

INTERROGATING PEACEBUILDING FRAMEWORKS OF RELIGIOUS ORGANISATIONS AND ITS EFFICACY IN KADUNA STATE

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ABSTRACT

The dominance of a religion beyond others had translated to political advantage and supremacy in the state affair. This notion has become an obstacle and a cog in the wheel of progress in peacebuilding and peaceful coexistence in Kaduna State, Nigeria. It was against this backdrop that this research work investigates the existing frameworks of peacebuilding of selected religious organisations and its efficacy in Kaduna State. This study explored the existing frameworks of peacebuilding of religious organisations and its efficacy in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive survey design; proportional stratified random sampling technique was used to select two groups from the populace. One of the groups was Women Interfaith organisation where 134 leaders and staff were randomly selected from religious organisation in Kaduna State while in the other group, 265 participants were randomly selected from different religions in southern part of Kaduna State. Three hundred and ninety-nine (399) copies of the questionnaire were administered across the two groups. The result showed with an average mean of 2.9 that religious organizations have a framework of structures that helped to bring about peace in Kaduna State. In addition, the average mean of 2.82 indicated that the challenges faced by religious bodies in carrying out peacebuilding in Kaduna are numerous but it is expected that through government support, funding availability, professionalism, as well as control of intolerant groups, religious bodies will achieve their goal of peace building. In conclusion, to sustain peace building in Kaduna State, the state should avoid gender inequality, and religious discrimination. Hence, the study recommends training and capacity-building programs for religious leaders and members on conflict resolution, mediation skills, and peacebuilding techniques. These programs should be accessible, tailored to local contexts, and include both theoretical and practical components.

Keywords: Religious, Conflict resolution, Gender inequality, Peace building, Interfaith organizations.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A peaceful state is one where citizens live joyfully and harmoniously, disregarding differences in religion, ethnicity, and background and so on. For peace to exist in any state, those in the positions of authorities and other stakeholders in the state need to work towards building and solidifying it. Peace building is therefore conceived as action directed towards identifying and

supporting structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict (Onuh & Kabuk, 2021).

To promote development in Nigeria, peace is essential. The needed peace is not just one defined by the absence of war, or some form of detente, but as an atmosphere of tolerance, harmonious co-existence and mutual development; an atmosphere where people are not only aware of their differences but are also understanding and willing to live and work together. It is imperative to note that peace require synergist efforts and societal development. Peace therefore is collaborative effort between government, non- governmental organizations, civil societies groups (CSO's) religious groups such as Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Jamatul Nasril Islam (JNI), the general public and other stakeholders. By extension, the term refers to a conflict prevention or resolution activity performed by external actors such as United Nations (UN) or other international organisations (Frere & Wilson, 2015).

Before independence in Northern part of Nigeria Usman Dan Fodio Jihad which commenced in 1804 was the most significant politico-religious development in Northern Nigeria. This was a far-reaching religious and political reform led by a Fulani cleric, purposely to depose the clean up the pre-existing Hausa political system and replace it with one based on the principles of Islam. This comprises of Islamic community (Umma), a body of learned clerics (Ulama), an Islamic legal code (Sharia), and a system of public opinion based on consultation (Mashwara) (Takaya 1987). The Jihad was achieved with a combination of methods, including violence where resistance was encountered, up to the British intervention in the early 20th Century.

Another stormy issue that surprised the sharia crisis in inter-faith divisiveness was the decision by the Babangida regime to move Nigeria from an observer status into full membership of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). This deepened suspicion between the two main religions and created distrust in government.

However, Internationalization or ummaization has been proffered by a number of young Islamists who see the need for Muslim unity in the face of Christian erusaderism" (Loimeier 2007:62). The armour-bearers of this school of thought seek to end the sufi-izala divide, Model Islam after the Dan Fodio Jihad ideals, eliminate dependence on foreign organizations and build international African Networks.

The conditions that have precipitated the early signs of conflict did not always lead to urban violence, nor were they causal. Rather, they have helped to sharpen the boundaries between faith-based identity groups, create consciousness based on faith categories, generate inter-religious animosity, deepen inter faith suspicion and often serve as triggers for urban violence and its escalation.

With the advent of European and British colonialism in Nigeria, they brought Christianity propagation by European Christian missions purposely, to enhance peacebuilding in Nigeria (Ajayi 1965). A kind of competition set in between these missions and the Sokoto/Islamic orthodoxy. Specifically, from 1897 to 1904, Christian missionaries and missionary organizations began to express deep anxiety over the expansion of Islam (Kastfelt 1994:37).As

a result of this, in south-west, Islam and Christianity met around Abeokuta-Osogbo axis for the first time and a natural competition commenced in the process of proselytization.

