

The Role of Leadership in Linking Multiple Intelligences to Ethno-Religious Conflict Management

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Abstract

Security is one of the fundamental purposes of government and why government function. Lack of peace is a major cause of life dissatisfaction, affecting all spheres of national life. Therefore, it is a responsibility on leaders to communicate peace and ensure that every citizen lives in harmony, regardless of cultural and religious differences. Although Nigeria is committed to unity in diversity, there have been frequent clashes between Christians and Muslims, the majority and minority ethnic groups, and within same tribe and religion. This paper argued that ethno-religious conflicts occur because stakeholders in community do not communicate and manage interactions emotionally, culturally, and spiritually. This research covers a gap by linking communicative leadership to the management of ethno-religious conflict. The paper is a conceptual review from extensive literature search and mapping. Based on the theory of multiple intelligence (MI), the paper identified the roles of emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, and spiritual intelligence toward ethno-religious tolerance and national security. The behavioural framework could help leaders and members of community to manage and prevent ethno-religious conflict in northern Nigeria. Practically, the paper can be beneficial to traditional rulers, community leaders, youth leaders, civil societies, peace ambassadors, and religious clerics.

Introduction

Nigeria is a multi-ethnic and tripartite religious country. Nigerians were known to be tolerant but of recent, there have been breakdown of peaceful coexistence making life difficult and affecting development. Peace is a fundamental component of community coexistence, and a constitutional requirement for the unity and progress of Nigeria. Peace is priceless. No leader will succeed nor do followers rejoice amidst violent conflicts. As such, leaders must communicate the messages of tolerance and peaceful coexistence among people. Likewise, followers must change their perceptions to accept all-encompassing love. Leaders have to influence followers to cooperate with one another rather than holding rigid positions. Burns (1978) argued that leaders can contribute to reducing conflict through integrative and collaborative solutions. In addition, leadership is linked to higher rates of cohesion which strengthens the collective identity of a group. In support of this argument, Doucet, Poitras, and Chênevert (2009) suggested that leadership has strong influence on cognitive and relational conflict.

Security is one of the major determinants of good governance. It is associated with tourism, safety of life and property, regional and international trade relations, local and foreign investment, micro and macro-economic growth and development. Security is determined by peace, and peace is simply the absence of aggression, war, violence or hostility, or

killings (Kim, 2012). Therefore, societies have to move away from a culture of war or violence to a culture of civility and peace. While there are many types of conflicts, this study is interested in ethno-religious conflicts. This is because ethnicity occupied 13% while religion occupied 26% of conflicts in Nigeria (Aduba, 1999). Even when ethnicity is the major cause of conflict, it is often given a religious meaning. Crisis becomes complex and consequential as ethnicity is diluted with religious conflict or religion enters ethnic crisis (Svensson, 2013). To worsen the situation, public policies are often interpreted along the differences of ethnicity and religion in Africa and 'particularly in Nigeria' (emphasis of the Author) (Bangwayo-Skeete & Precious, 2011). Extreme misunderstanding and disrespect for ethno-religious ideologies, norms, and values trigger suspicion, prejudice, hatred, aggression, hostility, and violent conflicts (Donnoli & Wertheim, 2012).

Although every ethnic and religious body is committed to love of its neighbor and respect for human being, one wonders why societies with history of peacefulness turn into violence (Shih & Susanto, 2010). One of the major assumptions of this paper is that ethno-religious conflict is not the problem of ethnicity or religion, as people must always differ on the two. It is the problem of 'failed leadership' and followers' misconceptions and misunderstanding of the duo as well. For example, Christianity has the "turn the other cheek approach", Islam has the "never

begin hostility norm” and tribes have the “respect your neighbor norm”. These guiding principles indicate that every ethnic and religious bodies are committed to peaceful coexistence.

