



**NGOS AND ETHNO-RELIGIOUS CONFLICT
MANAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY OF INTERFAITH
MEDIATION CENTRE AND CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM PEACE
MOVEMENT IN NORTHERN NIGERIA**

BY

MUSA ADAMU WUNTI

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ABSTRACT

This thesis analyses the role of NGOs in managing ethno-religious conflicts and examines why their strategies make them effective role players in the Bauchi and Kaduna states of Northern Nigeria. The thesis explores the integrative non-violence interreligious approach to informal intermediary peacemaking by IMC and CMPM for social change. Significant differences are found in their activities in dealing with violent conflicts, using new methods and strategic plans of action referred to as the voluntary intermediary conflict solution that are practically justifiable via facilitated interfaith dialogues, mediations and negotiations. The thesis focuses on the direct intervention of the two NGOs selected in analyzing their role perception and cooperation in the areas they served between 1999 and 2012. Critical to the goal of this research is the discovery and descriptive analysis of how NGOs manage ethno-religious conflicts as perceived by the local population and why strategies employed are effective. Lederach's Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding theory (1997) suited the research and was used as the theoretical framework for the analysis of active engagement of NGOs in ethno-religious conflict management in Northern Nigeria. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and documentary sources of the qualitative research methodology. Thus, face-to-face interviews were used for collecting data from the NGO officials, community/religious leaders as well as focus group discussions on various parameters. A thematic analysis of categories and themes was done to analyze, describe and interpret indicators in the analytical framework. The results of the study reveal that, the NGOs' strategies have persuaded cooperative ethno-religious conflict management which enjoy acceptability on mutual interest and integrative outcomes. The thesis indicates that NGOs are strong role players in responding to complex emergencies through effective peaceful means. The study found that NGOs ethno-religious conflict management in Northern Nigeria is effective, peaceful as well as preventive. NGOs strategies of action are non-violent, accommodative, integrative and non-partisan. The research also found that IMC and CMPM have made significant efforts in promoting peaceful co-existence and in inculcating the culture of sustainable peace among disputants by using religious scriptures and direct peace talk. This has led to the conclusion that the NGOs' intermediary role in ethno-religious conflict management relates more to how the locals view the process and which method best brings disputants to peace talks and peacebuilding.

