Economic Management of Ethno-Religious Crises in Nigeria: A Strategic Model

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Abstract

The disturbing economic, political and social consequences of ethno-religious crises and conflicts in Nigeria are major concerns of all stakeholders in the Nigerian development process. We observe that the democratisation efforts in Nigeria appear to have failed woefully as a result of ethno-religious crises. The paper focused on the critical issues revolving around ethno-religious crises in Nigeria, ranging from the origin to management strategies. The aim was to make valuable contribution to effective management of the ethno-religious crises. The methodology is purely analytical, with literature review as the major source of information on the origin, causes, and existing management strategies of the ethno-religious crises. Analysis of the relevant information revealed the following, among others: first, is the existence of multiple ethnic and religious groups in Nigeria that are difficult to manage; second is the existence of political, social and economic hardships that often lead to alliances among ethnic and religious groups; third is the difficulty in the democratisation of the Nigerian society due to ethno-religious crises, and finally, lack of effective strategies for management of the ethno-religious crises. Based on these findings, the paper recommended the use of a crisis management model, developed by Smith and Spipika (1993), complemented by the following: (i) adoption of a political culture, coupled with adequate provisions for all ethnic groups, religious groups, and general interest of the Nigerian citizenry; (ii) elimination of existing economic, social and political policies that are capable of reinforcing ethnic and religious differences; (iii) confrontation of the realities of ethnic minorities in Nigeria; (iv) ensuring that political, social, and economic development strategies form the integral parts of the approaches to conflict prevention, management, and peace-building efforts; (v) encouraging inclusiveness in the act of nation building; and, (vi) identification of potential sources of ethnic-religious conflicts through rigorous individual and institutional research.

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Introduction

Unlike the developed countries of the Western world, Africa as a whole has been battling with the issue of democratic dividends, some of which are positive and others negative. It is the negative aspects of such dividends that have been posing challenges and resultant instability in Africa in general and, specifically, in Nigeria. The most visible of the democratically-oriented challenges in Nigeria appear to have taken the form of ethno-religious crises and conflicts.

Some of the ethno-religious conflicts of national and international attention since the emergency of democratic government in the year 1999 in Nigeria include; the Tiv vs Jukun, Jukun vs Kuteb, Chamba vs Kuteb in Tararba State, Ogoni vs Andon in Rivers State, the Sharia crisis in Kaduna State, the Tiv vs other ethnic groups in Azara of Nasarawa State in 2001, the Hausa/Fulani vs the Anaguta, Afizere and Berom in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State in 2001, the Tarok vs Hausa/Fulani in Wase Local Government Area in 2004, the Goemai vs the Hausa/Fulani in Shendam Local government Area of Plateau State in 2002, the religious violence of Maidiguri, Borno State in 2005, the Quan vs Pan in Quan'Pan Local Government Area of Plateau State in 2006, the Hausa/Fulani vs the Anaguta, Afizere and Berom in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State in 2008, and the 'Boko Haram' violence that engulfed Borno, Yobe, Bauchi and Kano states in July, 2009 (Kwaja, 2009). The Boko Haram issues have continued to dominate the Nigerian security challenges.

These crises-related conflicts have not only put the Nigerian security environment in doubt, but dampened its economic progress through globalisation. In this presentation, we examine the nature of ethno-religious crises in Nigeria, their principal causes, and the emerging issues with the aim of identifying useful strategies in the management of such crises. The methodology will be basically a literature review of the emerging issues in the ethno-religious crises in Nigeria, analysis of the existing approaches in the crises management, and suggestions for effective strategies in the crises management. The rest of this presentation will be organised as follows: an overview of the ethno-religious crises in Nigeria; the emerging issues in the relationship between ethno-religious crises and democracy in Nigeria; an overview of the existing approaches to the management of the crises in Nigeria; and recommended strategies in the management of ethno-religious crises.

An Overview of the Structure of Ethno-Religious Crises in Nigeria

A brief examination of the composition of ethnic groups in Nigeria reveals that Nigeria has on record about 56 ethnic groups, identified by Iwaloye and Ibeanu (1997) as follows:

As at 1999, Nigeria has about 56 ethnic groups on record:

1. Agoi 2. Alago 3. Angas 4. Annang 5. Baatonum 6. Balta 7. Bassawa 8. Berom
9. Bokyi 10. Buduma 11. Buri 12. Busa 13. Chamba-Daka 14. Chomo-Karim 15. Delta
   minorities 16. Dendi 17. Dulawa 18. Ebira 19. Edo 20. Efik 21. Eggon 22. Ekon 23. Eloyi
24. Gade 25. Gwadara 26. Gwari 27. Hausa-Fulani 28. Ibibio 29. Idoma 30. Igala 31. Igbo
32. Ijo 33. Isoko 34. Itshekiri 35. Jarwa 36. Jukun 37. Kadara 38. Kamaku 39. Kanuri
40. Karekare 41. Karnbari 42. Katang 43. Kurama 44. Mada 45. Mambila 46. Margi
47. Migili 48. Mumuye 49. Nupe 50. Ora 51. Shuwa 52. Tiv 53. Urhobo 54. Waja
55. Yekhee 56. Yoruba

There are two dominating religious groups in Nigeria including, Christianity and Muslim religions.