Disturbingly, ‘generation X’ individuals who grow in a period of stable peace as well as youths have been involved and reported killing fellow human beings in periods of conflicts. This is posing serious threats to the development of Nigeria as grown-up individuals and youths turn into killers and destructs than developers. For instance, the violence that marred Nigeria’s 2003 presidential election was tribal and religious in nature, and these people were active participants. The 2018 Birom and Hausa/Fulani in Plateau State, 2018 Bachama and Hausa/Fulani in Adamawa and Taraba State, 2001 Kataf and Hausa/Fulani in Kaduna State, 2010 Sayawa and Hausa/Fulani in Bauchi State were ethnic but diluted with religious bigotries. In these conflicts, thousands of lives were loss and billions worth of property destroyed.

Left unattended, ethno-religious conflicts can result in a number of negative behaviours and consequences. The social consequences of violent conflict include perceptual biases, tensions, bloodbaths/loss of life, poverty, decreased life-span, disease, waste of youth productivity, and insecurity. The economic impacts consist of destruction of personal property and government infrastructure, decrease regional and international trade relations, low foreign investment, decrease tourism, increased cost of governance (Blomberg, Broussard, & Hess, 2011), macroeconomic instabilities, and stagnation (Gupta, Clements, Bhattacharya, & Chakravarti, 2004). Ethno-religious conflicts are of course, threatening Nigeria’s democracy and national security and therefore, economic growth and development (Salawu, 2010). It is also questioning the leadership effectiveness in the country. Therefore, conflict management represents an important part of the roles leaders’ play. As a result, leaders and conflict management experts are always searching for innovative ways to ensure sustainable peace.

Nigeria is among the top five most ethnically and culturally diverse but religiously-doctrine and practicing countries in the world, but ranked as the 45th out of 47th countries where these diversities are managed. Northern Nigeria - home to a dominant Hausa/Fulani and many ethnic groups, over 300 languages, and 2 major religious affiliations provides many examples of organized violence that are routinely characterized as being Christians versus Muslims (Bamidele, 2014). While Nigerians are peace lovers, some cabals, self-interested and

mischievous politicians, and narrow-minded leaders take advantages of the intolerance, ignorance, and xenophobia of the youths to cause, polarize, and fractionalize ethno-religious confusions and conflicts.

Many strategies have been employed by the Nigerian government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to manage the occurrence of ethno-religious conflicts. However, since the early 1990s, there was hardly a year without a violent ethno-religious conflict in northern Nigeria. Some of the strategies adopted to curb ethno-religious conflict in the past include mediation, judicial commission of inquiry, security measures and surveillance (Benharoon, 2013), and the media (Muhammad & Baba, 2014). Although, advocacy and creation of cultural awareness (Bellou, 2014), as well as citizenship education (Farahani, 2014) had also been employed, leaders seems less concerned about the creating awareness on some important behavioral factors. Moberg (2001) pointed that individuals prefer to employ behavioral management styles when dealing with conflict.

This study follows the chorus of Moberg (2001) argument and debates that until leaders change the behavioural perception of ethno-religious crisis mongers (‘unhealthy they’), violent conflict might continue to occur. Therefore, in a pre or post conflict period, it is important for leaders to inform, persuade, remind, and reinforce the messages that will promote ethno-religious tolerance and peace. Some researchers define leadership as ‘a group of behaviors that are communicative in nature’ (Hackman and Johnson, 2013; Luo, Song, Gebert, Zhang, & Feng, 2016). Therefore, consistent communication is an important component of effective leadership. It is also an integral part of peace building and security.

Despite the close association between leadership and communication, it is surprising, that leaders’ messages have neglected the role-played by multiple intelligence in changing peoples’ behaviour and managing conflict. Therefore, the general objective of this paper is to identify the type of messages that leaders’ should promote in order to influence ethno-religious tolerance and peace in northern Nigeria. Therefore, this paper argues that leaders have to communicate messages about emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, and spiritual intelligence in order to promote ethno-religious tolerance and national security.

