IMPACT OF ETHNO-RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE ON HOUSING DELIVERY IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria is an agglomeration of different ethnic nationalities with multiplicity of religious inclination of which Christianity and Islam are the dominant. The high level of intra and inter-ethnic rivalry between ethnic nationalities and extreme religious intolerance has resulted in many catastrophic clashes. These clashes have unquantifiable debilitating effects on the equilibrium of housing supply and delivery. The paper through deductive approach from secondary data in literature review, and descriptive analysis, examined the various ethno-religious violence from post-independence Nigeria and their causes in other to establish the impact on the housing sector. Findings revealed that the importance of houses in the African set up is beyond mere shelter, but are sacred and generational assets worth bequeathing. This underscores the reason it becomes target for attacks during ethno-religious violence. Deductive inferences made indicated that the more the loss of lives, the more number of internally is placed persons, the more the severity of the violence on housing and number of displaced persons. The study concluded that conflict resolution strategies are most required for a sustainable urban housing growth.

Keywords: Ethno-religious, violence, housing, Housing Delivery, Conflict Resolution, Nigeria

1. INTRODUCTION

The West Africa sub-region was home to kingdoms and tribal communities that were organized based on ethnicity, religion and socio-cultural affiliations before they became European colonies (Ekhaese *et al*., 2014). In spite of European contact in the 16th century, these kingdoms and communities maintained autonomy until the 19th century (Africa, 2003). Nigeria has more than one-seventh of the continent's people. Just like many other African

countries, the people belong to diverse ethnic groups and various monotheist and polytheist religions. Nigeria with about 340 ethnic groups has three dominant groups which are Hausa/Fulani (north), Yorubas (southwest) and Igbos (east). The dominant religions are Islam in the north and Christianity in the south. The ethno-religious diversities of the people give the country a rich culture on one hand, and a major source of challenge to fostering unity and nation building on the other hand. From pre-independence to post-independence Nigeria, the minority groups had always complained of marginalization by the majority groups who had occupied political and by extension, economic powers. These agitations for equal distribution of power and wealth have led to creation of more States, yet the problem of agitation remained unabated (Egwu, 2011). Indeed, experience has shown that the more States created, the more the complaints of marginalization and inequality by new minorities against the new majorities in each State (Abdulrahman, 2006). The study reported that the more the complaints and agitations of minorities against majorities for equal distribution of power and wealth, the more likelihood cases of ethno-religious violence. However, in all cases of ethno-religious violence in Nigeria, focus had been on reports on loss of lives and economic loss without adequate mention on its impact on housing delivery. Therefore, the aim of the study is to examine the impact of ethno-religious violence on housing delivery in Nigeria.

2. NIGERIA "AN INCONGRUENT ADMINISTRATIVE CONSTRUCT"

Nigeria covers a land area of about 923,770sq km, with a population of about 150 million people and a population growth rate of about 2.54%, birth rate of about 39.22 births/1000 people and a death rate of 14.1 deaths/ 1000 people. Nigeria with an infant mortality rate of about 72.49 deaths/1000 live births, has a life expectancy rate of 50-59 years (HRW, 2003). The level of civilization of a community is determined by the degree of its socio-political and economic stability. Nigeria gained independence about five and a half decades ago, but the amalgamation of several tribes incongruently joined together for political and economic gains are yet to accept each other. There are hundreds of ethnic partitions in Nigeria, but beyond the ethnic and linguistic divisions, is the religious division, mainly between Muslims and Christians. From the onset the nuptials was not perfect but Nigeria leaders believed it could be managed (Enukora, 2005). However, since independence in 1960 till date, several properties especially buildings have been destroyed in ethno-religious violence (HRW, 2012). Behind this violence lie the interests of the elite. Report on ethno-religious violence show that between 1999-2002, there were 62% global average and 11% sub-Saharan African average. But in 2002, the World Bank positioned Nigeria among the most politically unstable and violence-prone (7%) (USDP, 2003).

