hostility (attitude), but also include incompatibility or differences in issue position (Swanstrom, 2005, p.7).According to International Encyclopedia of

the Social Sciences (1972) conflict emerges whenever two or more persons (or groups) seek to possess the same object, occupy the same space or the same exclusive position, play incompatible roles, maintain goals or undertake mutually incompatible means for achieving their purpose (p.220)

- Conflict Management: These are interventionist efforts towards preventing the escalation and negative effects especially violent ones, of on-going conflicts (Miller, 2003, p.30).
- Religion: Geertz(1993) sees religion as a 'system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, pervasive and long-lastingmoods and motivation in men by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence'(p.87). This may be seen as an issue of identity which is about solidarity and setting of boundaries between those who are considered to be believers and those that are not. Microsoft Encarta (2008) sees religion as people's beliefs and opinions concerning the existence, nature, and worship of a deity or deities, and divine involvement in the universe and human life. It is also a system of thought, feeling and action that is shared by a group and that gives the members an object of devotion, a code of behavior by which individuals may judge the person and social consequences of their actions (www.encyclopedia.com/topic/religion-aspx, accessed on January 12, 2013).

3. Theoretical Framework

Various theories have been used to account for outbreak of conflicts. However, for the purpose of explaining the waves of violent religious conflicts in Nigeria, the Frustration-Aggression Theory has been adopted. This has been associated with a group of researchers, Dollard, Doob, Miller &Mowrer(1939, p.1)who postulated that man sets out to achieve intended ambitions and other set-out goals, but that when these expectations are not achieved, frustration will set in, which in turn, would lead to aggressive behaviour. The core assumption is that aggression is always a consequence of frustration. To the authors, the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression.

Berkowitz, in a revision of the theory, has demonstrated that even though frustration instigates a number of different types of response, one of the most likely of these is aggression (Berkowitz 1980, 59-73). Both however agree that frustration causes aggression, but that when the source of the frustration cannot be challenged, the aggression gets displaced onto an innocent target.

Given the above, the explanation for aggressive behaviour on the part of adherents of a particular religion in Nigeria can be found in their frustration with certain developments in the state, as shall be discussed later, such as economic, political and other unfulfilled religious injunctions, such as conversion of adherents of other religions in the country. Consequently, the frustration gave vent to the violence that subsequently followed. Research has also shown that the actual perpetrators of the religious violence were often those who felt economically deprived and belonged to the lower echelon of the social ladder. Those became ready and willing tools in the hands of the planners of the violence, partly because of the promise or reward of immediate economic benefits, which they felt schemed out of by the state or government. Under such inducement, they meted out violent aggression on innocent members of the society they could easily target.

4. Background

All the violent religious conflicts in Nigeria have been in the northern part of the country which harbours a greater number of the country's Muslim population. These began with the Maitatsine riots in Kano and Maiduguri in 1980. As noted by Hisket (1987)

it boiled over to a destructive and macabre climax in November and December ofthat year. It was finally put down by the Nigerian Army, after considerable initial hesitation on the part of both the Federal Government and Kano State Government and after many hundreds of people had been killed by the rioters…In October 1982, similar riots broke out in Bulumkuttu, near Maiduguri, and in Kaduna, all of which displayed similarities with the Kano eruption (p.29).

Aside from the afore-mentioned, some of the other outbreaks include, Jimeta-Yola religious disturbance (1984), Easter Procession disturbances in Ilorin (1986). Kafanchan ethno-religious crisis (1987), Bauchi religious crisis (1991), Zango-Kataf crisis (1992), Kaduna Shari'a riots (February and May 2000), the on-going *Boko Haram* attacks in the north-eastern states of Nigeria, among several others. In fact, it has been recorded that there were at least fifty violent religious conflicts in Nigeria between 1980 and 2004. (See appendix 1 for more details)

5. Causes of Religious Conflicts and Their Escalation in Nigeria

5.1. Economic Difficulties

The outbreak of violent religious conflicts in Nigeria has been traced to several causes, some of which had economic, political and ethnic undertones. It has been argued that people easily take recourse to religious conflicts in order to ventilate their heated economic conditions. (Ibrahim, 2005, p.317). Increasing rate of economic downturns and consequent poverty made many adherents of Islam in northern Nigeria more susceptible to militant forms of Islamism and turned them into willing tools in the hands of their leaders.