Christians and Muslims of Northern extraction sympathized with the unfortunate events, believing it served the interest of the north. The civil war was fought not as a religious war, since most, approximately 40 percent of the active federal combatants, included large number of Christians and or non-Muslims (Ikime 2002), fighting supposedly southern Christians or non-muslims Igbos based on a belief in the need for a united, indivisible Nigeria.

At the end of the civil war, general Yakubu Gowon regime (1966-1976) embarked on a policy of reconciliation, reconstruction and rehabilitation, and had declared that there was not victor and no vanquished in the civil war and this had birth different existing religions organisation such as CWF, CAN, FBO, JDPC, FOMWAN , OIC, WIC to mention a few.

Women Interfaith Council (WIC) or local actors on a community level, as one of existing peacebuilding framework with the common aim of establishing a sustainable peace corresponding to more than an absence of violence incorporating a structure transformation of a conflictual society to a peace available for all (Frere & Wilson, 2015). Despite the progress made in establishing implementation frameworks, globally, regionally and locally, significant gaps still persist between the envisioned provisions and the present circumstances of low formal peace processes due to gender and poverty issues, religion conflict issues, interfaith conflict issues particular in Kaduna, northern part of Nigeria.

Kaduna state has witnessed series of crisis which cut across religion, ethnicity, and dominance, among others. Among which are the 2002 religious crisis and the Zangon-Kataf crisis of 1992 which to a large extend are caused by lack of religious tolerance and fear of dominance of one religion in the affairs of the state It is observed that the dominance of a religion translates to political advantage and supremacy in the state affair. This notion has become an obstacle and a clog on the wheel of progress in peace building and peaceful coexistence in Kaduna state, Nigeria. It is against this backdrop that this research work will interrogate the existing frameworks of peacebuilding of selected religious organisations and its efficacy in Kaduna state.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Peacebuilding in Kaduna State

Most religious peace building frameworks in Kaduna State relies on aged religious leaders in the formulation and implementation of a religious peace initiatives with little or no representation of women who over the years have been effective in treating gender issues, unemployment, drug abuse, domestic violence and education which are the core issues influencing conflict and violence in the state and around the world (Onuh & Kabuk, 2021). Peace building is used to refer to long-term preventive, pre-hostility strategies and measures to remove the internal causes of conflict and to strengthen structural stability against the threat of conflicts (Oyeniyi, 2011). Preventive peace building is thus a long-term process that covers all activities intended to promote peace and overcome violence (Paffenholz, 2003).

The UN Security Council in February, 2001 defined peace building as the process that aimed at preventing the outbreak, the recurrence or continuation of armed conflict. Thus, preventive peace building includes many possible actions in the political, economic and social fields. For instance, community capacity building and fostering collaborative relationships are some of these pre-emptive peace building actions. To this end, the need for peacebuilding does not exist only at the state level, but also in the social and political spheres, as well as relationships -in everyday life- those of the basic everyday socio-political dynamics, and of the trust that bounds and bridges community together (Brown & Gusmao, 2009).

Sequel to this, Wirmark et al, (1997) observed that peace building largely consists of the construction of an institutional framework that supports the peace as well as the building of non-violence culture. In this vein, the strategies that are used in peace building and reconciliation includes; dialogue, co-ordination, reconciliation, participation, training, advocacy, networking, facilitation, negotiation, mediation and problem-solving workshops- (PSW).

According to Muragu (2010), long-term strategies to build sustainable peace also referred to as preventive peace building are designed to address the underlying substantive issues that brought about conflict. In this vein, sustainable peace is characterized by the absence of physical and structural violence, the elimination of discrimination, and self-sustainability. The Prevention of Deadly Conflict Report of 1997 categorises international approaches to prevention as both the operational and structural prevention:

Operational prevention (Direct prevention): It is the measures to address immediate crises (For instance, sending high-level diplomatic missions to mediate between parties, using economic tools such as sanctions, inducements, or collecting weapons and demobilising fighting units), and employing forceful measures such as deploying peacekeepers to a region. Direct prevention (also referred to as “operational” or “light” prevention) aims at giving an immediate answer to an imminent crisis.

Structural prevention (or root causes prevention): Addresses the root causes of conflicts which can, if left unattended, escalate into violence. Structural prevention focuses on more long-term measures that address the underlying causes of a potential conflict along with potentially escalating and triggering factors (Ackeman, 2003).