3. CONCEPTUAL UNDERPINNING

There are several concepts in cultural diversity. Some of these concepts have relatively acceptable definitions and other are highly contested amongst scholars and policy makers. This paper provides a set of working explanations for concepts like ethnic group, ethnicity, religious, violence and ethno-religious violence in other to set the framework for comparative discus. Joshua and Jegede (2013) described an ethnic group as a people sharing the same historical, culture, language experience, belief about the future together, custom and occupy the same territory. That is, a people with a common ancestry. Nnoli (2007) observed ethnicity in reality as a complex trend closely linked with political, economic, social, religious and other social views and interactions. Thus ethnicity finds expression in political domination, economic exploitation, psychological oppression and class manipulation. Religion is an elusive and imprecise concept which is difficult to define with precision and objectivity because it is emotion laden (Egwu, 2011). Religion can be understood in two related yet distinct ways, material and spiritual. Materially, religion is conceived as establishments (i.e. institutions/officials), social groups and religious concerns. While from spiritual perspective, religion is concerned with models of social and individual behaviour that help believers to organize their everyday lives. In this way, religion is characterized as transcendence, supernatural realities and sacred (Alanamu, 2004). In order to conceptualize violence, it is necessary to separate it from force. Force means lawful use of violence by government to protect the state, while violence is an illegitimate use of force by individuals/groups. Anifowose (2011) defined violence as the use/threat of physical act performed by people within a geographical enclave against another person(s) and or property, with the intent to cause injury/death to person(s) and or destruction to property. The concept of violence is a 'catch all' for every variety of protest, militancy, coercion, destruction/muscle flexing which an observer fear/condemn (Joshua & Oni, 2010). Therefore, ethno-religious violence is a clash, rivalry, quarrel among ethno-religious groups and stem from a clashing mien with regards to symbolic values like religion and language that cannot be compromised. Communal and societal clashes according to Ibrahim and Igbuzor (2002) have emerged as a result of new and particularistic forms of political consciousness and identity often structured around ethno-religious identities. In Nigeria, ethno-religious violence have assumed disturbing dimension in places like Shagamu (Ogun State), Lagos, Abia, Kano, Bauchi, Nassarawa, Jos, Taraba, Ebonyi and Enugu State. Groups and communities who had over the years lived together in peace and harmony now take up arms against each other in gruesome "war". The claim over scarce resources, power, land, chieftaincy, local government, councils,

controls of markets, "Osu caste system" and sharia among other trivial issues have resulted in ethno-religious violence amongst groups. In these engagements, new social separation and dichotomy logics have evolved in communities in Nigeria like classification of the "settler" and "indigene", "Christian" and "Muslim", and *"osu"* (slave) and *"Nwadiala"* (free born). These ethno-religious identities have become disintegrative and destructive social elements threatening the peace, stability and security in Nigeria (Okpaga *et al.*, 2012). The recurrent clashes between Hausa-Fulani and Igbo groups in Kano State, have acquired an ethno-religious complexion since the Hausa-Fulani are Muslims and the Igbos are mainly Christians (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005). All of these ethno-religious violence are multi-dimensional in nature.

3.1 Reprisal Action Theory

Reprisal actions are raids executed by defence forces in response to recurrent terror attacks during which armed militants infiltrate a territory to perform attacks on civilians and soldiers (Siegert, 2002). The goal of the actions is to create deterrence, prevent future attacks, restore public morale and train newly formed army units (Gilbert, 2005). Reprisals are as old as international law. The concept of reprisal was natural in notions of equity, if one was hurt by another's illegal action, then the aggrieved party was given right of redress against the offender. Before reprisal became a tool of foreign policy under international law, it existed as individuals' right and individuals were restrained from executing reprisals against others by the rule of proportionality. By 17th/18th centuries, securing Westphalian system of nation-states and State sovereignty ideas, reprisals were authorized beyond the state frontiers against individuals of offending States. In 1789, the power "to grant letters of marque and reprisal" was conferred on Congress under Article I, Section 8.12. The 1877 treatise on international law states that "every authority which can make war, can grant letters of reprisals". But the sovereign was given to magistrates, governors and courts the right of issuance, and later reserved for the central government alone (Michael and Kelly, 2003). Reprisal therefore, is an action of the State and can be categorised into general (public), special (private), forcible and belligerent. Wartime reprisal is the case of a warring party retaliating against another by otherwise unlawful warfare acts, to force opponent, opponent's branches and opposing armed forces to surrender the illegal acts of war and resume the principles of lawful warfare (Siegert, 2002). Reprisals are severe measures to enforce compliance with the armed conflict law by the illegal acts of adverse party as well as measures of coercion, derogating, determining, imposing, exertion and a return to legality. Reprisals are an act of self-help by the hurting States, to respond after an unsatisfied demand to an act contrary to international