خلاصة البحث

قامت هذه الدراسة بتحليل دور المنظمات غير الحكومية وما تؤديه من دور في إدارة الصراعات الإثنية والدينية، وبحث السبب في استراتيجيات المنظمات غير الحكومية لجعلها أكثر فعالية دور اللاعبين في ولايتي باوتشي وكادونا في شمال نيجيريا. واستكشفت الدراسة نهج صنع وسيط غير رسمي بين الأديان تكاملية اللاعنف IMC و CPM للتعديل الاجتماعي على مدى معرفة الجهات الفاعلة الجديدة، والتي كانت استثنائية في وجهات نظرهم. وتم العثور على اختلافات كبيرة في أنشطة المنظمات غير الحكومية في التعامل مع الصراعات العنيفة التي أدت إلى تقديم أسلوب المشار إليه، بوصفها حلا للصراع، ووسيطاً طوعياً الذي له ما يبرره علمياً عن طريق تيسير الحوار بين الأديان، والوساطة والتفاوض بشأن الاستراتيجية. وتركز الدراسة على التدخل المباشر من قبل منظمين غير حكوميين في تحديد تحليل تصور الدور، والتعاون بينهما في المناطق التي تعمل فيها ما بين عامي 1999 و 2012. وتكمن الضرورة الحاسمة لتحقيق الهدف من هذا البحث، في اكتشاف وتحليل وصفي لكيفية أدوار المؤسسات الأهلية في إدارة الصراعات الإثنية والدينية، والنظر في شؤون السكان المحليين، وكيفية استخدام الاستراتيجيات لتصبح فعالة. وتم جمع البيانات عن طريق المقابلات شبه المنظمة، ومقابلات فريق التركيز، والمصادر الوثائقية، لمنهجية البحث النوعي. وهكذا، استخدمت مقابلات وجهها لوجه لجمع بيانات من مسؤولي المنظمات غير الحكومية، وزعماء المجتمع المحلي والديني، فضلا عن مناقشة مجموعة التركيز على معلومات مختلفة. وتم تحليل موضوعي للفئات والمواضيع لتحليل ووصف وتفسير المؤشرات في الإطار التحليلي. وكشفت نتائج الدراسة أن إستراتيجيات المنظمات غير الحكومية أقنعت إدارة الصراعات الإثنية والدينية والتي حظيت بالقبول على المصلحة المتبادلة ونتائج التكاملية. والدراسة تشير إلى أن المنظمات غير الحكومية تؤدي دوراً قوياً في الاستجابة لحالات الطوارئ المعقدة من خلال الوسائل السلمية. وملاحظة نتائج البحوث أن IMC و CPM قد بذلتا جهوداً لتعزيز التعايش السلمي وغرس ثقافة السلام المستدام بين المتنازعين محققة بذلك زيادة الشعور بالتعاون من أجل تنفيذ الاتفاقات السلمية، ومنع نشوب الصراعات، والاحتجاج للثقة المتبادلة، فضلا عن تيسير الاتصال الفعال اللازم لتحويل الصراع وتحسين العلاقات في المجتمع. وهذا يؤدي إلى استنتاج بأن المنظمات غير الحكومية تؤدي دور الوسيط في إدارة الصراعات الإثنية والدينية، والتي تتعلق أكثر بالسكان المحليين وكيفية عرض عملياتها، وأفضل طريقة لمخادئات السلام وبناء السلام بين المتنازعين.

APPROVAL PAGE

The thesis of Musa Adamu Wunti has been approved by the following:

.....
Md. Moniruzzaman
Supervisor

.....
Ishtiaq Hossain
Co-Supervisor

.....
El-Fatih A. AbdelSalam
Internal Examiner

.....
Mohd Azizuddin Bin Mohd Sani
External Examiner

.....
Habu Muhammed
External Examiner

.....
Mohd Feham Md Ghalib
Chairman

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own study, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

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All praise is due to Allah, we praise Him and seek His help, and beg for His forgiveness, and we seek refuge of Allah from evil of our souls, and from the wickedness of our deeds, whosoever Allah guides cannot be led astray, and whosoever is led astray shall find none other to guide him. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and Muhammad (SAW) is His slave and messenger.

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Nigeria is a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-religious Federal state for which disagreement over power and resources become crucial in the socioeconomic and political sphere of the country.¹ As a heterogeneous society with a population of over 150 million, Nigeria comprises about 250 different ethnic groups inhabiting the 36 federating units of the country. However, Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo ethnic groups are the majority and have significant representation at the federal government level.

The political landscape of the country remains over heated due to contestation and rivalry among clusters of ethnic and religious groups (Christians and Muslims) competing for domination or fighting against marginalization.² This development has increasingly posed a number of challenges to the political system and economic growth of the country. Habu Muhammed,³ for example states that different ethnic groups from both the Southern and Northern regions feel they are excluded from vital political relationships and are deprived of benefits from economic resources distribution. Other studies have linked the country's prolong military rule with persistent ethno-religious polarization, which to a greater extent is suspected to be a

¹ See International Crisis Group. "Northern Nigeria: Background to Conflict". *Crisis Group Africa Report* No.168 (2010).

² Merren Milligan. "Fighting for the Right to Exist", *Comparative Politics*, vol. 45 no. 3 (2013):313-334. Habu Mohammed. "Federalism and the 'Native' versus 'Settler' Question in Jos, Plateau State" in *Nigeria's Convulsive Federalism*, edited by Habu Mohammed (Ibadan: Cypress Concepts & Solutions Ltd, 2013), 106-141. Ukoma Ukiwo. "Politics, Ethno-Religious Conflicts and Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 41, no.1 (2003):115-138.