According to Coward and Smith (2004) peacebuilding includes not only conflict management and resolution efforts on the ground, but also the efforts of people working at a distance from actual sites of deadly conflict, such as legal advocates of religious human rights, scholars conducting research relevant to cross cultural and interreligious dialogue, and theologians and ethicists within the religious communities who are probing and strengthening their traditions of nonviolence

In this vein, peacebuilding also entails conflict transformation, the replacement of violent with nonviolent means of settling disputes.

This occurs through overlapping processes of conflict management and conflict resolution which included:

Conflict Management (Prevention, Enforcement, Peacekeeping) Phase: Conflict management seeks to halt the immediate violence associated with a conflict by addressing the proximate, catalytic causes of violence, but does not (to the same extent as conflict resolution) attempt to resolve the underlying, permissive causes of the conflict (Rodd, 2008). Conflict management is however often a necessary precondition for conflict resolution, as halting violence creates a more stable and secure environments, in which conflict resolution efforts can begin to tackle the underlying causes of the conflict (Reagan, 1996).

Conflict Resolution or Peace-making Phase: It entails removing, to the extent possible, the inequalities between the disputants, by means of mediation, negotiation, advocacy and testimony on behalf of one or more parties to a conflict. It is a variety of approaches aimed at resolving conflicts through the constructive solving of problems distinct from the management or transformation of conflict.

Conflict Transformation: This occurs through overlapping processes of conflict management and conflict resolution. This school focuses on the complementarity of the conflict management and resolution schools, Consequently, Lederach (1995), agreed with Galtung and introduced a new concept called 'transformation', as the one in which 'conflict can progress in either positive or destructive ways'.

However, a core element of this approach which is the concept of peace constituencies' aims at identifying representative individuals or groups on the middle level and empowering them to build peace and support reconciliation in their own country such as legal advocates of religious human rights, scholars conducting research relevant to cross cultural and interreligious dialogue, and theologians and ethicists within the religious communities but for the sake of this study, this study will focus more on religious .and religious organisations. Religious communities take an increasingly systematic, intentional approach to peacemaking (Sampson, 2023). In addition, religion in northern part of Nigeria comprises of three major religion which are Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religion. The impacts of these religions in Kaduna State are as outlined below;

Christianity is built on the teachings and modification of the Mosaic laws by Jesus Christ of Nazareth. As a religion, it promotes love and peaceful coexistence through the principle of love, your neighbour as yourself, and the forgiveness of one's enemy. The parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) and Jesus' teaching of turning the other cheek (Mathew 5:39) shows how humanity can coexist peacefully in a society by helping the needy and forgiving one's enemies Christian based peace initiatives and leaders influencing peaceful coexistence and peace building around the world abound. by Christian leaders and organizations in fostering peaceful coexistence among varying cultures, races, and religions (Onuh & Ellias, 2021).

Islam is a religion of peace (Salam) which is guaranteed by living a pious life revealed by Allah in His law to the prophet (SAW) after his transformation in the cave. Zakat as one of the pillars of Islam connotes humanism as the pillar promotes alms giving and charitable deeds from

accumulated wealth towards the downtrodden. The Islamic norms and values of dignity of human life, pluralism and tolerance of diversity, justice and excellence, individual and public liberty connote humanism, peaceful coexistence, and respect for human life. In abiding by these norms and values, bloodshed, corruption, war, conflict, and anarchy in Kaduna state and Nigeria will decline to the barest minimum (Onuh & Ellias, 2021).

Indigenous religion of the Africans: It is a religion that has been handed down from generation to generation by the forbearers of the present generation of Africans. Murder and spilling of blood is considered a taboo in African tradition, it is forbidden and highly discouraged. To prevent a calamity from befalling, a community, sacrifices, libation, and ritual cleansing are carried out to appease the gods of the land when murder is committed as human life is highly valued. The fear of the wrath of the gods and the value of human life sensitizes an African society to live in harmony with one another (Daniel, 2010).

2.2 SYNOPSIS OF EXISTING PEACEBUILDING WOMEN RELIGIOUS ORGANISATIONS (WIC) IN KADUNA STATE

The Muslim Sisters Organization

This is a gender-based group that works for women and was involved in the provision of relief materials to victims in the form of food stuffs, clothing, bedding and toiletries within a two-week period. The organization is linked to the Hudaibiyah and received materials from them for distribution. Assistance was solicited from members through text messages, the national body and state body coordinated the Kano end, within a period of about two weeks.

