



**NIGERIA ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ARABIC
AND ISLAMIC STUDIES (NATAIS)**

**DERADICALISATION STRATEGIES
OF ARABIC AND ISLAMIC STUDIES**

36TH

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

**of Nigeria Association of Teachers of
Arabic and Islamic Studies (NATAIS)**

Held at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

Edited

Conference Proceedings, 2018 C. E. / 1439 A. H.

Abdul-Fatah K. Makinde, Ph.D.

Editor-in-Chief

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Preface

Radicalization has been a phenomenon which ravages the globe and is causing a lot of security challenges. It has generated security challenges both internationally and locally. The cases of Al-Qaeda and ISIS at the international domain and Boko Haram at the local realm make radicalization a serious problem begging for solution. Ironically, rather than seeing radicalization as a socio-economic problem of the world, the sense of Islamophobia has made some to believe that it is a religious problem that is attached to Islam and its youths. Contrary to that however, Islam itself frowns at radicalization in all ramifications. Islam, being a religion of peace, could not have also made radicalization an instrument for propagation. That certainly could be a negative disposition to its objective of ensuring that humanity attains peace in all spheres of life. Where radicalization exists, the focus of Islam would definitely be to deradicalize in order to promote peaceful co-existence, harmony and security, which the religion stands to achieve in society. The clamour for deradicalisation of youths as a means of sustaining peace, locally and internationally, is welcomed by Islam since it is one of its goals and objectives. Moreover, because Islam and its sacred language (Arabic) are primarily designed for intellectualism and scholarship in order to find solutions to human problems, the Nigeria Association of Teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies, as a professional body, made it incumbent on itself to contribute to knowledge in this direction, in order to find solution to problem of radicalization. In view of this, the Association resolved to dedicate its 36th National Conference to discuss the strategies employable through Arabic and Islamic Studies for deradicalisation.

The Zaria Conference held between 7th and 12th October, 2018 was dedicated for discussion on deradicalisation. Scholars of the twin disciplines of Arabic and Islamic Studies from various institutions across the country converged at the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Kaduna State to present their papers on the main theme of the Conference: “Deradicalisation and the Role of Arabic and Islamic Studies.” Various papers presented addressed the problem of radicalization in one way or the other and came up with various methods through which deradicalisation could be employed in solving the problem using the instrumentalities of Arabic and Islamic Studies.

Therefore, this edited book of proceedings of the Conference has been divided into two sections. The first section contains English papers while the second section contains Arabic papers. The two sections have forty-five papers in all after the conference papers have been subjected to the consideration and judgment of peer reviewers. The book is published for the benefit of knowledge seekers, researchers, national and international bodies who intend to find strategies for deradicalisation.

The contributors employed their knowledge in the fields of Arabic and Islamic Studies to explore deradicalisation strategies for solving the problem of radicalization both locally and internationally. This book, no doubt, will be of great advantage to humanity.

Abdul-Fatah K. Makinde, Ph.D.

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Contents

1	Deradicalisation – What Role For Islamic Studies?	1
	<i>Is-haq O. Oloyede</i>	
2	Deradicalizing Through Re-Education, Entrepreneurship and Reintegration in Nigeria: A Muslim Perspective	14
	<i>Abubakar Sani</i>	
3	Deradicalising Muslim Extremists Through the Exemplary Life of the Prophet	27
	<i>Alhassan Usman</i>	
4	The Challenges of Radical Muslim Organizations in the Contemporary Period	38
	<i>Abdulbasit Musa Karkarku</i>	
5	Ethno-Nationalistic Militancy in Nigeria: Islamic Deradicalisation Strategies	48
	<i>T.O.Tajudeen, Abdullah Abdulganiyy and A.Sulaiman Sheu</i>	
6	Historical Discussion on Media Radicalism: A case study of Third Caliph, ‘Uthmān Bn ‘Affān’s Assassination as lessons for the Contemporary Nigeria	58
	<i>Ajani Murtala Abdus-Salam Adebayo</i>	
7	The Role of Islamic Studies in Conflict Resolution and Management in Nigeria	75
	<i>Adigun Wasilat Fayokemi</i>	
8	The Role of Security Agencies in Deradicalisation Strategies among Muslim Youth in Nigeria	86
	<i>Ashiru T.Zango, Abubakar I.Shika & Amina Muh’d Sani</i>	
9	A Survey of the Qur’ānic Virtues in the Life of Hashir Abdulsalam towards Deradicalization of Nigerian Young Muslim Scholars	96
	<i>Mohammed Mustapha Kannike</i>	
10	Religious Deradicalisation: A Panacea to Religious Crises in Nigeria	112
	<i>Shehu Zubairu</i>	
11	The Effects of Killings in some States of the Middle Belt on Muslim – Christian Relations in Nigeria: Deradicalisation as an Antidote	122
	<i>Sajo Abdullah Muhammad</i>	
12	Deradicalisation of Boko Haram Youths: An Islamic Perspective	129
	<i>Ishaq Abubakar Dauda</i>	

13	The Role of Islamic Scholars in Deradicalisation of Evangelisation <i>S.A.Popoola, Muinat A.A.-Mustapha & A. T.Otuniyi</i>	137
14	Deradicalisation of Muslim Youth from Politico-Religious Thuggery in Nasarawa State <i>A.A.Sulaiman and A.K. Mu'allimu</i>	143
15	The role of Da'wah in deradicalisation of Boko Haram's Kharijite ideology in Nigeria <i>Dr. A. Alhaji Bala and Dr. I.S Sa'idu</i>	152
16	The Role of Islamic Scholars, Religious Organisations and Muslim Leaders in Combating and Managing Radicalization <i>Maryam Ya'u Zamau</i>	161
17	The Role of Muslim Women Da'wah Organizations in Deradicalizing Political Activities in Nasarawa Stste <i>Dr. A.A Sulaiman and Yahaya Sulaiman and R.A. Kaura</i>	169
18	Lessons from Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) Dialogue in Madinah: A Solution to Radicalization among the Muslims in Nigeria <i>S.A Aboki Ph.D & A.I. Musaddad</i>	178

Deradicalisation – What Role for Islamic Studies?

Professor Is-haq O. Oloyede

قُلْ يٰٓاَهْلَ ٱلْكِتٰبِ لَا تَغْلُوْا فِى دِيْنِكُمْ غَيْرَ ٱلْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوْا اَهْوَاءَ قَوْمٍ قَدْ ضَلُّوْا
مِنْ قَبْلُ وَاَضَلُّوْا كَثِيْرًا وَضَلُّوْا عَنْ سَوآءِ ٱلسَّبِيْلِ ﴿٧٧﴾

Say: “O people of the Scripture! Exceed not in your religion the bounds (of what is proper), trespassing beyond the truth, nor follow the vain desires of people who went astray in times gone by- who misled many and strayed (themselves) from way (Q5:77).

“Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.” (UNESCO)

Ladies and gentlemen, whenever I receive invitations to participate in a conference and deliver either the keynote or what is sometimes referred to as the lead paper, I always seize such moments to ponder the whole enterprise known as scholarship. I always find myself pondering the necessity not only for this kind of gathering, this conference, that workshop or that seminar. I am always humbled that, such occasions like this, gesture to more solemn realities of our life than we are prepared to contemplate- that our gathering at conferences like this, which is no doubt, that of intellectuals and ornaments of the society, is ironically equally a gathering of men and women who are, from another perspective, somehow inferior even to the birds, the fishes and the trees in discharging basic normal routine. Whereas, our conurbation and congregation at occasions like this, are meant to pool ideas together on how we might solve urgent problems of life and answer pertinent questions of existence, ours is nonetheless inferior to that of birds who do not have to attend flight schools in order for them to fly; ours is inferior to rivers and the ocean which are not in need of colleges where they could learn how to flow; nor is it superior to the fishes in rivers and oceans which are not in need of swimming conferences. What a creature humans are; what assemblage this is – they always organize conferences and seminars in order to solve problems they have created by themselves and for themselves; we are all gathered here simply because we are all affected by those who are infected with the virus of radicalization.

In other words, when the invitation to this conference got to me and I discovered that the theme reads “deradicalization- the role of Islamic studies”, I immediately found myself in a labyrinth-in the circle and spiral of questions and ideas where my status and stature, where my profession and specialization becomes both the problem and the solution. Ladies and gentlemen, the theme of this year’s conference is like a key that opens the Pandora box. The subject of interest is deradicalization;

the object of interests are Muslim youth across climes and times while the field of interest is Islamic studies. But the urgent question the Islamophobic, the anti-Islam and anti-Muslim critic would ask is this- how can Islamic studies be the solution to the problem it foisted on to the world in the first instance? How could we imagine a solution from the 'house' of Islam to the problem of radicalization since Islam in itself, they would argue, is the problem, or the source of the problem?

While you are pondering the above, let me complicate the setting with the other question, the question that concerns you and me - is it not because we have failed to reach out to the larger society with our learning and scholarship that others have succeeded in radicalising the youth? Put differently, is radicalization not a product of failure of professors and doctorate degree holders in Islamic studies whose learning and scholarship are of little value and not impactful enough as to prevent the emergence of violent elements within Muslim communities in parts of Nigeria; elements who hold that the perpetration of unwarranted violence and the destruction of lives and property are the best means of attaining martyrdom? Does it not crackle your minds and rattle your intellection that that an *ibtidaiyyah* or *idaadiyyah* certificate holder should command more followers and respect among the mass of Muslim faithfuls than a scholar in the field who is celebrated all over the world for his erudition?

Ladies and gentlemen, the above questions and many more beckoned to me and engaged my attention the moment I received invitation to this conference. In other words, I am acutely aware that this conference is holding at a time, pursuant to issues that are latent in the above questions, when Islam and Muslims continue to be in the eye of the storm. Ladies and gentlemen, aside from the image of Muslims suffering from natural disasters and civil wars that we see on a daily basis in the electronic media, Islam continues to enjoy negative patronage of the fifth realm of the estate, the media, both local and international. The latter continues to give prime-time-coverage to those who hide under the canopy of Islam and deploy verses of the Qur'ān as justification for their egregious and atrocious acts of violence. In fact, it has become fashionable to hear broadcast journalists, public analysts and over-night 'consultants' on Islam and Muslim affairs refer to these groups as "Islamic" terrorists. Any attempt to contest this narrative and rhetoric often flies in the face when it is juxtaposed with the self-label which some of these groups carry about town. It is fast becoming a lost battle for well-meaning scholars and ordinary Muslims to insist that no two types of Islam exist; that there can be no division of Islam into 'Tolerant' Islam and 'Violent' Islam; that it is puerile to divide Muslims into 'moderate' Muslims and 'extremist' Muslims.

Thus, the theme of this year's conference is very apposite indeed. Equally worthy of gratitude, is your invitation to me to deliver this lead paper. I should therefore be thankful to the organizers for the time and efforts they have put into making today's event a reality. I am extremely grateful to you for this invitation.

Let me proceed therefore with what this lecture hopes to achieve. I propose to offer insights into the dialectics in the whole idea of de-radicalization; I intend to give a

brief account of where we are now and why deradicalization has become a categorical imperative for the Ummah. I situate all of these against global streams in which struggle against insurgency has become good business. In closing, I offer some suggestions that may be worthy of consideration as we all struggle to rein in this hydra-headed problem known as radicalization.

Birth of Terror, Producing the Radicals, the “Shekaus”

Ladies and gentlemen, hardly is there a Muslim community anywhere in the world today that is free either of the incidences of radicalization or its impacts. In other words, to every Muslim community today, at least in Nigeria, its own radicals; to every mosque its own Shekau. But exactly what is radicalization and how do we make sense of the so-called Islamic radicalization?

Like all fetishized concepts in the contemporary period, the construct radicalization has produced at least three other constructs all of which take their referential framework from the former. In other words, no discourse about radicalization would be complete without reference to de-radicalization, anti-radicalization and counter-radicalization. I could even complicate the field further by adding under-radicalization and over-radicalization. The word radicalization refers to “the social and psychological process of increasing commitment to extremist political or religious ideology” [European Union, 2007). It is ‘a process characterized by increasing commitment to, and use of violent means and strategies in political conflicts. (Donatella Della Porta and Gary LaFree, START. 2012). Clutterbuck seems to have given more clarity on the subject when he says:

"radicalization" can be used to describe a process whereby individuals (and even groups) develop, over time, a mindset that can—under the right circumstances and opportunities—increase the risk that he or she will engage in violent extremism or terrorism. ... (it) is understood to be a complex, dynamic, and non-linear process of change in the mindset of an individual that leads over time to a significant alteration in worldview, perception of external events, and his/her internal understanding of them. As these changes occur, they can be reflected in the individual's behavior, which can ultimately—in certain individuals—escalate to the point of engaging in violence, violent extremism, or terrorism. (Lindsay Clutterbuck, 2015)

It is clear from the above that radicalization is a process where groups or individuals hold contrasting opinions on issues in whose case they believe their contrasting opinions ought to be established in place of the already existing norm. In addition, few of such individuals believe their opinions could only be established through violent means and methods in which case their radicalization reflects violence. Clutterbuck once again contributed to the discourse when he asserts:

...not all individuals who are radicalized go on to take part in terrorist attacks or become violent extremists. They may ultimately hold political, ideological, or religious views with which many others may

disagree, perhaps to the point of finding them distasteful or even unacceptable. However, they are entitled to hold these views, and indeed—as long as they act lawfully—to express them as well. As long as this remains the extent of their "radicalism," there is a well-founded expectation that under normal circumstances, Western states will not take actions against them, coercive or otherwise. (ibid)

While Abubakar Shekau has achieved renown, a certain Abu-ibeji has become popular in southwest Nigeria. Whereas the necessity for the establishment of the so-called 'Islamic' state or caliphate circumscribed the formation of the Jamā'at Ahl - Sunnah lid-Da'wah wa'l-Jihād, commonly known as Boko Haram, that of Abu Ibeji in Ibadan, Southwest Nigeria, was simply based on an overarching reading of Islamic history and a very slippery interpretation of the construct-Salafiyyah, Whereas the Boko Haram sought to achieve its aims and objectives through resort to force, violence, kidnap and destruction of lives and property, the Salafi trend in Yorubaland has largely remained pacifist but destructive of such fundamental values in Islam as respect for constituted authorities, adoration of parents, unity of the *Ummah* etc. In other words, no matter where they are located, these radicals and radicalizing elements usually deploy same method of recruitment into their operation. Their *modus operandi* are usually the same. They rely on deceit, promise of paradise for the new-recruits, demonization and *takfir* of everybody else except themselves. All radical groups in our world today reject what they erroneously refer to as 'Western education'. Little do they know that the West could not have reached the heights it has reached today were it not for Islamic civilization.

In other words, radicalization is an effect. The question therefore arises- what are its causes? Analyses and studies of the phenomenon at the global level have led to the production of a highly eclectic corpora of publications in which various reasons for the trend have been adduced. Thus scholars have posited that among many factors or conditions that account for radicalization relative deprivation (Gurr, 1970), Western occupations and support for oppressive regimes particularly in Muslim lands (e.g., Pape, 2006) could be suggested. Identity politics, (Choudhury, 2007), poor political and socio-economic integration (Buijs, Demant & Hamdy, 2006) and feelings of humiliation on the part of the radicalized (Stern 1999, 2003;9 Juergensmeyer, 2000; Richardson, 2006) have also been identified as causes of the phenomenon.

But my little knowledge of Arabic and Islamic studies and my experience as an expert in global cultural politics in the last four decades, compel a deeper contemplation of the whole idea of radicalization. This becomes all the more urgent whenever reference is made by non-Muslim critics and scholars of global terrorism to, in their opinion, 'Islamic' radicalization. I always ask- what is Islamic in Islamic radicalization. What is Islamic in Islamic extremism? What is Islamic in the so-called Islamic terrorism? You would begin to appreciate the global politics behind these labels when you realize that over eighty percent of acts of violence and unwanton destruction of lives and properties all around the world are actually being perpetrated by non-Muslim state and non-state agents across the world. You would

understand the dynamics in global politics the more as soon as you come face to face with the fact that in Uganda, in Central African Republic, in Philippines, even in Israel the religion of perpetrators of evil and violence is usually not invoked as labels or warrants for the former. In other words, hardly would you hear of Christian radicalization; hardly would you hear of Christian terrorism, hardly would a mention ever be made of Christian extremism even at a time Christians are engaged in acts of terror and violence all around the world. Terrorism and radicalization experts would never ever hold Christianity responsible for the foibles and failures of the Christian. On the contrary, Islam is usually pleaded as reason whenever a Muslim decides to go gaga. Our religion is always held responsible for our iniquities.

Now, if the import of the above discussion is the necessity to free Islam from the phenomenon of radicalization or terrorism, then we must endeavour, as experts in Arabic and Islamic studies, to locate the reasons why young Muslims fall into this error. One of such therefore might be acute lack of knowledge; or acute ignorance that masquerades under knowledge and learning. From the northeast to the southwest, it can hardly be controverted that leaders of these radicalized groups have less than thorough knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence, which they often plead as basis for their atrocities. The group's familiarity with the intricacies involved in the study and understanding of *Hadīth* and *Uṣūl al-Fiqh* are equally largely below par. Since they do not have the necessary grounding in Islamic law, leaders of these groups do not adhere to the rules of deducing juridical decisions nor do they combine the religious directives together. Rather, they substitute the true intent of a text with an erroneous one; they take the Qur'ān and *aḥādīth* out of their contexts and delink same from their references.

But that again might not be as fundamental as the abundance of independent preachers in our communities today; those I would also refer to as *da'wah* workers without 'visas', *da'wah* workers without *ijāzah*. These groups of young men have seized the *da'wah* space by the jugular. They issue *fatwa* at will; they appoint and address themselves as Imām at will; they call themselves Shaykhs; they take over the responsibilities of parents in marrying out their daughters; they forbid education to Muslim girls; they distribute paradise to their followers and consign everyone else to hell as if they are custodians of paradise and hell.

Again, upon greater reflection, I discovered that the trend I pictured above reflects a general and deeper malaise in our society today. Ours is now a society where people fraudulently claim what they are not and no questions are asked. People call themselves Drs today without passing through any university and nobody is arraigned in courts of law for impersonation; there are individuals in our cities today who have not or have never been to the four walls of the university who now refer to themselves as professors. Yet no question is being asked. Whenever a young boy wakes up and begins to refer to himself as Shaykh and we fail to stop dishonesty, we are unwittingly courting radicalization.

Again, the above may not be as fundamental as the proliferation of sects and societies within the *Ummah*. Like every other thing in our society today, formation of societies and organizations have become free for all. Every passing day, new Muslim organizations and groups are being registered. As Christians go about with their campaign to plant a church on every street in Nigeria, some Muslim youths are not tiring in forming new groups and associations. But we all know that Islam is unlike Christianity in terms of ethical requirements of establishing places of worship.

Yet, dear eminent colleagues, our pursuit of factors that often lead to radicalization would be incomplete if we fail to account for what terrorism and deradicalization experts refer to as the “N” factor. According to Kruglanski and others the ‘need’ factor for radicalization lies in the argument that “our beliefs are based on our motives. We do not necessarily see what is out there. Often we see what we want to see and believe what we want to believe. Valid arguments, however “strong,” are not necessarily convincing if they run counter to our needs. The need to hold radical attitudes is typically based on the need to feel significant, that one matters, that one is deserving of respect”. Thus one probable driver for radicalization is not exclusively enthusiasm for the faith or lack of adequate knowledge of what the religion demands of its adherents but the empty urge to be, to mean, to emerge; the quest for “personal significance” (Kruglanski et al,2014), even if that pushes him to violence.

In other words, the Arabs did not just come up with the axiom which says ‘fariq tasud’- create disunity, you will become popular. The axiom emerged out of experience. Thus, it is common nowadays for young men who want to become popular to embarrass those who are older than their fathers. This partly explains why leaders of these radicalized groups find pleasure impugning authority and profaning the sacred. What better way to satisfy the atrocious ‘need’ to be popular, even in hell, than a son who declared that the Islam of his father is inferior to his; than a man who declared that he, not the Sultan, is more suitable for the position of the Sultanate? The ‘need’ to be known, to be reckoned with as the leader of the *Ummah*, the Imām; the need to live a life of comfort, to have beautiful women as consorts, are usually an unaccounted factor for radicalization. Not a few British citizens left the UK to join ISIS when the group first established its reign of terror in-between Iraq and Syria; they were promised what UK could not provide or guarantee- a paradise here on earth. Thus, they plunged headlong into their self-destruction; they destroyed cities in order to inherit villages.

Yet there were others who became radicalized not by choice but by chance. They found themselves in the hands of the workers of the network, the network of radicalization. As I mentioned above, they were told stories of the ‘paradise’ already founded by the terror states here on earth. Such is the story of the young boy who left the comforts of his parent's home in Lagos sometime in 2015. He told his father he was going for *'Itikāf*. It was not the first time he would go out all alone. The young boy had demonstrated an uncanny competence and flair for integrity. His words was his watch. Thus there was no way his parents would know they would

not be seeing him soon, and probably never again. Days after that year's Ramadan, days which had become elongated for his parents because of the feelings of grief and agony on the disappearance of the beloved child, his father received a call that his son had gone to Syria to join the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL). Nobody knew he had fallen into the trap set up by the terror networks for innocent young Muslims. Nobody knew his journey to the land of no return had already been finalized. The above represents some of the reasons we are confronted by the challenges of radicalization today. The identified causes are internal to Muslims, we are aware of external causes which include planned strategies by some non-Muslims to infiltrate Islam and misrepresent it. This has been a subject of another publication of mine. (Oloyede, I.O. 2014). Now what have been its effects?

Effects of Radicalization

It should be evident from the above that nothing positive results from radicalization, neither for the radicalized nor for the Muslim *Ummah*. Or could this be positive- the negative representation of Islam and Muslims in local and international media; or the widening geography of Islamophobia which often occur each time acts of insurgency are perpetrated by these radicalized elements? Whenever a Muslim is arrested for doing what Islam forbids, every other Muslim becomes criminals. Muslim women in hijāb become subject of attacks. Your beard and mine become the butt of flaks and criticisms.

Radicalisation has drawn Muslims backward in the field of education as it has done in the field of politics. For example, education has now been divided into two- Eastern and Western. I have not read of an instance in Islamic history where knowledge could validly be racialized or dichotomized. What I know is this- that Allah is the owner of the east and the west; that when the Almighty instructed the Prophet to read- Iqra- what to be read had no boundaries; what he was asked to read is the whole world. Thus, notion of an education that is Western and the other Eastern is therefore slippery and invalid. What a Muslim is required to do is follow the Qur'ān whenever he comes across new knowledge. Allah teaches us to pray to Him thus:

هُم مِّنْ فَوْقِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ مِّنَ النَّارِ وَمِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ ذَٰلِكَ يُخَوِّفُ اللَّهَ بِهِ عِبَادَهُ
يَعْبَادِ فَاتَّقُونِ ﴿١٦﴾ وَالَّذِينَ اجْتَنَبُوا الطُّغُوتَ أَن يَعْبُدُوهَا وَأَنَابُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ
لَهُمُ الْبُشْرَىٰ فَبَشِّرْ عِبَادِ ﴿١٧﴾

But those who have avoided Taghut, lest they worship it, and turned back to Allah - for them are good tidings. So give good tidings to my servants;

Those who listen to the speech and follow the best of it; those are the ones that Allah has guided, and those are people of understanding (Q39: 16-17).

But what radicalization does is to prevent Muslim youth from listening to the speech let alone have the opportunity to take the best of it. Those undergoing radicalization are usually not given the option to think, to question, to ponder. In the underground of radicalization, it is not only education that is *haram*, politics and political participation are equally forbidden. Whenever a group declares a Muslim a *Mushrik* just because he accepted an offer to participate in governance, the *fitnah* foretold by the Prophet enters into reality.

Ladies and gentlemen, radicalization also does one other thing to the *Ummah*- it pulls it back into the abyss of *Jahiliyyah* through sexual objectification of Muslim women; through the erosion of their right to freedom of choice, the right to affirm their agency and subjectivity. When a Muslim woman is told to make a choice between her *niqāb* and her education by her husband, discerning minds would know that the *Ummah* is going down the abyss.

Apart from making that which is lawful unlawful, radicalization also creates *wājib* out of *mandub*- its makes compulsory what Islamic law and jurisprudence ordinarily deems to be permissible. Or how else might we make sense of the notion held by the radicalized groups that the usage of cutleries is an innovation (*bid'ah*) at this age, in the 21st century; that the usage of cutleries would prevent Muslims from practicing the *Sunnah* of licking their fingers after meals. I ask- does the *Sunnah* require the licking of fingers even after taking a meal consisting of rice and beans for example? Are cutleries not part of the blessings of the Almighty to humanity referenced in Q57:25?