The economic situation of Nigeria had taken a knock beginning in the 1970s and worsened in the 1980s. According to Albert (2005), the insincere implementation of economic policies by successive governments of the period led to the closure of industries and the retrenchment of workers both in the private and public sectors, with the government placing embargo on new recruitment in the public service (p.388).

All of these led to massive job losses and large number of unemployed people who felt deprived and hard done by. It should also be noted that the militant Islamist *Boko Haram*, which has been unleashing death to thousands of Nigerians since 2009, had hinted at a similar situation and mismanagement of the economic resources of the country. One could hardly recall any other time in the country's history, when it generated the amount of foreign exchange it did between 1999 and 2015. Even though the figures may not be readily available however, the period in question, especially between 2009 and 2013, witnessed unprecedented high cost of crude oil in the international market. Crude oil accounts for 90% of the country's foreign exchange earnings. Unfortunately, however, the effect of this huge revenue has not been felt by majority of the populace, more than 71% of whom were reported by *Nigerian Tribune* of February 13, 2012, to be living below the poverty line. In addition, the mismanagement of the country's economy by successive governments has led to Nigeria being tagged the poverty capital of the world in the 2018 world poverty index, as reported by the Brookings Institution (Vanguard, 2018; Kazeem, 2018). The report had indicated that at the end of May 2018, Nigeria had about 87 million people living in extreme poverty thereby overtaking India which had 73 million. It concluded that extreme poverty in Nigeria continued to grow by 6 people every minute. Consequently, little wonder one of the major features of attacks on non-Muslims in northern Nigeria has been the accompanying looting of property of the victims, by the attackers. Stock in market stalls and household possessions were particularly targeted. The human 'tools' who felt deprived, quickly realized the opportunities provided by the upheavals to acquire the property they felt 'deprived' of. Kaduna State is one of the hot beds of religious crisis in northern Nigeria. Radio Nigeria 7a.m. Network News report of Friday December 21, 2012, quoted then Governor Rotimi Amechi of Rivers State as admitting that deceased Governor Patrick Ibrahim Yakowa, of Kaduna Statehad confided in him that poverty was a major cause of religious crisis in the state. Little or nothing appears to have changed since then. Research findings by the Center for Global Development made Dapel (2018) conclude that some people in Nigeria may never escape poverty in their life time. This gloomy economic outlook presented above constitutes a fertile ground for recruitment of potential religious extremists.

5.2. Political Motivation

Evidence abounds to indicate that a number of the religious conflicts in Nigeria were caused by politicians, or by the activities of political leaders, in order to achieve their parochial political goals. As highlighted by Elaigwu (2005), 'some of these politicians have no constituency from which to demonstrate their relevance except through their narrow… religious groups'(p.43). Those politicians according to the writer, generated or exacerbated conflicts and, more often than not, got away with them without being punished, and continued to brew and dispense new forms of violence. Alluding to the political connotation of the Shari' a riots of 2000, Archbishop Peter Jatau, the then Northern Chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), advocated the division of Kaduna State along religious lines, with a new state formed for each of the major religious groups in the state – Christianity and Islam. (*The Guardian* 2000, p.1). Julian Borger (2015) records that in 2015 a Shiites (an Islamic sect) procession in Zaria, Kaduna State, northern Nigeria, allegedly blocked the convoy of the Chief of Army Staff (COAS). In the ensuing altercations British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC 2015) reported some 300 Shiites members were killed.Many of these were shot at to 'clear the way' for the COAS. In an immediate brazen reaction, the Iranian government berated the Nigerian government over the treatment meted out to the groupand warned the country to be careful the way it treated the sect's members (Borger, 2015). It is common knowledge that majority of Muslims in Iran belong to the *Shi'a* brand of the religion and understandably were sympathetic to the plightof their brothers and sisters in the faith in Nigeria. Latter reports were to show that the encounter with the military had actually consumed hundreds of Shiites who were buried in mass graves. The foregoing together with the continued incarceration of its leader, Sheikh Ibrahim El-Zakzaky, by the government of Nigeria without trial despite court orders to the contrary, has shifted the group's now albeit violent proteststo Abuja, the seat of the Federal Government. Its 2019 protests have witnessed further loss of lives and destruction of property.