Causes of Ethno-Religious Crises in Nigeria

Machava (2008:2) linked the roots of ethnic and religious crises to colonialism and the cold war, while some other scholars had argued that ethnic and religious crises are rooted in bad governance, politicisation of ethnic and religious identities, and, competition for political power by the ethnic and religious communities (Anarfi, 2004; Conversi, 1999). On the same token, Takaya (1992:112) identified major factors that gave rise to the politicization of ethnic and religious identities in Nigeria as follows:

(i) the existence of two or more ethnic and religious groups with numerical strengths that can significantly affect the outcome and direction of a democratic political process;

(ii) the instrumentalisation of ethnicity and religion as legitimizing tool of control in instances of political threats;

(iii) Existence of ascendant radical thinking within a politically significant ethnic or religious group capable of initiating conflicts; and,

(iv) Existence of political, social or economic hardships in the society that can cause alliances among ethnic and religious groups.

The available data indicate that, between 1980 and 2009 about 50 religious crises occurred in Nigeria, with their consequent economic, political and social implications. This is summarised by table I below.

Table 1: Selected Cases of Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Nigeria

S/N	Date	Location	Principal Actors
1.	Thursday, May 01, 1980	Zaria (Kaduna State)	Disturbances in Zaria during which property belonging to mainly Christians were destroyed
2.	December, 18-29, 1980	Yan-Awaki Ward in Kano (Kano State)	Riots by *Maitatsine Sects.* 118 people died. Extensive damage to property
3.	October 29-30, 1982	Bullumkutu, Maiduguri (Borno State)	*Kala-Kato and Maitatisine* 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,	*Maitatsine* Sect. 568 died. Wanton destruction of property
6.	April 26-28, 1985	Pantami Ward, Combe (Bauchi State)	*Maitatsine* Sect. 105 died. Wanton destruction of property
7.	March, 1986	Ilorin (Kwara State)	Muslims and Christians clashed during a Christian procession at Easter
8.	March, 1987	Kafanchan (Kaduna State)	Class between Muslims and Christians at the College of Education, Kafanchan. Loss of some lives and the burning of some mosques by Christians and natives Kajes.
9.	March 1987	Katsina, Funtua, Zaria, Gusau and Kaduna (Kaduna State)	Wave of religious riots in which Muslims burnt downs numerous church building s, and damaged properties belonging to Christians. Many lives were lost.
10.	February. 1988	Kaduna, Kaduna Polytechnic (Kaduna State)	Religious riots, ostensibly among students, destroyed the foundation walls of the Christian chapel
11.	April, 1991	Katsina (Katsina State)	Religious violence spear headed by Malam Yahaya Yakubu, leader of the fundamentalist Shiite sect in

			Katsina. It was protest over a blasphemous publication Fidi Times. Several lives were lost and property destroyed.
12.	April, 1991	Tafawa Balewa (Bauchi State)	Started as a quarrel between a Fulani man and a Sayawa meant seller in Tafawa Balewa. Escalated into full blown violence and later took the colouring of a religious war in Bauchi. Several lives were lost and property valued over hundreds of million naira was destroyed.
13.	October, 1991	Kano (Kano State)	A peaceful procession initiated by the Izala sect to halt Rev. Reinhard Bonnke from having a 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.
14.	May, 1992	Zangon Kataf, (Kaduna state)	A communal feud between the Katafs and the Hausas later took the dimension of inter-religious ware between Muslims and Christians in other major cities of Kaduna State. Several lives were lost and properties were destroyed
15.	January, 1993	Funtua, (Katsina State)	The Kalakato religious sect assaulted the village head and burnt down the police vehicle. Lives and property were also lost
16.	December, 1994	Kano (Kano State)	Communal violence triggered oil by the beheading of a Christian who had allegedly desecrated the Quoran.
17.	May, 1995	Kano (Kano State)	Communal violence triggered off by quarrel between Hausa and Ibo led to the burning of houses, churches and shops and killing of innocent people.
18.	Thursday, July 22, 1999	Kano Reprisal Killing	Hausa/Fulani youth took vengeance on the killing of their Kith and Kin in Sagamu. Their target was the Yoruba community.
19.	February 28, 2000	Kaduna Mayhem (Kaduna State)	Kaduna city exploded in violence as Muslim and Christian extremists and other hoodlums clashed over the proposal to introduced Sharia.
20.	Friday, April 14, 2000	Agyragu Crisis (Nasarawa State)	Communal clash that started with a protest again the location of Local Government Headquarters. The militant youth group started the riot and later took to the streets, killing and destroying.
21.	July 2000	Tsagari Crisis (Kwara)	Clash between Tsagari and Share communities of Kwara State which claimed several lives
22.	September 8, 2000	Kaltungo religious (Combe State)	A religious violence that was sparked off by the presence of the states Sharia implementation committee.
23.	October 17, 2000	OPC-Hausa/Fulani (Kwara)	A face off between the militant members of OPC and Hausa/Funlani community over supremacy of Emirate system in the state.
24.	Saturday,	Minna reprisal	Violent ethnic crisis erupted after the OPC assaults