Problem Statement

Ethno-religious conflict is becoming one of the most reoccurring conflicts in Nigeria. Although security

and peace are important constitutional requirements in every country, yet violent conflicts erupt and resurge due to extreme misunderstanding of diverse ideologies, norms, values and respect within and between ethical and religious groups (Basedau, Strüver, Vüllers, & Wegenast, 2011). Many countries use ethnic and religious diversity to strengthen polity, shape social cohesion, encourage national integration, improve national security, and promote economic growth and development. However, biases have been reported to divide Nigeria into ethno-religious conflict lines. The worst scenario is that once religion enters into ethnic conflict, armed conflicts become more challenging to resolve, and their management become more difficult (Svensson, 2013). As such academics must help peace stakeholders such as policy-makers, peace ambassadors, civil society groups, community leaders, religious leaders with innovative strategies to prevent and manage pre and post ethno-religious conflicts.

Most of the Northern Nigerian ethno-religious conflict occur due poor leadership and bias perceptions of a counterpart culture or religion. Since perceptual problems are behavioural, it is not out of place to connect is with multiple intelligence maladjustment such as lower emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, and spiritual intelligence. These factors might breed prejudice, bigotry, hatred, and intolerance which may lead to the eruption of violent conflicts. Due to lack of emotional intelligence, members of a community cannot perceive, detect, understand nor manage emotional cues regarding tribal and religious difference. Members become obsessed and angry at the slightest ethno-religious provocations.

Due to lack of cultural intelligence, members of ethno-religious group might strictly see the world from their cultural point of view, and think that their cultural norms and values are the best. Other culture are considered inferior. The result of such thinking is disrespect of the key cultural norms of a counterpart's culture. In addition, individuals may be aware of the cultural differences of others, but are not willing to change their communication styles during interactions. Aside emotions, individuals with low cultural intelligence often do not have patience with others, and may not perceive other cultures positively (Hackworth & Brannon, 2006). Strangers or "settlers" either have to totally accept their culture, or force to leave. This may lead to confrontation, anger, and break-down of peace (Ang et al.2006).

Due to low spiritual intelligence, fighting often erupt between the Christian and Islam faiths. There are instances where fighting erupt between members of

same religion who only differ on sect. This is because people often forget that one of the essence of religion is to connect with the Sacred Being and maintain peace in the world. However, challenges often arise when people from different religions lacks the spiritual knowledge to live together.

Many commissions were setup and strategies adopted to control the resurgence of ethno-religious crisis in northern Nigeria. Unfortunately, most of them were perceived as ineffective as recommendations were hardly implemented (Osaretin & Akov, 2013). The inaction culminated in sporadic and reprisal clashes. Although, the dimensions of multiple intelligence such as emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, and spiritual intelligence have not been integrated in the discussion of ethno-religious tolerance and peace, the systematic search of the literature indicates points of convergence among these behavioural constructs (Crowne, 2009). Ignorance of emotion, culture, and spirituality could make people illiterate, unaccommodating and antagonizing (Al Sadi & Basit, 2013). These negative factors could transform into disagreements, tensions, anxieties, racial hatred, ethnic cleansing, and persecution of ethnic and religious minorities (Cam, 2011).

Literature Review

Ethno-Religious Tolerance

Tolerance is a virtue (Brunn & Gilbreath, 2015). It is one of the basic elements of peace and a determinant of social cohesion (Rivera, Vollhardt, Migacheva, & Tropp, 2009). Vogt (1997) defines tolerance as "intentional self-restraint in the face of something one dislikes, objects to, finds threatening, or otherwise has a negative attitude toward—usually in order to maintain a social or political group or to promote harmony in a group. The UN defined tolerance as "respect, acceptance, and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human [. . .]" (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 1995). Frequent interaction between non-conformist group would breed familiarity, promote open-mindedness and trust (Lee, 2013). Whereas the grouping of dogmatic individuals could breed intolerance (Igllic, 2010). Tolerance helps to calm anxieties and reconcile difference.