Ladies and gentlemen, let me round-off this section with this - hardly could there be disagreement that no other acts of violence has led to the death of innocent Nigerians and the destruction of properties than the on-going insurgency in parts of the country. According to Governor Kashim Shetimah of Borno State who speaks on this situation. He says:

The Boko Haram insurgency has led to deaths of almost 100,000 persons, going by the estimates of our community leaders over the years. Two million, one hundred and fourteen thousand (2,114,000) persons have become internally displaced as at December of 2016; with five hundred and thirty seven thousand, eight hundred and fifteen (537,815) in separate camps; 158,201 are at official camps that consists of six centres with two transit camps at Muna and Customs House, both in Maiduguri. There are 379,614 IDP'S at 15 satellite camps comprising Ngala, Monguno, Bama, Banki, Pulka, Gwoza, Sabon Gari and other

locations in the State. 73,404 persons were forced to become refugees in neighbouring countries with Niger having 11,402 and Cameroon having 62,002.

Governor Shetima says further:

We have an official record of 52,311 orphans who are separated and unaccompanied. We have 54,911 widows who have lost their husbands to the insurgency and about 9,012 have returned back to various communities of Ngala, Monguno, Damboa, Gwoza and Dikwa, (Premium Times Saturday, September 1, 2018).

As at the 1st of September 2018, a total of thirty Nigeria soldiers were said to have lost their lives in the seemingly unending war of attrition between the latter and the Boko Haram insurgents in the north east. In other words, after close to a decade of the so-called global war on terror, the need to change strategy in countering violent extremism is now being felt more than ever before. The necessity to explore ways and means to counteract incidences of radicalization through de-radicalization has of recent gained traction. It is to the latter, I now turn my attention.

De-Radicalisation- Taming Rogue Shaykhs and their Followers

Is deradicalization possible? If yes, how might experts in Islamic studies become critical stakeholders in the field? Jessica Stern asked a different question about a decade ago. She said: “Is it possible to deradicalize terrorists and their potential recruits? (J. Stern 2010). While affirming the possibility of radicalized elements being weaned of their addiction, she cited Saudi Arabia which has had a highly successful deradicalization programme in place since 2004 as example. Previously, radicalized Saudi youths who have had stints in the programme have been reintegrated back into the mainstream Saudi society much more successfully than ordinary criminals. Similar programmes have been launched by various governments in the Middle East, Europe and Southeast Asia.

But what is "**deradicalization**"? This refers to methods and techniques used to undermine and reverse a completed radicalization process, thereby, reducing the potential risk to society from terrorism. The notion of deradicalization would not be functional until the construct "**counter-radicalization**" is invoked. The latter describes methods often deployed to stop or control radicalization as it is occurring. This is different from "**anti-radicalization**" which describes methods to deter and prevent radicalization from occurring in the first place. Thus, whatever suggestions an august gathering like this would want to propose to combat radicalization, such must show fidelity to the triad of concepts hinted at in this presentation. Thus, the suggestions I offered below on de-radicalization are relevant to both counter-radicalization and anti-radicalization. Since this is all about Islamic studies' perspective, I proceed by reminding you all of an instance in Islamic history.

The *Khawārij* as a Model

The *Khawārij* (also Kharijites) refers to the first group in Islamic history that became radicalized. There was a group of soldiers that seceded from the camp of

the then *Khalīfah* of the Muslim *Ummah*, Ali bn Abī Tālib. Their secession was as a result of their dissatisfaction with the decision of Ali to accept arbitration on the disagreement between him and Mu‘awiyah who had set himself up as a rival to the *Khalīfah*. The *Khawārij* later decamped from Ali’s army chanting ‘lā-hukmu ilā lillāh’ – ‘only Allah can arbitrate’. It was not long thereafter that the group became a fanatical one and started killing and assassinating Muslims who did not subscribe to their creed. They tagged Ali bn Abī Tālib, the then Muslims’ leader as a *Kāfir* (unbeliever) and concluded that he had strayed from the path of Islam by accepting arbitration.

What lessons are in the above for us? It includes the fact that radicalization is usually the first step to violent extremism and terrorism; that all radicalized groups that became violent usually see their fellow Muslim brethren as their number one enemies. Not willing to fight against his fellow Muslims, Ali decided to send a mediator to the group. He sent Abdullah bn Abbas to them. Ibn Abbas therefore asked for the points of reservations that they had against Ali. They listed three issues. These were:

- That the *Khalīfah* accepted human arbitration on Mu‘awiyah’s mutiny. This according to the group was against Qur’ān 6:57. This portion of the Qur’ān says it is only Allah that can arbitrate over Muslims’ affairs.
- That the *Khalīfah* did not take the womenfolk of his opponents captives or take any booty in the just concluded battle of Siffin
- And that he agreed that the title *Amīr-ul- Muminīn* be removed from his name while the arbitration document was being prepared.

Having listened to their grievances against the *Khalīfah*, Ibn Abbas went ahead to counter them one by one. He said:

- That Qur’ān 5:95 and 4:35 authorize human arbitration
- That the battle that the *Khawārij* referred to was fought between two Muslim parties and one in which ‘Ā’ishah, the wife of the Prophet, was in the opposition. Who among the *Sahabah* dare take the wife of the Prophet as a captive, Ibn Abbas wondered.
- That the Prophet himself erased his honorific title, ‘messenger of Allah’ during the treaty of Hudaibiyyah when the Quraysh unbelievers demanded that such a phrase should be erased from their pact with the Muslims. The decision to remove messenger of Allah from the treaty of Hudaibiyyah, Ibn Abbas argued further, did not change the fact that the Prophet was Allah’s messenger.

By Allah’s will, Ibn Abbas’s argument was sound enough that nothing less than two thousand soldiers of the *Khawārij* recanted and retracted their stance against Ali b. Abī Tālib. This incident represents an archetype in Islamic history even as it is highly useful for the three different processes mentioned above namely deradicalization, counter-radicalization and anti-radicalization. The incident

features elements that are necessary in any de-radicalization, counter-radicalization and anti-radicalization. Such include dialogue with the radicalized, knowledge of Islam (history, law and Jurisprudence), eloquence of deradicalization/counter-radicalization experts, knowledge (of valences that feed radicalization), empathy (while interfacing with the radicalized) and firm refutation (of the whole idea of radicalization). For example, Ibn Abbas' intervention was laced with all the elements mentioned here. Consider his introductory statement below:

I have come to you from the Companions of the Prophet, the *Muhājirūn* and the *Ansār*, and from the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, among whom the Qur'ān was revealed and who have more knowledge of its interpretation than you. None of them is among you, so I need to convey to you what they are saying and to convey to them what you are saying.

This shows a de-radicalization expert who has knowledge not only of actors in the field of radicalization but also of the tools by which the deradicalization process could be achieved.

The following activities may equally be useful in the three processes of deradicalization, **“counter-radicalization”** and **“anti-radicalization”**. These may include:

- i. creation of a platform where consensus on the evil effects of terrorism and violent extremism on the image of Islam and the Muslims could be built particularly among the youths;
- ii. creation of a platform for a re-interpretation of discourses of violence vis-a-vis the current ones in circulation among the insurgent groups;
- iii. increase the capacities of the participants in confronting the challenges of violent extremism today;
- iv. provide a platform where experiences in radicalization and anti-radicalization could be shared leveraged upon;
- v. provide an opportunity to develop near-accurate data on existing mosques and Muslim organizations in the country;
- vi. attend to push factors for radicalization such as lack of good governance;
- vii. introduce vocational training programmes and create job opportunities for the youths;
- viii. Launch social security programmes that would assist youth fulfill personal ambitions including that of getting married-ISIS lured UK citizens to Iraq based on, among others, promise of beautiful women and life in a paradise. In other words, providing radicalized youths with alternative means to personal significance may mitigate their inclination to attain it via violent extremism; it may “soften” their resistance to moderate theological arguments. It may open extremists' minds to the message that the “sacred

- values” of Islam (Ginges & Atran, 2009), far from being served by violent jihad, are actually trampled and desecrated by radicalism and terrorism;
- ix. Sponsor and fund the establishment of social networks and circles where the youth could share and interact with counsellors and others and share ‘realities’ of life with them. This is in recognition of the fact that radicalization occurs in a social context; it is shaped by the group dynamics of social interaction, the impact of family and friends and the charisma of influential leaders.
 - x. As experts in Islamic studies, we need to move out of the academy to make our learning more impactful; and
 - xi. Need for a well written “proposal by NATAIS on an in-depth study of Radicalisation in Nigeria”. This will entail personal interaction with the arrested Boko haram members.

Conclusion

What I have tried to do in this presentation is complicate existing notions of radicalization. I have shown the politics that undergird global war on terror, the causes and effects of radicalization. I have equally endeavoured to show, while deploying tools from Islamic studies, the methodologies and approaches that may be more productive in the on-going efforts against radicalization. Perhaps the most engaging issue that we shall continue to ponder as experts in Arabic and Islamic Studies is how shall we make our field more impactful than it is presently particularly in the whole task of counter- and anti-radicalization. This is urgent and a never ending challenge. There has never been a time when the world has been free of radicals; we should not equally tire to rise up to show the true light of guidance whenever the world becomes challenged as it is presently with reference to the scourge.

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Deradicalizing Through Re-Education, Entrepreneurship and Reintegration in Nigeria: A Muslim Perspective

Abubakar Sani, Ph.D.

Introduction

Islam is a comprehensive and universal religion for all races and classes of people; not oriented to serve a specific category or group of people, but specially aimed to address the needs of all humanity with its moral, spiritual, social, legal, political and economic systems. Its moral purity and clarity, simplicity in a strict monotheistic creed and faith, and comprehensive prohibition of all types of criminality, oppression and injustice appeals to all classes and categories of people, regardless of race, culture, education, social and economic status. The aim of Islam is to establish the ideal human society and brotherhood, spreading general benevolence and the divine guidance among men for their betterment and salvation. Part of its mission is to establish justice at all times and all levels, to maintain amicable relations even with potential enemies as long as there are no open acts of hostilities, and to promote peace whenever possible. In order to present the true and peaceful picture of the religion of Islam, Allah says in the following verses:

It may be that Allah will grant love and friendship between you and those whom you hold as enemies. For Allah has power over all things; and Allah is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. Allah forbids you not, with regard to those who do not fight you for your Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for Allah loves those who are just. Allah only forbids you, with regard to those who fight you for your Faith, and drive you out of your homes, and support others in driving you out, from turning to them for friendship and protection. Those who turn to them (in these circumstances) do wrong (Qur'an 60:7-9).

The above qur'anic verses indicated the peaceful nature of the religion of Islam which the entire Muslims should adopt in their relationship with fellow Muslims and followers of other religions. Also in the prophetic Sunnah, it reflects that, radicalism that ends with terrorism is totally condemned in the following ahadith:

Narrated Abu-Hurayrah: A man said: Apostle of Allah, a man wishes to take part in jihad in Allah's path desiring some worldly advantage? The Prophet (Pbuh) said: He will have not reward. The people thought it terrible, and they said to the man: Go back to the Apostle of Allah (Pbuh), for you might not have made him understand well. He, therefore, (went and again) asked: Apostle of Allah, a man

wishes to take part in jihad in Allah's path desiring some worldly advantage? He replied: There is no reward for him. They again said to the man: Return to the Apostle of Allah. He, therefore, said to him third time. He replied: There is no reward for him.¹

Narrated Abdullah ibn Mas'ud: The Prophet (Pbuh), said: The most merciful of the people in respect of killing are believers (in Allah).²

Narrated Abu-Hurayrah: The Prophet (Pbuh) said: Faith prevented assassination. A believer should not assassinate.³

Radicalization is a process of change in which non-violent individuals come to endorse and promote violent activity. Radicalization and extremism are complex and multifaceted phenomena that have been successfully exploited by terrorist groups in spreading their ideology, even among the most disenfranchised segments of the population throughout the world. This is further exacerbated by the strategic use of a variety of media, including the internet, which provides them with the ability to disseminate a broad-ranging corpus of indoctrination and propaganda, fostering the ideal environment for a virtual society.

Research problem

Since the revolution of Khomeini in Iran in 1979, there has been a persistent attempt to couple Islam with terrorism. Wherever and whenever a terrorist attack takes place, fingers of accusation are directed immediately and without flinching towards Muslims. Fanaticism or radicalism by its nature tends to be destructive. Just as there are religious fanatics, there are political, ethnic and racial and as well common among football fans as well. These groups are minorities in every society and tend to change system that contradicts their beliefs by force whenever possible. Radicalism knew no border, race, religion or geography, it exists in many endeavours.⁴

The history of radicalism in Nigeria, one of the most populous countries in Africa, could be traced back to the emergence of Maitatsine crisis between 1980 and 1985, though there were few instances of it before then. Muhammad Marwa's teachings were deeply heterodox as he claimed to be a prophet. In December 1980, his followers in Kano revolted; the city was convulsed by what was virtually civil war, and 4177 died, among them Maitatsine himself. These continued in other places like Gongola (Adamawa), Bauchi among others. Thereafter, followed some Muslims with some religious fanatical tendencies like: Izalah, Tariqah, Shi'ah among others, which sometimes led to many ethno-religious clashes in Nigeria. Northern Nigeria has since 2009 recorded the most critical radical attacks with the emergence of Boko Haram in North-eastern part of the country. Reports says more than 20,000 people have been killed while more than two million have fled their homes as a result of Boko Haram activities. The group is aimed at creating an Islamic state in north-eastern part of Nigeria and neighbouring countries. Nigeria's ranking on the Global Terrorism Index rose from 16th out of 158 countries in 2008 to 6th (tied with Somalia) by the end of 2011.⁵ In

addition to that, there are several captions on the media on the Boko Haram insurgencies. Such include “Boko Haram’s increasingly brutal assaults on schools, students, and teachers since 2009 in Borno, Yobe, and Kano states, between 2009 to 2015; Boko Haram’s attacks destroyed more than 910 schools and forced at least 1,500 more to close; at least 611 teachers have been killed and another 19,000 forced to flee.” (Human Rights Watch 2016, cite in Mukhtar, 2018)⁶.

The aim of this paper is to review and reflect on these radical activities and the counter-plans to change the mind-sets of the radical groups and to be re-integrated into the *Ummah*. Since the beginning of radicalism in Nigeria, there has been series of arrests and re-arrests of these radical groups by the law enforcement agencies which finally ended at detaining the accused parties in various prisons in the name of rehabilitation and other security issues. The United Nations (2012) confirmed that, many offenders, even after severe sentences of imprisonment, repeatedly fail to desist from crime and reintegrate into the community as law-abiding citizens. Imprisonment, in itself, is incapable of addressing the offenders’ social integration issues. Even when solid prison programmes have helped offenders to achieve some progress during detention, that progress is often lost as a result of the lack of follow-up supervision and assistance after release.⁷ In the process, many of these radicals died due to severe punishments while some used that avenue to become members of other radical groups and were therefore exposed and initiated into other ideologies. Hence, nothing was achieved in de-radicalising these groups through re-education and re-integration into community for them to start a new life.

Definition of concepts

Radicalization is by definition a process of change in which non-violent individuals come to endorse and promote violent activity. As terrorism expert, Brian Michael Jenkins cited by Ezzarqui states that “Terrorists do not fall from the sky...they emerge from a set of strongly held beliefs. They are radicalized. Then they become terrorists.”⁸ Individuals are drawn to killing their fellow citizens through acts of terrorism because their beliefs and grievances have been exploited to become a driving force to carry out such attacks. In addition, Ezzarqui cites Rohan Gunaratna, a renowned international terrorism expert to have remarked that “individuals are ideologically driven and not operationally driven.”⁹

Radicalization requires that the individual enters a mental process that is transformative, with a personal change that conditions him to violent behaviour. In other words, “radicalization comprises internalizing a set of beliefs, a militant mind-set that embraces violent jihad as the paramount test of one’s conviction”. The growing number of detainees in jails, most particularly of violent extremists, contributes to further entrenching radicalization among inmates, providing a safe-haven for recruitment and development of the jihadist narrative.¹⁰

On the other hand, the concept of de-radicalization is geared towards addressing the ideological challenge and thwart the appeal of militancy, transforming attitudes and seeking to rehabilitate individuals into mainstream society. The concept of “de-radicalisation” is defined as “a process that leads an individual or group to change

his attitudes about violence specifically about the appropriateness of violence against civilians”.¹¹This process requires the abandonment of violence and results in changing beliefs or ideologies.

Furthermore, “De-radicalisation” can be defined as the social and psychological process whereby an individual’s involvement in, and commitment to, violent radicalisation is “reduced to the extent that they are no longer at risk of involvement and engagement in violent activity” (Horgan, 2009).¹²Re-education is the process of presenting fanatic ideologies of the victims into more understanding and universally accepted beliefs for the peace and unity of Muslims. Here selected and learned Islamic scholars are chosen by the government to engage these radicals into peaceful educational interactions aimed at convincing them to abandon their extremist ideology to moderate one.

The word entrepreneurship is derived from the French *entreprendre* and the German *unternehmen*. Both verbs translate to “undertake.” In a way, the entrepreneur undertakes endeavours that others do not. The entrepreneur “is at once one of the most intriguing and one of the most elusive in the cast of characters that constitutes the subject of economic analysis.”¹³In other words, an entrepreneur is someone who exploits opportunities often through the recombination of existing resources while bearing the uncertainty in the undertaking.

Re-integration is the coming back of the prisoner/radical into the community to continue normal life (including gainful employment) after incarceration. According to Ajala and Oguntuase, one Alessandro identified the successful reintegration of ex-convicts back into the society to include: training in Prisons, job Placement (after release), innovative Programmes (such as After-care programmes), restoring economic supports and rebuilding family networks. Each of these provisions increases the chance that ex-offenders have a chance to make a new life after incarceration. Traditionally, one could identify three main types of offender reintegration programmes, namely, institution-based programmes, surveillance-based transition programmes, and assistance based transition programmes.¹⁴ The paper will now look at these concepts and their effective application in de-radicalizing radicals/returnees in some countries and in Nigeria.

An overview of radicalism and De-radicalisation models of some countries

Aitkulova observed that, there are many definitions on radicalism, but none of them is universally accepted. He therefore cited the European Commission that defines it as “the phenomenon of people embracing opinions, views and ideas which could lead to acts of terrorism” and the Swedish Security Service, which sees radicalization as “a process that leads to ideological or religious activism to introduce radical change to society”, and a “process that leads to an individual or group using, promoting or advocating violence for political aims”. Moreover, the US Department of homeland security has the following definition: “The process of adopting an extremist belief system, including the willingness to use, support, or facilitate violence, as a method to effect social change”.¹⁵

Some offenders released from correctional institutions are confronted by a range of social, economic and personal challenges that tend to become obstacles to a crime-free lifestyle. Some of these challenges are as a result of the offenders' past experiences and others are more directly associated with the consequences of incarceration and the difficulty of transiting back into the community.¹⁶ This situation forces them back to bad gangs who are ever ready to accept them thus increasing recidivist tendencies in the society.

State-sponsored de-radicalization programmes have been established in Egypt, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Algeria, Tajikistan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Colombia and the United Kingdom, each of which has developed its own approach to promoting disengagement from terrorism, with their strategies tailored to their local political culture. Yemen was one of the first countries to initiate a programme designed to de-radicalize jihadists using religious dialogue. The foundation of this approach was that extremists held ideologies that fuelled terrorism and these ideologies could be successfully debated and moderated to reduce terrorist activities. The basis of the programme was to convert imprisoned jihadists' ideologies from "a radical, militant understanding of Islam to a moderate and peaceful understanding. The main issues debated within the dialogue were the legitimacy of the Yemeni government, the permissibility of killing non-Muslims, and the appropriate utilization of jihad. The dialogue between the committee and jihadists was based on the Qur'an and sunnah and the purpose of the dialogue was to convince the jihadists to recognize the Yemeni government's authority, respect the rights of non-Muslims, and refrain from violence within Yemen.¹⁷

The chairman of the programme, Judge al-Hitar based his dialogue programme on the idea of mutual respect between the clerics and the detainees. Agenda was designed to meet with the detainees in the prison and other specific places where both will sit on same dialogue table for discussion. Records shows that by June 2005, Yemeni officials declared that Yemen was 90% free of terrorists and advised they had released 364 rehabilitated detainees.¹⁸ This can be understood that, the engagement of powerful team for the dialogue has yielded successful result in the country.

In Singapore, the Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG) was founded by the government in 2003 to provide religious counselling for detainees and their families. The main impetus for the Singaporean programme was to protect the Muslim population from radical ideologies. The state made an early commitment to a religious rehabilitation of *al-Jam'iyah Islamiyyah* (JI) members. A significant physical disengagement factor in the programme was the arrest and imprisonment of extremists of the group and disrupting their operational capabilities. Other elements of disengagement included the provision of employment and education to detainees' families.¹⁹ To further ensure that former detainees did not return to terrorism or re-engage in violence, the government closely monitored their activities. As part of a wider effort of counter-radicalization of the population at large, the government initiated a campaign targeting young people and the influence of internet, which was used as a medium to encourage radicalization. The group sets

up its own website to counter various erroneous misinterpretations of Islam and any other extremist deviant ideologies.²⁰ In other words, the “moderate” Singaporean Muslim Community is responsible for interpreting and teaching the correct understanding of Islam. The government’s objective was to solicit the community’s assistance in counselling terrorists. The RRG composed of Islamic religious scholars, a judge from the Singaporean Islamic Shari’ah Court and Muslim volunteers serving as religious counsellors.²¹

After the events of September 11, 2001, Saudi Arabia among other states adopted strict counter-terrorism measures as a response to UN Security Council Resolution, which requires all member States to prevent and suppress “the financing of terrorist activities by criminalizing all acts tending to provide for or facilitate such financing.” The legislation criminalizes all acts proven to create a disturbance to public order, damage the image of Saudi Arabia, or threaten its national unity. In reporting to the UN Security Council Committee on its adoption of Resolution 1373 with regard to counter-terrorism, Saudi Arabia asserted the *hirabah* Act derived from Shari’ah Law as follows:

In the Islamic Shari’ah, which the Kingdom applies and from which it derives its statutes, crimes of terrorism are included among the crimes of *hirabah*. The severest of penalties are applied to these crimes in the Islamic Shari’ah, as set forth in the Holy Qur’an. The crimes of *hirabah* include the killing and terrorization of innocent people, spreading evil on earth (*al-ifsad fi al-ard*), theft, looting and highway robbery.²²

To achieve security and stability all over the Kingdom, combat all types of crimes, ensure the safety of all Saudi people and Pilgrims, the new law grants the Minister of Interior the power to “reinforce security relationships with neighbouring Arab countries, as well as the broader Arab world.” The Kingdom has adopted soft counter-terrorism measures; these programmes aim to deter Saudis from involvement in radicalization, offer rehabilitation counselling and means, and provide aftercare programmes to individuals involved in radicalization to “facilitate their reintegration into society after their release from custody.”²³ It adopts the following steps to counter-radicalisation in the Kingdom:

- Education of the “public about radical Islam and the dangers of extremism, as well as programmes designed to short-circuit radicalization by providing alternatives.” The strategy of prevention focuses on combating radicalization “by monitoring radical websites and by promoting more moderate views through education, media, and entertainment.” The Ministry of Islamic Affairs, on the other hand, sponsors religious “lectures and classes at mosques throughout the country, utilizing speakers and materials recommended by experts on extremism.” At schools throughout the Kingdom, the Ministry of Education gives lectures and classes to raise the awareness of the “students from a very early age about the dangers of extremism and the effects of terrorism and violence.” Similarly, in public

streets and main roads, Saudi authorities post billboards, images, and photos of terrorists' attacks to raise public awareness about the danger of terrorism.²⁴

- Rehabilitation: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia runs a rehabilitation process, under the Counselling Programme, which is administered by the Ministry of Interior. The process is overseen by an Advisory Committee consisting of four subcommittees: The Religious Subcommittee; the Psychological and Social Subcommittee; the Security Subcommittee; and the Media Subcommittee. The Religious Subcommittee, for instance, includes clerics, scholars and university professors who “directly engage in the prisoner dialogues and the counselling process.” In terms of the effectiveness of rehabilitation, Saudi government reports show that the programme has achieved a success rate of 80–90 percent. The remaining 10 to 20 percent are either non-participants or those who reoffended upon release. That is to say out of the 1,400 prisoners who completed the programme and were released, only 35 had been rearrested.²⁵
- Aftercare Programmes are pre-release programmes run by the Religious Subcommittee targeting the “detainees who have completed their prison sentences and are assessed as suitable for release.” These detainees are transferred to a halfway house programme where they live for some months to prepare for reintegration into society and wash away their radical ideologies. Once the detainees have changed their radical mind-set, they are provided with financial support, jobs, apartments, cars, and many other benefits. Detainees who were previously government employees are assisted back to their jobs. Additionally, rehabilitated individuals are provided with materials such as books and audio-visual material propagating moderate Islam.²⁶ Such programmes have yielded great success in deterring radicalization.