³ Habu Mohammed. "Introduction: Nigeria's Turbulent Federation and Perennial Conflict" in *Nigeria's Convulsive Federalism*, edited by Habu Mohammed (Ibadan: Cypress Concepts & Solutions Ltd, 2012), 1-22.

significant contributor towards continued polarization of citizens along ethnic or religious lines. The developments also further the outbreak of conflicts among the competing groups.⁴ Thus, the prevalence of violent conflict and crisis over differences among diverse groups across the six geopolitical zones has become worrisome. Examples of these are post-election political violence, sectarian conflict, crisis over Sharia implementation, ethno-religious conflict, ethno-political conflict and emergence of non-state armed groups posing threat to the country's national security. The situation of inter-group conflict and disturbances has become worsened with severe casualties since Nigeria's return to civilian regime in 1999. Different groups have emerged clamouring for change in the system and also see the recent political development of the country as an opportunity to compete for advantages under democratic state.⁵ The outbreak of conflicts between contending groups (Muslims and Christians) and its persistence over time has affected the socio-economic and political life of the people in the region. Social conflict and its flash points in Northern Nigeria have manifested itself in various conflict forms such as ethno-religious, communal, sectarian and political conflicts to mention but a few. An ethno-religious conflict is the

⁴ See Fatima Oyine Ibrahim. "The 2004 Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Kano State and the Identity Questions" in *Nigeria's Convulsive Federalism*, Edited by Habu Mohammed (Ibadan: Cypress Concepts & Solutions Ltd. (2012), 84-105. Brandon. Kendhammer. "The Sharia Controversy in Northern Nigeria and the Politics of Islamic Law in New and Uncertain Democracies", *Comparative Politics*, vol. 45, no. 3, (2013):253-378. Merren Milligan. "Fighting for the Right to Exist", *Comparative Politics*, vol. 45 no. 3 (2013):253-378

⁵ Ukoma Ukiwo. "Politics, Ethno-Religious Conflicts and Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 41, no.1 (2003):115-138. Muhammed M Lawan. Periscoping the Causes of Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Nigeria's North-West Zone" in *Nigeria's Convulsive Federalism*, edited by Habu Mohammed, (Ibadan: Cypress Concepts & Solutions Ltd, 2012), 40-62. Philips Ostien. "A Survey of the Muslims of Nigeria's North Central Geo-Political Zone" (Abuja: Nigeria Research Network (NRN) Oxford Department of International Development Queen Elizabeth House University of Oxford, 2012). Haruna Muhammed Salihi. "Governance Failure and Political Violence in Nigeria: The Jama'atu Ahlis Sunnah Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad in Perspective" in *Nigeria's Convulsive Federalism* edited by Habu Mohammed (Ibadan: Cypress Concepts & Solutions Ltd, 2012), 211-236. Aliyu Yahaya. "Conflicts in North Western Nigeria: Anatomy of Inter-group Relations in Southern Kaduna state" in *Nigeria's convulsive federalism* edited by Habu Mohammed (Ibadan: Cypress Concepts & Solutions Ltd, 2012), 63-83.

worse and endemic resulting in devastating impact on state, society and the economy.⁶ It is in consideration of the severity of the conflicts in the Northern region of Nigeria that Northern Governors Forum in December, 2004 organized a two day conference to iron out the situation of violent conflicts in the North. Ahmad Adamu Mu'azu, the former Governor of Bauchi State representing the region stated that:

From the early 80s, the Northern States were turned into killing fields as a consequence of growing social, ethnic and religious intolerance. Hundreds of people were killed in sectarian and inter-ethnic crisis, billions of Naira worth of public and private properties was destroyed and millions of people were forced to be refugees in their own land. These hostilities have shaken the very foundation of our hitherto peaceful disposition. The savagery with which these atrocities were committed manifested a serious danger to the continued stability of our dear Country.⁷