5.3. International Dimensions

In addition, some of the political causes had international dimensions. For instance, the Kano religious conflicts of 2001 were allegedly caused when 'hooligans hijacked a procession after Muslims' *Juma'at* prayers, to protest the alleged backing of the United States of America by the Nigerian government in the former's war against terrorism' (Barde 2001, p.14). The 'peaceful' procession had been against American attacks on Afghanistan because of the former's conviction that the mastermind of the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States, Osama bin Laden, was based in, and consequently planned the attacks from Afghanistan. The 2003 United States and its allies' invasion of Iraq for the latter's alleged active interest in developing nuclear weapons, also sparked off protests in various parts of northern Nigeria. In both of these cases, the sympathy of Nigerian Muslim rioters was with their Muslim 'brothers' in those countries, consequently unleashing mayhem on Christians living in their midst in Nigeria.

5.4. Activities of Preachers

Another aspect of international dimension on the religious conflicts in Nigeria is the role of foreign preachers in Nigeria who deliberately incited or inadvertently caused violence. Indeed, one of the reasons given by the federal government of Nigeria in 1983 for the expulsion of illegal aliens from the country, was the accusation that a large number of foreigners were implicated in the Maitatsine religious violence in which many lives were lost. Malam Mohammed Marwa, who led the massacre, was actually a Cameroonian preacher who had allegedly illegally taken up residency in Nigeria in the 1960s (Albert, 2005, p.391). Some local preachers and religious leaders are also suspected to make provocative statements which incite their members to violence.

The easy spread of the Cartoon Riots of February 2006, caused by Muslims' displeasure over perceived insulting cartoons of Prophet Mohammed, published by a Danish newspaper, was also blamed on the activities of some foreign Islamic scholars. Further alluding to external influence on religious conflicts in Nigeria, a renowned Islamic scholar, Alhaji Mohammed Abba Aji contended that 'there are some Islamic scholars who are coming from other places and coming to Maiduguri with all sorts of small boys who have nothing to do… and it's these kinds of boys who cause the crisis' (*This Day,* 2006, p.62). In addition, the Reinhard Bonnke Riots of 1991 in Kano were also attributed to the perceived discriminatory attitude of the Kano State government by Muslims. This was in connection with the approval given a German Christian Preacher, Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke, to hold a crusade, while earlier denying Deedat, a Muslim preacher from South Africa, permission to carry out a similar exercise. According to eye witnesses interviewed by this writer, Enyidindu (A.D. Enyidindu, personal communication, July 2, 2011) and Ukandu (E. Ukandu, personal communication, July 3, 2011), controversy over the granting of permit to these foreign preachers led to riots in Kano in which many lives were lost and property destroyed.

The effects of the numerous religious conflicts in Nigeria have been incalculable loss of lives, mistrust among the various groups in the state, dislocation of families, retarded economic development, ruined businesses, tension, fear and general insecurity, among others. Allegations of abuse of inmates of internally displaced persons camps occasioned by violent religious conflicts have been reported by human rights groups (Iroegbu, Ogunmade&Alike, 2018). However, these allegations have often been dismissed with terse statements by the authorities of the security agencies.

6. New Proposals for Mitigation and Management

It had earlier been stated that conflict is an inevitable feature of human interaction. The problem then is not to count the frustration of seeking to remove an inevitability but rather of trying to keep conflicts in bounds (Zartman, 1997, p.197). However, it must also be noted that conflicts beyond certain thresholds are detrimental to the very survival of the state (Elaigwu, 2005, p.28). Consequently, the pervasiveness and seeming intractability of religious conflicts in Nigeria require new approaches aimed at mitigating potentially explosive situations and eventually keeping them within manageable bounds. These are suggested hereafter:

- Measures to tackle Unemployment: Many of the foot soldiers in religious violence in Nigeria, especially at the low level, are people who are either unemployed or not gainfully employed. Very few gainfully employed persons are likely to come under the excessive influence of religious extremists. Therefore, it is of utmost necessity that governments at both federal and state tiers formulate and implement policies that would create employment opportunities and engender conducive environment for business to thrive.