Counter-radicalism in Nigeria

Nigeria's current counter-terrorism activities were borne out of the Terrorism Prevention Act 2011 (as amended in 2013), which provided the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) with a mandate to: act as the coordinating body for all security and enforcement agencies under the Act; provide support to prevent and combat acts of terrorism in Nigeria; ensure the effective formulation and implementation of a comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy for Nigeria; and build the related capacity of relevant security, intelligence, law enforcement and military services.²⁷ Atta and Bryans record that, Nigeria's countering violent extremism (CVE) programme was publicly launched in March 2014 with the aim that it would operate horizontally and vertically across government and includes working with non-state actors. The three main components of the CVE programme were: counter-radicalisation, strategic communications and de-radicalisation, with education initiatives as an additional cross-cutting activity.²⁸

The main objectives of this programme are: identifying the underlying causes of radicalisation (social, cultural, religious and economic); developing strategies that provide solutions; introducing measures to change the attitudes and perceptions of potential recruits; packaging and disseminating the right messages to the populace through strategic communication; assessing the impact of insurgency on the welfare and wellbeing of affected communities; and creating opportunity and hope for people in the affected communities and restoring their faith in the government.²⁹

The National Counter Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST) stated that the Ministry of Interior, along with the Nigerian Prisons Service (NPS), should drive the de-radicalisation programme in prisons. In January 2015, ONSA and NPS held a public launch of their joint de-radicalisation programme. Implementation of the prison based programme began in Kuje prison in March the same year.

Local Treatment Team was established to handle the de-radicalisation programmes in Kuje prison. A number of personnel were appointed to manage this activity which include: imams and pastors, teachers, vocational instructors, arts therapists, psychologists, and medical personnel.³⁰ The implication here is other radicals in many prisons were neglected to mix with other prisoners which is very dangerous and easy to recruit new members.

A basic de-radicalisation model was adopted for use in Nigerian prisons, consisting of four stages: engagement; risk assessment; needs assessment; and interventions.

- **Engagement:** The first stage involved the Treatment Team members getting to know the violent extremist prisoners, establishing a positive professional relationship, developing trust and entering into a constructive dialogue.
- **Risk:** Once Treatment Team members had engaged the violent extremist prisoners, the next stage was for the Treatment team to undertake a thorough risk assessment to identify the reasons for the prisoner becoming a violent extremist offender and the level of risk the prisoner currently posed.
- **Needs:** Having identified the underpinning reasons for a violent extremist prisoner's involvement in violent extremism, Treatment Team members identified risk-related needs. That is, the activity that would help to reduce the risk that the prisoner would engage in, or advocate, future violent extremist activity.
- **Response:** The fourth stage was to implement the interventions that would meet the violent extremist prisoners' identified risk-related needs and thereby reduce risk.³¹

Challenges of fight against radicalism in Nigeria

- 1- Having seen how de-radicalisation programmes worked in some countries and the little initiatives in Nigeria, the paper observes that, Colonial prisons in Nigeria were not designed for reformation or rehabilitation rather intended

to be punitive. Hence, prisoners were used mainly for public works and other jobs for the colonial administrators as a form of punishment.

- 2- Also, if a radical or prisoner is released without adequate rehabilitation opportunity through skills training and capacity building, he usually returns to the society which has incarcerated him/her as a hardened enemy of that society. Such an ex-convict is often full of desire for vengeance because he/she sees himself/herself as victimized rather than corrected.
- 3- Lack of adequate and powerful Islamic Scholars in the Local Treatment Team of the Nigerian government to dialogue with the radical detainees.
- 4- Some of the members of the committee were drawn from other stations and moved to Kuje, for the assignment. This will automatically create shortage of intelligent staff in some prisons.
- 5- Short coverage of the counter-radicalisation programmes as it operates only in Kuje Prison.
- 6- Lack of adequate skill facilities and centres to empower the detainees after their period in the prison.
- 7- Inefficient follow-up to the ex-radicals to assess the level of their re-integration into the community.

Conclusion

Islam is aimed at providing permanent solutions to problems affecting the *Ummah* through effective derivation of rulings from the sources of Islamic law. Rewards and punishments are set out in Shari'ah to encourage good deeds and warn/punish the wrongdoers. Radicalisation is a disease that affects some religious followers especially youth and most a time lead to terrorism. Government at all level should try to provide soft-approach in addressing this extremist ideological mind of the radicals through re-education, re-integration and finally to empower those rehabilitated with skills, facilities and capital to start a new life in the society. However, if these programmes are not effectively managed to achieve the target, many ex-convicts would be re-arrested and jailed for life.

Suggestions and recommendation

- 1- Rehabilitation/de-radicalisation programmes should not be left in the hands of prison officials alone.
- 2- Social workers, NGOs and FBOs among others should be fully involved in rehabilitation/de-radicalisation of inmates.
- 3- Moderate Islamic scholars and religious' organisations should be involved in the programme.
- 4- Routine supervision of the ex-radicals should be effectively managed to assess the level of his/her re-integration into the community.

- 5- Continuous counselling should be maintained with these category of returnees so as to protect them from returning back into radical/crime ideology.
- 6- Media should be used to re-enlighten the public on the dangers of radicalisation.
- 7- Sustainable entrepreneurship programmes should be initiated and provided with constant supervision to the ex-radicals.

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Deradicalising Muslim Extremists through the Exemplary Life of the Prophet

Alhassan Usman

Introduction

Islam is not only a religion but a complete way of life. Allah in His infinite mercy sent Prophets with the clear guidance to mankind so as to leave a peaceful and a happy life in this world. The last and the seal in this series of the prophets is our noble Prophet Muhammad. He came with the book; Qur'ān in which all that is needed for human living on this earth is explained. The main function of the Prophet is to interpret and explain the Qur'ān. The Prophet has done this in the best form to the extent that it was reported that his attitudes and characters are that of the Qur'ān. In another circumstance, it was said that Prophet is the speaking Qur'ān (*Qur'ānal-Natiq*). Islam is a religion of moderation and does not accept any form of extremism or radicalism. For this, we can see from the conduct of the life of the noble Prophet that he was always moderate either in private or public affairs.

Radicalism and Extremism

Al-Tatarruf and *al-Guluw* stand for radicalism and extremism respectively. Literally, *al-Tatarruf* means the limit and edge of something while *al-Guluw* means rising above and going beyond the appropriate measure. Man is in extreme when he exceeds the proper limit due in a matter or he goes beyond its limit. Extremism is going beyond the limit.¹ Other related terms include:

- *Al-Unf* – meaning harshness or the opposite of softness
- *Al-Tashaddud* – meaning rigidity and inflexibility
- *al-Tanatta'* - meaning to spread or extravagancy in speech and action

Al-Unf, *Al-Tashaddud*, and *al-Tanatta'* are attributes of *al-Guluw* (extremism)

The literal meanings of these terms are not far from the technical usage. They all denote going beyond the limit of *Sharī'ah*. This can be seen in the definition of the terms given by the following scholars: Ibn Taymiyyah defined extremism as going beyond the proper limits concerning a matter, beyond what it is deserving, either in praising it or disparaging it. Ibn Hajr defined extremism as exaggeration in something and being stringent in that matter by going beyond the proper limit.²

Misconception about Radicalism and Extremism

It is necessary at this juncture to clarify some misconception about these two concepts of radicalism and extremism. As far as this paper is concerned, the two terms and related ones are used within the context of *Sharī'ah*. This has become necessary due to the fact that the terms are misused in the contemporary world for

political and other reasons. The West in particular with its propaganda machineries, especially the media deliberately gives a poor conception of the terms. Some writers from the West and their stooges from the Muslim world also employed the words in order to undermine Islam and Muslim by creating a poor image of them. In most western writings, media used the words to mean any Muslim or group of Muslims who advocate return to Islam in its original form or demand for implementation of *Sharī'ah*. In some instances growing of beard, wearing of *Jalbab* and turban, frequenting mosque and other forms of religious devotions are termed as radicalism. For example, one writer says:

Fundamentalists wish to place the *Sharī'ah*, God's law, above human-made law. The striving for implementation of the *Sharī'ah* constitutes Muslim fundamentalism, perhaps the most apt criterion for distinguishing fundamentalism, a minimum definition. As a criterion, it does not refer to the social characteristics of a movement but rather to its doctrinal aspects. It still includes a very wide range of Muslims, obviously, for there are not many Muslims who dare to proclaim that they do not want the *Sharī'ah* implemented. In Indonesia, the Darul Islam movement fought against the (secular) Republic, hoping to establish a *Sharī'ah*-based Indonesian state, but within the Republican fold both *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) and Masyumi, the two major Muslim political parties, also fought for official recognition of the *Sharī'ah* in the form of the Jakarta Charter.³

So, one can see from the foregoing, demand for the establishment of *Shari'ah* is termed as fundamentalism or extremism which is very wrong as far as Islam is concerned.

Islam Prohibits Extremism

Islam goes parallel with extremism in all its ramifications; be it at individual or collective level. Many verses of the Glorious Qur'ān and *Ahādith* of the Prophet declare that extremism in its true meaning has no room whatsoever in Islam. The Qur'ān says:

O people of the scripture (Jews and Christians)! do not exceed the limits in your religion, nor say of Allāh aught but the truth.⁴

The verse though directed to the people of the scripture (Jews and Christian), is also meant for the Muslim to digest and take caution so that they do not fall into what their predecessors fell into.

In a *Hadith*, the Prophet said: "Avoid going extreme in the affairs of the religion because that was what destroyed the nations before you." He also said: "Two kinds of people will never enjoy my intercession; an oppressive ruler and an extremist in the affairs of the religion."⁵ The Prophet had earlier noticed some signs of extremism within the Muslim community; therefore, he took the necessary measure to curtail it. The following *Ahādith* are indications for that measure taken by the Prophet:

When some three individuals took extreme stand, one of them pledged to pray the whole night, the other pledged to fast all days while the other one pledged not to marry at all. He told them I am more Allah fearing than all of you, but at the same time I fast and I eat, I pray and I sleep, I also get married; whosoever dislike my way is not part of me.⁶

A'ishah reported that when people talk about the prayer of a certain lady, the Prophet said you should exert what you can afford for Allah will not get tired but you grow weary.⁷ One day the Prophet saw a man standing under the heat of the sun, he inquired about him. He was told it was Abu Isra'il; he pledged to stand under the sun heat, he will not sit, he will not talk and he will be fasting. The Prophet at once said: asked him to talk and take to shade and to sit down and to complete his fasting.⁸

From the fore going *Ahādith*, one could deduce the fact that Islam is not only against radicalism but has taken a practical step towards eliminating it as seen in these exemplary teachings of the Prophet.

Forms of Contemporary Extremism among the Muslims

There are many manifestations of extremism in the contemporary Muslim society despite the fact that there is clear cut ruling of Islam in the Qur'ān and *Sunnah* against it. By way of example, some of them will be cited here for our society to be cautious especially the youth. These are:

- i. Fanatical affiliation to a sect (organisation)
- ii. Considering one's organisation to be the only one on the right path
- iii. Taking the leader of one's organisation to be infallible
- iv. Anathematising Muslims because of committing sins
- v. Anathematising a leader who does not rule with the Qur'ān
- vi. Anathematising followers of the leaders that do not rule with the Qur'an
- vii. Ruling that Muslim countries are *Daral- Kufr*
- viii. Saying that the Muslim *Ummah* of today is a *Jahiliyyah* society
- ix. Forbidding Western type of education
- x. Going extreme on the issue of *Taqīd* (blind imitation), denying *al-Ijmā'* and Anathematising *Muqallidun* (blind imitators)
- xi. Enforcing all people to conduct *Ijtihād* in order to arrive at an Islamic Ruling
- xii. Saying that Islamic rulings are in stages; Makkan and Madinan, and we are currently at Makkan stage and therefore some rulings will not be applicable to us.⁹

Moderation in Islam

In place of extremism and radicalism, Islam calls for an intermediate and a fair course. Islam is a religion of moderation i.e. intermediate between

extremes or opposite poles so that neither side takes a lion share against the other. It is intermediate between the spiritual and the material, individual and society, reality and ideal, permanent and temporary and so on. By being intermediate, it means all sides take its due proportion without tilting to either. Allah says:

And the heaven He has raised High, and He has set up the balance in order that you may not transgress (due) balance. And observe the weight with equity and do not make the balance deficient.¹⁰

Islam is moderate in all its facets; belief system, forms of worship, morals, punishment of offences among others. In fact, the Glorious Qur'ān mentions this *Ummah* (nation) to be a moderate one, following middle and an intermediate course in all its affairs.

Thus, have we made of you an *Ummah* justly balanced, that ye might be witnesses over the nations, and the Messenger a witness over yourselves...¹¹

It is because of this inherent attribute of the Muslim nation that the Qur'ān called them the best nation evolved for mankind:

You are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind; You enjoin *Al-Ma'rûf* and forbid *Al-Munkar* and you believe In Allâh; and had the people of the Scripture believed, it would have been better for them; among them are some who have Faith, but Most of them are disobedient to Allâh.¹²

The term "moderate" means being in harmony between the divine and human, the spiritual and material, the individual and the collective and so on.¹³ No any humanly designed system, ideology or philosophy that takes a balanced and intermediate course as Islam does. This is because Islam is divine system and it is therefore above human creation. It is a design of Allah who creates and gives all creations their due right. This is noticeable in all natural phenomena. Look at the sun, the stars, the moon and all other heavenly bodies how they rotate and revolve in their orbit in a balance course without one intruding into others. Allah says:

Who has created the seven heavens one above another, you can see no fault in the creations of the Most Beneficent. Then look again: "Can you see any rifts?"¹⁴

The sun and the moon run on their fixed courses (exactly) calculated with measured out stages for each (for reckoning, etc.). And the herbs (or stars) and the trees both prostrate. And the heaven He has raised high, and He has set up the balance.¹⁵

It is not for the sun to overtake the moon, nor does the night outstrip the day. They all float, each in an orbit.¹⁶

Moderation means *al- Adl* (justice and equity). It is narrated in a *Hadith* that *al- Wast* (intermediate) mentioned in the verse stated earlier means *al- Adl*.¹⁷ Zuhair (a popular pre- Islamic poet) says: “They are the just (*Wast*) whom all people agree to their ruling ...” According to *Mufasssirūn, Awsatuhum* mentioned in this verse: Said one of them, more just (than the rest): "Did I not say to you, 'Why not glorify ((Allah))?'"¹⁸, means *A'dalahum* (the most just among them).¹⁹ *Al- Wast* also means straight path that is neither, tilted to either side as the Qur'ān calls it *Sirat al- Mustaqīm*.

Moderation is a source of goodness, both for this material world and the spiritual one. The Arabs consider the best of all affairs to be the moderate one (*khair al- umur al- wast*). Aristotle says that the best (of affairs) is the best between two bad ones. Moderate stand is the most secured and reliable as against the extreme position, which is generally prone to risk.

Signs of Moderation in Islam

Since Islam is for moderation, there are a lot of signs which confirm this fact. Islam shows moderation and takes to intermediate course in all its facets. It is intermediate in its belief systems, forms of worship, morals and so on. The principles and basis of Islam is moderation. As said earlier, its moderation can be seen in all angles. Most of the religious beliefs and ideologies fall between two poles of extremism. For example, the Jews are too pond of worldly affairs as the Qur'ān describes them:

And verily, you will find them (the Jews) the greediest of mankind for life and (even greedier) than those who - ascribe partners to Allāh (and do not believe in resurrection - Magians, pagans, and idolaters, etc.). Everyone of them wishes that he could be given a life of a thousand years. But the grant of such life will not save Him even a little from (due) punishment. And Allāh is All-Seer of what they do.²⁰

The Christians on the other side counteract the Jews by abandoning the worldly beauties and totally committing to the spiritual life. The Qur'ān says:

Then, we sent after them, Our Messengers, and we sent Isa (Jesus) - son of Maryam (Mary), and gave him the *Injeel* (Gospel). And we ordained in the hearts of those who followed him, compassion and Mercy. But the Monasticism which they invented for themselves, we did not prescribe for them, but (They sought it) only to please Allāh therewith, but that they did not observe it with the Right observance. So we gave those among them who believed, their (due) reward, but many of them are *Fâsiqûn* (rebellious, disobedient to Allāh).²¹

The above verses indicate that Judaism and Christianity fall within the range of extremism. However, Islam comes up with an intermediate course. The Qur'ān says:

But seek, with that (wealth) which Allāh has bestowed on you, the home of the Hereafter, and forget not your portion of legal enjoyment

in this world, and do good as Allâh has been good to you, and seek not mischief in the land. Verily, Allâh likes not the *Mufsidûn* (those who commit great crimes and sins, oppressors, tyrants, mischief-makers, corrupts).²²

Islam is built on ease and simplicity. Its main aim is to simplify life for mankind and make things easier. The Qur'ân says:

...and has not laid upon you in religion any hardship, it is the religion of your father Ibrahim (Abraham) (Islâmic Monotheism)...²³

..Allâh intends for you ease, and He does not want to make things difficult for you...²⁴

Allâh does not want to place you in difficulty, but He wants to purify you, and to complete his favour on you that you may be thankful.²⁵

It is worth noting that the Prophet is specifically sent to remove hardship and bring ease to the whole of mankind. Allah says:

He releases them from their heavy burdens (of Allâh's Covenant), and from the fetters (bindings) that were upon them. So those who believe in him (Muhammad), honor him, help him, and follow the light (the Qur'ân) which has been sent down with him, it is they who will be successful.²⁶

In a *Hadith*, the Prophet said: "The most beloved religion to Allah is the right and simple one."²⁷ Jabir reported that the Prophet said: "I was not sent as an arrogant and foolish tutor but as a teacher and a simplifier."²⁸ The concept of *Rukhsah* in Islam is a clear testimony that the religion is based on ease and simplicity. There is consensus between Islamic scholars that the religion of Islam is not build on hardship.²⁹

The Necessity of Emulating the Prophet

The Prophet was sent to guide man to the straight path that will emancipate him from the hardship of this world and the doom of the hereafter. This is because man needs divine guidance to put his faculty of reasoning into proper functioning. The Prophet was assigned with such responsibility and therefore for man to attain this set goal, he must follow and emulate the Prophet in the totality of his life. The Glorious Qur'ân clearly instructs the entire humanity to follow this chosen servant of Allah so as to attain eternal blessing:

O you who believe! Obey Allâh and his Messenger, and turn not away from Him (i.e. Messenger Muhammad) while you are hearing.³⁰

Say (O Muhammad): "Obey Allâh and the Messenger (Muhammad)." but if they turn away, Then Allâh does not like the disbelievers.³¹

And obey Allâh and the Messenger (Muhammad) that you may obtain Mercy.³²

He who obeys the Messenger (Muhammad), has indeed obeyed Allâh, but he who turns away, then we have not sent you (O Muhammad) as a watcher over them.³³

And whoso obeys Allâh and the Messenger (Muhammad), and then they will be in the company of those on whom Allâh has bestowed His Grace, of the Prophets, the *Siddiqûn* (those followers of the Prophets who were first and foremost to believe in them, like Abu Bakr As-Siddiq), the martyrs, and the righteous. And how excellent these companions are!³⁴

We sent no Messenger, but to be obeyed by Allâh's leave...³⁵

...and whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad) gives you, take it, and whatsoever He forbids you, abstain (from it), and fear Allâh. Verily, Allâh is Severe In punishment.³⁶

Say (O Muhammad to mankind): "If you (really) love Allâh then follow me, Allâh will love you and forgive you of your sins. And Allâh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."³⁷

But no, by your Lord, they can have no faith, until they make you (O Muhammad) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission.³⁸

Indeed in the Messenger of Allâh (Muhammad) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (the meeting with) Allâh and the last Day and remembers Allâh much.³⁹

All the above verses and numerous others that are not mentioned here are testifying to the position of the Prophet as a messenger of Allah and therefore he should be imitated in all endeavours of life.

The Prophet as *Uswatal- Hasanah* - Quintessential Example

The life and the gracious character of the Prophet mark the apex of human conduct. In all his dealings, he has shown characters worthy of emulating. He has discharged his duties set out for him by Allah. The Qur'ân has testified that he is at an apex of good conduct:

And verily, for you (O Muhammad) will be an endless reward. And verily, you (O Muhammad) are on an exalted standard of character.⁴⁰

The Prophet's biography was intricately recorded more than any other person known in history. A lot of biographers have documented in detail all that has to do with his life which was passed from one generation to the other up to our present time and it will continue to the end of the living of man on earth. The Prophet exhibited qualities par excellence in exercising good characters worthy of emulation. His good virtues have been commended by the Qur'ân itself. Report of his companions and others who associated with him either before or after his

prophet-hood (including his foes) testified to his high standard of good human conduct. At this juncture, therefore, it is necessary to relate some of the reports in respect of the characters of the Prophet by eye-witnesses. Among such reports is that of Ali bn Abi Talib:

The Apostle of Allah never raised his voice in market places, nor returned evil for evil; rather he forgives and forget. Never in his life had he laid his hand on any one save in a fight in the cause of Allah, nor did he ever strike anybody with his hand, neither a servant nor a woman. He commanded what was good and deprecated what was bad. He was always moderate and steadfast without going back and forth; never allow anything to escape his attention lest others should become negligent or get distracted; and was never found wanting in doing what is right and proper but in no wise, he ever exceeded the limit.⁴¹

In another report, Ali also says:

The Apostle of Allah was big hearted, benign and accommodative, and forgave the fault of others. He never kicks a row with anybody while others report that he was always calm and composed. He was the most generous, large-hearted, truthful, clement, lenient and amiable.⁴¹

The Prophet was a model for every class acting under different circumstances and state of human emotions. If you are rich, there is example of tradesman of Makkah. If you are a poor, you can follow the internees of *Shu'ab* Abi Talib. If you are a king, watch the action of the ruler of Arabia. If you are a vassal, take a look at the man enduring hardship imposed by the Quraysh. If you are a conqueror, lay your eyes on the victor of Badr and Hunayn. If you have suffered a defeat, take a lesson from one discomfited at Uhud. If you are a teacher, learn from the honourable mentor of the school of *Suffah*. If you are a student, look at the learner who sat before Jibril ...⁴²

Moderation of the Prophet

One of the important areas of the life of the Prophet worth emulating is his moderate character. This is a great lesson for the Muslims in general and the youth in particular in order to check their excesses. Emulating the Prophet should not be in areas of rituals only but also in the general life conduct. Moderation is one of the salient features of the Prophet. Ali Nadwi said:

The cardinal virtue of the Prophet, the niceness and seemliness of his character, which would remain a shining example of decorous behaviour for coming generations present as well as future, consisted of his innate moderation, refined taste and gracefulness, restraint and temperateness and unexcessiveness which always kept him on the middle path.⁴³

In a *Hadith*, A'ishah is reported to have said:

The Prophet was never given option between two (or more) choices but he takes the easiest one provided it involves no sin.⁴⁴

Also, the Prophet used to say:

The religion is a facility, but if any one overdoes it, it wears him down; so take to moderation and steer in an even course; approximate yourselves to handiness and be cheering, and get strength through prayer in the morning, the evening, and some part of the darkly night.⁴⁵

The Prophet also advised:

Lo! Exert only as much as you have strength, for, Allah would never get tired but you will grow weary.⁴⁶

Ibn Abbas relates that the Apostle of Allah was asked about the religion most liked by Allah. He replied, the religion of ease and sincerity.⁴⁷ Abdullah b. Mas'ud reported that the Messenger of Allah says: "They are doomed who overdo or deal sternly or are given to hair splitting."⁴⁸ The Prophet whenever he sends the companions on a mission (education or exhortation) used to command and advise them: "Make it easy, not hard, gladden the hearts, and do not scare them away."⁴⁹ It could not be coincidental, but Allah's wish and sign that he was moderate even in his physique. Bara' bn Azib described the Prophet as of medium height. Abu Hurairah says: "The Prophet was of moderate size, a bit tall than short, his complexion was very fair, his beard was black, and the mouth was of moderate size and pretty."⁵⁰

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Prophet was sent by Allah to teach and guide people with examples. The Qur'an commands that the Prophet be emulated and followed in all his speeches and actions. On the other side, the Prophet discharged his duty in the best manner as certified by the Qur'an and all those who witnessed his life either on the supporting or opposing side could testify to this. In all conduct of human endeavour, he excelled not only to the admiration of his followers but also his enemies. He is particularly moderate and simple. His moderation is seen in all his dealings whether worldly or spiritual, in private or public life. He avoided excessiveness in all matters and reprehended his companions from this evil conduct. Even in matters of private worship, he discouraged going extreme lest it becomes boring and cumbersome. In view of all these, it is recommended that:

- i. The biography of the Prophet with particular reference to his characters and conducts should be an integral part of the school curricula at all levels.
- ii. The biography of the Prophet should be given more emphasis so as to create awareness to the general public on his conduct of his life and how he related to the general public.