According to one account, Nigeria has witnessed at least 187 ethno-religious conflicts which had led to numerous casualties and massive destruction of properties between 1999 and 2010.⁸ It is true that conflicts of any sort tend to have spillover effects. For example, the Yoruba-Hausa conflict in Lagos claimed the lives of 100 people and displaced more than 1000 people from their homes in 1999 which later resulted in another revenge attack against non-Hausa community in Kano. The disturbances led to further loss of lives and rendered people homeless in the state.⁹ Meanwhile, the Kano, Kaduna and Jos conflicts were the worst in the North-West and North-Central

⁶ For detailed information see International Crisis Group. "Northern Nigeria: Background to Conflict" *Crisis Group Africa Report No.168* (2010). Machiel O. Maduagwu. "Electoral Violence and the Challenges of Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria: Lesson from the April 2011 Post-Election Violence in Northern Nigeria" in *Nigeria's convulsive federalism*, edited by Habu Mohammed (Ibadan: Cypress Concepts & Solutions Ltd, 2012), 237-260. Murtala A. Ringim. "An Exploration into NGO's Peace-building Initiatives in Major Flash Points of Conflicts in Northern Nigeria" in *Nigeria's Convulsive Federalism*, edited by Habu Mohammed, (Ibadan: Cypress Concepts & Solutions Ltd, 2012), 261-290.

⁷ See Bauchi State Government, *Enduring Peace through Conflict Resolution, Law & Order: The Role of Traditional Institution*, Speech by His Excellency Alhaji Ahmadu Adamu Mu'azu, The Governor of Bauchi State of Nigeria, (Abuja: Bauchi state Government 2006).

⁸ Habu Mohammed. "Introduction: Nigeria's Turbulent Federation and Perennial Conflict" in *Nigeria's Convulsive Federalism* edited by Habu Mohammed (Ibadan: Cypress Concepts & Solutions Ltd, 2012), 1-22.

⁹ See for example Ukoma Ukiwo. Politics, "Ethno-religious Conflicts and Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 41, no.1 (2003):115-138.

part of the Northern region. In Kaduna, there have been conflicts between the Hausa and Kataf community for a long period of time but its intensity boiled up after 1999. Thus, Muslim/Hausas and Kataf/Christian community are the major actors in the conflict in Kaduna. In the year 2000, conflict between Muslims and Christians in Kaduna over Sharia (Islamic Law) implementation lasted for four days claiming 1,800 lives and injuring 5000 people while displacing a significant number of the local populace.¹⁰ The 2011 post-election violence is another serious ethno-political conflict in the Northern States where Human Rights Watch reported the death of more than 800 people and the displacement of another 65000.¹¹ States affected in the conflict are Kaduna, Kano, Bauchi, Borno, Adamawa, Yobe, Gombe, Jigawa, Katsina, Sokoto, Niger, and Zamfara.

In 2000, Human Right Watch revealed that in Jos there was mass killing and destruction between rival groups and had led to the killing of more than 1000 people while property were destroyed.¹² The recurrence of such conflict over time has posed an increasing insecurity in Jos area where travelers on high way were attacked. Fulani's cattle were seized by youth militia as well. As a result of this, in March 2010, an ambush attack was carried out by Fulani herdsmen and led to merciless killing of 400 Christians in four villages.¹³

The post-election violence in Kano, Kaduna and Bauchi in 2011 has left many people in state of fear, especially, inhabitants from the Southern parts of Nigeria. For example, in Bauchi there was a brutal killing of Southern youth corps member which

¹⁰ Elaborate information is provided in International Crisis Group. "Northern Nigeria: Background to Conflict", *Crisis Group Africa Report No.168* (2010)

¹¹ Find out from Human Rights Watch. *World Report: Events of 2011* (HRW, 2013)

¹² See Human Rights Watch. *World Report: Events of 2000* (HRW, 2001)