The Ansar U Deen Society of Nigeria

The society is located at Kafanchan and was involved in assisting victims of the 2004 crisis. In office buildings were used as an IDP camp, and like the Islamic foundation of Nigeria assistance was solicited from worshippers during Juma'at prayers. Money was also collected from Muslim brothers and other wealthy individuals. The congregation was able to raise cash and distribute to victims in providing foodstuff and cloth. The welfare committee comprising members also made on the spot assessments and reported back to the society for action.

Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN)

Church leaders and leaders of groups within the church also provided counselling services to injured victims and those who lost their houses, businesses, relations etc. According to many, Christian families took in victims according to the coordinator of CWF expressed this situation in 2001 crisis this way: We help displaced people by absorbing them into members' homes. We hosted 17 people for two months. After the 2001 crisis for instance CAN distributed food and clothing materials to IDP's in churches used as camps. In addition to the effort of CAN, Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) alone gave 400,000 Naira (Omotayo, 2011).

Christian Foundation for Social Justice and Equity (CFSJE)

The Christian Foundation for Social Justice and Equity was founded in 2000. The Foundation normally engages in a number of peace support and capacity building activities. For instance, following the Kaduna 2001 crisis, the Foundation engaged in peace talk with warring parties to ameliorate the situation. CFSJE also engaged in the following activities: Engaged in need analysis of affected areas, Registered victims in IDP camps and gave them relief materials.

Jama'atu Izalatil Bidah Wa'ikamatis Sunnah (JIBWIS)

This is the society for the removal of innovation and re-establishment of sunna, known simply as Izala. (Takaya 1987) It was founded in 1978 by Shiekh Ismaila Idris in Kaduna State, Nigeria. This is an anti-sufiyanti-Tariga movement dedicated to the eradicating of innovations (bid'ah) introduced into the religion of Islam by the sufi brotherhoods especially the Qadiriyya and the Tijaniya (Wakili 2005). The society has declared practices like naming ceremonies, celebrating the Maudid (the birthday of the prophets), visiting tombs of saints, among others as non-Islamic.

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was anchored on social constructivism theory which was advanced by Alexander Wendt in 1992. The theory highlights the knowledge and understandings of the world that are developed jointly by individuals. This theory assumes that understanding, significance, and meaning are developed in coordination with other human beings. It also assumes that human beings rationalize their experience by creating a model of the social world and the way that it functions. In peacebuilding the theory emphasizes the role of culture and identity (Jung, 2019).

Applying social constructivism to the religious organisation and sustainable peacebuilding in Kaduna State, Nigeria, involves understanding how social interactions, shared meanings, and collaborative knowledge construction contribute to the process of building and sustaining peace since the social constructivism emphasizes the role of collective understanding, dialogue, and shared narratives in shaping individuals' perspectives and behaviours. Thus, it encouraged open dialogues that allow women from diverse faith backgrounds to collectively define and understand the concepts of peace, tolerance, and coexistence within the context of Kaduna State.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The descriptive survey design was preferred because it largely focus on vital facts, beliefs, opinions, demographic information. The target population was 402,731 of people living in Southern part of Kaduna State. The reason for using Southern part of Kaduna State was because of high rate of all forms of crises ranging from religion, dominance, and ethnicity. Proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to select two groups of participants; one from religious organisation (women interfaith council) in Kaduna State and the beneficiaries from the populace in southern part of Kaduna State. Women interfaith council {WIC} was selected from this group because it was a religious organisation that comprises of different religion (Christian, Muslim), from this group one hundred thirty-four (134) leaders and members of women interfaith council were selected while two hundred and sixty five (265) populace from different religious were selected as the beneficiaries for this study.

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The main objective of this study was to examine the existing frameworks and structures used by WIC in peacebuilding and the effectiveness of these structures. The study is guarded by the research question interrogating the extent to which these structures have been adequately deployed by WIC in peacebuilding process in Kaduna state. The research instrument was

structured in such a way to ensure that cogent themes were used to elicit cogent responses to assist the researcher achieve the objectives.

Table 1 Demographic Sec

Analysis of Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Items		Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	51	21.8%
	Female	183	78.2%
Religion	Islam	136	58.1%
	Christianity	98	41.9%
Ethnicity	Yoruba	54	23.1%
	Igbo	58	24.8%
	Hausa	122	52.1%
	Others	0	0.0%

Source: Field Survey,(2024)

The above table showed that 78.2% of the respondents were female. This signified that the respondents were more of women. In other words, the available group of individuals readily available for the research are women. This also was possible as the population of the study were more of the female gender. More so, 21.8% are male, 58.1% are Muslims. This implies that majority of the respondents are Muslim, this could be as a result of the scope of the study, Kaduna State is a Muslim predominant state.