	October 27, 2000	(Niger)	in Kwara and Lagos States.
25.	Saturday, December 02, 2000	Hadejia Crisis (Jigawa)	A sectarian disturbance that was caused by a debate between Muslim and Christians in Hadeja (Jigawa). There was wanton destruction of worship places
26.	Thursday, June, 28,2001	Azara crisis (Nasarawa)	An ethnic conflict between the Tiv and the Azara indigences. It started with gruesome killing of an Azara traditional leader, and later spread to the Tiv village, with the Tiv community on the defense.
27.	Friday, September 07, 2001	Jos crisis	A violent ethnic/religious crisis between the Muslim/Hausa Fulani and Christian/Indigences. The subject of discoved between the Jasawa Development Association and Plateau Youth council was over political appointment in Jos North.
28.	October 12, 2001	Kano Riot	A peaceful anti-American protest over the bombing of Afghanistan turned violent, taking ethnic and religious dimension, it degenerated into uncontrollable violence which claimed lives and damaged properties and places of worship.
29.	Monday, October, 29, 2003	Tiv-Jukun/Fulani Conflict	An ethnic clash between Tivs and Jukwun/Fulani which was an extension of the May 2001 clash and could be linked to the protracted dispute between both sides. Newsivatch reported that 16 soldiers were killed which later led to the gruesome revenge on the Tives, by the Nigerian Army.
30.	Friday, November 02, 2001	Gwantu crisis	A clash that started on a political ground (over the relocation of LG Headquarters) later took on ethno-religious dimension in which places of worship were destroyed
31.	Sunday, December 30, 2001	Vwag crisis	A violent communal conflict in Vwang district between the indigences and non indigences, exploded in the backdrop of the September 7 Jos crisis. It started when an illegal group of 40 men attacked the district Head of vwang. It also had religious colouring.
32.	January 18, 2002	Awe crisis	A renewed communal clash between two indigenous communities in Awe Local Government of Nasarawa State. The cause was not certain but two people were killed and several others injured.
33.	May 2, 2000	Jos Mayhem	Another mayhem that followed PDP congress but later took an ethno-religious colour
34.	May 2, 2002	Fulani-Irigwe crisis	An ethnic clash between the Hausa/Fulani and the Irigwe indigences in Basa, Plateau which was said to be a reprisal attack.
35.	Saturday, June 01, 2002	Yelwa-Shendam Mayhem (Plateau)	A religious-cum ethnic fracas between the native people (predominantly Christians) and Hausa settlers (predominantly Muslims). This violence extended to about four Local Government councils in Southern Plateau.
36.	Monday, July 01, 2002	Wase (Plateau)	The Yelwa-Shendam riots spilled over to Wase
37.	Tuesday, July 01, 2003	Edo/Kogi	Communal clashes between border communities in Edo and Kogi States Ekepedo and Ogori over ladn ownerships.

38.	Thursday, January 1, 2004	Ganye, Adamawa	Clash between Fulani herdsmen and farmers over grazing lands.
39.	Thursday, January 1, 2004	Yobe	Militant Islamic group operating under the name of Muhajiran launched a Taliban-like attack on police. Men of the Nigerian Army killed five and arrested several others.
40.	Sunday; February 1, 2004	Wase/Kanam (Plateau)	Violent clash between Mavo and Taroh communities, which claimed II lives. Suspected Taroh youth were alleged to have raided Mavo villages.
41.	Saturday, February 1, 2004	Wase/Kanam (Plateau)	Communal clash over land ownership between Minda and Kparev groups. Several lives were lost.
42.	Saturday, April 3, 2004	Makarfi, Kaduna	Religious protest in Makarfi twon over the desecration of the Quran by a Christian teenager.
43.	Sunday; April 11, 2004	Lantang South, Plateau	Continued clashes that led to the sacking of Taroh villages in Lantang South LGC by suspected Hausa-Fulani insurgents.
44.	Monday, April 26, 2004	Bakin Chiyawa Plateau	Renewed hostilities launched by suspected displaced Fulani herdsmen. The conflict was believed to be spill over of the ethno religious crisis that has been bedevil ling southern Plateau Local Government of Langtang South and North, Wase, Kanam and Shendam.
45.	Saturday, May 1, 2004	Yelwa Shendam, Plateau State	A fresh ethno religious mayhem that claimed over 650 lives and over 250 women abducted by suspected Taroh militia.
46.	Wednesday, May 12, 2004	Kano	Kano may hem following the Yelwa Shendam ethno religious crisis in Plateau. Non Muslims were attacked in reprisal of the Plateau crisis. Over 200 lives were lost and the traditional ruler of the area deposed.
47.	Saturday, June 8, 2008	KonshishaGwer, Benue	Boundary disputes between neighbouring Konshisha an Gwer communities. Thirteen lives were lost.
48.	Tuesday, June 8, 2004	Numan, Adamawa	Ethno-religious crisis in Numan over the contruction of a mosques minaret over the Humma Bachamas palace. Over 50 people were feared killed and the traditional ruler of the area deposed.
49.	Tuesday, August 3, 2004	Quanpam, Plateau	Fresh outbreak of violence in Lankaka village. Suspected armed milita from neighbouring state allegedly stormed the village community killing two and razing twenty houses.
50.	Monday, September 27, 2004	Limankara, Borno	A self-styled Taliban group hiding on the Goza hills and Madara mountains on the north-eastern boarder with Cameron raid police station killing officers and stealing ammunition.