¹³ Habu Mohammed. "Introduction: Nigeria's turbulent federation and perennial conflict" Nigeria's Convulsive Federalism Edited by Habu Mohammed (Ibadan: Cypress Concepts & Solutions Ltd, 2012), 1-22.

graveled great challenge to national unity. There are numerous challenges as a result of violence on individuals, groups, society and the state. The worst is the growing tension among people which might have an increasing possibility for loss of lives and property, social dislocations and displacement, serious distrust, political instability and deepening lack of development in the society.¹⁴ Reports from government agencies on internally displaced people between 2009 and 2011 from Plateau, Bauchi and Kaduna have been estimated at about 550,000.¹⁵

Addressing the conflict flash points in the region by the government has not been effective and fruitful.¹⁶ Therefore, a number of non-governmental contributions were made juxtaposing the impact other institutions made in dealing with conflict management. This development is not only found in Nigeria, but in other countries too, where civil society organisations have effectively engaged in managing complex emergencies. There are instances in Asia, Europe and other African countries where civil society organizations, more importantly NGOs, have taken part in dealing with conflict situation. It started with International NGOs' involvement in war zones for humanitarian assistance to active involvement in conflict resolution and

¹⁴ Muhammed Taufeeq Ladan. *Ethno-Religious Difference, Recurrent Violence and Peace building in Nigeria: Focus on Bauchi, Plateau and Kaduna States* (Edinburgh Centre for Constitutional Law (ECCL), University of Edinburgh School of Law, In Association with Centre for Population and Development, Kaduna, 2012)

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ See Comprehensive details of why government is considered ill-fitted to put an end to this menace in the work of International Crisis Group. "Northern Nigeria: Background to Conflict" *Crisis Group Africa* Report No. 168 (2010). Fatima Oyenu Ibrahim. "The 2004 Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Kano State and the Identity Questions" *Nigeria's convulsive federalism*, edited by Habu Mohammed (Ibadan: Cypress Concepts & Solutions Ltd. (2012), 84-105. Habu Mohammed. "Federalism and the 'Native' versus 'Settler' Question in Jos, Plateau State" *Nigeria's Convulsive Federalism*, edited by Habu Mohammed (Ibadan: Cypress Concepts & Solutions Ltd, 2013), 106-141. Moses. D. Omeiza. "The State, Ethno-Religious Divide and Conflicts in Tafawa/Balewa Local Government Area of Bauchi State" in *Nigeria's Convulsive Federalism*, edited by Habu Mohammed (Ibadan: Cypress Concepts & Solutions Ltd, 2012), 176-190. Philips Ostien. *A Survey of the Muslims of Nigeria's North Central Geo-Political Zone* (Abuja: Nigeria Research Network (NRN) Oxford Department of International Development Queen Elizabeth House University of Oxford, 2012).

transformation. For instance, Evans-Kent & Bleiker,¹⁷ discussed the role of NGOs in peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina and found that they have achieved significant success despite numerous challenges faced in the process. The work of Bercovitch et al,¹⁸ also has pointed out the role of NGOs as third party in mediating regional conflict with specific focus on conflict management, security and intervention in East Asia.

The efforts and style of NGOs in dealing with conflict varies according to situations, parties and issues in conflict. Many studies emphasized on the importance of transformative and reconstructive peace-building initiatives coordinated by NGOs to explain mechanisms involved, including; mediation, negotiation, reconstruction, reconciliation as well as humanitarian aid.¹⁹ Generally, third party intervention is about the intermediary effort of actors such as individuals, state and organizations into managing disagreement between parties or disputants. It is meant to improve

¹⁷ See the work of Bronwyn Evans-ken & Ronald Bleker Peace “Beyond the State: NGOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina” in *Mitigating Conflict: The Role of NGOs*, edited by Henry F. Carey & Oliver H. Richmond (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003), 103-191.