law by the offending State (Mitchell, 2001). Reprisals attack against classes of targets has heightened ethno-religious violence in Nigeria.

3.2 Housing Situation in Nigeria

The quality of human existence is a function of their housing condition. Consequently, the right to adequate housing has been recognized in article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and in other international instruments (UN-HABITAT, 2005). The article recognized that having a secure place to live, is one of the fundamental elements for human dignity, physical and mental health and overall quality of life, which enables one's development. The right to adequate housing has been consistently reaffirmed as a distinct human right by various bodies in the UN system, numerous national constitutions and legislations, and civil society organizations across the world (Kothari, 2001). Despite the welcome acknowledgement, right to adequate housing remains unrealized for the vast majority of poor and vulnerable people and communities across the world. The situation is more precarious in Nigeria where housing demand far outweighs housing supply. Table 1 shows that direct intervention by the Federal Government to meet the housing demand of her populace through various national housing programmes from 1962 to 1995 (33 years) yielded an abysmal 12.8% success. Currently, housing deficit in Nigeria is estimated at 14 million units which will cost N49 trillion ($326billion) to bridge the gap, assuming the cost of N3.5million per unit (EFInA & FinMark Trust, 2010).

Table 1: Assessment of Impact of National housing Programmes from 1962-1995

Period	Planned	Achieved	% of achievement
1962 - 1968	24,000	500	2.1
1970 - 1974	54,000	0	0
1975 -1980	202,000	28,500	14.1
1981 - 1985	200,000	47,200	23.6
1994 - 1995	121,000	1,014	0.8
Total	601,000	77,214	12.8

Source: Pison Housing Company, 2009 in EFInA & FinMark Trust (2010)

3.3   Housing as subject of Attack in Ethno-Religious Violence

Despite the importance of housing to human existence and the pervasive inadequate supply of the commodity, this study observed that they are primary objects of attacks aside destruction of lives in ethno-religious violence in Nigeria. The reason is not far-fetched as posited by

Ademiluyi (2010) that housing is one of the most valued material assets in a typical African setting. It can be deduced then that humans place value attachments to housing beyond just mere shelter (Alagbe *et al*, 2014). For instance, housing condition is used as one of the best indicators for measuring a person's standard of living and of his or her place in society (Adedokun et al, 2011; UN-HABITAT, 1993). Furthermore, housing represents a major portion of the family budget or that of an establishment (Kinyungu, 2004), and also constitutes the first major capital investment and life ambitions of individuals (Bello, 2007). In fact, the aspiration to own a house constitutes one of the strongest incentives for savings and capital formation (Ozo, 1990). Alagbe (2010) identified that Nigerians place high premium on home ownership because it is a legacy that individuals aspire to bequeath. These underscores the reason why housing becomes a primary object of attack in ethno-religious violence. The concept is based on the fact that destruction of the home of a perceived enemy amounts to rendering the individual useless. While that aim is achieved in ethno-religious violence, it creates a bigger problem of reduction in housing supply with its attendant increase in the number of homeless and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the country. Houses destroyed in ethno-religious violence are not usually enumerated but perceived by this study to be significant due to the number of IDPs at aftermath of such crises. This necessitated the need for this study which is aimed at underscoring the need to quantitatively evaluate the impact of ethno-religious violence on housing delivery beyond just reporting it as "loss of lives and properties".