Newman (1978) defines religious tolerance as 'tolerance of religious beliefs, religious actions, or people who hold a different religious belief. Following Elissa, Tongeren, McElroy, Davis, & Hook (2014), this study defines ethno-religious tolerance as an instance where various communities can live in close proximity without letting ethnicity and religious differences lead to escalating conflicts that are

entrenched for generations. Civility and self-regulation are among the important components of tolerance. Civility is defined as public behavior towards strangers in which one must neither love them nor hate them in order to be civil towards them. Civility involves treating others with respect without necessarily accepting their values, beliefs, and practices (Bergen, 2013). Self-regulation means empathy by putting one's own immediate self-interests in the context of the larger common good and acting accordingly. Communities with higher levels of tolerance tend to attract talented people, are more competitive and economically developed (Das, DiRienzo, & Tiemann, 2008).

Religiosity

Religion is an organized system of beliefs, practices, rituals and symbols designed (a) to facilitate closeness to the sacred or transcendent (God, higher power, or ultimate truth/reality), and (b) to foster an understanding of one's relation and responsibility to others in living together in a community. Religion is "the feelings, thoughts, experiences, and behaviors that arise from a search for the sacred and the means and methods (e.g., rituals or prescribed behaviors) of the search that receive validation and support from within an identifiable group of people" (Hill et al., 2000). Religiosity or religiousness is defined as "the strength of one's connection to or conviction for their religion (King & Williamson, 2005)." Researchers have examined the correlations between religiosity and almost every aspect of mental health, human psychology, deviant behaviors, and sociological opinions (Noble, Galbraith, Singh, & Stiles, 2007). Religion promotes trust, cooperative behaviours as well as reduces criminal behavior (Stark & Bainbridge, 1997). However, religiosity is equally a source of conflict (Hage & Posner, 2015; Paciotti et al., 2015), prejudice and extremism (Dawkins, 2006; Iannaccone & Berman, 2006). Similarly, Noland (2005) support a negative relationship between religiosity and economic development. Challenges could arise when people from different religions and cultures lacks the cultural awareness, emotional stability, and spiritual knowledge to live and respect religious differences.

Ethno-Religious Peace

Right to peace and peaceful coexistence is one of the fundamental provision of the Nigeria's 1999 constitution. Peace is simply the absence of aggression, violence or hostility, or killing (Kim, 2012). Peace is propagated across all philosophies, disciplines, cultures, politics, and age groups. The United Nations has been advocating a transition from the 'culture of war to a culture of peace' (Kim, 2012). In peaceful societies, people foster interpersonal

relationships, and are horrified and nervous at the thought of violence (Bonta, 2013). Therefore, a peaceful society will always avoid aggressive behaviours at all cost and consider violence as abnormal, inhuman, and unacceptable.

Religion has come to play an increasingly important role in shaping today's Nigeria. Culture and Religion have strong and perhaps growing impact as a key source of identity for millions of people in Nigeria. Failed' states may provide the circumstances that encourage conflicts linked to religious (Haynes, 2009). A number of studies have attempted to investigate the origins and motives of ethno-religious crisis. But what is certain is that no one has the right to claim fighting for the Almighty. It is not Christ for Christians to kill Muslims. Similarly, it is not Islamic, for Muslims to kill Christians. It should be noted that no religion or ethnic group, nor any individual has monopoly of violence. A violent act committed by one is often return with reprisal attack. Therefore, people should not recourse to violence but resolve their differences intelligently.

Causes of Ethno-Religious Conflict

Conflict arises when one party or social entities perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party, or when one party disagrees or feels dissonant with another party (Shih & Susanto, 2010). Conflicts occur due to personality clashes, ego clashes, and differences of opinions, cultural differences, perceptual biases, power struggle, and scarcity of resources, miscommunication, and paucity of information. Niebuhr (1932) argued that violent people are often selfish and lack moral values. The common perpetrators of violent conflicts include the wicked community leaders, local militia, extremists, intoxicants, the unemployed, ex-convicts, uneducated youths, frustrated veterans and ex-service men, and the predominant illiterate and bigoted Muslim or Christians clerics. Similarly, profiteering politicians and unprofessional media outfits, often exploit ethnic chauvinisms, religious narrow-mindedness, and 'hate and vulgar speeches' to instigate the ignorant youths to unleash violence on other individuals who have historically coexisted together. These people often view the world around them as lacking in equality, justice, and liberty.