¹⁸ For detail explanation of nature and environment of conflict see Jacob Bercovith, Victor Kremenyuk, & William I. Zartman. “Introduction: The Nature of Conflict and Conflict Resolution” in *The Sage Handbook of Conflict Resolution*, edited by Jacob Bercovith, et al, (Loss Angles: Sage Publications, 2009), 1-12.

¹⁹ For detail analysis of NGOs work see Oliver P. Richmond. “Introduction: NGOs, Peace and Human Security” in *Mitigating Conflict: The Role of NGOs*, edited by Henry F. Carey & Oliver P. Richmond (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003), 1-11. Murtala A. Ringim, “An Exploration into NGO's Peace-Building Initiatives in Major Flash Points of Conflicts in Northern Nigeria” in *Nigeria's Convulsive Federalism* (Ibadan: Cypress Concepts & Solutions Ltd, 2012), 261-290. Michael Schloms, “Humanitarian NGOs in Peace Processes” in *Mitigating Conflict: The Roles of NGOs*, edited by Henry F. Carey & Oliver P. Richmond (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003), 40-55. Charlotte Ku & Joaquin Caceres Brun “Neutrality and the ICRC Contributions to Humanitarian Operations” in *Mitigating Conflict: The Role of NGOs*, edited by Henry F. Carey & Oliver P. Richmond (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 56-72. Bronwyn Evans-Ken & Roland Bleker, “Peace beyond the State: NGOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina”. *Mitigating Conflict: The Role of NGOs*, edited by Henry F. Carey & Oliver P. Richmond (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003), 103-19. James Larry Taulbee & Marion V. Creekmore, NGO Mediation: The Carter Centre” in *Mitigating Conflict: The Role of NGOs*, edited by Henry F. Carey & Oliver P. Richmond (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003), 156-171. Wafula Okumu, “Humanitarian International NGOs and African Conflicts, in *Mitigating Conflict: The Role of NGOs*, edited by Henry F. Carey & Oliver P. Richmond (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003):120-137.

relationships to a considerable structural change and also to create peaceful agreement through voluntary and concrete action.²⁰

The role played by NGOs in mitigating conflicts has gained the attention of some scholars whose contributions paid more attention to how NGOs manage to deal with conflict in Northern Nigeria. For example, Muhammed Auwal Umar²¹ has indicated the important role NGOs can play in conflict resolution. He found that the activities of NGOs in conflict zones have changed situations and made people to consider services of NGOs in peace-building as important milestone, simply because of their positive impact on the society. Other studies have shown that NGOs have become directly involved in conflict resolution and management in Northern Nigeria in an effort to eliminate possibilities of violent conflict escalation in the region. According to International Crisis Group, NGOs have played a significant role in complex emergencies in Northern Nigeria and it is visible with growing number of NGOs' set up to pursue third party intervention agenda.²² Thus, the existence of NGOs and their activities are growing and have emerged as a vital part of third party contribution using different mechanisms of intervention. While the role of government in dealing with conflict in the Northern region of Nigeria proved ineffective, the participation of NGOs has been the business of the day since early 2000, with a number of practical examples in Plateau, Bauchi and Kaduna states.. A study on the role of NGOs in conflict resolution in Northern Nigeria has indicated the participation

²⁰ See Jacob Bercovith, Victor Kremenyuk, & William I. Zartman. "Introduction: The Nature of Conflict and Conflict Resolution", in *The Sage Handbook of Conflict Resolution*, edited by Bercovith, et al, (Loss Angles: Sage Publications, 2009), 1-12

²¹ Muhammad Auwal Umar, "Periscoping: Conflict and the Role of NGOs in Conflict Resolution, in *Conflicts and Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution*, vol. 1. edited by Habu Mohammed (Kano: General Studies Units, Bayero University, 2006),

²² International Crisis Group. "Northern Nigeria: Background to Conflict". *Crisis Group*, Africa Report No. 168 (2010).

of some NGOs in managing some conflicts.²³ In most cases, civil society organizations have exhibited higher level of influence in ensuring good governance and democratic consolidation.²⁴