3.4. DOCUMENTED TIMELINE OF VIOLENT ATTACKS ON LIVES AND BUILDINGS IN NIGERIA.

Date	Location, Description and Extent of Violent on Lives and Structures
September, 2012	Nigerian Islamists damaged phone network and destroyed about 24 mobile telephone towers in 7 northern states.
June, 2012	40 people died after 2 days of clashes between Islamic sects and security services in Damaturu, Yobe State.
June 2012	1 person died and 28 others injured after a suicide car bomber exploded at Christ Chosen Church of God in Jos. Gunmen attacked Church of the Brethren in Nigeria Church in Biu, Borno State, killing a woman. A suicide car bomber killed 12 people at a Church in

	Bauchi, destroyed 2 churches in Zaria, and a church in Kaduna, Kaduna State killing at least 101 people.
April, 2012	2 churches were destroyed on Bayero University campus in Kano, killing about 19 people and COCIN church in Maiduguri, and killed 5 others. A suicide car bomber detonated a bomb at the This Day newspaper offices in Abuja, and Kaduna killing 7 people.
March, 2012	2 suicide car bombers killed about 7 people at a Catholic church in Rayfield, a suburb of Jos
February 2012	A suicide car bomber killed 3 people at the COCIN headquarters in Jos, Plateau State and burnt down 12 schools in Maiduguri
January, 2012	The Islamic sects launched coordinated attacks on police facilities in Kano, leaving about 185 people dead, attacked a Christ Apostolic Church in Yola, Adamawa State, killing 12 worshipers, and Deeper Life Church in Gombe, killing 6 people. a 3-day Ultimatum was issued to southern Nigerians to leave the north, with a series of attacks on Christians and churches after the deadline passed
December, 2011	A suicide bomber discharged a bomb outside a Catholic church in Madalla, Niger State, killing 43 people
November, 2011	The Islamic sects attacked government security, targets banks, and churches in Damaturu, Yobe State, killing about 100 people
August, 2011	A suicide car bomber drove into the United Nations building in Abuja, killing 25 people and injuring more than 100
July, 2011	An explosion outside an All Christian Fellowship Mission church, killed 3 people in Suleja, Niger State and another car bomb in police headquarters in Abuja, leaving 2 dead
June, 2011	Gunmen attacked a COCIN church in Maiduguri, killing two people
April, 2011	A bomb exploded at the National Electoral Commission offices in Suleja, Niger State, killing 16 people
December, 2010	An explosion at an outdoor beer garden next to a military barracks in Abuja killed 4 people, 2 churches were attacked in Maiduguri, Baptist church and Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN) and another 2 churches in Maiduguri killing 6 people. A series of explosions in Christian neighbourhoods in Jos, Plateau State, killed 233 people

September, 2010	Islamic sects invaded Bauchi prison releasing about 700 prisoners.
July, 2009	5 days of clashes between Islamic sects and government security forces, left more than 800 people dead in Borno, Bauchi, Yobe, and Kano states. Islamic sects in Borno killed 37 Christian, destroyed 29 churches, during 5 days of clashes with government security forces
April, 2003	A group of armed Muslims attacked Fobur village and Zambwar village killing a woman and burnt down more than 70 homes
March, 2003	Up to 2,000 white clad jihad warriors attacked the town of Kardako in Wase Local Government Area (LGA), killing at least 22 people, injured 16 and burnt down several houses.
December, 2002	An armed Muslim mob attacked Christians in Bauchi. The Celestial Church of Christ and many Christian homes were burnt down
October, 2002	Forty Christians were killed when a mob of about 2,000 Muslims attacked the town of Fajul in Plateau State, burned down homes, raped several women, and ambushed 17 policemen
September, 2002	Church of Christ in the Laranto suburb of Jos was destroyed
August, 2002	20 churches destroyed in Kano by the government of Kano State.
June 2002	Violent attacked in several villages, including Yelwa Shendam, Wase, Berakin Ladi, Vom and Miango. 4 people were killed and 20 injured in a village near Jos and no church building was left standing.
April, 2002	7 churches in Kano State were destroyed by authorities on the pretence that the churches have violated building codes.
December, 2001	Armed Muslims attacked the Christian community of Vwang in southern Jos, killing 29 people and destroying buildings. Muslim army soldiers from the 23rd Armoured Brigade in Yola City, Adamawa State, burned a church building.
October, 2001	The anti-American protests in Kano left 600 Christians missing and another 350 killed and 5 churches were burnt down. Muslim youths burnt down 3 churches and 10 Christian-owned shops in Kaduna,
September, 2001	24 churches have been demolished, 6 churches set ablaze, 54 churches given demolition notices, in Kano. In Jos, more than 500 have been killed in violence between Muslims &Christians, 900 were injured, several mosques and churches burnt.