It is important to note an abridged history of ethno-religious crises in Nigeria, beginning from the pre-independence period.

1. The Pre-Independence Inter-Religious Conflict

Colonialism was an important variable in the political economy of the ethnic groups that were later forced to become Nigeria. Agbodike (1999: 113) noted that colonialism changed the trends of events in the historical process of ethnic groups in Nigeria. He observes that colonialism led to a radical departure from original and traditional setting to distorted cultural and political values of Nigerian people. According to Agbodike (1999), Colonialism came with new religion, rejects indigenous cultural values and introduced alien culture through new education style and religious teaching.

The new religions were noted to have re-oriented the people and destroyed traditional pre-colonial non-capitalist economic system; dismantling of the pattern and structure of indigenous socio-economic life; generation of a culture of dependency and the creation of a class of natives that are exploitative and ethno-religious conscious.

It was also noted that an observed divide and rule strategy applied by the British in the colonial era was aimed at enabling them control the Nigerian political economy. They incited one ethnic group (religion) against the other and assumed moderator when struggles ensured, hence distracting the people from identifying the British as their common enemy. Most conflicts occurred between the North (Moslem) and South (Christian) though these categories are not exclusive.

On the same token, Agi (1987:89) observed that the brand of Christianity which came with colonialism was with a secularizing tendency. The disparity in the level of Christian penetration of Southern part of Nigeria and Northern Nigeria was pronounced. This was aptly explained by Jihadist capture of the Northern Nigeria and the comfort the colonialists found with the already existing Northern political structures which they tended to preserve.

This disparity notwithstanding, both religions served the purposes of the colonial masters. As a matter of fact, it was the colonial administration, education and religiousity that sowed the seed of ethno-religious consciousness in Nigeria and hence ethno-religious-conflicts.

2. Post- Independence Inter-religious Conflicts

According to Agbodike (1999:113), with the regionalization of Nigeria, which restructured the nation into tri-national state, sectional loyalties were introduced into the politics of Nigeria. In addition, it led to serious intra-class conflicts within and outside regions. It also led to the dominance of some sectional ruling classes, and the formation of political parties as well as the game of politics played on ethnic basis resulted in the marginalization of ethnic minorities in the country.

The interests of the constituents of ruling class were observed to be mutually exclusive and often antagonistic. Numerous strategies were used by this institutive ruling class to express their exclusion in decision making process of the state. The strategies ranged from religious violence to military coup d'état. Within these strategies were other strategies, including: the instigation of 1962/63 census crises, the declaration of state of emergency in Western region in 1983, instigation of the 1964 general strike under the auspices of Joint Action Committee of all Nigerian trade unions, creation of states, indigenization policy, privatization attempt, 1967/70 civil war, election annulment of 1993, election rigging and religious conflicts of the Northern Nigeria.

Religion had formed the basis for expression of disequilibrium in Nigeria, so that religious institutions became important vehicle for the expression of popular discontent and for elaboration of alternative survival strategies. This explains the prevalence of the use of religion in the expression of class discontent in Nigeria.

Though there have not been major attempts to find solutions to the Nigerian ethno-religious crises, as well as identify the causes, the literature has attempted to enumerate some conflict influencing factors as follows (Agbede, 2010):

1. Political Factor

It appears the most outstanding among the conflict influencing factors is the role of political operators who invoke ethnicity and religious mobilization to gain political relevance. Indeed it has been observed that most of the ethno-religious crises in Nigeria can be traceable to politics.

2. Economic Factors

Individual and community claims over ownership or use of land, water resources, and other tangible or intangible interests continue to provoke conflicts and crises between communities and ethnic groups.

3. Social Factors

Disagreements over cultural, ritual and other social practices may likely provoke violent conflicts. Chieftaincy matters are not left out either.

4. Defective Legal Framework

The legal framework in Nigeria has been blamed for the incidence of ethno-religious crises in Nigeria. This can be reflected in the following observations:

(i) involvement of religious advancement as a political manifesto in contesting for election in a multi-ethnic and religious country like Nigeria;
(ii) military-imposed constitution that conferred enormous powers on the President including control over the Police and the Electoral Commission;
(iii) the "federal character" clause which was inserted to protect minority interest but has now become a qualification for members of the majority groups to get appointed to positions to which they have neither the requisite qualification nor the experience; and,
(iv) denial of opportunity for self-expression, selfactualization and self-development. Such deprivation and frustration can inevitably lead to agitation and conflicts.