Theoretical Framework

This study is inspired by Gardner's (1983) theory of multiple intelligences (MI). According to Gardner, intelligence is "a biopsychological potential to process information that can be activated in a cultural setting to solve problems or create products that are of value to culture". Intelligence is a broad mental

capacity which, among other things, involves the ability to understand and think about complex ideas, to deal with abstractions and solve problems, as well as to learn quickly (Cavazotte, Moreno, & Hickmann, 2012). The theory of MI proposes eight intelligences consisting of linguistic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, spatial intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, musical intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence, and natural intelligence. Gardner also suggested that existential and moral intelligences may be worthy of inclusion. These intelligences encompasses functions of cognition, adaptation, competency, complexity, perceptions, assimilation, and understanding. Gardner (1983) proposes that MI can be employed in a variety of ways and a variety of settings, including everyday lifestyles, educational settings, and community settings. Consequently, it is logical that the concept of MI can prove useful in understanding leadership effect on ethno-religious tolerance and peace.

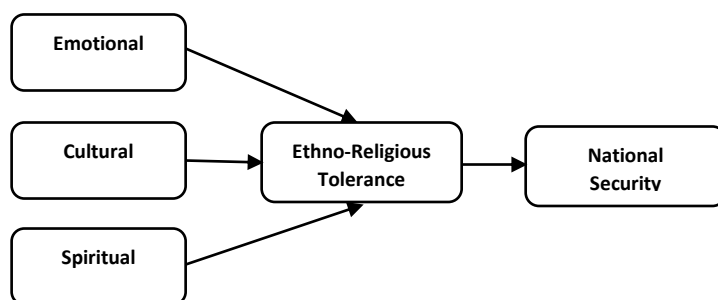
As diverse people live together, it is quite likely that conflict, which may be seen as a mere differing of opinions or views will occur. The theory argues that the eight dimensions of multiple intelligence are inherited and culturally derived. This suggests that in addition to being born with various MI, some intelligence are potentially determined by the cultural environment in which individuals socialize (Green, Hill, Friday, & Friday, 2005). This paper attempts to extend this line of argument by reviewing the connection between multiple intelligence and ethno-religious tolerance and peace. Thus, the main proposition of this study is that some of the eight dimensions of MI and the recent inclusion of the ‘existential and moral intelligence’ can be used to explain emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, and spiritual intelligence in the sphere of ethno-religious tolerance and peace.

Emotional intelligence is similar to Gardner’s (1983) intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence. While Salovey and Mayer (1990) defined emotional intelligence as “an individual’s ability to monitor one’s own and others’ emotions; to discriminate among the positive and negative effects of emotion;

and to use emotional information to guide one’s thinking and actions”, Gardner (1983) conceptualized intrapersonal intelligence as “self-knowledge of strengths, limitations, moods, motivations, and the ability to react to this knowledge”. Similarly, interpersonal intelligence is “the perception and distinctions made about moods, intentions, motivations and feelings of other people with specific attention given to facial expressions, bodily gestures, and voice”.

Cultural intelligence is related to natural intelligence and spatial intelligence. While Tuleja (2014) argues that cultural intelligence is “the ability to understand key cultural norms of a counterpart’s culture; to be ready to listen, observe, and alter one’s behavior or communication preferences; and to be open and flexible to reflect and change interaction strategies and expectations depending on the situation and the context, Gardner (1983) points that natural intelligence is the ‘capacity to recognize and make distinctions in the natural world, including flora and fauna’. Likewise, spatial intelligence is the ‘perception of the visual-spatial world and the capacity to transform those perceptions into form, color, space and relationships’.

Spiritual intelligence is consistent with existential and moral intelligence. While George (2006) defined spiritual intelligence as an ‘individual’s ability to utilize spiritual talents to know more, searching for the meaning, and analyzing the existential, spiritual, and practical issues’, Gardner (1983) conceptualizes existential intelligence as “an individual’s ability to use collective values and intuition to understand others and the world around them”. It has to do with understanding human existence. Moral intelligence has to do with the questions of what is good or evil, right or wrong, virtue or vice, justice or crime. The different components of multiple intelligence are interactive and work together in a variety of ways. Green, Hill, Friday and Friday (2005) posited that MI can be communicated through the use of workshops, training sessions, and problem-solving sessions. Based on the arguments above, the research framework in Figure 1 is proposed.