August, 2001	According COCIN, Bauchi state government has been using Muslim mercenaries to attack Christians in the Tafawa Balewa and Bogora areas, resulting in many deaths, several houses burnt down
June 2001	15 churches &14 pastor's residences were burnt in Gawaram Jigawa state. A similar attack on 11 churches occurred in Hajaya governate.
February, 2001	A visit to Gombe state by an Israeli ambassador ignited a riot by Muslim youths leaving 4 people dead, 50 were injured, and Calvary Baptist Church and Bishara Baptist Church were burnt down.
September, 2000	In Bambam, Gombe state 25 people died as a result of clashes between Muslims and Christians. Houses and property destroyed.
May, 2000	Several days of violence in Kaduna led to the death of 150 people. Homes, shops and churches have also been destroyed. Muslim youths destroyed the First Baptist Church and Christian homes in Kaduna, leading to 11 death and many others were injured. Muslim youths destroyed the Evangelical Church of West Africa in Kaduna
February, 2000	Christians killed in Kaduna were returned to southern Nigeria, setting off more violence killing about 50 people in Aba and 12 in Umuahia. Riots began after a Christian protest against implementation of Sharia law in Kaduna, leaving more than 1,000 people dead.
December, 1999	Islamic extremists destroyed 18 churches in Ilorin, of Kwara State
July/August, 1999	The Kano state government announced its plans to destroy 150 churches. Hostilities between the Christian and Muslim communities have resulted in more than 100 deaths and the destruction of house

4. METHODOLOGY

The observation, descriptions, documentation and deductions in the study were based on secondary data obtained from field research conducted in Nigeria from 1994 – 2012 by International Organizations, and through continuous monitoring of reports of ethno-religious violence across the country. It explores crimes committed by during ethno-religious violence and alleged abuses by Nigeria's security forces, whose actions in response to the violence have contravened international human rights standards and fuelled further attacks. These international organizations conducted interviews with witnesses, victims of attacks, lawyers, civil society activists, journalists, religious leaders, military and police officials, senior officials at the Federal Ministry of Justice, judges, diplomats, and foreign aid workers in

Borno, Kano, Abuja, Niger, and Plateau for the following reasons: Maiduguri is the scene of most of Northern-religious-sect's attacks, alleged security force abuses and was base/stronghold Boko Haram before going underground in 2009. Kano has suffered the second highest death toll from the ethno-religious violence after Maiduguri. Madalla, is a site of the highest death toll in a single church bombing. Abuja, the nation's capital, is the site of several Northern-religious-sect bombings and Jos is the worst hit from reprisal attacks as shown in figure 1.
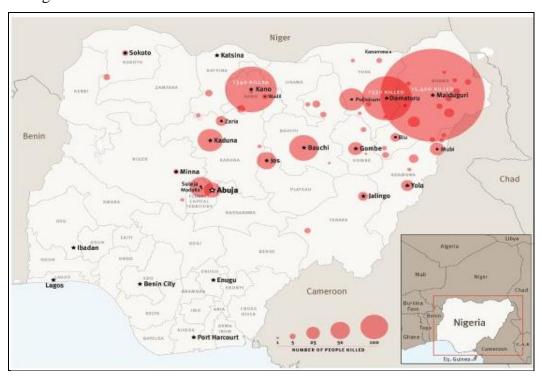