5. Clumsy, blunt and near paralyzed Investigatory and Law enforcement

Machinery

The pervasive corruption, indiscipline and lawlessness on the part of Law Enforcement and investigatory agencies appear to have made nonsense of the dignity of Law in Nigeria. This situation has led to loss of confidence in the government.

6. Leadership Failures

It appears Nigeria is yet to produce a charismatic leader with the ability to organize responsively its various ethnic and religions groups. Nigeria has not experienced a leader that has demonstrated outstanding ability to lead and inspire confidence in the various ethnic and religious groups.

7. Failure on the Part of Government

The government has failed in the following ways:

(i) Inability to resolve poverty and unemployment issues since the mid-1980s.
(ii) Insincerity on the part of government. Reports of Panels set up to investigate various wrong doings continue to gather dust while government appears unconcerned.
(iii) Inability of government to pay adequate attention to early warning signals of crises and conflicts.
(iv) Inability of government to effectively check corrupt practices of officials and ensure equitable distribution of the economy's wealth.

Emerging Issues in the Relationship between Ethno-Religious Crises and Democracy in Nigeria

It can be said that the famous emerging issues on the relationship between ethno-religious crises and democracy in Nigeria are those of ethnic and religious marginalization. Anugwom (2000) has identified conflict and distrust as the bane of former democratic experiments in Nigeria.

She added that, since the late 1980s, ethnicity in Nigeria has assumed disturbing new dimensions, the most crucial of which arc the issues of marginalisation and agitations by ethnic minorities. In addition, marginalisation breeds suspicion, distrust, heightens ethnic tensions and may eventually lead to conf1ict over the sharing and allocation of power and national resources. It follows that democratic tradition, which is imperative for economic and social development, may not be feasible in an environment charactised by ethnic conflicts, marginalisation and crises.

It has been noted that, since independence from British colonial rule in 1960, Nigeria has experimented democracy about three times: the first Republic, second Republic, and third Republic democracies, and is presently engaged in the fourth attempt.

The first two democracies were derailed by coup d' etats, while the third hardly got off the ground before it was again overruled by the military. According to Ungar

(1989), the first five years of Nigeria's post-independence were chaotic and bloody, ending with two coups in 1966. Ungar(1989) noted that the bitterness and infighting which characterised these five years, were due to the fact that Nigeria had been a federation of three large regions before independence, so that when this changed, ethnic rivalries became the order of the day. The democratic experience of the 1960s was not only derailed by the military, but by severe ethnic rivalries arising from competition for power and national resources.

As Ibrahim and Pereira (1993) put it, during the colonial period, categorization of linguistic groups as tribes and their observed differences led to the severe ethnic rivalries, distrust, and fierce competition for power and resources. This eventually corroded the first attempt at democracy in the country. The story appears the same for all attempts toward democratic governance in Nigria.

From all indications, it appears clear that democracy in Nigeria can only be feasible when perceptions of marginalization and acts portending the marginalisation of ethnic groups can be confronted directly. Therefore, the present attempts at democracy as a form of sustainable socio-cultural formation in Nigeria, can only be attained if fears of ethnic marginalization were erased.

Ethno-religious crises in Nigeria have defied resolution as they have been difficult to tract. These crises appeared to have been impelled by groups who believe the crises could be fundamental for their survival as a group. Emphasis on religious values by ethnic-religious leaders often concealed more than it revealed. It can conceal the fact that behind these religious values preservation is the economic interest of the religious leaders. These leaders preserve these values as they favour them, and would embark on even intra-religious conflicts to preserve their interests.

The Existing Approaches to the Management of Ethno-Religious Crises in Nigeria and the way Forward

The general observation has been that Nigeria as a Nation appear weak in issues related to the control and management of ethno-religious crises. The argument is that the political and legal structure does not make room for crises interventions in both the States and Federal government. Such weaknesses have impacted significantly on the management of ethnic and religious conflicts in view of the fact that the state has increasingly become less responsive to the security needs of its citizens.

The inability of the government to effectively perform its core functions of providing or guaranteeing security for the people, as well as act as regulator has also led to a weakening of its bargaining power and capacity in relation to the ethnic and religious groups. This situation poses a serious challenge for national security. In fact, it has been observed that loyalty to ethnic or religious cleavages is being placed far and above the Nation, as people prefer to be seen and described based on the ethnic or religious groups they belong rather than their status as citizens of Nigeria.