- Mediation and reconciliation skills training for security agents: From experience, Nigeria appears to have two major forms of responses to outbreak of violent religious conflicts in the country i.e. coercive response and setting up investigative panels. The former, as the name suggests, is the use of security agencies to attempt to restore order in troubled places. The initial deployment is often the regular police, but increasingly, mobile force. In cases where these are overwhelmed, the military are invited in. This method, on the surface, appears effective as the level of violence is often generally reduced after some time. When it appears that frayed tempers have calmed down, the combined, police and military forces are gradually withdrawn. However, in the interim, they have often been accused of several human rights abuses including extortion, rape, beating and killing of innocent citizens (Omorogbe and Omohani, 2005, p.556; Amnesty International, 2012). Besides, the deployment of these forces does not guarantee lasting peace as the Shari'a crisis in Kaduna in 2000 has shown, where fresh hostilities broke out not long after the withdrawal of the security agencies. In as much as the deployment of security forces may be indispensable at times, it is the opinion of this writer that they should be further trained in, and encouraged to foray into mediation, between warring factions with the aim of reconciling them to ensure lasting peace, long after the withdrawal of the forces. This becomes more urgent since the units of mobile police or armies frequently deployed to quell disturbances in Nigeria have neither the mandate nor the training to act as conflict resolution facilitators. (Oromareghake and Akpator, 2005, p.601).

- Better Intelligence Gathering: Another area where the security agencies need to intensify effort is intelligence gathering. This should help nip in the bud potential explosive situations. A case where a deported alien-preacher, Mohammed Marwa, slipped back into the country and attained some prominence, with the security agencies perhaps unaware of his activities, is deplorable. The attitude of security agencies in Nigeria tend to be more of reacting to events rather than preventive. A situation where more than a hundred insurgents could successfully invade a town and abduct hundreds of school girls from their hostels in a convoy, unchallenged, is a terrible indictment on the deplorable state of intelligence gathering of the forces; and to think that the area in question is a known zone for insurgent activities is a huge embarrassment to them and should set a new focus of training for security agencies. Repeated successful attacks on Nigeria's military bases in Borno by *Boko Haram*Islamic insurgents in2018 and 2019 (Kazeem, 2018)buttress the urgency of the reforms needed in this area.

- Implementation of Investigative Panels Reports: Routine response of governments in Nigeria to religious crisis is the setting up a panel(s) of enquiry to investigate a particular crisis and submit its findings, often with recommendations. Sometimes, it could be administrative or judicial. Even though the latter, as the name suggests, should be able to mete out punishment to perpetrators of religious violence, the situation has been that of impotence. More often than not, the reports are submitted to the government and nothing is heard about them anymore. It is difficult to recall anyone who was ever actually indicted and punished for crimes committed during religious conflicts in Nigeria. It is also common knowledge that most, if not all who were arrested during such

crises by security agents were often released without trial or, just managed to make it to court only once for the benefit of the news media. One of the greatest motivations to crime is the conviction by the criminal that he would get away with such crime. Consequently, the lack of will to publish reports of investigative panels into religious violence and to prosecute perpetrators and sponsors of such violence appear to be major reasons for the continued spate of religious attacks. More effort should be made to fully implement the reports or recommendations and, where necessary, legal action should be taken against the perpetrators and their sponsors, to serve as deterrent to others. Perhaps if this practice had been adopted, the spate of outbreaks would have been checked. Furthermore, members of investigative panels should be people of integrity and unquestionable character. This should also help avert aggravating an already bad situation as was witnessed in Borno in 2006. The report of a panel set up by Governor Ali Sheriff of that state to investigate the religious riots of that year, was publicly rejected by the state CAN and the Igbo Community in the state on issues bothering on the integrity of its members (*The Sun,* 2006, p.7)*.