Figure 1: Map of Nigeria Showing the Ethno-religious Violence Prone Areas
Source: Human Rights Watch, (2012)

5. DEDUCTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Numerous causes of ethno-religious violence in Nigeria have been identified in the literature and this includes socio-political, economic, governance factors, accusations and allegations of neglect, oppression, domination, exploitation, victimization, discrimination, marginalization, nepotism and bigotry (Salawu, 2010). The study identified some factors responsible for ethno-religious violence in Nigeria as discussed below:

5.1 Amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates into the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria

The major factor identified that led to the beginning of ethno-religious violence in the nation was traced by political analyst to the amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorates

into the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria in 1914 by the British colonialist. Their argument rested on the premise that Nigeria is an agglomeration of people of diverse ethnic and religion affiliation who were forcefully brought together without proper machinery for co-existence. Griswold (2000) observed that the British colonialist sowed the seeds of ethnic violence in Nigeria with the adoption of a divide and rule tactics, which robbed Nigerians of the common front for nation building and paved way for the emergence of regional parties, interests and leaders whose manifestoes were designed along ethnic interests. The continued discourse of ethno-religious violence in Nigeria was first underscored by Chief Obafemi Awolowo who observed that "Nigeria was just a mere geographical expression created by the British Colonialist strictly for administrative convenience" (Adebakin, 2012). Abdukadir (2011) noted that the colonialists used authoritarian fiat to forcefully package unwilling communities of diverse origin and culture under the same polity. This lack of unity and cohesion between ethnic nationalities and various religions plunged the country into a civil war (1966-1970) and millions of Nigerians died (Dung-Gwom & Rikko, 2009). Moreover, from 1979-2007, over 100,000 Nigerians have been killed through ethno-religious violence and about 500,000 displaced from their homes. Despite Nigerian independence of 1960 which was assumed will mark a new beginning in the nation's developmental phase, ethno-religious violence in the country has continued unabated. The current democracy has not brought the needed succour, but its associated freedom has plunged the nation further into ethno-religious violence (Onwuzuruigbo, 2010).

5.2 Failure of the State to fulfil its Fundamental Obligation of Good Governance and Social Justice

Another cause of ethno-religious violence in Nigeria is government/State failure to fulfil its fundamental obligation to the citizenry and lack of social justice. The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria stated *inter-alia* under Section 14(1) that her fundamental obligation to the citizenry is that "The Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be a State based on the principles of democracy and social justice". Lack of social justice was traced to frequent disruptions in civil rule. For instance, between 1966 and 1999 there were coups and long periods of autocratic military rule due to ethno-religious diversity, until the current democratic rule was established in 1999 (Uhunmwuangho & Epelle, 2011). Furthermore, utter disregard for the rule of law by Nigeria ruling elites was also identified as a causative factor of ethno-religious violence. In Nigeria, government officials appear to lead the way against the rule of law by treating judicial decisions as mere suggestions rather than commands (Omorogbe & 'Omohan 2005)

5.3 Institutionalization of State Religion and Religious Intolerance

The institutionalization of Sharia law in some northern states aggravated ethno-religious tensions (Amusan, 2001). Amusan believed that ethnicity and religion are the twin problems that hindered development in Nigeria and economic self-interest of the political and military elites are responsible for the state instability and ethno-religious violence. For instance, much of the violence in the Nigeria northern cities are restricted to poor, overcrowded and starved neighbourhoods, where youthful gangs of a domineering religious sect out of intolerance of minor religious groups burn down churches, schools and lacerate each other to death over trivial provocations as shown in figure 2. The ethno-religious angle to the slaughter is reprisal killings of Muslims in Nigeria southern cities in the same squalid pattern (Sanusi, 2009). Rarely does ethno-religious violence occur in city centres or in wealthy residential neighbourhoods.

Figure 2: The Burning of School Building during an Ethno-Religious Clash

Source: Human Rights Watch, (2012).