Emotional Intelligence and Ethno-Religious Tolerance

Emotional intelligence have four dimensions. These are perceiving, facilitating, understanding, and managing emotions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Perceiving emotion involves one's ability to detect and identify emotions in oneself and others. Facilitating emotion involves one's ability to use emotions productively in the context of various cognitive processes including creativity, problem solving, and reasoning. Understanding emotion concerns one's intelligence about the emotional system – more specifically, one's understanding of the emotional lexicon and how emotions combine, progress, or transition from one to the other. Managing emotion, often called emotion regulation or coping, involves one's ability to regulate self-emotions and among others in adaptive ways. There are several reasons why emotional intelligence is important for ethno-religious peace. Shih & Susanto (2010) noted that EI helps to manage functional conflict. Emotionally intelligent people may consider other people's interests in a conflict situation. Thus, a win-win solution produced by integrating and compromising styles may become a priority in resolving conflicts among individuals. The aim is to satisfy everyone's interests. Jordan and Troth (2002) showed that individuals with high emotional intelligence will have superior conflict resolution skills, by engaging in greater collaboration and problem-solving. In addition, individuals who have high emotional intelligence will have compassionate feeling towards others (Shih & Susanto, 2010). Therefore, the following proposition is formulated:

Proposition 1: There is a relationship between emotional intelligence and ethno-religious tolerance in northern Nigeria

Cultural Intelligence and Ethno-Religious Tolerance

Cultural intelligence is a major determinants of ethno-religious harmony. A culturally intelligent person is mindful, empathic, and understands differences in values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors and thus interacts well with people from other cultures and background (Rockstuhl, Seiler, Ang, Van Dyne, & Annen, 2011). A significant relationship was found between CQ and group acceptance and social interaction (Cheng, 2007; Westby, 2007). Studies have shown that CQ can reduce anxiety (Earley and Ang 2003). However, lack of cultural intelligence is often reflected in ignorance and disrespect of other cultures, which consequently may lead to confrontation, alienation, anxiety, and break-down of peace.

Limited studies have examined the effect of CQ on ethno-religious tolerance and peace. CQ is essential for personal wellbeing (Sew, 2015). It prepares individuals to express themselves, listen, act, and react when interacting with others. It helps to stimulate peoples' thinking and understanding about other cultures. It helps people search for explanation about cultural differences, develops the trust to control the unfamiliar situation, improves peoples' self-efficacy and energy in a cross-cultural situation, and uses verbal and non-verbal behavioral repertoires to act in an interaction (Bücker et al., 2014). As such possession of cultural intelligence is essential for mutual understandings and respect during ethno-religious interactions. Thus, it is postulated that:

Proposition 2: There is a relationship between cultural intelligence and ethno-religious tolerance in northern Nigeria.

Spiritual Intelligence and Ethno-Religious Tolerance

Religion has considerable impact on society and has been used to inspire or suppress conflict. Religion helps people to spiritually, politically and socially tolerate one another (Canetti-nisim, 2003), show obedience to constituted authority and norms (Mohdali & Pope, 2014). Spiritually intelligent people are more flexible, self-aware and insightful, and have more holistic approach in life. These individuals have respect for the religious doctrines of other people. Several studies have indicated positive relationship between spirituality and physical/mental health (Masood & Cheraghali, 2014), life satisfaction and well-being as well as deepening interpersonal relationship (Peter, 2013). Spiritual intelligence strengthens aspects of community interconnectedness and deeper values (Shah & Sachdev, 2014). It is almost certain that spirituality have always been significant influences on individual attitudes and behaviors in both private and public life. Similarly Abanes, Scheepers, & Sterkens, (2014) suggested a relationship between spiritual intelligence and ethno-religious peace. Following this submission, it is predicted that:

Proposition 3: There is a significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and ethno-religious peace in northern Nigeria.