Regardless of the above challenges, the Nigerian government has, to a large extent, attempted to managed ethnic and religious pluralism through the following strategies:

(i) In the design and report of population census, questions of religious or ethnic identity were downplayed;

(ii) The promotion of inter-faith cooperation through the setting up of the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC), which consists of clerics from both Christian and Muslim leaders. At present, NIREC is co-chaired by Arch-Bishop John Oneiykan and the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Sa'ad Abubakar III;

(iii) The establishment of the Federal Character Commission (FCC) in the Nigerian constitution, so as to ensure inclusiveness of all the state of the federation in appointments, University admission and promotion among others;

(iv) The application of the principle of the North –South power sharing arrangement. For instance, if the President comes from the North, the Vice President would no doubt come from the South and vice versa; and

(v) Emphasis on the non-registration of political parties with ethnic or religious colourations so as not to heighten ethnic or religious apathy in the electoral process.
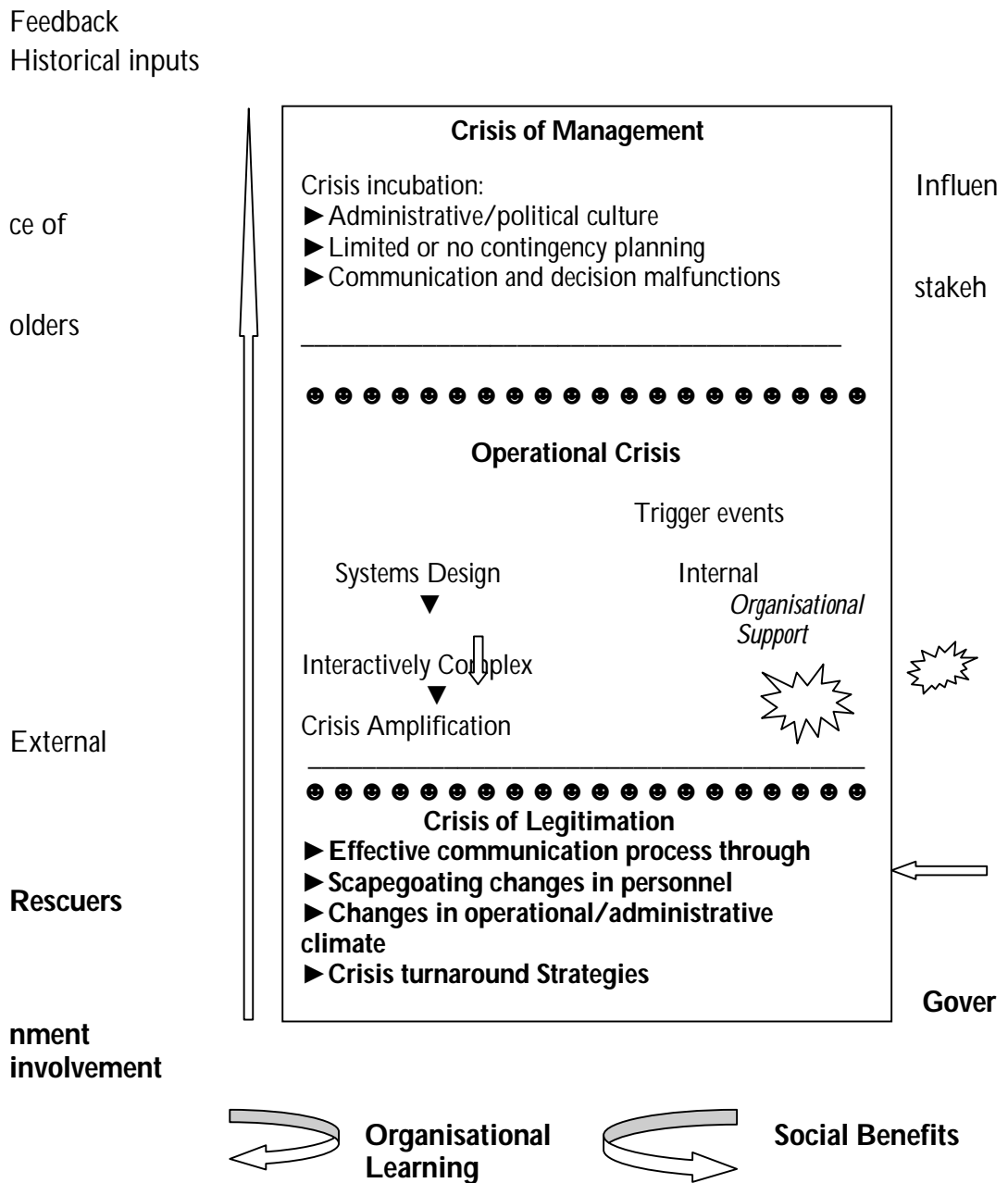
In addition, the Federal government has become increasingly engaged in the management of ethnic and religious conflicts through the use of maximum retaliatory measure to respond to emergencies, as witnessed in Zaki-Biam, in Benue State, as well as other non-coercive means such as treaties, as witnessed in Kaduna and Plateau States, demobilizing and reintegrating combatants; designing and enforcing civil and criminal legal systems; training police in the area of community policing, reconstructing and operating public utilities as well as the reconstruction of education and health systems.

An economic assessment of the above management strategic would reveal some lack of linkages to the root cause of ethnic crises, resulting in further problems of unresolved crisis of management, administrative crisis, and crisis of legitimation. To contribute to effectiveness in the management of ethno-religious crises in Nigeria, we attempt to adapt the crisis management model developed by Smith and Spipika (1993). We will be guided by Heath (1998) proposition that crisis management should aim at:

1) planning and providing for possible crisis events which may occur – the pre-crisis stage;
2) reducing or mitigating the impacts of a crisis by improving the response management – the crisis; and,
3) determining effectively the damage caused by the crisis – the post-crisis stage.