Table 2: Frameworks Put in Place by Religious Organizations in Peace Building

Items	SA Freq. (%)	A Freq. (%)	D Freq. (%)	SD Freq. (%)	Mean \bar{x}	Standard Deviation (SD)
Designing of peace accord agreement.	74 (31.6%)	125 (53.4%)	27 (11.5%)	8 (3.4%)	3.13	.74
Signing peaceful coexistence law by communities.	60 (25.6%)	129 (55.1%)	36 (15.4%)	9 (3.8%)	3.03	.75
Proposing peace and conflict guidelines to Government.	44 (18.8%)	90 (38.5%)	78 (33.3%)	22 (9.4%)	2.67	.89
Designing resource sharing formula on disputed resources.	52 (22.2%)	81 (34.6%)	81 (34.6%)	20 (8.5%)	2.71	.91
Designing religious accords for religious leaders.	49 (20.9%)	88 (37.6%)	71 (30.3%)	26 (11.1%)	2.68	.93
Designing security guidelines for communities.	70 (29.9%)	127 (54.3%)	23 (9.8%)	14 (6.0%)	3.08	.80

Providing reporting framework of any glimpse of conflict action by any party.	107 (45.5%)	92 (39.1%)	36 (15.3%)	0 (0.0%)	3.30	.72
Designing responsibility framework for citizens in conflictual situation	62 (26.4%)	68 (28.9%)	53 (22.6%)	52 (22.1%)	2.60	1.10
AVERAGE MEAN					2.90	.85

KEY: SA=Strongly Agree, A= Agree, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree

*****Decision Rule if mean is 1-1.49= SD; 1.5-2.49= D; 2.5-3.49= A; 3.5-4.0= SA**

Table 2:showed that generally, the respondents agreed that there are structure/ framework put in place by religious organizations in building peace in Kaduna State; ($\bar{x}=2.90$). This implied that there are structures in place to ensure building peace in Kaduna State. The respondents agreed the frameworks include; Designing of peace accord agreement ($\bar{x}=3.13$), this implies that religious organization helps to design peace accords so as to ensure peace within the community. Also, the respondents agreed that signing peaceful coexistence law by communities ($\bar{x}=3.03$), Proposing peace and conflict guidelines to Government. ($\bar{x}=2.67$), this means that religious organizations make proposal on peace and conflict guideline and send to the government for approval and adoption. Designing resource sharing formula on disputed resources ($\bar{x}=2.71$), designing religious accords for religious leaders ($\bar{x}=2.68$), Designing security guidelines for communities ($\bar{x}=3.08$), providing reporting framework of any glimpse of conflict action by any party ($\bar{x}=3.30$) and designing responsibility framework for citizens in conflictual situation ($\bar{x}=2.60$). The implication of this result, with average mean 2.90 is that religious organizations have a framework of structures that helps her to be able to bring about peace in Kaduna State, however may not be as effective as desired.

Table 3: Challenges Faced by Religious Organizations in Peace Building

	SA Freq. (%)	A Freq. (%)	D Freq. (%)	SD Freq. (%)	Mean \bar{x}	Standard Deviation (SD)
Items						
Rise of fanatical and intolerant groups	91 (38.7%)	68 (28.9%)	55 (23.4%)	21 (8.9%)	2.97	.99
Reservations about working with others actors and vice-versa.	91 (38.7%)	111 (47.2%)	12 (5.1%)	21 (8.9%)	3.16	.88
Lack of capacity and professionalism of peace practices.	48 (20.4%)	79 (33.6%)	62 (26.4%)	46 (19.6%)	2.55	1.03
Seen to be proselytizing by attracting membership and converting them.	100 (42.6%)	110 (46.8%)	13 (5.5%)	12 (5.1%)	3.27	.78

Lack of funding for sustained activities.	43 (18.3%)	92 (39.1%)	29 (12.3%)	71 (30.2%)	2.46	1.11
Lack of total support and sponsorship from Government.	48 (20.4%)	105 (44.7%)	35 (14.9%)	47 (20.0%)	2.66	1.02
Intolerance by religious leaders in various communities.	56 (23.8%)	104 (44.3%)	21 (8.9%)	54 (23.0%)	2.69	1.07
Average Mean					2.82	.98