In Nigeria, like other developing countries, the involvement of NGOs in helping the poor is significantly investigated by some scholars.²⁵ Part of it demonstrated how NGOs increasingly became active as well as involved in conflict management in Northern Nigeria. Even though, there have been some studies on NGOs' impact on conflict management in Northern part of Nigeria, a thorough investigation is yet to be undertaken. Violent ethno-religious conflicts have significantly ravaged the region. As such, finding evidence of positive role of NGOs in conflict management is worthy of exploratory research. A systematic and rigorous investigation into the matter is important to fully understand the role played by NGOs in conflict management to increase our knowledge.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

After a prolonged military rule, Nigeria returned to civilian rule in May, 1999. Since then, conflict of ethnic and religious dimensions keep occurring and reoccurring with

²³ Murtala A. Ringim. "An Exploration into NGO's Peace-Building Initiatives in Major Flash Points of Conflicts in Northern Nigeria, in *Nigeria's Convulsive Federalism*, edited by Habu Mohammed (Ibadan: Cypress Concepts & Solutions Ltd, 2012), 261-290. Philips Ostien. *A survey of the Muslims of Nigeria's North Central Geo-Political Zone* (Abuja: Nigeria Research Network (NRN) Oxford Department of International Development Queen Elizabeth House University of Oxford, 2012). Muhammed Taufeeq Ladan. *Ethno-Religious Difference, Recurrent Violence and Peace-Building in Nigeria: Focus on Bauchi, Plateau and Kaduna States* (Edinburgh Centre for Constitutional Law (ECCL), University of Edinburgh School of Law, In Association with Centre for Population and Development, Kaduna, 2012).

²⁴ Habu Muhammed. *Civil society organizations and democratization in Nigeria: the Politics of Struggles for Human Rights* (Ibadan: Kraft Books Limited, 2007).

²⁵ Murtala A. Ringim, "An Exploration into NGO's Peace-Building Initiatives in Major Flash Points of Conflicts in Northern Nigeria", *Nigeria's Convulsive Federalism*, edited by Habu Mohammed (Ibadan: Cypress Concepts & Solutions Ltd, 2012), 261-290. Philips Ostien. *A Survey of the Muslims of Nigeria's North Central Geo-Political Zone* (Abuja: Nigeria Research Network (NRN) Oxford Department of International Development Queen Elizabeth House University of Oxford, 2012). Muhammad Auwal Umar, "Periscoping: Conflict and the Role of NGOs in Conflict Resolution" in *Conflicts and peace studies and conflict resolution*, Vol. 1. (Kano: General Studies Units, Bayero University, Kano, 2006).

destructive effects on lives and property across the country. The Northern region of Nigeria is the worst affected. Thus, 1999 and beyond is the period when inter-group conflicts between Muslims and Christians outrageously increased, particularly in the 19 states of Northern Nigeria. Apart from that, Boko Haram's insurgency in the recent years is also frequent in the North, more specifically, the North-Eastern part of Nigeria. The period between 1999 and 2012 has seen increasing tendency of outbreak of violent conflicts along ethnic and religious lines in Nigeria. In consideration of the fact that ethno-religious violence in Northern Nigeria has resulted in destructive outcomes, NGOs have emerged as new important catalyst to contain and limit the disruptive and destructive effects of the conflicts.

This study aims at exploring the role played by as well as outcomes of NGOs' involvement in managing ethno-religious conflicts in Northern Nigeria during 1999 and 2012. It intends to analyze the diverse ways through which NGOs' efforts and activities have helped in managing conflicts. In so doing, the research focuses on the activities of two NGOs, which are: Interfaith Mediation Centre (IMC), Kaduna and Christians Muslims Peace Movement (CMPPM), Bauchi. While focusing on the two selected NGOs, the study intends to explore the pattern of role they may play in conflict management between different ethnic groups divided along religious lines. This study assumes that NGOs in general and that of Northern Nigeria in particular, can play a differentiating role and can also contribute to substantive peace initiative in ethno-religious conflict management.