- Devolution of Peace-support Effort: The forum for the national leaders of Christians and Muslims in Nigeria, Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC), has apparently not made any significant impact probably because it is still seen as an elite talk shop. The activities of this body should devolve to the state and local levels where religious violence is more likely to break out. At these lower levels, constant dialogue between the leaders would help build confidence and quickly douse whatever tension and differences that might arise before they escalate.
- Check on Proliferation of Weapons: The intensity of religious violence in Nigeria has been as a result of the proliferation of sophisticated weapons in the country. Consequently, security agencies on Nigeria's borders must be more alive to their responsibilities. Security along the country's land and sea borders and even the airport should be tightened to ensure that such weapons do not make it to the mainland. The unexplained landing of an airplane filled with state-of-the-art weapons in Kano airport in 2006, allegedly from Ukraine with final destination unknown was worrisome. More worrisome was that no further official information after the initial promises of investigation came in the wake of the furor that attended the incident. The police and other security agencies should mop up all illegal weapons in unauthorized hands. There should also be more effort made to identify, close down and, indeed prosecute the owners of illegal local arms manufacturing firms in the country.
- Screening of Migrant Foreign Preachers: Another step toward mitigating religious conflicts in Nigeria is that the government should begin to screen the *Malams* and other religious leaders (irrespective of their religious leaning) that migrate into Nigeria from neighboring countries, to help ascertain the genuineness of their intentions. This screening should also extend to the multitude of their disciples that migrate with them, to ensure that they do not constitute social menace.
- Assistance of the International Community: With the internationalization of religious conflicts in Nigeria, there is an urgent need for effective collaboration between the country and the international community. Nigeria must as a matter of necessity and expediency seek and share experiences with states that have passed and or are still passing through similar challenges. The country also needs to seek the assistance of more technologically developed countries to help her in this regard.
- Quality Education: There is the need for more investment in education. This should be in both quality and access. An educated mind is more likely to assess a situation before taking the decision on what course of action to take. The educated man is less gullible and pliable and is also able to see through the deceit of a religious leader.
- Going Beyond Rhetoric: As noted by Ayoke (2006), it is disheartening to note that 'most of our traditional rulers, political and religious leaders, irrespective of their religious beliefs, are paying lip-service to the unity of this nation' (p.8). It is not uncommon to hear vague expressions of regret, at the dastardly happenings, (religious conflicts), and hope that, somehow, 'all these things that are happening in the country will, by the grace of God, come to an end one day' (Obuh, 2012, p.1) and then dream that Nigeria will soon be greatand also that 'we will come to love one another' (*Vanguard,* 2012, p.1). It is imperative that religious leaders take up the challenge of controlling their followers by enlightening and educating them on the need to respect other people's religion. Political leaders should go beyond paying lip-service to issues of national unity, especially religion, and wake up from their state of delirious expectations and take concrete steps to check the violent outbreaks.
- Religious Tolerance: In spite of the above, it is the opinion of this writer that what is really needed to curb religious conflicts in Nigeria is religious tolerance. Accepting the fact that, in practicing one's religion, one should acknowledge and respect the right of other citizens to practice theirs, is an indispensable beginning point to actualize this. This, religious leaders can help impart in their followers. In addition, the government has an important role to play, through good governance, in minimizing the frustrations that eventually percolate into violent religious conflicts.

7. Conclusion

No doubt, violent religious conflict is a major problem in Nigeria today. This is more so considering its potential, as has been the case on a number of occasions, to threaten the continued corporate existence of the country. This paper has identified the economic, political and other frustrations which have given vent to conflicts in Nigeria, with religion acting as an outlet. New possible preventive, mitigation and management measures have also been proffered which should help ameliorate the situation if adopted and implemented.