- iii. There should be more writings on the behaviour of the Prophet with particular reference to his moderation and simplicity.
- iv. The writings on the biography of the Prophet should be translated into the local languages for easy consumption of the people.
- v. Caution should be taken as to the use of the concept of extremism, radicalism and other related terms because of the misused of the terms and bad interpretation by the Western agents and their allies within the Muslim communities

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The Challenges of Radical Muslim Organizations in the Contemporary Period

Abdulbasit Musa Karkarku

Introduction

Security threats in Africa's Sahel region, spanning the Northern tier of African continent, have existed for decades. However, in recent years security analysts have focused their attention on the increasingly sophisticated attacks by al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), the now al-Qaeda linked *al-Shabaab* based in Somalia and insurgent group *Boko-Haram* based in northern Nigeria. Increased fighting in these areas of instability as well as changing tactics among insurgents and terrorist groups might reveal a growing relationship between these groups and as a result pose a greater risk for instability not only in the region but for the international community. Those most affected are the civilian populations who live in fear of suicide bombs, raids, threats and kidnappings. In Nigeria, thousands of people have been killed and a large number are taking shelter at various refugee camps especially in the North Eastern Nigeria. Problems that are seen as the main causes of the insurgency would be analysed and solutions suggested.

Conceptualising Radicalization

The word *Radical* according to the Oxford Dictionary, means changes in something social or political. In another definition, *Radical* means something very new and different from what is traditional or ordinary.¹ Vocabulary Dictionary defines a radical as someone who has very extreme views, so you could say that his views are different from the root.² Therefore, Radicalisation is the action or process of causing someone to adopt radical positions on political or social issues. According to Wikipedia, Radicalization is a process by which an individual, or group come to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideas and aspirations that reject or undermine the status quo or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of the nation.³ Radicalization can be both violent and non-violent, although most academic literature focuses on Radicalization as violent extremism.⁴ Therefore, Radicalization can mean different things to different people.

Some Causes of Radicalization among Muslim *Ummah*

The following are considered to be causes of radicalization among the Muslim *Ummah*:

1. **Extremism in Religion:** Islam is the religion of moderation and balance; it shuns extremism and deficiency in religion. Allah the Exalted says in the Glorious Qur'an "*O people of book! Commit no excesses in your religion: nor say about Allah except the Truth....*" (Qur'an 4:171)

2. **Wrong perception and bad Interpretation of Qur'anic text and Prophetic Traditions:-** Some of the Muslim youths found themselves in radicalism and even terrorism due to the improper interpretation of Qur'anic verses and *Ahadith* of the Prophet (S.A.W), as a result of inadequate knowledge of *Tafsir* and *Hadith* and *Maqasidal-Shari'ah* (Shari'ah intelligence).
3. **Social and Economic reasons:** These are other factors that cause radicalization among Muslim youth. Poverty and unemployment are considered to be obstacles that cause moral decadence among the youth in which extremism and radicalism are included.
4. **Political Factor:** Politics and political injustice are other keys to radical thinking and terrorism. They come in form of depriving them their rights or marginalizing a particular tribe or set of people by the political leaders, or using some radical groups in destabilizing Muslim *Ummah* in order to achieve some political goals.

Radical Islamic Organizations

Some of the radical Islamic Organization include the following: Boko-Haram, Al-Qaeda, ISIS or ISIL or Daesh, Taliban, Al-Shabab. Below is a brief history, ideologies and activities of these groups.

1) Boko-Haram (Militant Group)

Jama'at Ahlussunah li Da'awati wal-Jihad (Group of the people of Sunnah for preaching and jihad) and commonly known as *Boko-Haram* is the *Jihadist* militant organization based in north-eastern Nigeria, also active in Chad, Niger and Northern Cameroon. Founded by Muhammad Yusuf in 2002, the group has been led by Abubakar Shekau since 2009. When *Boko-Haram* first formed, their actions were non-violent. Their main goal was to purify Islam in Northern Nigeria. From March 2015 to August 2016, the group was aligned with the Islamic state of Iraq and the Levant. Since the current insurgency started in 2009, *Boko-Haram* has killed thousands and displaced 2.3 million from their homes and was ranked as the world deadliest terror group by the Global Terrorism Index in 2015.⁵

Boko-Haram was founded upon the principles of the *Khawarij* advocating shari'ah law. It developed into *Jihadist* group in 2009. Their beliefs tend to be centred on strict adherence to *Wahabism*, which is an extremely strict form of Islam that sees many other forms of Islam as idolatrous. The group has denounced the members of the *Sufi*, *Shi'ah* and *Izala* sects as infidels.⁶ *Boko-Haram* seeks the establishment of an Islamic state in Nigeria. It opposes the westernization of Nigeria society and the concentration of the wealth of the country among members of small political elite, mainly the Christians of the country. Nigeria is African biggest economy, but 60% percent of its population of 173 million as of 2013) live on less than \$ 1 a day. The shari'ah law imposed by local authorities, beginning with *Zamfara* in January, 2000 and covering 12 northern states by late 2002, may have promoted links between

Boko-Haram and political leaders, but was considered by the group to have been corrupted.

According to Borno Sufi Imam ShaykhFahi, Muhammad Yusuf was trained by Kano Salafi IzalaShaykhJafar Mahmud Adam who called him the (leader of the young people).The two split some time in 2002-2004. They both preached in Maiduguri's *Indimi* Mosque which was attended by the deputy governor of Borno State.⁷ In a 2009 B.B.C interview, Yusuf described by analyst as being well educated reaffirmed his opposition to western education. He rejected the theory of evolution, said that rain is not an evaporation caused by sun'' and that it is not a sphere.

Activities of Boko-Haram

After its founding in 2002, Boko-Haram's increasing radicalization led to the violent uprising in July 2009 in which its leader was summarily executed. Its unexpected resurgence following a mass prison break in September, 2010 was accompanied by increasingly sophisticated attacks, initially against soft targets but progressing in 2011 to include suicide bombing of police buildings and the United Nations office in Abuja. The government establishment of a state of emergency at the beginning of 2012, extended in the following year to cover the entire northeast of Nigeria, led to an increase in both security force abuses and militant attacks.

Since May, 2013 at least 2.3 million people displaced by the conflict and at least 250,000 have left Nigeria and fled to Cameroon, Chad and Niger Republics. Boko-Haram killed over 6,600 in 2014. The group have carried out mass abductions including the kidnapping of 276 school girls from Chibok in April, 2014. In mid-2014, the militants gained control of swathes of territory in and around their home state Borno, estimated at 50,000 square kilometres (20,000sqmiles) in January 2015, but did not capture the state capital, Maiduguri, where the group was originally based. In September, 2015 the Director of Information at the Defence Headquarters of Nigeria announced that all *Boko-Haram* camps had been destroyed.⁸

Similarly, on 7th March 2015 Boko-Haram's Leader AbubakarShekau pledged allegiance to ISIS via audio message posted on the organizations Twitter. On 12th March, 2015, ISIS spokesman Abu Muhammad al-Adnani released an audio tape in which he welcomed the pledge of allegiance and described it as an expansion of the group's caliphate to West Africa. Again in early August, 2016, ISIS announced that it had appointed Abu-Musab al-Barnawi as the new leader of the group. In a video released a few days later, Shakau refused to accept al-Barnawi's appointment as leader and vowed to fight him. Although, Boko-Haram kidnapped 110 school girls from Government Technical Girls College in Dapchi, Yobe State on 19th February, 2018, Boko-Haram reportedly released all but one of the girls by 21st March, 2018.

2) Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)

The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (*ISIS*) officially known as the Islamic State (IS) and by its Arabic language acronym *Daesh*, *ISIS* is a *Salafi/Wahabi jihadist* terrorist

organization and former un-recognised proto-state that follows a fundamentalist *Salafi/Wahabi* doctrine of Sunni Islam. ISIS gained global prominence in early 2014 when it drove Iraq government offensive followed by its capture of Mosul and Sinjar massacre.

ISIS originated as *Jama'at al-Tawhidwal-Jihad* in 1999, which pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda and participated in the Iraqi insurgency following the 2003 invasion of Iraq by western forces at the behest of the United States. The group proclaimed itself a worldwide caliphate and began referring to itself as the Islamic state (*ad-Dawlah al-Islamiyah*) or IS in June, 2014. As a caliphate, it claims regions, political and military authority over all Muslims worldwide. Its adoption of the name Islamic state and its idea of a caliphate has been widely criticised, with the United Nations, various governments and mainstream *Muslim* groups rejecting its statehood.⁹

ISIS is a theocratic, proto-state, *Salafi* and *Wahabi* group. It considers itself being radical Wahabi Islam. Wahabi Islam is a strict, puritanical form of Sunni Islam. ISIS promotes religious violence and regards Muslim who do not agree with its interpretations as infidels or apostates. According to observers, ISIS emerged from the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood, the first post Ottoman Islamist group dating back to the late 1920s in Egypt. It adheres to global jihadist principles and follows the hard line ideology of al-Qaeda and many other modern day jihadist groups. However, other sources trace the group's roots to *Wahabism*. For their guiding principles, the leaders of the Islamic state are open and clear about their almost exclusive commitment to the *Wahabi* movement of *Sunni* Islam. The group circulates images of *Wahabi* religious textbooks from Saudi-Arabia in the schools it controls.¹⁰

ISIS aims to return to the early days of Islam rejecting all innovations in religion, which it believes corrupts its original spirit. It condemns later caliphates and Ottoman Empire for deviating from what it calls pure Islam and seeks to revive the original *Wahabi* project of restoration of the caliphate governed by strict *Salafist* doctrine following the *Wahabi* tradition. ISIS condemns the followers of secular law as disbelievers, putting the current Saudi-Arabian government in that category.

In addition, ISIS group gives more emphasis on eschatology and apocalypticism that is a belief in final day of judgement by God and specifically, a belief that the arrival of one known as Imam *Mahdi* is near. ISIS believes that it will defeat the army of 'Rome' at the town of *Dabiq*, in fulfilment of prophecy. Following its interpretation of the *Hadith* of the twelve successors, ISIS also believes that after al-Baghdadi there will be only four legitimate caliphs.¹¹

Activities of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)

Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) conducted its activities in Syria and Iraq; for instance in Syria, the group conducted ground attacks on both government forces and opposition factions and by December, 2015 it held a large area in western Iraq and eastern Syria, containing an estimated 2.8 to 8 million people where it enforced its interpretation of Shari'ah law. ISIS is believed to be operational in 18 countries

across the world, including Afghanistan and Pakistan with aspiring branches in Egypt, Mali, Somalia, Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Philippines. In 2015, ISIS was estimated to have an annual budget of more than US \$1 billion and force of more than 30,000 fighters.¹²

In July, 2017 the group lost control of its largest city, Mosul to Iraqi army, following this major defeat, ISIS continued to lose territory to the various states and other military forces allied against it until it controlled no meaningful territory by November 2017. U.S military officials and simultaneous military analyses reported in December 2017 that the group retained a mere 2% percent of the territory they had previously held. On 10th December, 2017, Iraqi's Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi said that Iraqi forces had driven the last remnants of Islamic state from the country, three years after the militant group captured about a third of Iraqi's territory.

3) *Al-Shabaab* (Militant Group)

The full name of Al-Shabaab militant group is “*Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen*” (*Mujahideen* Youth Movement) or (Movement of Striving Youth) more commonly known as *al-Shabaab*. It is a *Jihadist* fundamentalist group based in East Africa. In 2012, it pledged allegiance to the militant Islamist organization *Al-Qaeda*. In February, 2012 some of the group's leaders quarrelled with Al-Qaeda over the union and quickly lost ground. *Al-Shabaab's* troop strength was estimated at 7,000 to 9,000 militants in 2014. As of 2015, the group has retreated from the major cities; however *al-Shabaab* still controls large parts of the rural area.¹³

An ideological rift within the group's leadership also emerged and several of the organization's senior commanders were assassinated. Due to its *Wahabi* roots, *al-Shabaab* is hostile to Sufi traditions and has often clashed with the militant Sufi group *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah*. The group has also been suspected to having links with *Al-Qaeda* in Islamic *Magreb* and *Boko-Haram*. It attracted some members from western countries, including Abu Mansoor Al-Amriki.

Activities of *Al-Shabaab*

Al-Shabaab began as an armed wing of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) which later splintered into several smaller factions after its defeat in 2006 by Somalia's Transitional Federal Government (TFG and the TFG's Ethiopian military allies). The group describes itself as waging jihad against 'enemies of Islam' and is engaged in combat against the Federal Government of Somalia and African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM). Al-Shabaab has been designated as a terrorist organization by Australia, Canada, United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and United States.¹⁴ As of June 2012, the US State Department has opened bounties on several of the group's senior commanders.

In August 2014, the Somalia government led operation Indian Ocean to clean up the remaining insurgents in the countryside. On 1st September 2014, a US drone strike carried out as part of the broader mission killed *al-Shabaab* leader Ahmed Abdi

Godane, also known as Mukhtar Abu Zubair. US authorities hailed the raid as a major symbolic and operational loss for *al-Shabaab* and the Somalia government offered a 45 day Amnesty to all moderate members of the militant group. The group remains nonetheless strong and active and has been responsible for exceptionally deadly terrorist attacks such as the Westgate shopping mall attack and the 14 October, Mogadishu bombings.¹⁵

4) Taliban (Militant Group)

Pakistani Taliban is an umbrella organization of various Islamist groups based in Fata. In October 2007, about thirteen groups united under the leadership of BaithullahMehsud to form the Taliban. Among the Taliban objectives are resistance against the Pakistani state, enforcement of the interpretation of the Shari'ah and the plan to unite against the NATO led forces in Afghanistan.

The root of Taliban as an organization began in 2002 when the Pakistan army conducted incursions into the tribal areas to combat foreign militants who fled from Afghanistan into Pakistan. The most important event which became the single point of its creation was the operation against the Lal-Masjid in Islamabad in July 2007. In this operation more than one hundred students of the *Madrassa* were killed along with a dozen of security personnel. On August 25, 2008 Pakistan announced the group as terrorist organization, froze their assets and banned it in the country.¹⁶

In appraising the ideology and beliefs of the Taliban, emphasis will be on the following objectives and programmes of action transforming the human lives into a concrete way of life.

1. Freeing Pakistan from the western influence.
2. The doctrine of global jihad and the idea of United *Ummah*.
3. The eradication of un-Islamic laws and practices from the society.
4. Establishment of Shari'ah based homeland.

Activities of Taliban

Taliban according to their rigid stance towards Muslims and Pakistani state was justified of fighting other Muslims under their doctrine, due to Pakistan allegiance to the western states, regarded non-Muslim state and war against them according to the teaching of jihad. They called their resistance as the defensive jihad against the Pakistan army. BaithullahMehsud argued that Pakistanis, who co-operate with the westerners, are not true Muslims because they are the collaborators of infidels and deserved to be killed.¹⁷ However, the Pakistan army is not regarded as Muslim army but a mercenary army on the payroll of the US. HakimullahMehsud made strong statements against the leaders of PPP, ANP and threatened to launch offensive attack against them.

MullaNazir, a leader of the Taliban called an interview explaining that jihad is against *Kufr*- infidelity. He submitted further:

.....and to get back our lands that *Kufir* had occupied and our jihad meant to make supreme the word of Allah and to establish the system of Shari'ah. Our jihad is not limited to Pakistan or Afghanistan our goal is global jihad. We want the law of Allah on the land of Allah.¹⁸

Taliban militant group banned all kinds of images in any form (TV, photography and movies) but for themselves, they made the films of their fighting with the forces and also the videos of killings of foreigners. They called themselves the true believers of Islam and never hesitated to kill others or themselves for their cause. Muslim Khan, the spokesman of Taliban in Swat, criticized the constitution of Pakistan and called it unacceptable to Taliban because it is un-Islamic and man-made. Qari Hussaini, a deputy of the Taliban and mastermind of suicide bombing in Pakistan, issued a verdict declaring that it is permissible to rob banks because they are un-Islamic business and also permissible to rob minorities because they don't follow Islam. They set fire on T.V sets, pictures and paintings, audio and video cassettes in different parts of tribal areas. Attacks on the Sufi shrines, barber shops and keeping the beard, observing proper purdah for women are all policies of the Taliban.

5) Al-Qaeda (Militant Group)

Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM) dates from the 1990s and grew out of an insurrection mounted by an Islamist resistance movement protesting the Algerian regime's decision to end parliamentary elections in 1992. Experts believe that these elections would have resulted in the Islamic salvation front political party gaining a majority. The Islamist resistance group was originally part of the Armed Islamic Group (G I A) but eventually declared its independence in 1998 out of concerns that G I A's violent method were hurting the Islamic cause.¹⁹ Once separated from G I A, the group was called the Salafist group for preaching and combat (SGPC) and was popular for its commitment to fighting the Algerian government while simultaneously working to prevent indiscriminate killing of civilians in the process.

AQIM initially pursued a targeted suicide bombing campaign in Algeria. However, by 2008 these attacks tapered off and were replaced with ambushes against security forces and kidnapping operations, the latter of which provides millions of dollars in financing for its operations. AQIM collected an estimated USD 70 million in ransom payments between 2006 and 2011. They also conducted 33 attacks in Algeria in 2007 which increased to 40 attacks in 2009. One of the notable incidents was the bombing of the UN building and a court house in Algiers on 11th December, 2007, which killed an estimated 67 people in simultaneous attacks.²⁰

AQIM reportedly maintains mobile training camps along the Algeria-Mali border and has taken advantage of the porous borders of the Sahel region in order to move people and supplies. It expanded its operations into Mauritania, Mali, Niger and other countries in response to intensified counter-terrorism crackdowns by North African governments. As AQIM moved southwards, it expanded its operations to include local militant groups and has become involved in drug trafficking. The group has carried out raids on military and police targets, kidnapped and

assassinated soldiers and tourists, attacked foreign embassies and repeatedly clashed with the militaries of Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Algeria and more recent Burkinafaso.

Among the beliefs ascribed to al-Qaeda members is the conviction that a Christian-Jewish alliance is conspiring to destroy Islam. As Salafist jihadist, they believe that the killing of non-combatants is a religious sanction. Al-Qaeda also opposes what it regards as man-made laws and it wants to replace them with a strict form of Shari'ah law.²¹

Activities of Al-Qaeda

Al-Qaeda has mounted attacks on civilian and military targets in various countries including the 1998 U.S Embassy bombings, and the September 11, 2001 saga. The U.S government responded to the September 11 attacks by launching the 'War on Terror'. Al-Qaeda's leaders regard liberal Muslims Shi'as, Sufis and other sects as heretical and its members attacked their Mosque and gatherings. Examples of sectarian attacks include the Yazidi community bombings, the Sadr city bombings, the Ashura massacre and April 2007 Baghdad bombings. Since the death of bin Laden in 2011, the group has been led by Egyptian Ayman al-Zawahiri.

The Challenges of Radical Islamic Organizations on the Muslim World

The entire Muslim world is now in confusion, fear and danger as a result of wide spread of armed radical Islamic Organizations everywhere in this world. Al-Qaeda, ISIS, Al-Shabaab, Boko-Haram and Taliban. The mission of all these organizations is launching attacks on Muslims and Non-Muslim communities in the name of al-jihad and establishing an Islamic State in their respective countries, regions and globally at large. The activities of these organizations cause havoc and negative impact on the large population of Muslim *Ummah*²² These include:

1. Killing innocent people including women and children in the name of jihad: Many Muslims were killed by the radical Islamic groups/terrorists or by the forces of enemies of Islam (in the name encounter terrorism) in many countries around the globe, which include Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Libya, Nigeria, Pakistan and Somalia etc.
2. Vandalization of personal and public properties: The amount of damage caused by wars on terrorism could not be ascertained due to its quantity. But many public and private places were turned to ashes in many Muslim communities, such as mosques, schools, churches, hospitals, motor parks, market place etc.
3. Creating fear and doubts among the Muslim *Ummah*: people found themselves from the beginning of this global war, in fear and expecting troubles such as bomb attack (more especially in gathering places), killing, kidnapping etc.
4. Adding more weakness to the religion of Islam and Muslim *Ummah*: By the inception of the activities of the radical and terrorist groups, Islam and

Muslim world found themselves in additional weakness. Instead of continuation of propagating the religion by *Du'at*, they are now busy defending the accusations of terrorism labelled against Islam and the Muslim world. Other weakness includes economic and social hindrance.

5. Blackmailing Islam and Muslims in the eyes of the entire human race to the extent that the enemies of Islam are attributing Muslims to terrorism by using the acts of such organizations as an Islam icon.
6. Providing a window to non-Muslims and enemies of Islam to execute their agenda of weakening and fighting Islam in the name of counter terrorism.

Conclusion

The radical Islamic organizations are the organizations or group of people that radically stand wrongly on certain ideas of extremism and opinions without intending to discuss such opinion with anyone. These organizations, cause serious setback to the entire Muslim *Ummah* globally, since after the incident of September 11, the western world and enemies of Islam turned the incident to a mechanism of dealing with Muslim *Ummah* economically, socially, politically and intellectually. They started from Afghanistan, killing thousands of innocent Muslims including women and children; followed by Iraq and instigating violence and anarchy in Muslim states in the name of revolution and liberation from democratic rulers in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria respectively. These activities and situation of Muslim world today can be clearly showing the negative impact of radical Islamic organizations to the Muslim World.

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Ethno-Nationalistic Militancy in Nigeria: Islamic Deradicalisation Strategies

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Introduction

The post-independence era in Nigeria features national question strongly agitated by the circumstances of the uneven distribution of national resource allocation such as crude oil and dividends of democracy. The manifestations inevitably led to the hostile interactions among the ethnic groups constituting the political community of Nigeria. The reactionary strategies by the Nigerian youths have been through the formation of individual ethnic-based nationalist movements. These have been used as vanguard for protesting the rights of the divergent ethnic groups. Nationalism in the contest of this paper refers to a people of homogeneous culture and language willing to come together and protect their territorial integrity.

Predominantly, the youths constitute the most active population of a society. The sensitivity of the youths to the environmental challenges indispensably determines the socio-religious standard, political socialization and technological developments. The youth ethnic-based militant groups in discussion employ radicalism to redress diverse regional grievances. The Federal Government of Nigeria, in the bid to consolidate the corporate existence of the country had intermittently embarked on some statutory steps through dialogue, disbandment and reconciliatory strategies. However, the sceneries have continued to ensure dichotomy and weaken national unity and solidarity.

One of the general notions of nationalistic expression is that it abounds in a nation. The political scientists and expert in History and International Relation submit that a nation share a common historical heritage, culture and homogeneous language. A number of territories and Europe are specifically more relevant to the conceptual analysis of nation stated above. European territories were partitioned along the line of geographical proximity, language and cultural homogeneity.¹

Islam is critical of the upsurge of ethnic violence and political rivalries resulting from fear of domination. Other disintegrating appalling factors include the prevailing religious intolerance in the socio-political atmosphere of Nigeria. The Qur'an teaches in this regard:

And verily this Ummah of yours is a single ummah and I am your Lord and Cherisher; therefore fear Me (and no other). But people

have cut off their affair (of unity), between them, into sects; each party rejoices in that which is with itself. Qur'an 23: 52-53)

Conceptual Clarifications

Radicalization: According to the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (New Edition), radicalization means: "to make people accept new and different ideas, especially ideas about complete social and political change."² However, radicalism contextually applied to the area of research in view of the interactive experience implies desire for social change through strategic approaches such as either through dialogue, aggressive protests or militancy as applicable to different ethno-nationalist groups under study.

Nationalism: The *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, (New Edition) defines nationalism as:

A group of people of the same race, origin, language etc to form an independent country: love for your own country and the belief that it is better than any other country.³

During the era of imperialism, nationalism was the horizon of socio-political consciousness of the colonized countries and the desire to fight against colonialism and gain political independence. However, the above definition rendered by the Longman Dictionary with particular reference to 'same language' reveals that nationalism and its aspirations are limited to divergent group of people in a country such as Nigeria, but can as well be projected by a group of people with the same language for the love of their tribe. Therefore, the post-colonial era in Nigeria has featured divergent and dynamic trends in the concept of Nationalism. Contextually analysed in consonance with the thematic focus of the paper, it is the struggles and patronage of tribal cause whether it is good or detrimental to another group in Nigeria. Nationalism is a determination to achieve equal resource allocation, status and treatment by ethnic groups in Nigeria.

Patriotism: This is synonymous concept with nationalism. According to the above same dictionary source, it is also a demonstration of great passion and defence of one's country⁴.

Dhimmis: These are the non-Muslims living in an Islamic State⁵.