1.3 Significance of the Study

There are a number of reasons why this study is important. In the first instance, NGOs have demonstrated high sense of enthusiasm towards engagement to solve or reduce

societal problems mostly affecting societal peaceful relationship. Their drive for peace building and conflict management, social change and perceived interest in dealing with poverty, health problems, reduction of illiteracy rates, empowerment, ensuring good governance and political participation has flirted with the idea of volunteerism. In recent times, NGOs have become active in issues related to conflict resolutions which require extensive analysis. Secondly, ethno-religious conflict in Northern Nigeria has become endemic and NGO's responses to manage conflict have increased over time.

Thirdly, NGOs' engagement as third party in conflict management has motivated concern over the need to investigate why and how such important actors approach conflict situations as phenomenon affecting different aspects of social life. Considering this development in recent times, NGOs are universally recognized as agents of peace and have contributed greatly in peace-building and conflict transformation using different methodologies.

This is important towards understanding the role NGOs played in conflict management using Bauchi and Kaduna as a case study to add to the existing knowledge, the consequence of NGOs' role in conflict management in Northern Nigeria. The goal is to investigate the phenomenon of NGOs' conflict management activities in Northern Nigeria, using an elaborate framework for analysis in order to know why NGOs' involvement particularly in ethno-religious conflict management in Northern Nigeria remains worthy of study. The significant roles NGOs play in managing conflicts are expected to remain critical in social change and peace-building. This suggests the need to explore the meaning of such intervention in improving social groups' relationship which fundamentally affects the lives of individuals in the society. The impact of such active third party intervention in

managing conflict and contributions made on peace-building, harmony, mutual respect and social change deserves serious scholarly attention. The recent development of active NGOs' role in conflict management in Northern Nigeria has justified the need to understand and analyze the phenomenon for policy guidance, theoretical explanations and practice.

1.4 Research Questions

The study attempts to answer the following research questions:

- (a) What is the role of NGOs in conflict management in Nigeria?
- (b) Why strategies of NGOs make them more important role players in conflict management in Kaduna and Bauchi States of Northern Nigeria?
- (c) How ethno-religious conflict management is carried out by NGOs in Nigeria?

1.5 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are three as follows:

- (a) To assess the role NGOs play in ethno-religious conflict management in Northern Nigeria between 1999 and 2012;
- (b) To analyze the strategies of NGOs in conflict management using case study of two selected NGOs in Kaduna and Bauchi states of Northern Nigeria;
- (c) To examine the impact and acceptability of NGOs in carrying out conflict management in Northern Nigerian states of Kaduna and Bauchi.

1.6 Research Methodology

1.6.1 Research Design

This is a qualitative study and best suited to the topic of investigation, because, qualitative research is about discovery, description and interpretive content which tends to assess the quality of things using words, images, and descriptions. Following a case of two representative NGOs and the role they play in conflict management, this study acknowledges NGOs' role perception and strategies as important indicators to assess activities of NGOs and their role in conflict management. It is obvious that, NGOs' role perception and strategies they employed in dealing with conflict remain important indicators towards assessing their effectiveness. These indicators are also applicable to all NGOs and can help in assessing the activities of each NGO. Thus, qualitative methods can guide this research through interviews to understand values, opinion, experiences and feelings of individuals and groups in the society.

The study used interviews particularly, semi-structured interviews, to collect data from the field directly from three sources: leaders of NGOs/officials, leaders of the conflicting parties (community and religious leaders) and members of the society. Interview as the instrument of data collection was used through which populations of each case selected will be reached for information relevant to topic of investigation. This allowed face-to-face discussions to enable collecting of data from respondents.

1.6.2 Location of study

The location of study comprises Kaduna and Bauchi states of Northern Nigeria. The region is selected because it is the most affected area in Nigeria. So investigating NGOs role in managing conflict in the area using Bauchi and Kaduna as case study is