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Appendix

S/N	Date	Location	Principle Actors
1	Thursday, May 01 1980	Zaria, Kaduna State	Disturbance in Zaria during which property belonging to mainly Christians were destroyed
2	December, 18-29, 1980	Kano, Kano State	Riots by Maitatsine Sect. 4177 people died. Extensive damage to property.
3	October 29 – 30, 1982	Bulumkutu, Maiduguri, Borno State.	Kala-Kato and Maitatsine sects. 118 people died. Extensive damage to property.
4	October 29 – 30, 1982	Kano, Kano State	Muslim demonstrators burnt down churches.
5	February 27 – March 5, 1984	Dobeli Ward Kano	Maitatsine sects. 568 died. Wanton destruction of property.
6	April 26 – 28, 1985	Pantami Ward Gombe, former Bauchi State.	Maitatsine sects. 105 died. Extensive destruction of property
7	March 1986	Ilorin, Kwara	Muslims and Christians clashed during a Christian procession at Easter.
8	March 1987	Kafanchan, Kaduna	Clash between Muslims and Christians at the College of Education, Kafanchan. Loss of some lives and the burning of some Mosques by Christians and native Kajes.
9	March 1987	Katsina, Funtua, Zaria, Gusau and Kaduna (in former Kaduna State)	Wave of religious riots in which Muslims burnt down numerous church buildings and damaged property belonging to Christians. Many lives were lost.
10	February 1988	Kaduna, Kaduna	Religious riots, ostensibly among students of Kaduna Polytechnic, destroyed the foundation walls of the Christian Chapel.
11	April 1991	Katsina, Katsina	Religious violence spearheaded by Malam Yahaya Yakubu, leader of the fundamentalist Shi'ite sect in Katsina. It was a protest over a perceived blasphemous publication.
12	October 1991	Kano, Kano	A peaceful procession initiated by the Izala sect to halt Rev. ReinhardtBonnke from having crusade in Kano later degenerated into a very violent and bloody religious confrontation. Thousands of lives were lost and properties valued in millions of Naira were destroyed.
13	May 1992	ZangonKataf, Kaduna	A communal feud between the Katafs and the Hausa later took the dimension of inter-religious war between Muslims and Christians in other major cities of Kaduna State.
14	December	Kano, Kano	The Kalakato religious sect.
15	Feb. 22, 2000	Kaduna, Kaduna	Kaduna city exploded in violence as Muslim and Christian extremists and other hoodlums clashed over the proposal to introduce Shari'a.
16	December 2, 2000	Hadejia, Jigawa	A sectarian disturbance that was caused by a debate between Muslims and Christians in Hadejia (Jigawa). There was wanton destruction of worship places.
17	September 7, 2001	Jos, Plateau	A violent ethno-religious crisis between the Muslim/Hausa-Fulani and Christian/Indigenes.
18	October 12, 2001	Kano, Kano	A peaceful anti-American protest over the bombing of Afghanistan turned violent, taking ethnic and religious
19	June 2002	Yelwa, Shendam, Plateau	A religious cum –cum ethnic fracas between the native people, predominantly Christians, Hausa settlers who are predominantly Muslims.
20	2004	Yobe	Militant Islamic group operation under the name of *Muhajirim* launched an attack on the Nigerian Police. Men of the Nigerian Army killed 5 and arrested several others.
21	April 3 2004	Makarfi Kaduna	Militant Islamic group operation under the name of *Muhajirim* launched an attack on the Nigerian Police. Men of the Nigerian Army killed 5 and arrested several others.
22	February 2005	Sokoto Sokoto	Sectarian violence between *Sunni* and *Shiites*– both Muslim sects –which claimed 3 lives

S/N	Date	Location	Principle Actors
23	June 2005	Sokoto Sokoto	A renewed clash between *Sunni* and *Shiites* over use of Mosque
24	2009-2019	Northern Nigeria	The *Boko Haram* Islamist group insurgency against the state of Nigeria. It initially demanded that all Nigerians convert to Islam and Nigeria become an Islamic state. It is currently conducting a campaign of wanton killing of both Christians and Muslims alike. Thousands of lives have been lost.

Table 1: Selected Cases of Violent Religious Conflicts in Nigeria Since 1980
Elaigwu, J.I. (2005). Crisis and Conflict Management in Nigeria Since 1980
Kaduna: Baraka Press. Information Updated by This Writer