Nationalism and Radicalization in the Global Medieval Polity

The unruly Arabs in the pre-Islamic epoch expressed early concept of nationalism in tribal radicalism, dehumanizing gender discrimination, etc. They contended the aristocratic radicalism with neighbouring kingdoms in warfare on regular basis to subdue their enemies in order to retain their socio-political hegemony.⁶

The ancient Greek conceptualized other races of the world as barbarians. However, the Medieval Greek acknowledged alien national as second class Greek citizen if he had undergone Graeco Roman acculturation with pride. In the same vein, the

French and Germans individually proclaimed respective racial and cultural pride while other nations should be subservient and aspire cultural assimilation of the French epoch.⁷

Plato's conception of training of army guardians was a distortion of universal peace and diplomatic communities. His postulation on army guardians was considered important epistle for recapitulation by successive rulers. He projected the radicalization of the army guardian in defence of their territory and citizens. Plato predicated radical nationalism on necessity for aggression by the army guardian. He recommends courage and ability to detect enemies spontaneously on non-cultural affinity.⁸ In other words, the army guardian, though gentle and receptive to their own people but highly spirited temper to alien national.

The Jews portrayed insolent nationalism through the belief that they are the unique people chosen by God. Other humans are perceived as donkey to be led by the Jews. It was based on the belief in cultural and political superiority with strategized economic exploitative policies that African and Asia were colonized by the imperialists.⁹

Nationalistic Radicalization Strategies and Impact on the Colonial Nigeria

The consequence of imperialism in the colonized territories was the practical realization of nationalism by the colonialists in the context of imposed racial and cultural superiority with a view to dominating alien lands. The partition of African continent in 1884 by the Europeans, Dutch and France at Berlin ushered in cultural shock and a new social order in Africa. This was manifested in the practical artificially designed boundaries on the continent of Africa and subjugation of the traditional socio-political systems. Nations were shattered and aboriginal people were displaced.¹⁰

Nigeria was a creation of the British colonial authority. The country consists of strange inhabitants of more than 373 ethnic groups who came together under one national identity. Nigeria became one political entity in 1914 after the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern protectorates. The major tribes, Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo can be found in the six geo-political zones of Nigeria. Each independent tribe had its distinct cultural value and methods of administration before the European incursion. The British exploration and application of nationalism were causative factors of the colossal destruction of the social structures and disintegration of the closely knitted communities of Africa.¹¹

Ethnic and Kinship phenomena projected individualistic nationalism in the 1920s in Nigeria during the bandwagon drift of rural-urban migration of the Nigeria citizens. Each tribe sensitized their people on club and society formation along the line of ethnic homelands. The 1940s witnessed strong tribal affinity which resorted to formation of Igbo Federal Union and *EgbeOmo Oduduwa*.¹²

In the post second world war, there was an absurd reflection of radical nationalism. Political parties' formation and nationalist movement revealed ethnicity and

regionalism. Hausa and Fulani supported Northern People's Congress (NPC) because it was strongly supported by the Emirs and personalities such as Alhaji Ahmad Bello. In the South-West, Action Group (AC) was not ethnically inclined by the founder but wore cultural consciousness of the Yoruba identity because it was formed by the secretary of *Egbe Omo Oduduwa* (Chief Obafemi Awolowo). The National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroon subsequently known as National Council of Nigeria Citizens (NCNC) were dominated by Igbo people in the South-East Nigeria because of its patronage by Hubert Macaulay and Nnamdi Azikwe.¹³ Although, the patrons of these political parties struggled to bring the heterogeneity into one bloc without projecting ethnic bias, their collective struggle was instrumental to Nigeria independence in 1960.¹⁴

Ethno-Nationalistic Militancy and its Impact on Socio-Political Stability of Nigeria

Ethno- Nationalistic struggles and regional agitations for equitable public resources distribution became prominent and more accentuated in the post-independence era. The persistent protest against uneven distribution of the dividends of natural resources, insecurity and political marginalization have been the basis of the reactionary impulses from ethno militant groups.¹⁵ In 1968, a set of Yoruba radical farmers popularly known as Agbekoya led peasant uprising in the old western military government of Nigeria. It was a violent repulsion of the exorbitant tax rate levied on the masses. The turbulent protest led to the death of a king; Oba Olajide Olayode who was beheaded in the western region of Nigeria. Many other people including government officials were brutally killed while government structures were pulled down¹⁶. Consequently, there was reduction in tax levy and increase in the price of cocoa to resuscitate the financial power of the farmers. In a similar experience, Nigeria also witnessed the episode of the Bako-Lori peasant farmers in the Northern Nigeria in 1979 and 1980.

Oodua People's Congress (OPC) is a formidable militant Yoruba group which came into existence as a strong basis for the advocacy against the political marginalization of the Yoruba in June 1993. The group radically opposed the annulment of the 1993 presidential election. OPC is championed by the present Aare Ona Kankanfo of Yorubaland; Chief Ganiyu Adam. O.P.C. engaged violent channel to redress the annulled perceived victory of the late Chief M.K.O. Abiola as the President of Nigeria in 1993¹⁸.

The Niger Delta violent protests became noticeable in the 1990s under some identified militant groups strategized to sensitize the Federal Government on the disequilibrium ratios in resource allocation and disastrous environmental challenges. The militant groups with ethnicity undertone include: Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), Movement for the Survival of Ijaw Ethnic Nationality (MOSIEN)¹⁹. Also worthy of note is the radicalization activities of the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra in the Eastern part of Nigeria clamouring for secession on intermittent basis.

MOSOP is a militant youth group radically demanding for fair treatment in view of the alleged unjustified national exploitation of their land and quota allocation for the Ogoni people by the Federal Government of Nigeria. Shell Oil Company had been severally alleged by MOSOPA, being responsible for the Government reprisals against Ogoni people in the course of projecting their rights²⁰.

Arewa Youth Forum is an organized Northern Nigeria Based Socio-political body formed in 2001. The Youth Forum is sensitive to democratic dispensation in Nigeria with a view to enlisting the northern youths in active participatory governance²¹ and in their advocacy for youths leadership in democracy employs non-militant approach. They strategically engaged the northerners in mass mobilization and awareness against the geroncratic tendencies of all former Nigerian presidents and heads of state.

Bakassi Boys is also an ethnic and Youths Vigilante group in Anambra State formed in 2000. The group derived their legal autonomy to carry out surveillance and arrest armed robbers in the State from the constitutional enactment by the State House of Assembly²².

The Owo Boys are found in Owo in Ondo State of Nigeria. The members are strong able-bodied young men who were the security operatives to the King of Owo (Olowo of Owo) when he was enthroned. The bodyguards were to protect him against humiliating tendencies and attacks from his co-contestants.²³ The existence of the Owo boys was at the instance of the crisis which erupted in the town during the enthronement of the new King.

The Ijaw Youth Movement (IYM) is known as the Egbesus. The Movement constitutes the most notorious militant group in the riverine area because of its several violent attacks. The Ijaw Youths continuously express their grievances on the nationalexploitation of the mineral resources in their area²⁴. The devastating ecological challenges and poverty problem have not been sufficiently addressed by the Federal Government of Nigeria. The reactionary military has led to killings, bombing of oil pipes and abduction of oil worker expatriates.

There was a fatal crisis between Odua Peoples' Congress (OPC) and Hausa People in Shagamu on the 2nd July, 1999. In sequence to this, a retaliation of mass massacre of Yoruba people followed in Kano.²⁵

Radical Nationalism and its threats in Nigeria would not be complete without reference to the resultant effects of sporadic boundary disputes and their disintegration impacts. On the basis of nationalism, territorial consciousness and definition, Nigeria and Cameroon had intermittent international boundary disputes on Bakassi Peninsula. In the South-West region, Ile-Ife and Modakeke had a protracted land dispute. In Ondo state, the Ilaje and Ijaw Arogbo combined ethnic chauvinism with land disputes and fought a war from September 1998 to August 5, 1999. Offa – Erinle communal dissension over boundary dispute had occurred intermittently and grossly retarded inter-communal development and social integration²⁶.

Islamic Assessment of Ethno-Militant Nationalism in Nigeria

Nigeria is practically not a nation in contrary to the fantasy political slogan: “one nation, one Nigeria.” Radical nationalism in the context of Nigeria political socialization and modernization is projection and protection of tribal solidarity. It is individualistic pursuit of political aspiration and consolidation of power.²⁷ The political experience and ethno-nationalistic patronage have deepened the existence of gruesome dichotomy in the Nigeria polity. It led to seemingly unabated socio-economic crises. However, Islam as a religion cannot be de-emphasized because of its indispensable reconstructive roles in the resuscitation of the country from ideological problems.²⁸

The wide range of differences between Islamic political thought and the western oriented nationalism is responsible for the lackadaisical attitude of Nigerian leaders to civic responsibilities. The politicians aggressively seek political mandate through corruptive and violence strategies. This includes mischievous formation of ethno-militant based group to initiate disastrous crisis for a particular political interest.²⁹ The prophetic tradition reads as follows in this regard:

Indeed, Allah has revealed to me that you should have humbleness, and that no one should act proudly and oppressively over anyone else, nor should one boast over anyone else.(Sahih Muslim 8: 120).

The locus of sovereignty in Islamic state is Allah. A ruler in an Islamic state is a vicegerent (*khalifah*) of Allah. He jealously guides the principles of accountability, welfarism and responsible governance. Justice and equality inherent in Islamic art of governance do not have nationality or boundary demarcation. It is applicable to humanity on equilibrium level. The prophetic tradition sensitizes rulers in this regard:

Anybody whom Allah makes the ruler of a people but who fails to look after them properly and honestly will never smell even the sweet aroma of *Al-jannah*(Bukhari: 89:8).

The basis of western nationalism inherent in the post-colonial territories is the revival of the indigenous ancient heinous tradition such as geographical pride and blood bound compatriots, social alliance and synergy against non-members. This is the reason why the Egyptians glorify the divinely accursed Pharaoh as national hero. The Nigerian nationalism grossly manifests divergent cultural pride and superiority, heroes worship, group solidarity (whether morally wrong or right with prevalence inter ideological clashes. These have been the bane of good governance in Nigeria.³⁰

As mentioned early, tribalism and its associated conflicts are expressed in the group solidarity to support guilty compatriots. The syndrome of embarrassing solidarity is displayed in the political dispensation in Nigeria when some corrupt past and present politicians were arraigned for accountability. This was radically repressed by undue protest by their fellow compatriots.³¹ In such circumstances, protestants in support of the corrupt citizens politicized the prosecutor power of Federal

Government of Nigeria and deceptively tagged peaceful protest in support of justice as ethnic or regional marginalization to pre-empt natural justice.

The Islamic concept of good governance devolves round good leadership based on sincerity of purpose as reflected in the following prophetic Hadith:

O Allah, whoever is in control over my people and is hard upon them, be hard upon him. Whoever is in control and is kind to them, be kind to him (Muslim: 18:5).

Ethno-Militant based Nationalism in Nigeria: Islamic De-radicalization Approach

Islam repels radical nationalism with the aim of synthesizing the disintegrated community on the platform of divine piety and equity. The universality of Islam as a religion encompasses principle of human collectivity in the development of the world. This is devoid of geographical barriers, tribal agitation, linguistic or regional affinity. Divine piety is methodological approach of the Qur'an employed to equip the Muslims with stable emotional level and equity in social dealings:

O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is most close to piety, and mind God for God is well- acquainted with all that you do(Qur'an 5:8)

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) pragmatically demonstrated the concept of global brotherhood and national development in the constitution of Madina. The Jews and Christians were not humiliated but were given rights of citizenry as applicable to their Muslim counterparts. Al-Maududi's presentation of the Islamic philosophy of ideal universal brotherhood and principle of collectivity are necessary epistle in the modern nation-building in Nigeria. Al-Maghili's treatise in the principle of Qur'an are de-radicalization strategies against the obnoxious ethnic patronage and good governance in Nigeria. The Maududi's thought provoking political philosophy presented mania of nationalism as an aberration and the greatest curse that has ravaged the world.³² His criticism is on the grounds of Shari'ah system and moral probity.

Maududi explains the universality and applicability of the philosophy of the Quranic concept of political potential and *Sunnah* of the Prophet (SAW). This is against the traditional sentimental national consciousness projected by the spirit of nationalism. Nationalism instills in the citizenry loyalty and dedication to national course whether it is morally accepted or condemned on the grounds of Islam.³³

The watch word of nationalism is: "my country, right or wrong". Shari'ah system is replaced by western philosophy of governance. The state or country is exceedingly glorified and worshipped to replace monotheistic value. National heroes also replace divine purpose of Prophets.³⁴

Al-Maghili was one of the early scholars who contributed to the development of Islam in West Africa in the late 15th century. He was in Kano during the reign of Muhammad Rimfa (1463-1499) who requested him to write a treatise subsequently known as "The Crown of Religion Concerning the Obligations of Princess."³⁵ Al-Maghili derived his impetus from the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. He wrote a treatise for the political overhauling of the African community. The treatise, based on Islamic ideals had positive impact on the political life of West African states. The treatise outlined the expected welfare responsibilities of Muslim ruler in his kingdom as follows: "The heights of affliction are the isolation of the ruler from the subjects."³⁶ In actual fact, the sensitiveness of political heads to the social agitation by the followers often lead to conflicts.

Al-Maghili recommended moral qualities expected to be satisfied by ministers, senators, directors, permanent secretaries, etc. According to him, public officials should possess high standard of moral rectitude and meticulousity. He strongly advocated for punitive measure against erring public officials according to Islamic law regardless of status or affiliation.³⁷

Recommendations

The mass media as the fourth realm of the estate needs careful observation of the reports of clashes and demands emanating from ethno-militia groups. Nigeria has witnessed inflammatory reportage on several occasions which escalated violence. In view of this, the media should be a solace for reconciliatory strategies. Mass media should be an avenue to enlighten the government and the citizenry on the articulated demands of the diverse groups.

Emphasis is hereby laid on youth empowerment programme. A crop of people involved in the various radicalization activities are the youths languishing in abject poverty as a result of unemployment. If maximum attention is paid to youth restiveness, sanity would be restored to sensitization of the youths to the participatory development of their community.

The community leaders have important matured intermediary roles to play between the Government and their subjects. The involvement of the contemporary traditional rulers in partisan politics and unruly display of ethnic chauvinism had severally caused mayhems in Nigeria. The traditional rulers should be engaged in occasional seminars and conferences on inter-community dialogue and developments.

There should be a new orientation drive towards enriching the citizenry with divine instructions on the origin and indispensable universal unity of mankind. The practicability of the suggestions is expected to be exemplified by Nigerian rulers on non-discriminatory ground (Qur'an, 4:1 and 7: 189).

Consistent maintenance of internal tranquility and security would be realistic when desired attention is paid to youth restiveness through provision of lucrative vocational training and financial backing for the deserving ones in terms of natural talent inherent in individuals.

Rationale for personnel recruitment and placement: The country needs reform and overhauling in the areas of wrong appointments and placements of personnel. For instance, those who have flair for academic, engineering, politics, etc should be placed according to their natural talent on non-discriminatory ground. This would pave the way for steady growth and development.

Tolerance and social dignity: There should be respect for other people's view points and sanctity of life. Usurpation, social denial of rights and aggressive application of authority are phenomenal trends in the corrupt Nigerian political system. The syndrome of protracted non-payment of workers' salaries and casualties in the education sector suffice as bad reference point in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Ethnic-based militant groups and their violent protests had adversely affected the social and structural developments of the country. The Federal Government of Nigeria had taken bold steps in the various reconciliatory strategies through the use of force and dialogue. However, not much success has been recorded and a lot of public resources have been expended on rehabilitation strategies at the expense of human and capital resource development.

International life on the basis of equality in Islam is built on the principle of universal brotherhood devoid of nationalism, intimidation, discrimination on the grounds of blood, geographical, and tribal affinity. These have been the hotbed of violence in Nigeria.

Ideal governance was exemplified in the constitution of Islamic state in Madinah during the life of Prophet Muhammad: the Jews, Christians and other nationals (*Dhimmi*s) benefited from the commonwealth of Islamic polity on non-discriminatory ground. Therefore, good governance, citizenry inalienable rights, multi-national hitch-free socio-economic relationship stem from Divine guidance.

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Historical Discussion on Media Radicalism: A case study of Third Caliph, ‘Uthmān Bn ‘Affān’s Assassination as Lessons for the Contemporary Nigeria

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Introduction

Allah says: ‘(O Muhammad!) So relate the stories, perhaps they may reflect’.¹ Story should link the present with the past for the purpose of gaining and creating records of experiences for the present and future generation respectively. The incidents that led to the assassination of the third Caliph of Islam, ‘Uthmān Bn ‘Affān’(573 C.E. – 656 C.E) need to be studied to reveal the factors which led to his assassination and the role played by the media represented by the then mode of communication, which was written words. There was peace and unity among the Muslims and adherents of other faiths; the Jews and Christians, as a result of good governance of the Prophet. This was also maintained by the two subsequent successors of the Prophet, Abu Bakr and ‘Umar. Consequently, the first half period of the third Caliph, ‘Uthman bn ‘Affān was also very peaceful and this led to the caliphate expansion to a very vast area of the then known world. However, his later period of governance was marred by a terrible war resulted from fake news and propaganda, carried out by Abdullah Bn Saba’, a Yemenite Jew, and his followers. ‘Uthmān Bn ‘Affān was finally assassinated on Friday, the 17th Dhūl-Ḥijjah, 35 A.H. (the 17th July, 656 C.E).² His assassination led to the divisions and disunity of the Muslim community in terms of ideology and politics for good. These two phenomena are the main subjects of radicalization which the whole world community is trying to find solution for today.³

It is pertinent to note that the problem created by the assassination of the Caliph was also inherited by the fourth Caliph, Ali Bn Abī Ṭālib, who reigned between 656 – 661 C.E. He was faced with serious problems ranged from civil war to series of revolts which he tackled with extraordinary courage. But he was also assassinated on the struggle to unite the Muslim community. After his death, the Muslim community was divided into four, namely; ‘Uthmānīs; Shi‘ah, Ahlus-sunnah wal-Jamā‘ah and the Khawārij.⁴ The real caliphate also ceased to be after his assassination.⁵ The disunity among the Muslim community and instability of the Islamic government was due to misinformation, fake news and propaganda against the government.

This issue reveals the message contained in the adage “the pen is mightier than the sword”. It means achievement can be made through the power of pen than the power of sword. Those who were instrumental to the division and instability of the

Muslims and Islamic caliphate did not use sword to face the government and to arrest the attention of the public but they used their pens to fabricate and distort the real information as it will be revealed in this paper. Today, the government is being driven by the power of press, media. This power can be used positively to bring development to the nation as it can also be used negatively to destroy the nation. Media can be used to change the belief and idea of the people because it is intermediary between the masses and the government. It brings public closer to the government and vice versa. It can also make people to create hatred against the government and cause disorderliness in the country.

The world has moved from inferior intellect to higher intellect, from handwriting to printing technology which can produce information capable of reaching millions of people at once. Newspapers, television, magazines, radio, internet and so on, are used today to disseminate information.⁶ Obviously, media can play an outstanding role in creating and shaping of public opinion, positively or negatively. Media in Nigeria presently are likened to fake news merchants and rumour mongers.⁷ Media should produce news and information to counter radicalization. The world is struggling to cope with the persuasive powers of extremists but media in Nigeria is engaging in the acts of media radicalism, capable of disuniting the country as it will be examined in this paper. The paper therefore seeks to study the information radicalism engaged by the enemies of Islam to weaken the government of the third Caliph and to arrest the growth of Islam historically. The paper also views the activities of the media in Nigeria presently and likens the events that led to the collapse of the Islamic government with the similar events going on in Nigeria presently including the role playing by the media as it also draws lessons therefrom, for the Nigerians.

A Brief Biography of ‘Uthmān Bn ‘Affān

‘Uthmān Bn ‘Affān was born in 573 C.E to a noble family of Quraysh in Makkah. His ancestral pedigree could be traced to join that of the Prophet in the fifth generation. He was one of the few educated people who knew how to read and write. He started business in cloth when he grew up and became rich, who was very generous with his wealth. ‘Uthmān was a soft-natured and kind-hearted man who always spent money to solve others’ problem and remove them from misery. People of Makkah respected him for this noble character.⁸ He was one of the first set of people who accepted Islam through Abu Bakr who preached to him and others. He immediately became an enemy of Quraysh who loved him before he accepted Islam. He got married to one of the daughters of the Prophet, Ruqāyyah who was divorced by Abū Lahb’s son (‘Utbah) on the account of the Prophet’s preach to Islam. When Ruqāyyah died, the Prophet gave his next daughter, Ummu Kulthūm in marriage to ‘Uthmān. This gave him a title of *Dhūn-Nūrayn* (the man with two lights).⁹ He also married other women from time to time after the death of his second wife, Ummu Kulthūm. He had eleven sons and seven or six daughters from different wives.¹⁰

His Election as the Third Caliph

The second Caliph, 'Umar Bn Al-Khaṭṭāb appointed a six man panel and asked them to select a successor from among themselves before his death and sought his approval through *Bay'ah* (pledge of loyalty) by the Muslim public. He mandated them to make the selection within three days. The panel comprised of 'Uthmān, Ali, Sa'd Bn Abī Waqāṣ, Talḥah, Zubayr and Abdur-Raḥmān Bn 'Awf as the members. In the morning of the fourth day, 'Uthmān's name was announced as the next Caliph. This was followed by the pledge of loyalty taken at his hands by the Muslim public.¹¹

His Services for Islam

'Uthmān and his family were the first people to engage in migration (*Hijrah*) to Abyssinia when Makkah was hard for the Muslims.¹² He also participated in almost all the battles against the unbelievers except battle of Badr, due to the sickness of his wife, Ruqayyah. He was also appointed by the Prophet to negotiate with the people of Makkah during the treaty of Hudaibiyyah. When the Muslims were misinformed of his murder, the Prophet sought a pledge by the Muslims to fight the unbelievers as a revenge of his murder. This pledge is called *Bay'ah al-Riḍwān*. He bought a well called Bi'r Rumah from a Jew for twenty thousand dirham for the Muslims when it was very difficult for the Muslims to get water at Madīnah. He was given a glad tidings of Paradise by the Prophet for this act. He also bought land for the extension of the Prophet's mosque when the population of the Muslims increased. His contribution toward the expedition of Tabūk was enormous to the extent that the Prophet remarked: "O Allah, be pleased with 'Uthman, for I am pleased with him".¹³ Apart from these, he was one of the scribes of the revelation as he also wrote some documents for the Prophet. He participated fully in the administrations of his two predecessors, Abū Bakr and 'Umar as a member of *Shūrā* (Advisory Council).¹⁴

His Administration

'Uthmān maintained *Shūrā* in the same manner as his two predecessors did and called for general councils for consultations from time to time. He also divided the state of Islam into various provinces and put them under governors. He also separated the post of Governor from that of Commander of the armed forces in some provinces, all under the control of Caliph. He set up commissions of enquiry to investigate certain allegations against the alleged officers in some occasions. He also attended to people on Fridays and during the *Hajj* period in order to solve their problems. He diligently managed the public treasury and revenue, controlled the military and did not use force against civilians.¹⁵

Beginning of the Problem

The enemies of Islam took advantage of soft nature of the Caliph to create chaos among the Muslims. Unrest also started in various provinces as a result of the attitudes of some governors and officers whose faults were overlooked by the Caliph who was too compassionate. It was Abdullah bn Saba', a Yemenite Jew who

spearheaded the conspiracy against the Caliph. He accepted Islam for self-interest and to destroy the peace of Islamic State. He had followers who he used to disturb the peace and spread false news. He invented a few beliefs based on the love of the Prophet and his family. He made wrong commentaries of various verses of the Holy Qur'ān, twisted their meanings in favour of his beliefs, preached these in secret and selected the main Headquarters of the Muslim military power like Kūfah, Baṣrā, Syria and Egypt as centres of his activities. Newly converted Muslims and those who had certain complaints against various governors also joined him. He visited all the provinces including Madīnah to know the internal conditions of the capital as he appointed representatives in some areas. All governors got to suspect him except Egypt where the Governor was busy in the battle against Byzantine forces in North Africa and could not pay much attention to Ibn Saba's activities.¹⁶

Media Radicalism Nature of Ibn Saba's Campaign

From Egypt, he started contacting his followers in Kūfah, Baṣrā and other places through correspondence with instructions to create disorder and rivalry among the Muslims and to incite the public to forge complaints against the governors, some officials and the Caliph as well. Most of the State officers were called irreligious (*Kāfir*), non-practical and bad Muslims. Forged letters were sent from place to place, stating that there was injustice and unrest in the place from where they were posted. These forged letters were read by Ibn Saba's representatives to as many people as possible. The letters also contained statements such as the leading companions in Madīnah then; 'Ali, Ṭalhah and Zubayr had sympathy with Saba'ites and their mission and that they disliked the Caliph. This made the people to believe that there was a widespread unrest and these leading companions wanted to remove the Caliph. These people in many occasion, incited the public against their governors and on the other hand they accused the Caliph for removing such governors and criticized him for replacing them with his relatives.¹⁷