In a nutshell, the Smith and Spipika's model is represented in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: A Model of Crisis Management

Feedback
Historical inputs

Crisis of Management

Crisis incubation:
► Administrative/political culture
► Limited or no contingency planning
► Communication and decision malfunctions

Influen

stakeh

ce of

olders

☻ ☻

Operational Crisis

Trigger events

Systems Design   Internal
        ▼   *Organisational*
                              Support
Interactively Complex
        ▼
Crisis Amplification

External

☻ ☻ ☻ ☻ ☻ ☻ ☻ ☻ ☻ ☻ ☻ ☻ ☻ ☻ ☻ ☻ ☻ ☻ ☻ ☻
Crisis of Legitimation
►Effective communication process through
►Scapegoating changes in personnel
►Changes in operational/administrative
climate
►Crisis turnaround Strategies

Rescuers

Gover

nment
involvement

Organisational   **Social Benefits**
Learning

Source: Adapted from Smith and Spipika (1993)

The above model is made up of three distinct phases of the crisis management process: crisis of management; operational/administrative crisis; and, crisis of legitimation. The model in effect recommends a process which enables the various stages of crisis to be managed. The model also allows for learning within the process. As can be observed, the feedback loop represents the passing of the crisis and lessons to be learned so that the system or organisation can return to the pre-crisis stage.
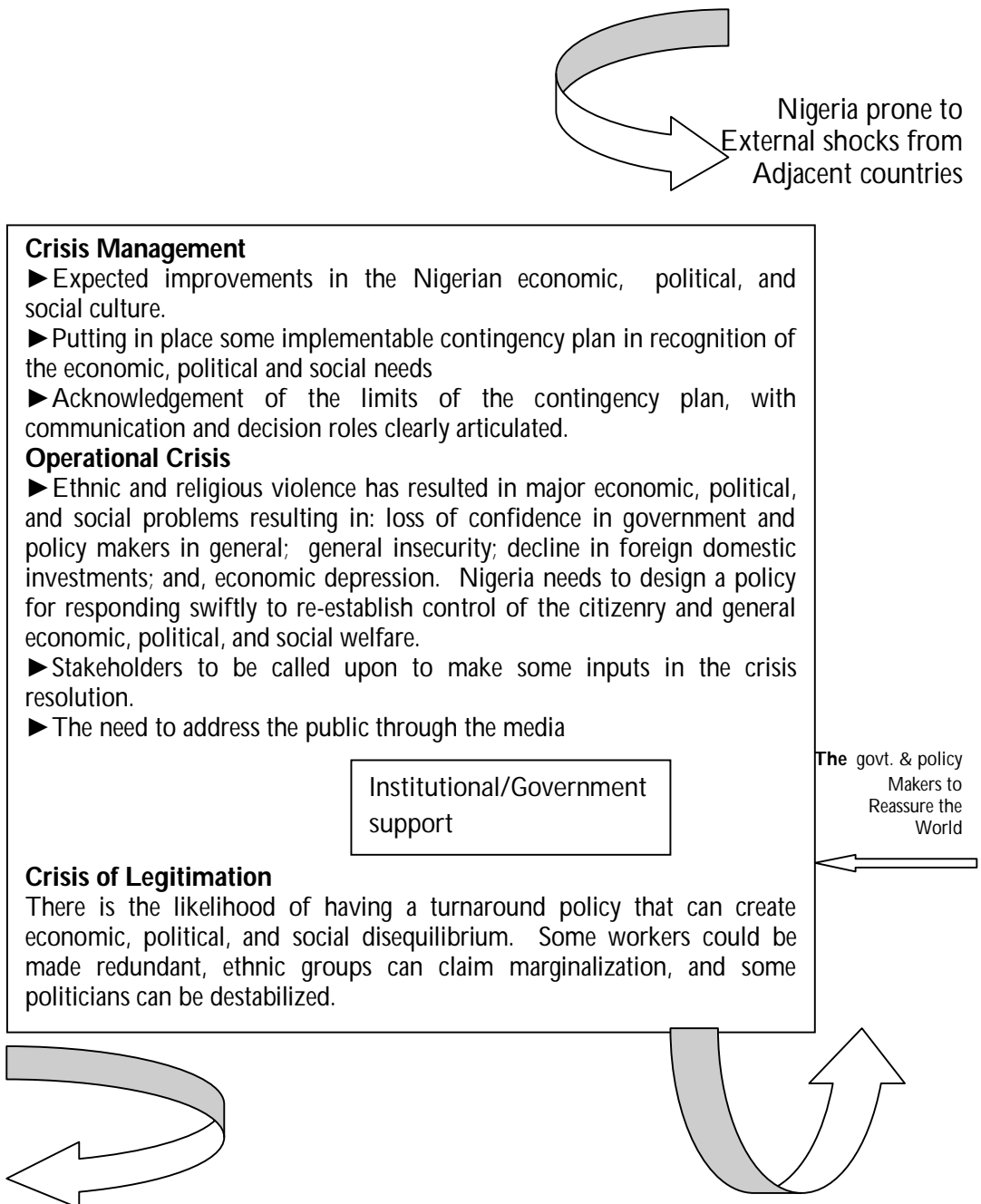
According to Harrison (2000), in the pre-crisis period or stage, organizations need to be aware of the possible scenarios that may occur and activate a successful planning that involves a large number of staff in order to experience how to react in a real crisis situation.