Source: Field Survey, (2024)

KEY: SA=Strongly Agree, A= Agree, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree

*****Decision Rule if mean is 1-1.49= SD; 1.5-2.49= D; 2.5-3.49= A; 3.5-4.0= SA**

Table 3 showed that generally, the respondents agreed that there are challenges faced by religious organizations in peace building in Kaduna State; (\bar{x} =2.82). This signified that religious organizations have challenges that hinder them from carrying out their task of peace building. The respondents agreed the challenges include; Rise of fanatical and intolerant groups (\bar{x} =2.97), this indicated that fanatical groups like extremist religious groups, Boko Haram and others constitute a lot of hindrances in achieving the goal of peace building.

5.0 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

On the challenges faced by Religious Organizations in Peace Building, the findings on this is as per the following discuss. One of the major challenges is that in some instances the religious leaders may lack the capacity of peace building theory and practice and therefore may be ineffective. Also, some groups or individuals may have reservations about working with actors of a different religion or those opposed to the intersection of religion and peace building. In addition, other challenge was that religious peace actors may be perceived to be proselytizing, by actively seeking to attract religious membership or conversion (Dubois 2008).

Furthermore, maintaining and strengthening sustainable peace in conflict-affected populations is high on the agenda of governments and development agencies and stakeholders in peace building. Another challenge is forced conversions. In this vein, there are threats to life, punishment, and harsh treatment which were routinely utilized by an alliance of sacred and secular powers (Smock, 2002).

Nonetheless, Orjuela (2008) expressed another religion challenges as he found that the reintegration of parties in conflict and alternative livelihoods for conflict affected populations is always enormous.

On the existing frameworks and its efficacy in Peace Building in Kaduna State, the result showed that, religious organizations in Kaduna State employed various structures and frameworks to facilitate peacebuilding efforts (\bar{x} =2.90). Specifically, designing of peace accord agreement, signing peaceful coexistence law by communities proposing peace and conflict guidelines to government. These frameworks were positively affirmed by the respondents

which clearly indicates that the structures that are being established to ensure peace in Kaduna by religious organizations ($\bar{x}=3.13$). To buttress this more, Achi (2021) established that religious organizations establish interfaith peace dialogue forums or councils that bring together leaders and members of different religious communities ($\bar{x}=4.21$). These forums serve as platforms for open communication, mutual understanding and collaboration on peacebuilding initiatives. They also formed peace committees comprising representatives from diverse religious groups. These committees are tasked with promoting peace, mediating conflicts, and facilitating dialogue within communities. Gladys (2016) noted that religious organizations engage in community outreach activities, including peace rallies, public awareness campaigns, and grassroots mobilization efforts. They worked closely with community leaders, youth groups, women's associations, and other stakeholders to promote peace and social cohesion. Furthermore, the present study suggested that designing resource sharing formula on disputed resources also it was agreed that religious organizations design religious accords for religious leaders as well as providing reporting framework of any glimpse of conflict action by any party. Gusha (2022) supported this result by reporting that religious organizations establish mechanisms for conflict mediation and reconciliation within communities. These according to the study include mediation panels, peace committees, and traditional dispute resolution mechanisms guided by religious principles and values. According to the study of Imam (2019) religious organizations engage in advocacy efforts to influence government policies, legislation, and programs related to peacebuilding, religious freedom, and social justice. Jah and Mabas (2022) corroborated the findings of this study and affirmed that religious organization collaborate with policymakers, civil society organizations, and international partners to advocate for inclusive and sustainable peace initiatives (mean=4.21, STD=1.01).

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, the existing framework for religious organizations in peacebuilding in Kaduna State, Nigeria, is pivotal yet challenged by various obstacles. Despite these challenges, religious organizations remain essential agents of change in fostering dialogue, reconciliation, and social cohesion within communities. By promoting interfaith dialogue, capacity-building, community empowerment, and advocacy for inclusive governance, religious organizations can overcome these challenges and contribute significantly to sustainable peace in Kaduna State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

There is the need to create formal interfaith peacebuilding councils comprising representatives from diverse religious communities. These councils can serve as platforms for ongoing dialogue, collaboration, and joint initiatives aimed at promoting peace and reconciliation.

The study recommended training and capacity-building programs for religious leaders and members on conflict resolution, mediation skills, and peacebuilding techniques. These programs should be accessible and tailored to local contexts.

Women are encouraged to participate in leadership roles within religious organizations and peacebuilding initiatives. This will help to strengthen the framework of the interfaith peacebuilding.

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