Allegations against the Caliph, 'Uthmān Bn 'Affān

The Caliph was accused politically, of playing tribalism since he replaced Banū Hāshim, the Prophet's family of the Quraysh with his family, Banū Umayyah to occupy big offices according to the Sabaites who used this to incite Banū Hāshim in Madinah against the Caliph. It would be recalled that there was rivalry between the two families of the Quraysh before Islam. They also accused the Caliph of favouring his relatives financially and burning of some copies of the Holy Qur'ān. The two allegations were absolutely false since 'Uthmān was a wealthy person who was by the Islamic law could not be prohibited or accused of spending his money for his relatives and poor. Also, in order to avoid confusion, he had to order the burning of incomplete versions of the Holy Qur'ān in circulation that time because they were not in order as was arranged by the Prophet and Angel Jibril. He also needed to replace them with the copies of standardised one which was compiled during the period of Abū Bakr, the first Caliph. Another accusations against him was that he called Ḥakam Bn 'Āṣ who was exiled by the Prophet to Madinah and appointed his son Marwān as his Chief secretary, an action which did not appeal to

the prominent companions as well as the Muslim populace. Unfortunately, it was this Marwān that became the main cause of insurgents' excitement that led to the assassination of the Caliph.¹⁸

Steps taken by the Caliph against the Saba'ites' Agitations

The leading companions suggested to the Caliph to take steps to stop the unrest which had grown in all parts of the State and reached Madīnah. To this request, the Caliph called for the conference of the governors. The conference took place in Madinah in the year 34 A.H. after the *Hajj*. The governors told him about the unrest which was due to some mischief-mongers who wanted to overthrow the government. They also suggested to him that those involved should be punished and their leaders be put to sword, an advice rejected by the Caliph on the account that he did not want to shed the blood of the Muslims. He instead, set up a mission of four people to tour the provinces. This included Muḥammad Bn Muslimah, Usāmah Bn Zayd, 'Ammār Bn Yāsir and 'Abdullah Bn 'Umar. After the conference, Mu'āwiyah, the then Governor of Syria requested the Caliph to come and stay in Damascus for a while. When he rejected this offer, he requested that he should allow him to send an army to Madīnah for the protection of the Caliph. The proposal was also rejected.¹⁹

The four people sent on mission to the provinces did their work and all of them returned and reported to the Caliph except 'Ammār Bn Yāsir, who was sent to Egypt, where 'Abdullah Bn Saba and his followers coaxed him and he started to live with them. 'Ammār Bn Yāsir joined this team where he met other two important figures who had earlier joined 'Abdullah Bn Saba's group. They were Muḥammad Bn Abī Ḥudhayfā and Muḥammad Bn Abī Bakr. The former was an orphan brought up by the Caliph along with other orphans. He demanded some big post when he grew up but was not considered as fit for such post, an act that made him to leave Madinah for Egypt where he joined Ibn Saba. The latter was in debt and his creditor made a complaint against him to the Caliph who decided impartially in favour of the creditor. For this reason, he also left Madīnah for Egypt where he joined Ibn Saba's group accordingly.²⁰

This group made another plan to converge at Madīnah. This plan served two purposes; to study the situation for the action they wanted to carry out and to show to the public that they tendered their grievances before the Caliph but he did not pay any attention to it. When they entered Madīnah, some companions suggested to the Caliph that they should be killed but he told them that without sufficient legal reasons, no man's blood should be shed. He further told them that he would approach them with kindness and if the kindness failed to work, he would rather sacrifice himself for Allah's Will. When this dangerous group arrived, the Caliph listened to them and gave them a long convincing address as replies to all charges they put against him. But when this people returned to their places, they told the audience that the Caliph was not ready to set things right.²¹

The next thing they did was to ask their members from different places to come for the forthcoming *Hajj* whereas their intention was to go to Madīnah to carry out the mission of deposing the Caliph by force. They started to come in small groups as at the time of *Hajj* in the year 35 A.H. They took positions at the places closed to Madīnah. They wanted the Caliph to step down but there were different opinions as regard the next Caliph. There was a faction who wanted ‘Ali, another wanted Zubayr while other opted for Talḥa. Each faction consulted whom it loved for the post of Caliph but they met negative replies from them. When ‘Uthmān heard about the insurgents, he sent some prominent companions included ‘Ali to them. They were assured by ‘Ali that their complaints would be listened to. They demanded certain things which included the removal of Governor of Egypt and appointment of Muḥammad Bn Abī Bakr as replacement. Their demand was approved without any question. The Caliph also addressed the insurgents with the assumption that they were satisfied.²²

Media Radicalism of the Insurgents

The people of Madīnah were surprised to hear shouts of ‘revenge’, ‘revenge’ in the streets a few days after it was assumed that the trouble was over. On hearing this, ‘Ali came out to enquire about the matter. The next thing they did was to show a letter written under the seal of Caliph, signed by Marwān Bn Ḥakam, the Chief Secretary of the Caliph to him. The letter was sent to Egypt by a special messenger whom they intercepted on the way. The letter read; *‘uqtul Muḥammad Bn Abī Bakr’* which means kill Muḥammad Bn Abī Bakr instead of *‘iqbil Muḥammad Bn Abī Bakr’* – accept Muḥammad Bn Abī Bakr as governor. It can be observed that the dot (*nuqtah*) of Arabic letter ‘ba’ was either wrongly or intentionally replaced with the dot of Arabic letter ‘ta’ which led to the change in the meaning of the statement. According to some historians, the letter was intentionally written by Marwān without the knowledge of the Caliph while others opined that it was the insurgents who forged the letter. ‘Ali tried to persuade them but they did not listen, instead they requested him to join them in removing the Caliph, a demand he rejected. They continued shouting: ‘we do not want ‘Uthmān to be the Caliph, his blood has been made lawful for us by Allah’.²³

The insurgents got to the Caliph who swore that he did not know anything about the letter but they told him that he was unfit to be the Caliph and he should abdicate whether he knew about the letter or not. ‘Ali observed that the insurgents were in control and that the Caliph did not want force against them, he left Madinah for Aḥjar, a nearby place because the insurgents wanted to drag him in the dispute. The radical group further asked the Caliph to renounce his post in which he refused, especially when he remembered what the Prophet told him that; ‘Perhaps God will clothe you with a shirt, ‘Uthmān and if the people want you to take it off, do not take it off for them’.²⁴ Consequent upon this, they laid a siege on his house for forty days in which they did not allow him to go to the mosque for prayer and they also denied him of water supply. Marwān also acted in favour of the insurgents since he did not allow anybody to fight them but some brave Muslim youths like Ḥasan and

Ḥusayn fought Marwān and the insurgents when they did not allow the Mother of the Believers, Ḥabībah to supply meal to the Caliph.²⁵

It was in this condition that the Caliph sent ‘Abdullah Bn Abbās to Makkah to lead the *Hajj* and to inform people of the situation with the insurgents. The same message was sent to provincial governors. The only weapon with ‘Uthmān was his kindness and soft nature which did not appeal to the insurgents at all. Some eminent companions persuaded him to allow the use of force against these people several times but he declined every proposal. The enemies decided to take quick action to execute their mission because of the notion that *Hajj* was coming to an end and after the *Hajj* a number of supporters of the Caliph would come to Madīnah; hence, they decided to assassinate him without delay. The insurgents entered his room where they met the Caliph reciting the Holy Qur’ān. One of them hit him with an axe and another one struck him with sword. Nailah, the wife of the Caliph tried to protect her husband but she was also dealt with. She received several wound and her fingers were chopped off.²⁶ It is on the record that Muḥammad Bn Abī Bakr led the assassins who first enter the Caliph’s room.²⁷ Caliph received several injuries and was finally beheaded by an Egyptian called ‘Amr Bn Ḥamq on Friday, the 17th of Dhūl-Ḥijjah, 35 A.H. equivalent to the 17th of July, 656 C.E.²⁸

The Effects of the Assassination on the Unity of Muslim Community

The death of ‘Uthmān, without doubt, marked the beginning of open religious and political conflicts within the Islamic community and in fact, it created desultory fighting among the successful communities.²⁹ It is doubtful whether the Muslim community would ever be united again till resurrection. The first thing that happened immediately after his assassination was the issue of succession. There was disagreement over ‘Ali’s right to succession which brought about schism in Islam.³⁰ The Muslim community was divided into four groups: The ‘Uthmānis or ‘Uthmān’s supporters who demanded capital punishment for the assassins of ‘Uthmān and who did not want ‘Ali to become Caliph; the Shī’ites (loyalists of ‘Ali); the *Murhibah* (people who were on the Islamic battle field at the time of Caliph’s assassination) and the *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamā’ah* (those were the majority of the companions and the Muslims of various parts of the Islamic State). They saw no fault in ‘Ali and ‘Uthmān. ‘Uthmānis and *Murhibah* were temporary political groups while both Shī’ites and *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamā’ah* still exist till today in the shape of permanent theological groups.³¹ This was followed by great civil wars and battles between the Muslims and the system of centralized government founded by ‘Umar and developed by ‘Uthmān got shattered. This situation also paved way for the establishment of a number of internal movements of which the Kharijites was the most serious.³²

The Role of Media in Rwanda Genocide

The Media, internally and internationally played two separate roles in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda which is termed as the most appalling catastrophes of the 20th century. Radio stations and newspapers were used by the conspirators to

dehumanize the Rwanda's Tutsi minority prior to the genocide and during the genocide, radio was also used by the Hutu extremist conspirators to mobilise the Hutu majority, to coordinate the killings and to ensure that the plans for extermination were faithfully executed. On the other hand, the international media also ignored the increasing violence in Rwanda and when the genocide started, the erratic media coverage largely conveyed the false notion of what was happening. This resulted into little public pressure in the West for governments to intervene.³³

Nigeria Version of Media Radicalism

There is proliferation of fake news capable of destroying the unity of Nigeria and as well threatening her existence as a nation on radio, television, newspapers, magazines and internet. Radicalization has been defined as a complex process whereby people adopt a system of extreme beliefs and willingness to use, encourage or facilitate violence in order to promote an ideology, political project or cause a means of social transformation.³⁴ The Nigeria media is best described as a system of extreme beliefs and willingness that encourage or facilitate violence in order to promote or destroy an ideology as well as political project which has caused social transformation of Nigeria in a negative manner. The media through the fake news can cause psychological pain and suffer on individual, group, society and government which may graduate to violence. Nigerians do not see one another as one entity; instead, they have been divided alongside ethnicity, political parties and religion which are being fueled by the media daily. It is no more an exaggeration that the pages of dailies are full of these phenomena.

Instances of Media Radicalism in Nigeria

During the second republic in Nigeria, there was a media report that caused religious tension between the Muslims and Christians. The report alleged that the Federal government has granted ten million Naira (N10,000,000) to the Muslims to build a central mosque in Abuja. This was considered as a favour to the Muslims at the detriment of the Christians. The truth of the matter was that each of the religious groups, Muslim and Christian was given ten million Naira, to build a mosque and a church respectively. The worst part of the matter was that the same prominence given to the matter was not given to it when the issue was made clear to the public. The press reports on the 1987 Kafanchan incident was an action that increased disharmony between the Muslims and Christians. Members of public were grossly misinformed due to partial reports of the press which publicised widely the reactions of the Muslims in Kano, Kaduna and Zaria. The reaction in those areas was about the original incident of the killing of the Muslim students and burning of their mosque in Kafanchan on July 6-7, 1987.³⁵ It is the duty of media to publicise issues that will foster the unity of the religious groups in Nigeria and not to cause disunity and hatred.

Apart from the above, the Nigeria media is fond of giving complete false information, photos or videos purposefully created and spread to confuse or

misinform. For example, photos or videos of tragic events in another place are published by Nigeria media as if they are as a result of attacks in Nigeria. A picture of the scene of a 2015 traffic accident in the Dominican Republic was printed to show half a dozen people that were killed in some attacks whereas the picture was not taken in Nigeria. Sometimes in June, 2018, major news outlet in Nigeria ran a story claiming that Danladi Ciroma, a leader of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association, said that the attacks in Plateau were revenge for the loss of 300 cows and there will be no peace as far as those cows are still missing. His comments drew widespread anger and swift condemnation, but the man denied ever making such statement.³⁶

One of the processes in which the media has been radicalized is the promotion of hate speeches and fake news which are threats to the national security and peace. Both are time bomb in a country like Nigeria which is a multi-ethnic and religious. The President has been accused of fake or lack of school certificate many times. Here are samples of hate speeches and fake news which are dangerous to nation's survival. A court in Osogbo ordered: 'The applicants are hereby granted leave to issue and bring an application for the order of Mandamus to compel 1st to 3rd respondents to start impeachment proceedings against the 4th respondent, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria'. This was manipulated by the media to read: 'Court orders National Assembly to begin impeachment of Buhari'.³⁷ The Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Sa'ad Abubakar was also a victim of fake news when he was misrepresented at a Nigerian Labour Congress' event in Abuja that he kicked against restructuring, whereas he was only against any restructuring that would lead to the disintegration of Nigeria. Media captioned it thus: 'Restructuring, Sultan kicked, Oshiomale booed'. President Buhari's health condition was also politicized and made to generate hate speech.³⁸ The demise of the then presidential candidate of APC, General Muhammadu Buhari in London was also reported in social media. This fake news gained prominence during the build-up to the 2015 elections and was intensified after the inauguration of APC government in May 2015 as the recently proscribed Biafra agitation quickly seized the opportunity to advance their secession agenda. Ever since that time, Nigeria continues to bloom in the vicious circle of ubiquitous disinformation. There was also a well-crafted fake UN speech of President Buhari which was circulated on social media in September, 2017, even before the arrival of the President in New York for 72 Session of the United Nation General Assembly meeting.³⁹

Media Radicalism of 'Uthmān Era and the Contemporary Media Radicalism in Nigeria: Any Correlation?

The assassination of 'Uthmān depicts the height of violence and ugliness to which human can reach when consumed with an ultimate goal of absolute authority since killing of their competitor is nothing to them. The media in Nigeria through its propagation of fake news and hate speeches has in no doubt fiercely divided the Nigerian community along socio-political, racial and ethno-religious lines. A visit to online medial any time proofs this assertion. If the decisive action is not taken

now, the situation can degenerate to what was obtained during the ‘Uthmān era. The series of accusations leveled against him are also surfacing during this regime of President Muhammadu Buhari. The President has been alleged of nepotism and impunity and asked to resign just as ‘Uthmān was accused. The aggrieved corrupt politicians are saying this and media is equally spreading it. They call him dictator, who does not obey the law, may be, because of continuous detention of Zakzaky, the Shī’ite leader in Nigeria and Dasuki, the former Special Adviser on Security during the last regime of former President Jonathan. It will be recalled that, the insurgents during the time of ‘Uthmān accused him of injustice and burning of the Qur’ān, the primary source of law in the Islamic State. This accusation can also be interpreted that the President does not believe or obey the constitution. The issue of Herdsmen and Farmers clash is always attributed to the President. They claim he is doing nothing and will not do anything to solve the killing problems because he is Fulani by tribe as they request that he should declare the Fulani people a terrorist organization. The oppositions formed Coalition for Nigeria Movement (CNM) on the 1st of February, 2018 which they termed ‘Third Force as an alternative to the ruling party, APC and the main opposition party, PDP. It was launched on Thursday the 1st of February, 2018 in Ogun State.⁴⁰ This followed a letter written by the former President Olusegun Obasanjo on the 23rd of January, 2018, titled: The Way Out: Clarion Call for Coalition for Nigeria Movement. The President was accused of nepotism, impunity and incompetency and was therefore requested by Obasanjo not to re-contest in 2019 general elections.⁴¹ The above mentioned allegations, efforts and others are similar to the pseudo-methods used by Abdullah Bn Saba’ and his followers to dispose the third Caliph of Islam if studied keenly. While Caliph ‘Uthmān used his kindness and soft heart to tackle the insurgents, President Muhammadu Buhari is enjoying his sincerity, credibility and popular vote gave to him by the electorates in 2015. He also enjoys the majority of people tackling his opponents on social media whenever fake news and hate speeches are directed on him. In addition, it has been confirmed that the problems he is facing were creations of the oppositions, including the PDP and President Obasanjo.⁴² Those who assassinated the third Caliph also looted *baytul-māl* (public treasury of the Muslims) likewise the politicians in Nigeria who have been curtailed from corruption to certain level by the present administration are not happy and they are making every effort to tarnish the image of the administration. They are being assisted by the media as well.⁴³ It is suspected that the unstable health of the President which consumed him of some months in London for treatment could be traced to the action of the corrupt politicians.

Media Radicalism and Islam

Islam is a comprehensive religion which leaves nothing undiscussed,⁴⁴ and gives preference to preventive approach over antidotal measures on matters. Its approach to lying, fake reports, hate speeches, abuse, image tarnishing and the like, which constitute radicalism in every field including media is scornful and attracts grave punishment.⁴⁵ Islam considers lying against Allah, His Messengers as *kabā’r* (grave or major offence).⁴⁶ It is also a grave sin to lie against fellow human being,

tarnish or defame his character; as unlawful accusation, slander and false witnesses are not allowed in Islam.⁴⁷ The Prophet seeks those who fabricate lies against him to prepare seats for themselves in Hell fire.⁴⁸

The action taken by the Prophet when the divine inspiration was revealed to him that Ḥātib Bn Balṭa'ah sent a letter secretly to the Quraysh people through a woman, informing them about the intending invasion of Makkah by the Muslims, revealed the importance of media and the protection of duty entrusted to the journalists. The Prophet sent two companions to pursue the woman and retrieve the letter from her. The woman was caught and the letter was retrieved from her. Though Ḥātib Bn Balṭa'ah did this to gain protection for his people who had no guardians in Makkah, he would have been killed for the action he took, if not that he was part of those companions who participated in the battle of Badr, the first battle in Islam.⁴⁹

One day, Hudhuda (Hoopoe) was absent from Prophet Sulaymān's inspection. For this, he threatened to punish it, by depilating its feathers, or even executed it unless it produced a manifested excuse for its absence. On its arrival, it told Prophet Sulaymān that it brought him true news from Sheba of Yemen. He wanted to know whether the news was true or it was a lie to get rid of the punishment of which it was threatened. He wrote a letter to queen of Sheba (Balqīs) of which the outcome revealed the genuineness of Hoopoe's report. It would have been a bad end for the Hoopoe if it proofed to be a radicalized reporter.⁵⁰

Deradicalisation from Saudi Arabia Experiences

Saudi Arabia method of deradicalisation is based on fighting the extremist ideology with the ideology of the State. The government realized that the extremists enjoyed significant amount of sympathy from the public when comprehensive counterterrorism programme was in use. This facilitated more recruitment into the radicalized groups. Therefore, the authority developed a society-wide approach which is among the most high profile of its kind. A two-stage government-run programme was initiated and took off in 2005. It began with the arrest of suspected terrorists and dialogue with them to know the reasons for their involvement in radical causes and about their religion. The programme is religious, psychological and cultural. The radicals are allowed to attend social events and sports. It is a programme consolidating the correct nations and concepts of Islam. The programme also encourages the participants to marry and pursue further education with government finance. Beneficiaries are also made to return to their former jobs before joining the radical groups. Financial help is also used to lessen the appeal of the extreme groups. Radical Imams and teachers are deployed to the administration in order not to radicalize the followers and students respectively.⁵¹

In addition, Saudi Arabia has two separate prison systems, one for non-extremists criminals and another for extremists and convicted terrorists. The overarching structure of the comprehensive initiative is an advisory committee, which also coordinates the programme, using its three subcommittees namely: religious subcommittee, psychological and social committee and security subcommittee.

After rehabilitation, the beneficiaries are encouraged to be in contact with the programme tutors and are given books, tapes and text messages to keep them in the mainstream society. Apart from the above, Saudi Arabia has an internet-based deradicalisation project called *Sakinah* which was launched by the Ministry of Islamic Affairs in 2003 – 2004. It is an online deradicalisation initiative programme where the appointed group of intellectuals, visit the websites of the radical groups and challenge their extreme interpretations of Islam. They also engage the youths and correct their extreme ideologies accordingly.⁵²

Lessons for Nigeria

It was fake news, hate speeches and information distortion that led to the assassination of the third Caliph of Islam, ‘Uthmān Bn ‘Affān (R.A). His assassination was resulted from the power of media which can be used either positively or negatively to attain certain cause. He sacrificed himself to prevent blood of the Muslims from being shed. Without mincing word, his assassination brought about heavy problems on the Muslims. The problems remain unsolved since his death in year 35 A.H, about 1, 404 years ago. In fact, Muslim community is exposed to unending schism and unnecessary divisions in perpetual enmity, which make Muslims to forget the importance and impact of Islamic brotherhood. Muslims in general and the Islamic nations in particular have become objects of ridicule and territories or grounds for enemies to test their deadly weapons. Palestine is being unduly occupied with its people, Muslims being sent away from their home-land, hence they become strangers in their home land. There are other several Muslims minority or majority who are under captivity whereas they were not born slaves. These were due to the oneness of the Muslims which was originally shattered due to unjustified assassination of Caliph ‘Uthmān.

There are similarities between the events, which led to the collapse of the greater Islamic Empire and unity of Muslims in connection with the assassination of ‘Uthmān and the contemporary media radicalism activities in Nigeria, which has reached its pick for condemnation to sustain Nigeria oneness. The media is being used by radical politicians to discredit the present administration led by President Muhammadu Buhari, who is believed to be financially disciplined and incorruptible. A sincere journalist credited the refusal of media to voluntarily publicise the achievements of this government but embarking on fake news and hate speeches to the refusal of the present government to give unofficial or free money to the media, which was a *status quo* of the past administrations.

The Buhari led government is presently facing various problems, internally within his party (APC) and externally from the opposition parties, as well as from the public workers and the collaborators, media and some religious groups. It is very difficult for the politicians to shift from the acts of corruption to which they have been used, especially since the beginning of the third republic. Therefore, they have to give it all that it requires to maintain the *status quo* of misappropriation of public funds or property entrusted to them called embezzlement. The same thing applies to the public workers and those who are unavoidably relating with them to carry out

certain public affairs. This also includes the security agencies in the country. It is suspicious that some religious groups do enjoy an unduly financial assistance from the previous administrations. These groups have never condemned corruption⁵³ as they show their perpetual hatred for this administration, which it is believed it does not condone misappropriation of public funds to attract undue support of the religious bodies. Sincerity and credibility of Muhammadu Buhari and popular vote which brought him in as the President since 2015, are believed to be the forces behind the unity of this nation till now otherwise, the crisis which occurred as a result of increase in the fuel price in January 2012⁵⁴ and the like would have also occurred during this present administration. This is because there is hunger in the country with lack of money to get basic needs including hike in the fuel price, an avenue for the oppositions and media to create break-up between the government and public; hence, crisis leading to disunity. This confirms the importance of voting for credible candidates at all levels.

What the Nigerians need presently is to interpret the biography of the third Caliph into action. His piety, love of others, kindness, frugality despite being a rich person, tolerance and good governance are lesson-worthy for us. The attitudes of President Buhari are to us similar to those of ‘Uthmān. In order to succeed, he needs to remain firm on his mission, develop it and carry the stakeholders along for continuity. The cooperation of Nigerians irrespective of their religious, social, ethnic, professional and political affiliations is highly prerequisite for the betterment of the contemporary and future Nigeria. The radicalized groups including the media, judiciary, the politicians and others should realize the importance of history, which reminds us of the past events regarding the past heroes, and as such should try to demonstrate character and professionalism worthy of emulation. Today, Nigerians talk of the past heroes in the positive manners. People like Tafawa Balewa, Ahmadu Bello, Obafemi Awolowo and Nnamdi Azikiwe, those who used the meager resources in their time to develop their regions to the satisfaction of their respective communities. These people and their contemporaries who got independence for us realized the strength in unity and weakness in division, the reason they made efforts for the survival of one Nigeria.

Nigerians should not stand akimbo by watching, hearing and enjoying the unbecoming activities of media. They have to cooperate in curtailing the peddlers of wrong information around Nigeria and the President. It is believed that if the Muslim community cautioned the insurgents and their activities during the time of the third Caliph, the situation would not have generated to killing of the Caliph and eventually disunity of the Muslim community for good. It is therefore the responsibility of all and sundry to make efforts to deradicalise the media and the collaborators in fear of repercussion of their unprofessional attitudes, which will undoubtedly affect everybody. The Rwanda incident is there as lessons where several lives were lost due to media radicalism. It is therefore necessary for every Nigerian to pray every time for those in authorities, from ward to local government, state and federal, for their guidance and success. The government should also act promptly on any matter of great concern to the unity and progress of this nation,

using peaceful and forceful means as applicable. Force should replace leniency or tolerance whenever there is provoking issues capable of causing disunity of the nation.