Ethno-Religious Tolerance and National Security

People will always disagree on issues that divide them. However, individuals should disagree without demonizing those with whom they differ. This means that all points-of-view and points-of-difference can be heard without venomous attacks. Allport (1950) describe religion as intrinsic and extrinsic. People

who are high intrinsic are true believers in religious practice. Those who are high extrinsic view religious practice as an opportunity to achieve social or personal end. Intrinsic participants are more likely to be tolerant than those who are extrinsic and religiously inactive (Kim & Zhong, 2010). While Fislinger (1976) demonstrated that religiosity (prompt and punctual attendance) influenced tolerance, Kim & Zhong (2010) showed that it had negative effect on tolerance. Tolerant individuals are expected to endure what they found to be disgusting in order to coexist with those who were different; they accept the presence and participation of all kinds of people in society; they demonstrate openness, inclusiveness, and diversity to all ethnicities, races, and religions. Tolerance for difference increases communication among different people (Ihara & Yamamoto, 2016), and decreases level of nepotism (Wated & Sanchez, 2014). Based on the arguments above, it is postulated that:

Proposition 4: There is a relationship between ethno-religious tolerance and national security.

Conclusion

Ethnicity and religion are vital components of the private and public life of Nigerians. Since they have powerful emotional, cultural, and spiritual appeal and are too sensitive and easy to be manipulated and exploited, they have to be managed based on behavioural approaches. The major emphasis of this paper is to utilize leadership communication effectiveness to enlighten community members and other stakeholders about the importance of emotional, cultural, and spiritual intelligences in curtailing ethno-religious conflict. Thus the aim of the study is to help leaders create the consciousness and awareness towards consolidating and complementing sustainable peace and security in northern Nigeria. This study employed the lens of the theory of multiple intelligence to explain the role of leadership in combating ethno-religious tensions and conflicts and enhancing national security.

This paper identifies four important variables upon which leaders should create awareness for ensuring national security. These variables are emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, cultural intelligence, and ethno-religious tolerance. It is argued that the antecedents of ethno-religious tolerance are emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and cultural intelligence while national security is its outcome. The paper adds to the body of knowledge of national security by integrating the arguments of emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, cultural intelligence, and ethno-religious tolerance. Thus, the paper will help

leaders communicate the messages that will strengthen peoples' behaviour towards peace. Through the communication efforts, community members will develop the emotional intelligence, cultural awareness, and spiritual connectedness for ethno-religious tolerance that will walk the peace. Practically, this paper can be beneficial to traditional rulers, community leaders, youth leaders, civil societies, peace ambassadors, and religious clerics. Although, the paper makes strong arguments for national security, it is limited by the conceptual review method. Therefore, future studies should test the framework through an empirical studies by conducting a survey or an interview method of investigations.

Recommendations

Implementing the recommendations of this paper may aid communities to live together, trade peacefully and pay taxes to government. Similarly, the paper will help to curtail government spending on internally displaced victims, enhance economic growth and development, and life satisfaction. Therefore, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Leaders should collaborate with stakeholders involved in managing peace and security by enlightening community members to develop the emotional, cultural, and spiritual intelligences for peaceful coexistent.
2. Leaders should be organizing quarterly town hall meeting comprising of different ethnic and religious groups in a community, with the aim of encouraging open communication and understanding the cultural and religious differences among themselves.
3. Youths should utilize the trio of emotional, cultural, and spiritual intelligences to put aside intolerance, and accept dialogue rather than confrontation in spaces they differ and disagree.
4. Community members and religious group should denounce cultural and religious ethnocentrism and bias-sensitive utterances regarding opposing norms and doctrines.
5. Leaders should promote good governance based on the principles of rule of law, peace, responsiveness, consensus oriented, equity and inclusiveness, social investment, and transparency.
6. Leaders should provide social securities in the form of poverty alleviation programmes especially in trade, agriculture, and artisans/handicrafts to members of communities.
7. Leaders should not politicize peace and security. Victims should be adequately rehabilitated'

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