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**AN EVALUATION OF AFTERMATH
OF INTERRELIGIOUS CRISES
IN KISI AND SAKI OF
OYO STATE**

**AN ESSAY SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT
OF THEOLOGY, FACULTY OF THEOLOGICAL
STUDIES,**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
AWARD OF MASTER OF
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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the aftermath of inter-religious crises in Kisi and Saki in Oyo State. The target population for the study included the adherents of Christian, Islamic and African Traditional religions in Kisi and Saki. Using purposive sampling technique, a sample size of eighty (80) respondents was selected for the interview through a structured questionnaire with reliability co-efficient of 0.8.

From data collected, the study showed that:

1. Inter-religious crises in Kisi and Saki constitute a clog in the wheel of progress in efforts geared towards the process of development.
2. The aftermath of these crises included killing, vandalization of vehicles and houses, churches, public property and molestation of people.

The overall effect of all these was that socio-economic development in the areas was truncated. It also undermined the security of life and property. It was recommended among others, that the meaningful way out of this web of manipulation and politicization of religion is the education of adherents in their religion and those other than theirs. Furthermore, government must address the national socio-economic context, within which these have come to assume their corresponding relationship with the economy.

Conclusion

The conclusion that could be drawn from the findings of this work is that inter-religious crises in the areas constitute a clog in the wheel of progress in efforts geared towards the process of development. These incessant crises have become endemic in these areas of the state resulting into wanton destruction of lives and property undermining development as well as eroding social fabric requisite for cohesion and identity.

To a greater extent, a related conclusion at this juncture is that, the pragmatic involvement of the post-colonial state in Nigeria has fostered the weakness of its ability to decisively deal with the problem. Of great importance within this context is the bastardization of the

Nigerian constitution, which recognizes the secularity of the Nigerian State (FGN, 1999, 12).

Also, drawing from our analysis of the immediate and remote causes of inter-religious crises especially within the period between 1995-2005 in the areas, it is concluded in this research work that they were predicated on a combination of interwoven factors of which the pre-eminent one is the economic depression.

Consequently, this had an attending effect on the socio-political fabric of the areas, resulting in untold hardships, which gave boom to a burgeoning fundamentalism among adherents of the two major religions.

Recommendations

Stemming from the findings of our analyses and theoretical orientation regarding the notorious phenomenon of inter-religious crises in Kisi and Saki, with a specific reference to the time frame covering the period 1995-2005, we have come to realize the hard fact that in order to address such a hydra-headed problem, well coordinated and concerted counter-efforts must be put in place so as to forge a popular struggle to break this nagging chain of manipulation. In the light of this view, therefore, this research work proffers the following short and long-term recommendations directed at the individual adherents of the major religions, religious leaders and the government who are perceived as the principal facilitators of this manipulation.

- 1 On the level of short-term solutions, the individual adherents must bear in mind this syllogism that man is at the center of society, and society is a product of man just like all the other institutions within it. Thus, religion, which is likewise a product of man, cannot survive without him. This makes man the first focus. In this regard therefore, adherents must know the tenets of their religion. It is requisite of them to be knowledgeable and conversant with the teachings of their religious leaders.
- 2 On the part of the religious leaders, if they will remain conscious of the fact that one of the easiest and cheapest ways of winning converts is through persuasion rather than compulsion, then, they should make sure that their preaching engagements are persuasive and not inciting or insulting. They should as a matter of necessity, weigh seriously and critically their utterances and actions.
- 3 They should also teach their followers the basic tenets of their own religions and those of others so as to foster a better understanding between them. This recommendation is closely related to the fact that majority of our population in these particular areas is illiterate. This handicap renders them totally dependent on what their leaders say or do. Most importantly, religious leaders and political elite must refrain from manipulating their followers for their selfish ends, but rather create sustainable fora for their inter-religious communication

and dialogue while at the same time, teaching respect and upholding the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

- 4 The Federal Government too has a responsibility. It must uphold and enforce the constitutional provision stating the secularity of the Nigerian State. In this regard, all forms of ambiguities that create room for hesitations must be eliminated.
- 5 While it had been noted that the state existing within the secular context, has the responsibility to protect the rights of its citizenry as well as their desire to practice any religion of their choice, it must also be stated that the state, should withdraw from active involvement in religious matters. Most importantly, the rights and desires to self-recognition and determination of the minorities of these areas must be respected and protected to enhance their feeling of sense of belonging.
- 6 Likewise, it should sever its relations with any international religious organization or institution, as well as the soliciting and use of its resources to fund religious structures. These, histories have shown not only to be the center points and catalysts to religious conflicts, but have also served to heighten awareness in general.
- 7 The logic of earning fundamental success in nation development necessarily requires a certain level of patriotism and sense of nationalism, which must be inculcated in the people through a conscious process of socialization. Given this therefore, the Federal Government should as a matter of need, embark upon a

long-term deliberate socialization and mass education campaign aimed at mobilizing the entire citizenry for civil orientation. These campaigns should also be targeted at engendering a viable and durable democratic ethos devoid of acrimony, suspicion and bitterness. This will go a long way in helping to create a sustainable mutual confidence, understanding and cooperation between the leaders and the led. This will also aid in harnessing the abundant human and material resources, which abound in the country in an orderly focused manner, which ensures the galvanization of the Nigerian populace for nation development.