A good thing about the crisis management model is that it involves an on-going process which can be reviewed and improved each time a crisis occurs. The model suggests basic requirements that need to be put in place for an effective crisis management. Such requirements include: (i) an improvement in the economic, political and social culture; (ii) setting limits of contingency planning in addition to reasonable and practicable contingency plans; (iii) effective communication system; and, (iv) policy makers capable of identifying operational crisis and crisis of legitimation.

We now attempt to apply the model in the management of ethno-religious crisis in Nigeria. At the first instance, we recommend the fulfillment of the four major requirements of the crisis management model as enumerated above. In addition, it is required that Nigeria begins to think of putting in place an appropriate policy of crisis management. Such policy will be expected to have recognised major economic, political and social indicators. The policy should also state the communication and decision network or flows, along with clear role definitions and assignments to ensure that crises can be handled swiftly and effectively at an the appropriate level. Training should be an important part of the policy, so that the entire system and policy makers would be aware of potential crisis situation.

Applying the crisis management model, figure 2 below is illustrative.

Figure 2: Application of the Crisis Management Model to the Ethno-Religious Crisis

Nigeria prone to External shocks from Adjacent countries

Crisis Management
►Expected improvements in the Nigerian economic, political, and social culture.
►Putting in place some implementable contingency plan in recognition of the economic, political and social needs
►Acknowledgement of the limits of the contingency plan, with communication and decision roles clearly articulated.
Operational Crisis
►Ethnic and religious violence has resulted in major economic, political, and social problems resulting in: loss of confidence in government and policy makers in general; general insecurity; decline in foreign domestic investments; and, economic depression. Nigeria needs to design a policy for responding swiftly to re-establish control of the citizenry and general economic, political, and social welfare.
►Stakeholders to be called upon to make some inputs in the crisis resolution.
►The need to address the public through the media

Institutional/Government support

The govt. & policy Makers to Reassure the World

Crisis of Legitimation
There is the likelihood of having a turnaround policy that can create economic, political, and social disequilibrium. Some workers could be made redundant, ethnic groups can claim marginalization, and some politicians can be destabilized.

From the above illustration, we observe that crisis management can be a key strategic issue in Nigeria. Such issue needs to be addressed by the policy makers as a central concern. As a matter of fact, crisis management in Nigeria should be an integral part of our strategic planning processes.

To complement the requirements of the crisis management model, Nigeria needs to also consider the following alternatives:

(i)   Adoption of a political culture that makes adequate provisions for all the interests and groups in the Nigerian society

(ii) Elimination of the existing practices which are known to be reinforcing ethnic and religious differences

(iii) Confrontation of the realities of ethnic minorities, who may have been neglected in the dynamics of the Nigerian power and resource struggle.

(iv) Ensuring that political, social and economic development strategies are integral parts of a well-focused approach to conflict prevention, management and peace-building efforts.

(v) Ensuring inclusiveness in the task of nation building, equitable political representation, social justice, mutual respect and tolerance among the diverse groups that make up the country.

(vi) Identification of potential sources of ethnic-religious conflicts through rigorous individual and institutional research.

Conclusion

The focus of this paper was on ethno-religious crises in Nigeria, with the aim of making suggestions on effective management strategies. The origin of ethno-religious crises in Nigeria was discussed at length, alluding to the fact that Nigeria had lost its tradition of coexistence through colonialism. The paper identified ethno-religious crises in Nigeria as the consequences of the following, among others:

(i)   existence of multiple ethnic and religious groups; (ii) instrumentalisation of ethnicity and religion as legitimate means of controlling political threats; (iii) Existence of political, social, and economic hardships that can lead to alliances among ethnic and religious groups; and,

(iv) democratisation of the Nigerian society.

The paper observed that Nigeria at present lacks appropriate strategies for the management of ethno-religious crises, and that it appears effective management of the crises resides on the ability to reverse the consequences of colonialism and democratisation. Nevertheless, the paper recommended the application of the crisis model developed by Smith and Spipika (1993). Complementary to this model are the following recommendations:

(i) Adoption of a political culture with adequate provision for all ethnic groups, religious groups, and general interest of Nigerians;
(ii) elimination of the existing practices capable of reinforcing ethnic and religious differences;
(iii) confrontation of the realities of ethnic minorities in Nigeria; and,
(iv) ensuring that political, social and economic development strategies are integral parts of the approaches to conflict prevention, management, and peace-building efforts.

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