Conclusion

Unity, peace and tranquility are not attainable through lip service of ‘unity of Nigeria is not negotiable’ statement of Nigerians but through collective efforts, conviction and good leadership and followership. The Muslim community under ‘Uthmān’s government experienced peace, unity and development during the first half of his caliphate while the second half was marred by unrest and civil war created through media radicalism. Good leadership of ‘Uthmān cannot be doubted historically. Noble character, prudence, piety, tolerance, generosity, astuteness and determination are some of his attitudes. He was able to keep the religion of Islam and the Muslim community as a unit, following the footsteps of his predecessors. However, his assassination has brought wrath on the Muslims, an action that facilitated different thoughts and political beliefs, which remain unsolved until today.

Nigerians in general and media specifically should not misuse the principle of ‘freedom of speech’. If it is continuously misused, it may result to civil war and division; hence, weakness of the nation as it can be discerned from the status of Muslim community and Islam prior to the assassination of the Caliph. The Islamic community, which was founded on peace, tranquility and unity with development and consolidation became weak and shattered due to pseudo-media activities of those who pretended to be Muslims. There is no peace, tranquility and unity among the Muslims today, not to talk of development and consolidation of Islam and territories. Nigerians should learn lessons from what is attainable through peaceful co-existence and what will be lost as a result of division among a nation. President Muhammadu Buhari is on course to establish good governance and redeem the image of the nation because of the similar attitudes he shared with the third Caliph. He is only required to improve on it and appeal to the conscience of radicalized groups and Nigerians in general in order to understand and believe him for the sake of developing and keeping the nation’s unity.

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The Role of Islamic Studies in Conflict Resolution and Management in Nigeria

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Introduction

After independence in 1960, Nigeria has witnessed many conflicts and outbreak of violence caused by political, economic, religious and ethnic motives. Omotoye in his catalogue of conflicts and riots, recorded intra-religious crisis in Kano, (1980,2000 and 2012); Muslim vs. Christian crisis in Maiduguri, Kaduna, Yola, Kafanchan, Bauchi (1982, 1984, 1987 and 1990); Ethnic/clash of Ife vs. Modakeke in Osun State, Itsekiri vs. Urhobo in Delta State, Italu vs. Boju in Kaduna State (1999, 2000 and 2001.); Hausa vs. Fulani vs. Yoruba in Kano, Jos, Kwara, Oyo, Ogun, Lagos, Niger, Gombe, Kebbi, Jigawa and Ekiti (2000,2001,2002, 2008, 2009, and 2015); Boko Haram bomb blasts in Bauchi, Niger, Jos, Yobe, Borno and Kano (2009,2011,2012) and others.¹ According to Dalhatu, these conflicts and violent attacks have had enormous consequences on the progress of Nigeria.² Jega notes that, conflicts and insecurity in the country have brought about so many negative effects, as millions of people have been internally displaced.³ This had also led to political, social and economic disruptions which in turn led to slow economic growth and development and wanton destruction of life and property in the country.

Ethno-religious conflicts have badly affected the practice of religion in the country as people start to suspect or kill one another during the conflicts. Many places of worship have been destroyed during inter-faith conflicts. To some people, conflict is an opportunity for growth. However, when conflict begins to draw back productivity and gives way to more crisis, then, conflict management is needed as a matter of necessity.

Concept of Conflict

The word “conflict” which is derived from the Latin word ‘confligere’ means ‘to strike together.’⁴ This word has been defined by different people in different ways. According to Gary, conflict is a difference in opinion or purposes that frustrates someone’s hopes or desires.⁵ Shittu in his own view states that conflict is a clash between ideas, principles or people or better still, a state of negative situation that exists between two groups or parties who find themselves incompatible to live together peacefully.⁶ Albert notes that conflict may be conceived to mean or connote argument, polemic, disagreement, dispute, controversy and of course antagonistic discourse.⁷

Conflict according to Rashid, refers to some forms of friction, or discord arising within a group when the beliefs or actions of one or more members of the group are either resisted by or unacceptable to one or more members of another group.⁸ It is

drawn from the various definitions given above that conflict as a concept does not connote crisis or destructiveness all the time, but one basic thing that is prominent in all the definitions is the fact that there is always a state of disagreement and argument over an issue before conflict can surface. It is on this basis that Hornby defines conflict as a situation in which people, groups or countries are involved in a serious disagreement or argument.⁹ Conflict is an inevitable part of human life. Each person possesses his or her own opinions, ideas and a set of beliefs and thus acts accordingly. However, since every one strives for peace which can only be established in the absence of conflict, then conflict resolution and management is relevant for the growth and development of a nation.

Types of Conflict

Conflict is classified into four according to Harris¹⁰. They are:

- i. ***Interpersonal conflict:*** It refers to a conflict between two individuals. This occurs as a result of varied personalities rooted in incompatible choices and opinions. It is a natural occurrence that eventually helps in personal growth and development with others. It is also referred to as manifest and social conflict that includes all the disputes related to society such as family, cultural and communal conflicts. It can occur between spouses, room-mates, co-worker, siblings and neighbours.
- ii. ***Intrapersonal conflict:*** This is the type that occurs within an individual. The experience takes place in the person's mind. Hence, it is a type of conflict that is psychological and involving the individual's thoughts, values, principles and emotions. This has to do with conflict within one's self.
- iii. ***Intra-group conflict:*** This is a type of conflict that happens among individuals within a team. The incompatibility and misunderstanding among these individuals lead to an intragroup conflict as it arises from interpersonal disagreements or differences in views and ideas. This conflict is derived from differentiation in terms of religious, ethics, residential, racial and gender identities. Part of this conflict is intra-religious conflict aimed at purifying religion and is usually directed at members of the same faith. This type of religious conflict is usually the result of violent efforts by some believers to impose their own views or interpretations of the theological positions on others.
- iv. ***Inter-group conflict:*** This arises among different teams within an organization. This is due to the varied sets of goals and interests of these different groups. In addition, competition also contributes to the growth of inter-group conflict. Instances of this include rivalry in resources or boundaries set by a group to others which establish their own identity as a team. Inter-religious conflict falls under this type of conflict as it occurs when members of different religions are engaged in a fight over superiority of their faith or some related issues.¹¹

The term 'conflict resolution' is sometimes used interchangeably with the term 'conflict management'. However, Rubin et al consider conflict management to be distinct from conflict resolution.¹² The latter encompasses the use of non-violent methods in resolving conflict and in such a way that both parties are satisfied, encouraging them to move from a zero-sum mentality to a win-win situation; while the former refers to a process that will be undertaken for an indefinite period of time (and may not result in a resolution), and is primarily concerned with containing and limiting the conflict. However, the two terms are used synonymously to establish peace and happiness through the elimination of conflicts, debates and wars. Thus, conflict resolution means a range of methods of eradicating sources of conflict or any reduction in severity of a conflict or the process of resolving disputes between parties.¹³

Causes of Conflict

Conflict in Nigeria manifests itself in interpersonal, intrapersonal, intragroup and inter-group forms. Most of these constitute threats to global peace and security in many occasions as they start from family disagreements. When such conflicts are not quickly resolved and managed, they translate into national problems. According to Kolawole, other causes of conflict include maltreatment of citizens or encroachment upon their rights as obtainable in the *Jāhiliyyah* (period of ignorance and darkness among the Arabs).¹⁴ This was what led to the battles fought by the Prophet. The period of succession immediately after the death of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) nearly caused conflict and disintegration among Muslim *Ummah*.

In Nigeria today, the different views of some Muslims based on their school of jurisprudence (*Madhhab*) or their national or ethnic customs or their type of education (traditional or modern) and so on, are potential sources of disagreement. More-so, the way and manner in which a *da'i* (*da'wah* worker) carries out his *da'wah* activities, his utterances, his proclamations, his behaviour, e.t.c are potential source of conflict¹⁵. There are conflicts in different towns and community as a result of tussle for political leadership. For instance, political intolerance led to the western region crisis of November 1965 which culminated in the "wete" violence in an attempt to reject imposition of unpopular leadership. The result was the military coup of January 15, 1966, the counter coup of July 29, 1966 and the civil war of 1967-1970.¹⁶

The Place of Islamic Studies in Conflict Resolution and Management

Islamic Studies is a contemporary approach of studying Islam. It is an umbrella term and draws on a variety of fields that include Islamic civilization, culture, religion, history, social sciences, scientific heritage, philosophy, Sufism, jurisprudence, comparative religions, inter-faith dialogue, gender studies, economics and finance and human rights with the tools of interdisciplinary and comparative approach.¹⁷ It sheds light on the multiple expressions of Islam as a spiritual traditions, the role of Islamic civilization in global history and importance

of Islamic discourses in the contemporary world. It examines the thought of the key Muslim intellectuals particularly of modern age and their attempts to come to terms with modernity.

As one of the Nigerian educational subjects or courses, Islamic Studies contributes greatly to the quality of life in so many areas including faith and worship, family affairs, administrative and political matters, business transactions, inter-personal relations, good conduct and ethics. It recognizes the essence of high morality and ethical standard of behaviour including manners of relating with each other and respect for humanity. Thus, Islamic Studies is to mould the character and develop sound attitude and morals in man. According to Bidmos, Islamic studies as an academic subject inculcates in the pupils knowledge, ideas that shape and condition man's attitudes, actions, intellect, emotions, physical moral and spiritual powers to be able to make his contributions to humanity.¹⁸

In Islamic Studies, conflict resolution is referred to in the Qur'an as '*Iṣlāḥ*'. This word is an Arabic word which means 'to mend', to restore something that is broken, to make peace, to make something right, and to set something in order.¹⁹ The term appears several times in the Qur'an and conveys the idea of improving, purifying, reconciling, repairing and reforming. The notion of '*Iṣlāḥ*' implies bringing the object (whether a heart, an intelligence or a society) back to its original state, when the said object was considered to be pure and good. It is indeed a matter of improving or curing through reform.

Islamic teachings advocate living in peace with God-the Creator and Lord of all that exists. It also means seeking peace within oneself, and living in peace with other human beings, and in peace with one's surroundings and environment in its entirety. Islam makes provisions for avoiding war, minimizing its effect if it unavoidably occurs, and ending it as soon as possible.

However, conflict in Islam is considered to be inevitable and an integral aspect of human existence. That is why the permission to engage in conflict is only given to those people who are currently at the receiving end of aggression and, in effect, are being wronged. The purpose is to preserve justice and prevent oppression from becoming widespread. Even at this point, it is better according to Islam to resist and reconcile by other means if there is an opportunity to do so. Thus, peacemaking between conflicting parties is a sacred act and duty in Islam. In this regard, the Qur'an says: "So fear Allah and adjust all matters of difference among you, and obey Allah and His Messenger if you are believers." (Qur'an 8:1).

Based on the teachings of Islam, there are certain principles relevant to preventing, resolving and managing any type of conflict. These include modesty in speech, patience, tolerance and forgiveness, honesty, justice, consultation and dialogue. These teachings of Islam are discussed as follows:

i. Modesty in Speech

Tongue an instrument of speech, is capable of destroying or building relationships as attested to by the Yoruba saying that "the tongue is sharper than a knife". Speech

can be made to ridicule or for condemnation. Nigeria has witnessed many ethno-religious conflicts revolving around the misuse of tongue. Some groups in their movements, use the media to spread provocative messages which gradually become offensive to others. For instance, on March 6, 1987, the religious conflict in Kafanchan was caused by what was considered as blasphemous remark when a convert from Islam to Christianity was said to have misinterpreted the Qur'ān while preaching. This led to a conflict between the Christians and the Muslims. This spread to Katsina, Funtua, Zaria, Kankia, Daura and Kaduna as hundreds of people were killed in the process while many Churches and Mosques were set ablaze.²⁰

To avoid, resolve or manage conflicts through the use of ridicule, insults accusations and infidelity, Islam teaches that man should be modest in speech. Islam forbids the wrong use of tongue through *Qadhf* (defamation), of accusing other persons falsely, backbiting and gossip. In connection with this, Allah warns thus:

O you who believe! Let not a group scoff at another group, it may be that the latter are better than the former. Nor let (some) women scoff at another women, it may be that the latter are better than the former. Nor defame one another, nor insult one another by nicknames. How bad is it to insult one's brother after having Faith (i.e. to call your Muslim brother (a faithful believer) as: "O sinner", or "O wicked"). And whosoever does not repent, then such are indeed wrong-doers. O you who believe! Avoid much suspicion; indeed some suspicions are sins. And spy not, neither backbite one another. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would hate it (so hate backbiting). And fear Allah. Verily, Allah is the One Who forgives and accepts repentance, Most Merciful (Qur'ān 49:11-12).

Even when calling people to the faith, Islamic teachings maintain that it should be based on wisdom and fair preaching, as the Qur'ān says: "Invite (mankind) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair preaching and argue with them in a way that is better" (Qur'ān 16:125). Modesty in speech taught in Islamic Studies is a significant effect on the effectiveness of conflict resolution and management. Muslim leaders, tutors and parents should serve as role models in speech and conduct in educating and upholding the true teachings of Islam wherever they found themselves.

ii. Patience, Tolerance and Forgiveness

To manage and resolve conflicts, one has to be at peace within the heart and to remain calm and composed in times of difficulty. This virtue is very useful in conflict prevention. The Qur'ān stresses this by calling Muslims to be patient (Qur'ān 3:200). It further stresses the fact that God tries the believers with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods, lives and the fruits and that only those that patiently persevere are the receivers of glad tidings (Qur'ān 2:155).

Islam maintains fighting against oppression. It allows equal retaliation by those who have endured an injustice. The terms of this kind of fighting as explained in the Qur'ān (2:190-195) requires that the retaliation must be equal and fair and that fighting must stop as soon as the oppressors stop the fighting and pursue peace. Similarly this approach to conflict is also manifested in verses 4:89-90 of the Qur'ān. However, it encourages forgiveness and patience instead of taking revenge to be a more superior and rewarding response (Qur'ān 5:45; 42: 43). Muslim youths need to be taught and encouraged to exemplifying these virtues of Islam.

iii. Justice and Honesty

The importance of justice and honesty in Islam cannot be overemphasized. Muslims are commanded to seek justice and act justly when reconciling between two conflicting parties. In the Qur'ān, Allah says: “And if it returns (the dispute), then make settlement between them in justice and justly. Indeed Allah loves those who act justly” (Qur'ān 49:9). This verse indicates that being just in conflict resolution is connected to appropriate Islamic ethics and piety as the Qur'ān says:

O you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just; that is next to piety and fear Allah. For Allah is well- acquainted with all that you do (Qur'ān 5:8).

Objectivity in argument has positive effects of calming nerves and creating a relaxed atmosphere conducive to level-headed discussion. Islamic principles that are taught in Islamic Studies denote that justice in reconciliation is an Islamic right of mankind regardless of religion, ethnicity, and socio-economic background. This attribute is considered a fundamental trait of an individual's character as truthfulness. Reliability and sincerity are important characteristics of mediators or consulting councilin order to facilitate their success. A person's reliability and justice is judged based on his ability to accurately view events or incidents dispassionately, without fear or favour.

Honesty incorporates the concept of truthfulness and reliability. The teaching of Islam commands truthfulness and forbids lying. This honesty, an essential ingredient of the Muslim character, includes being truthful towards God by worshipping Him sincerely, truthful to oneself by adhering to God's laws , truthful with others by speaking the truth and being honest in all dealings, such as buying, selling and contracting marriages. There should be no deceiving, cheating, falsifying or withholding of information. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) warned Muslims on the dangers inherent in dishonesty, and the benefits of living an honest life as he said:

Truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise. In addition, a man keeps on telling the truth until he becomes a truthful person.

Falsehood leads to wickedness and evil-doing, and wickedness leads to the (hell) Fire, and a man may keep on telling lies till he is written before God, as a liar' (Sahih al- Bukhari).²¹

The Qur'ān provides an explicit warning against accepting narratives related to conflict from unreliable and unjust individuals as it says:

O you who believe! If there comes to you a disobedient one with information, investigate, lest you harm a people out of ignorance and become, over what you have done, regretful" (Qur'ān 49: 6).

Islam stipulates that those involved in settling disputes should be reliable and not those that are notorious for dishonesty and spuriousness, as this may weaken their effectiveness in managing conflict. The practical application of these virtues are lacking in the lives of some Muslims. The Islamic teaching is both theory and practical. The theoretical aspect of it is the belief that is based on inner conviction in the heart and verbal expression undertaken by mouth. This is the case of *Imān*(faith) in Islam. The dictates of this belief as theoretical aspect are put into practice through righteous deeds and application to daily life so that the teachings emphasized by Islam bear fruits in the lives of Nigeria Muslims and serve as models for the rest citizens.

iv. Consultation (*Shūrā*)

Consultation (*Shūrā*) is an integral feature of the teachings of Islam which allows common people to participate in the decision making process. *Shūrā* calls upon Muslims to gather and through articulate debate and reason form productive opinions. It helps create a society that engages actively with leaders and thus crucial in building solid relationships among people. It is also designed to resolve disputes. It extends further to include all the affairs of Muslims.

The concept of *Shūrā* (consultation) in the history of Islam is well established in politics and government. However, it is encouraged as a means for dispute management in all facets of life even within the family. It is described as an attribute of a believer in a chapter of the Qur'an entitled *Al-Shūrā* thus: "And those who have responded to their Lord and established prayer and whose affair is (determined by) consultation among themselves" (Qur'ān 42:38). Randeree and El-Faramawy assert that *Shūrā* minimizes conflict between stakeholders and leads to a positive atmosphere to resolve differences.²²

The importance of *Shūrā* in Islam is exemplified in the statement of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) thus: "By Allah, no group gathers to consult (*Shūrā*) except they are guided to the best outcome because of their consultation."²³ The purpose of consultation in Islam is to present the conflict or opinions for discussion among a panel of experts in order to achieve the most effective and positive results based on experience and knowledge. Consultation also provides an objective approach based on understanding of the Qur'ān and Hadith in managing conflicts. Consultation intrinsically enlists people's interest and gets them committed to the resolution or management of the conflict situation (Qur'ān 3: 159).

In Islam, there are conditions for establishing *Shūrā* and recruitment of members. This can be seen in the action of the second Caliph, Umar bin Al-Khattab as he barred his son from being among the potential leaders and selected five individuals to succeed him based on their leadership among people and closeness to the Prophet. When they began to dispute, Umar had given four days to consult and added Talha and Abdullah bin Umar to mediate the discussion based on their knowledge, experience and virtue.²⁴ The basic attributes of *Shūrā* members can be adopted from this narrative on establishing reliability of an individual with some modifications suitable to the Nigerian context.

The adaptations for use in Nigeria to establish *Shūrā* are: knowledge (Qur'ān 58:11), justice in decision-making (Qur'ān 5:8), reliability in reporting events and passing information (Qur'ān 49:6), truthfulness (Qur'ān 9:119), wisdom (Qur'ān 2:269), experience and expertise, and sincerity (Qur'ān 4:35). The character of *Shūrā* participants should be validated to ensure that there is no possibility of bias or prejudice that would deter the individual from mediating between conflicting parties.

v. Dialogue

Dialogue in Islam is seen as one strategy of managing conflict constructively. Dialogue implies some talk or discussion between two parties. The teachings of Islam lay down guidelines for dialogue especially between people of different faiths and culture. It maintains that all speeches aimed at convincing the other must have the best of intentions and be conducted in a good manner. Dialogue according to Islam, serves three main purposes:

- i. It creates room for understanding. Most disagreements among diverse inter-groups in Nigeria especially in the past have often been caused or aggravated by ignorance or prejudice, or both.
- ii. It creates opportunities for people from different groups (religious, ethnic or political) to raise grievances and resolve disputes.
- iii. It creates open channels for negotiation and eventual peace.

Islam institutes dialogue at all levels of human relationship. The purpose is to give everyone concerned a right to have a say in the issue at hand and for all to benefit from the wisdom, foresight and experiences of the parties involved. This will ensure peace and stability and provide the people with a sense of worth and belonging. Islamic dialogue is not to dictate terms or impose views, but to achieve understanding and reach compromise and reconciliation. In the Qur'ān, Allah enjoins coming together with mutual understanding in numerous verses. For instance, Allah says in the following verse thus:

Say, O people of the book, come to common term as between us and you, that we worship none but God, that we associate no partner with Him, that we erect not among ourselves lords and partners Other than God... (Qur'ān 3:64).

The invitation in this verse is to give room for discussion on issues of common interest among people of different faiths for the promotion of unity. Prophet Muhammad (saw) had displayed great diplomatic ability and capacity to resolve disputes peacefully and affect reconciliation between mutually antagonistic people.

The treaty of *al-Hudaibiyyah* is a relevant example when the Prophet went to Makkah with his companions to perform lesser Hajj (*Umrah*). The Makkan authorities thought that he had come to conquer the city and they made preparations for war. Tempers flared when his followers realized that the pagan leaders would not allow them to enter the city to observe their rites. Consequently, heated negotiations ensued which resulted in a treaty that was unfair to Muslims as it imposed unfavourable conditions on them. Tensions rose high and war was imminent. However, the great restraint and statesmanship shown by the Prophet who was able to persuade the Muslims to accept the treaty. This treaty later became a landmark victory to Islam and indeed Muslims.²⁵ In summary, the teaching of Islam gives room for dialogue in resolving differences among different people through mutual understanding, freedom of religion, co-operation, sincerity and mutual respect (Qur'ān 3:64; 109: 1-6; 10:99; 5: 2).

Conclusion and Recommendation

Modesty in speech, honesty, justice, patience and tolerance, forgiveness, consultation and dialogue taught in Islam which have been discussed in this paper are virtues crucial to peacemaking, conflict resolution and management in Nigeria. Thus, Islamic Studies, if properly taught and included as one of the compulsory subjects at both primary and secondary education levels and as general course for all disciplines in the Nigerian tertiary institutions, the right virtues such as modesty in speech, patience, honesty, administration of justice, respect, peace and tolerance, consultation and dialogue would be encouraged and promoted through the teaching and learning of Islamic Studies in Nigeria.

Muslim leaders (*Imāms*) often have contact with Muslims and are in the best position to encourage the community to reflect on the issues of conflict and violence through preaching, readings, prayers and spiritual guidance. This is more necessary as they have opportunities to speak on Islamic virtues such as tolerance, modesty, honesty, patience and forgiveness when they preside at ceremonies.

Islamic Scholars and the generality of Muslims need to clarify misinterpretations of religious texts used to incite conflict. Moreover, Muslims need to clarify scriptural interpretation in order to end religious belief-based justifications of conflict and radicalization by challenging those that use Islamic tradition to justify conflict and violence against humanity.

Muslims should inculcate Islamic values such as modesty, honesty, tolerance, forgiveness and good morals in their children. They should also increase awareness of the whereabouts of children by discouraging or screening the type of friends they keep.

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The Role of Security Agencies in Deradicalisation Strategies among Muslim Youth in Nigeria

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Introduction

The trend of terrorism in the world today has become a great source of concern at both national and international levels. The number of terrorist organizations and their activities across the world has become one of the major hindrances to peace and security all over the world. However, the current phenomenon of terrorism was only after the 9/11 attacks in New York and Washington creating a new body of terminology to understand al-Qaida and its affiliates. The terminology is used to explain their ideology as 'violent extremism', the people that believed it as 'extremists' or 'radicals' and 'radicalization' as the process whereby someone becomes an extremist.¹ Terrorism continue to spread like a wildfire in every part of the world and its impact reverberates beyond the countries where it is being perpetuated.² It remains a serious and on-going threat called globalization of terror just as we have Boko –Haram in Nigeria, Al –Qaeda in the Maghreb, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Al-Shabab in Somalia and the recent Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. The major flashpoints of the security problems could be seen in the area of recent phenomenon of Boko-Haram suicide bombings in some Northern states of Nigeria, the unrestrained attacks on individuals and institutions of the government during some of the crises suggest that there is an element of terrorism in Nigeria.³ Many counter-terrorism measures were put in place to prevent the menace of terrorism as part of the strategy aiming at preventing terrorism. These include de-radicalization programme by different countries with different approaches to counter-radicalization and de-radicalization of terrorists.

Deradicalisation programmes have been implemented in a number of countries with religious extremist prison populations. While these programs share some of the same characteristics, they also differ tremendously due to the resources available within each country. Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Indonesia and Singapore have utilized de-radicalization programmes for the past five years. Additionally, each country has approached the de-radicalization process with varying degrees of success. Six general lessons emerge from these cases: success depends on the availability of: (1) adequate funding, (2) reform within the prison structure, (3) use of knowledgeable and well-respected Islamic clerics, (4) incorporation of cultural norms, (5) provision

of monetary support to families of detainees, and (6) follow through with after-care programmes.⁴

As a result of the significant counterterrorism efforts, several countries have captured and imprisoned large numbers of radical and extremists. The challenge for these governments is what to do with these extremist prison populations and how best to rehabilitate them to avoid a return to violent militancy. Are these de-radicalization programmes an effective solution to dealing with the large number of imprisoned extremists? What are the key components of de-radicalization programmes for religious extremists and how do they compare with the factors seen in disengagement from other types of anti-social groups, including terrorists, gangs, cults, and racist groups? What are the similarities and differences among the current programmes? Are there specific practices that have met with success or failure? Are the existing programmes unique to their context and culture within each state or can they be applied in different settings? Therefore, this paper aims at examining the role of Security Agencies in de-radicalization strategies in Nigeria.