5.4 Perceived Political Marginalization:

The study identified that at different levels and times people experience ethnic bigotry, complain of past and present ethnic bias, demand for ethnic rights and more importantly, the State use of ethnicity in political discourse/action. Political marginalization has been a major cause of ethno-religious violence in Nigeria. However, there seems to be a conflicting interplay of politics, ethnicism and religions, which has led to the rising nationalism, ethnic militancy and religious movements. Consequently, this has resulted to escalation of ethno-religious visolence observed all over the country today (Igwe, 2009). See figure 3.

Figure 3: Bompai Police Barracks In Kano Destroyed During Ethno-Religious Violence

Source: Human Rights Watch, (2012)

5.5 Breakdown of Family Ethos

Indeed, the breakdown of the family, education, law, religion and political system has actually increased ethno-religious violence in Nigeria (Ayuk *et al*, 2012). For instance, the inability of many homes to provide for the family tends to increase immorality, broken homes, divorces and drunkenness, resulting to jobless youths who could be employed to execute ethno-religious violence. The Nigeria school system today is in shambles, so cannot instil discipline and morality. The religious institution is also not playing its expected roles, while the law enforcement agents indulge in crimes, demand bribes and collect illegal levies from motorists openly. All the above encourages societal vices, thus setting the pace for violence

5.5 Proliferation of Arms and Ammunitions

The ostensible political elites are responsible for arming the youths as political thugs to manipulate electoral outcomes, kidnap/kill political opponents, threaten and intimidate electorates, destroy lives and properties as electoral processes are disrupted. Youths trained and armed for political kidnapping continue the process in post-election period for economic ends. The issue of political thuggery and establishment of small political armed forces have led to the infiltration and establishment of gun culture in Nigeria. These groups copiously acquire and thoughtlessly use assorted types of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) to perform their atrocious activities. The presence of SALWs, easily transform minor social, cultural, ethnic and political disputes into violent clashes, with lives and properties destroyed as shown in figure 4 (Onwudiwe, 2004).

Figure 4: Reckless Use of Arms and Merciless Killing During Ethno-Religious Violence

Source: Human Rights Watch, (2012)

5.7   Internationalization of Religious Alignments

The ethno-religious violence in Nigeria has some connection, with a number of politico-religious developments at the international scene. Religions crises in Nigeria could be traced to the developments in the Middle East known as new Islamic ideology (i.e. with the death of cold war and replacement of communism with Islamism). The contemporary increase in the incidences of terrorism around the world has been linked to the new ideology of Islamism (Cordesman, 2003; Booth and Dunne, 2002). The increasing feelings of relative deprivation and hostility around the world makes developing states with large Muslim populations susceptible to militant forms of Islamism in the Middle East. This explains the increased rate of ethno-religious violence in Northern Nigeria (a Muslim dominated region) since 1980s (Albert, 2005).

6.0   CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The paper attempted to establish that ethno-religious violence has an impact on housing delivery in Nigeria. The paper discussed the conceptual issues around ethno-religious violence in Nigeria. The paper traced the root cause to the forceful amalgamation of unwilling communities of diverse origin and culture under the same polity for administrative convenience. It also established a connection between some socio-economic variables and government failure in its responsibilities as catalyst of ethno-religious violence. Furthermore, the study recognised a conflicting interplay of politics, ethnicism and religion. The chronicle of ethno-religious violence in Nigeria revealed an unquantifiable loss of lives and properties. Most importantly, the study identified that while there were attempts at recording loss of lives as a result of ethno-religious violence in the country, there was no corresponding data on loss

of homes. The paper therefore recommends that damages to housing during ethno-religious violence should be enumerated and such records kept. This will help in policy formulation towards managing and curbing such violence when they occur. Finally, since ethno-religious violence is inevitable in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society like Nigeria, it is recommended that government must move from policy of conflict resolution to conflict prevention. This can be achieved only when government resolve to live up to its responsibility of providing for the welfare and well-being of its citizenry. Government must initiate poverty reduction and employment creation strategies, with effective funding of State security that will be swift in nipping ethno-religious violence in the bud before they escalate.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

ACKNOWLEGEMENT

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