Concept of Terrorism

The word terrorism comes from the reign of terror instigated by Maximilien Robespierre in 1793 following the French revolution.⁵ This implies that terrorism is not a child of modernity; it is as old as the existence of man. The history is as old as human's willingness to use violence to effect politics. Terrorism does not lend itself to one single acceptable definition. The term according to Terrorism Research (Undated) is better understood from the point of view of the person that is being represented. This is because to the victims of terrorism the perpetrators are terrorists while to the perpetrators, terrorism is an act targeted at reforming or enforcing change. Against this background, Terrorism Research (Undated) describes terrorism as a tactic and strategy, a crime and a holy duty, a justified reaction to oppression and an inexcusable abomination. For Hornby,⁶ terrorism is the use of violent action in order to achieve political aims or force a government to act. The United States Department of Defense cited by Terrorism Research (Undated), defines terrorism as "the calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious or ideological." The people or individuals that carry out acts of terrorisms are known as terrorists.

Characteristically, terrorism involves the following:

1. Use of unlawful violence believing that violence will usher in a better system
2. Use of unlawful and assorted dangerous weapons
3. Motivated by goals that might be political, religious or ideological
4. Secretive in membership recruitment and locations of residence
5. Fewer in number comparable to the larger society they attack

6. Have strong will and could die for the course they uphold
7. Most times, operate as syndicates
8. derive financial and military supports from national and international loyalists
9. They are militant, they use coercion, intimidation and instill fears in people
10. Their tactics involve:
11. Suicide bombing, car bombing, rocket propelled grenades, assassinations, abductions and kidnapping,
12. Disguising and hijacking.
13. Their targets are extermination of human lives and destruction of properties. These are achieved by attacking: public squares, government buildings and installations, churches and mosques, schools, bridges, police stations, military barracks and installations as well as market squares and prisons to free inmates particularly their members incarcerated.

Terrorism is of both national and international concern. This is because their activities most times are not concentrated in a particular place. Its waves span across geographical boundaries both locally and internationally. Terrorist activities had led to displacement of people, loss of lives and properties, feelings of suspicion, anger and hatred as well as psychological and emotional trauma and general state of insecurity.

Terrorism can regarded as a threat to world peace; a threat to growth, progress, development and most importantly, a threat to the right to life. There is still a debate in some quarters over what exactly constitutes terrorism. However, it is generally agreed that: "terrorism is premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by sub national groups or clandestine agents".

Terrorism in Nigeria

The history of terrorism in Nigeria is traceable to the emergence of a group of Islamic militants called "Boko Haram" in 2002. "Boko Haram" is translated to mean "western education is evil". The progressive destructive activities of "Boko Haram" made the US department of states to designate them as terrorist organization in November, 2013.⁷ Since the emergence of this sect in 2002, human lives had been lost to their attackers in thousands. The Vanguard newspaper put the death toll at more than 12,000 with more than 8000 injured or maimed and thousands of other innocent Nigerians displaced.⁸ The killings have continued unabated until recently that they are being gradually overcome. Their escalated activities created widespread insecurity among Nigerians, increased tensions between various ethnic communities, interrupted development activities, frightened off investors and generate concern among Nigeria's northern neighbours.⁹ According to Okpaga, Chijioke and Innocent,¹⁰ between July 27th 2009 and February 17th 2012, "Boko Haram" had carried out 53 deadly attacks. While

according to Jacob,¹¹ Okpaga, Chijioke and Innocent,¹² 57 attacks occurred between September 2010 and 11th August, 2014. These crises have heightened tensions and insecurity in Nigeria and they have assumed a frightening dimension until recently that they are being overpowered by combined military efforts of Nigeria and surrounding nations. Aside “Boko Haram,” insecurity in Nigeria is heightened by the activities of other ethnic militias such as the Niger Delta militants’ etcetera, whose activities manifest in kidnapping, abduction, pipeline vandalism, armed robberies, and hostage taking. Other activities that have heightened insecurity in Nigeria also include human and drug trafficking, porous borders that allow infiltration of illegal aliens, arms and ammunitions, ethno-religious conflicts, political based violence, economic based violence etc. These life threatening activities frustrate economic and technological transformation keeping Nigeria in a perpetual state of economic dependence, loss of productive human resources and general apathy and discontentment.¹³ Unless this situation is checked and reversed, Nigeria will remain in the problem of insecurity.

Concept of Deradicalisation

The literature on deradicalisation is young. The majority of publications are from the last decade, especially from the last eight years, triggered in part by a ‘blowback’ reaction to the US-led intervention to overthrow Saddam Hussein in 2003 – an intervention not authorized by the United Nations’ (UN) Security Council that angered many Muslims in the Middle East and the West. Most of the literature focuses on Islamist radicalization, especially in the West. According to Alex,¹⁴ the majority of studies describe radicalization and recruitment processes while studies on deradicalisation, disengagement and counter- radicalization are fewer and of more recent origin. What has been notably absent in most of the writings of those who now plough the field of (counter-) terrorism studies with regard to radicalization to political violence in general, and terrorism in particular, has been some soul-searching in one’s own history. In none of the studies on radicalization and de-radicalization surveyed, could discussions of apparently obvious questions be found, like, ‘how did the radicalization that led to the American revolution come about?’ or ‘how was the ‘de-nazification’ (de-radicalization) of Germany achieved after the Second World War?’ According to Collins English Dictionary deradicalisation is the practice of encouraging those with extreme and violent religious or political ideologies to adopt more moderate views.¹⁵ Broadly speaking, the word "radicalization" can be used to describe a process whereby individuals (and even groups) develop, over time, a mindset that can under the right circumstances and opportunities increase the risk that he or she will engage in violent extremism or terrorism. It therefore follows that the word "deradicalisation" should only be used to refer to the methods and techniques used to undermine and reverse the completed radicalization process, thereby reducing the potential risk to society from terrorism Lindsay. Deradicalisation can therefore simply be seen as a process or measures taken to dislodge the notion or rooted ideologies on radicals or extremists individual or groups to revert to ideal and more acceptable views in the society. Deradicalisation can be pursued in form of a holistic programme or as an in

built mechanism whereby stakeholders in the fight against terrorism would play some vital roles in course of carrying out their duties e.g. the role of security agencies in deradicalisation strategies, role of politicians, legislature, judiciary, executive, scholars etc.

Deradicalisation Programme in Nigeria

Nigeria has recently joined many states which have established deradicalisation programmes with the aim of re-integrating former terrorists and reducing the risk of returning into act of terrorism. How successful is deradicalisation programmes this can be ascertained given the substantial flaws of using recidivism as a measure.¹⁶ It broadens the conception of the success of deradicalisation beyond recidivism rates at the individual level to take into account its social impact, examining how the ideational context of re-integration shapes the efficacy of deradicalisation programmes. The re-integration into ideational contexts which are influenced by a radical milieu risks could render deradicalisation efforts as counter-productive and being a cause of recidivism. Conversely, deradicalisation programmes in ideational contexts which are influenced by a referent milieu aligned with state forces, such as in Nigeria, function to overcome community resistance to re-integration. Deradicalisation programmes provide former combatants with ‘scripts’ of disengagement and function as a brand, signaling to communities that former combatants have repented and are ‘better citizens, imbued with genuine nationalism’ that resonate with local communities. Thus community resistance to re-integrating former combatants in Nigeria is the context in which deradicalisation programs can be, paradoxically, more successful as communicative strategies of resolving community tensions. The article makes a conceptual contribution to deradicalisation studies by broadening what constitutes success in deradicalisation away from recidivism reduction and by placing greater focus on the implications of social relations with radical milieus and referent milieus on the efficacy of deradicalization.¹⁷

In 2015, President Muhammad Buhari said that as a result of military gains by the Nigerian government, Nigeria had “technically won the war” against Boko Haram, as he stated they were no longer able to launch conventional attacks and people were returning to their communities. The Nigerian government has now regained most of the territory previously held by Boko Haram and claims these areas are returning to normalcy. There are also positive signs that suggest the military gains have had some success in weakening the group, resulting in a significant reduction in the group’s capabilities, with violent incidents dropping 29 per cent and casualties decreasing by 73 per cent on the previous year. However, despite the claims that Boko Haram has been largely defeated, there is evidence it still poses a threat to Nigeria and the west African region, with their expansion into neighbouring countries and continued attacks in Nigeria (43 attacks and 200 civilian deaths in the first half of 2017) (Punch 2017). Therefore, despite that, the group was no longer capable of mounting large-scale attacks, its continued activity underlines Boko Haram’s resilience and limitations of a military-centered counter-insurgency

approach. The limitations of a predominantly military-based strategy for countering Boko Haram has led to a number of initiatives for a more comprehensive approach, one of which has been the use of deradicalisation programmes. The expansion of deradicalization in Nigeria has prompted a public debate on whether or not they needed amnesty and this paper considers how we can understand whether deradicalization programmes can be effective as a ‘softer’ alternative to the military approach to countering violent extremism and groups such as Boko Haram. Given the programmes are in their infancy, the question of efficacy is approached conceptually to discuss what constitutes success in deradicalization and how might such programmes be judged to be successful or not.¹⁸ Nigeria keeps saying it has defeated Boko Haram against all the evidence of continuing Boko Haram attacks Punch. The question still remains on whether deradicalization is effective or desirable in order to counter terrorism.¹⁹ It builds upon the argument that the efficacy of de-radicalization has been conceptualized too narrowly which has de-contextualized the role of deradicalisation in re-integrating former combatants.²⁰

Firstly, the efficacy of deradicalisation programmes has predominantly been conceptualized in terms of recidivism reduction, the use of recidivism as a measure of success has been highly criticized thus, studying the effectiveness of the Nigerian programme in any timescale with recidivism as the measure will be fraught with problems.

Secondly, the focus on outcomes of individual programme participants neglects the wider social dimension that deradicalisation can have and when it is addressed there is a tendency to frame other consequences in society as primarily negative. Deradicalisation has been framed in terms of individual attitudinal/behavioral change with little examination of the social context in which former combatants (might eventually) be reintegrated into, or it is viewed as mechanistic push and pull factors and thus neglecting the agency of re-integrating communities and the contextual factors which shape their desire and capacity to facilitate or resist re-integration (thus potentially undermining deradicalisation). By over-emphasizing recidivism measures of success and underplaying re-integration into the social context, deradicalisation programmes are easy targets for being criticized as unsuccessful, unnecessary and nefarious. Recently, there has been much interest in the relationship between deradicalisation and re-integration – best exemplified by the debate in regard to (former) ISIS fighters returning to Europe.²¹ Yet there has thus far been relatively little conceptual discussion on the intersection between deradicalisation and re-integration and how contextual factors mediate the success of the two.

Deradicalisation and Re-integration

There has been much research on how former combatants can be successfully re-integrated into society, thus reducing the risk they re-engage in violence, although the causal relationship of deradicalisation within this process of re-integration is less well understood. While much research on deradicalisation has acknowledged the need to take into account the context of deradicalisation, only a few studies have

focused on the context of re-integration and its relationship with deradicalisation (programmes). It is now a near-consensus that the existence of strong links between a former combatant/extremist and their family and community can facilitate successful re-integration and reduce recidivism; however, it is unclear to what extent deradicalisation programmes facilitate this form of re-integration. In some cases, the re-integration programmes have little focus on deradicalisation or promoting ideological change, and it was other behavioural-oriented measures, which were more successful in reducing the risk of recidivism. On the other hand, Barrelle argues that deradicalisation programmes can facilitate acceptance of a plurality of views within society and that re-integration into mainstream society can reduce the risk of recidivism. While the article does not contest the arguments of these excellent studies, this nascent but important literature has thus far focused on a few (similar) contexts which may obfuscate the influence of ideational relations between societies within the state. The ability of former combatants to be accepted by family and the community is shaped by the community's ideational relation to the state and to the radical sections of society (the ideational context). For example, in some contexts, families may face extensive normative pressure from the community not to accept the former combatant because they have deradicalised. Therefore, deradicalisation programs would need to take this context into account to ensure they are successful. Deradicalisation programmes which promote ideological change, the renunciation of violence, and successful re-integration into 'mainstream society' through family support are significant factors in shaping whether or not the programmes will be successful, however so is the ideational context which encompasses the relationship between the former combatant and the community they are re-integrated into. Thus in some cases re-integration and deradicalisation can be in tension with the goals of recidivism reduction. By seeking to conceptualise how re-integration into different social contexts impinges on the effectiveness of deradicalisation. This paper provides a complementary framework to assessing effectiveness which circumvents the problems inherent in using recidivism as a measure.

Security Agencies

1. Nigeria Police Force

The Nigeria Police (NP) formerly The Nigeria Police Force (NPF) is the principal law enforcement agency in Nigeria. The Nigeria Police (NP) is designated by Section 194 of the 1979 Constitution as the National Police of Nigeria with exclusive jurisdiction throughout the country. Constitutional provision also exists, however, for the establishment of separate NPF branches "forming part of the armed forces of the Federation or for their protection of harbours, waterways, railways and airfields." One such branch, the Port Security Police.

National Intelligence Agency

National Intelligence Agency (NIA) is a Nigerian government division tasked with overseeing foreign intelligence and counter-intelligence operations.

Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps

Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) is a para-military institution that was established in May 1967 by the Federal Republic of Nigeria, with the act of National Assembly. The primary function of the NSCDC is to protect lives and properties in conjunction with Nigeria Police. One of the crucial functions of the Corps is to protect pipelines from vandalism. The agency also involves in crisis resolutions.

National Drug Law Enforcement Agency

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) is a Federal agency in Nigeria charged with eliminating the growing, processing, manufacturing, selling, exporting, and trafficking of hard drugs. The agency was established by Decree Number 48 of January 1990. The NDLEA is present in international airports, seaports and border crossing. It tries to eradicate cannabis by destroying plantings. The NDLEA also targets the leaders of narcotics and money laundering organizations

Nigerian Prisons Service (NPS)

The Nigerian Prisons Service (NPS) is a government agency of Nigeria which operates prisons. The agency has its headquarters in Abuja, and it is under the supervision of the Ministry of Interior.

Role of Security Agencies in Deradicalisation Strategies in Nigeria

While security agencies are mainly responsible for counter-terrorism characterized with use of force, arrest, detention prosecution and imprisonment, they can also make a positive contribution toward deradicalisation. One of the most effective ways is through “community policing” a decade-old approach with many applications that has recently been adapted to countering violent extremism. Simply put, the idea is that policing becomes easier, and communities safer, if police forces are not seen as distant authority figures who only turn up when there is trouble, but are part of the communities they serve, build relationships, and gain people’s trust, especially among communities which have traditionally been hard to reach or suspicious of state authority. The hopes for results are increased community resilience, more cooperation, and the ability to de-escalate tensions and avoid vicious cycles of polarization, for example in the aftermath of terrorist attacks or hate crimes. In practice, community policing boils down to three core principles. The first is an emphasis on partnerships with community organizations and leaders, including youth, women, religious and ethnic minority groups, as well as business and other civil society organizations, which police should engage and seek to build honest, long term relationships with. The second is problem-solving, which means that police should listen to communities and be responsive to their concerns, even when they are not high on its own list of priorities. Finally, community policing is meant to be proactive and preventive because it seeks to educate and mobilize people before a problem has festered or turned into criminal activity. Studies have shown that community policing can be effective in increasing people’s trust in the police. Its application to countering violent extremism is important and positive,

though police forces should never be the only – or main – vehicle through which counter-radicalization programs are delivered to communities. Furthermore, when police forces are seen as “policing thought,” this can undermine their authority and lead to allegations that counter-radicalization is, effectively, a “spying programme.” Indeed, building trusting and co-operative relationships with communities is not something that police forces should do with the sole – or immediate - expectation of increasing tip-offs or countering violent radicalization, but for its own sake.²²

Conclusion

The paper concludes that there is no doubt that devising different strategies towards deradicalisation in Nigeria or counter-radicalization or anti radicalization is a task that should not be taken lightly. The paper also tried to outline the benefits that could be achieved from diversifying strategies that are aimed at countering the phenomenon of "terrorism" and its associated tactics and processes more especially on the role to be played by the security agencies by slowing down other counter terrorism measures and pursuing community police relation tactics such as using the stake holders in the community to douse extremism and radical ideas behaviours and other tendencies.

Recommendations

1. There should be integrated policies and programs among security agencies for tackling deradicalisation
2. There should be synergy among the Nigerian security agencies on training and exchange of ideas on counter terrorism measures
3. The responsibility for deradicalisation strategies should not be left for security agencies alone. It should be seen as a collective responsibility whereby all the stakeholders must come together to take part in deradicalisation programmes acting in an overt and transparent manner.
4. Security agencies should engage in community policing than the use of force in deradicalisation strategies among the youth in Nigeria.
5. Nigerian government should introduce more educational and economic policies aimed at disengaging the youth from extremism and radicalization.

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A Survey of the Qur'ānic Virtues in the Life of Hashir Abdulsalam towards Deradicalization of Nigerian Young Muslim Scholars

Mohammed Mustapha Kannike

Introduction

“Verily, this Qur’ān does guide to that which is most right and gives the glad tidings to the believers who work deeds of righteousness, that they shall have a magnificent reward”.¹The Qur’ān advocates many virtues that shape one’s intellectual and spiritual journey to Allah; these virtues also enable adherents to be more tolerant as they consider themselves vicegerent of Allah. Apparently, in every generation, Allah raises certain individuals and makes them virtues personified. For instance in *Surah Maryam* (Qur’ān 19), four prophets are identified with respective virtuous attributes. Ibrahim is described as “a man of truth, a prophet”². In the case of Prophet Musa, it is said that “he was specially chosen and he was a Messenger and Prophet,”³ while in respect of Prophet Ismā’il, “he was (strictly) true to what he promised, and he was a messenger and prophet”⁴ and concerning the virtues in Idrīs, Allah says that, “he was a man of truth (and sincerity) and a prophet”⁵. Allah caps it up by confirming in *Surah al-Qalam*, to Prophet Muhammad, the first receiver of the Qur’ānic information that: “And surely you have sublime morals.”⁶ Unfortunately, it appears that some Muslim youth do not give due consideration to these virtues.

This paper maintains that failure of the youth of the present generation, especially the Muslims, to uphold the virtues of the Qur’ān, as exemplified by the prophets of Allah and their followers, has greatly influenced the rate of radicalization in our society. Radicalization is a process by which an individual, or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideals and aspirations that reject or undermine the *status quo* or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of a nation.⁷ It behooves a Muslim society to apply the methodology of the Qur’ān by identifying in the present generation individuals who represent the virtues of the Qur’ān so that the younger generations take these individuals as role models and learn from them thereby de-radicalising the radicals and establishing peace and progress.

The study wishes to assert that the life of late Prof. Hashir AbdulSalam of University of Ilorin, Ilorin is one that was full of numerous virtues traceable to the Glorious Qur’ān and worthy of emulation by the young Muslims especially in an effort to deradicalise the youth. The paper specifically attempts not only to give reports of the worthy life of Hashir AbdulSalam as gathered from different categories of people

but also to demonstrate how correlated the gathered reports are with the virtues preached in the Qur'ān, particularly the virtues needed for young scholars' de-radicalisation. To achieve this target, between this introduction and the conclusion, there are four relevant sections: i. a biography of Prof. Hashir Abdul Salam, ii. a survey on causes and effects of youth radicalisation, iii. a general survey of the Qur'ānic virtues and iv. a correlation of the virtues with the life of Prof. Hashir Abdul Salam.

Biography of Prof. Hashir Abdul Salam

Late Prof. Hashir Adekanmi Abdul Salam was born in Otan-Ayegbaju, Osun State in the South-west of Nigeria in 1953. He studied the Qur'ān under the tutelage of his brother Shaykh Sulaiman in Otan-Ayegbaju. He attended Nawair-ud-deen Primary School where he obtained First School Leaving Certificate. He thereafter attended El-Mahad Al-Azhari Arabic School, Ilorin, Kwara State between 1967 and 1972 where he acquired knowledge of Arabic and Islamic Studies certificates equivalent to Junior and Senior Secondary School levels. This was under the tutelage of the first *Mufty* of Ilorin and great teacher, Shaykh Muhammad Kamalud-deen Habeebullahi Al-Adaby.⁸ Prof. Abdul Salam advanced his educational career at the Abdullahi Bayero College, Kano (an affiliate of Ahmad Bello University, Zaria) where he met and became friend with Prof. Badmas Lanre Yusuf in 1976 and both obtained Diploma Certificate in Arabic, Hausa and Islamic Studies in 1979.⁹ Prof. Abdul Salam pursued a number of degrees in Islamic Studies at the University of Ilorin between 1979 and 1982, between 1984 and 1985 and between 1987 and 1997. He obtained Bachelor of Arts in 1982, Master of Arts in 1985 and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in 1998.¹⁰ He was closely bounded with his associates throughout these stages of career, not only due to his educational prowess but also his humility, piety and sense of fellow feeling.¹¹

His started work from Owo in Ondo State where he served as a teacher in the famous *Adabiyyah* College under the Proprietorship of the late Second Mufti of Ilorin, Shaykh Khidir Salaudeen Apaokagi. He was seconded to Akure to lead Jum'at prayer in the Akure Central Mosque for many years until after the resolution of the crises within the stakeholders. He worked as a lecturer at Kwara State College of Technology (Now KWARAPOLY) between 1982 and 1983. He was the Chairman, Muslim Students' (MSSN), Kwara State Chapter from 1983 to 1992. He served as the Secretary-General, National Council of Muslim Youth Organisations (NACOMYO), Ilorin, from 1988 to 1992 while he served as the Treasurer, NACOMYO, Kwara State Chapter from 1992 to 1996.¹² He joined Kwara State Judiciary in 1983 as an Area Court judge and he was a forthright and upright jurist till 1993 before he moved to Kwara State College of Arabic and Islamic Legal Studies in that year and he was till 1995. While at the College, he was a lecturer and Dean of the School of *Shari'ah* and Common Law. In 1995, the University of Ilorin employed him as an Assistant Lecturer. It was from there he rose through ranks and files to become a professor of Islamic Studies in 2017¹³. While in the service of the University, Prof. Abdul Salam occupied many positions both in the University and

public places some of which are: Secretary-General, Hilal Islamic Centre, Ilorin, Nigeria from 1999 till his death; Chairman, Muslim Community High School, Otan-Ayegbaju from 1999 till his death; Vice-Chairman, Otan-Ayegbaju Progressive Union from 2002 to 2004; Treasurer, Journal of Arabic and Religious Studies, University of Ilorin from 2003 to 2007; Chief Moderator, IJMB, ABU Zaria from 2005 till his death; Acting Head of Department of Religions, University of Ilorin from 2008 to 2010; Sub-Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Ilorin from 2011 to 2013; and Acting Head of Department of Religions, University of Ilorin, from 2015 till his death.¹⁴

His brilliance and academic erudition have been clearly noted right from the time he was undergoing his *'Idādiyyah* at Al-Azhary School, Ilorin. His ingenuity was prominent among his peers, the main reason why he was often chosen to lead other students of the School in the school rhymes; no one would doubt his retentive memory. He outshone his fellow students in many Arabic subjects considered to be extremely difficult, such as Arabic Syntax and Morphology. His classmates at university levels also testify to this fact.¹⁵ He left conspicuous legacies in his many products whose projects he dutifully supervised at first degree, second degree and Ph.D. levels. He credited to himself more than thirty articles in national and international journals, articles accepted for publication, edited conference proceedings, books and chapters in books. His articles ranged from different perspectives on Islamic Family Law, Islam and Natural Science, Islam and Culture, Islamic Economic Principles, Comparative Religion, Human Rights, Oppression and Terrorism, varieties of themes on *Da'wah* to Critical Issues on Islamic Jurisprudence.¹⁶

The *da'wah* and humanitarian services of Prof. Hashir AbdulSalam was great and exceptional. He was widely distinguished as an Islamic teacher and preacher who spent most part of his life performing these two noble assignments. He was widely known and called "Mallam Hashir", taking after his intimate colleague, Prof. Abdul-Ganiyy Abdus-Salam Oladosu, who usually addressed him as "Mallam Hashir." He attended many religious gatherings such as symposia, conferences and workshops within Nigeria and abroad.¹⁷ Prof. AbdulSalam was a devoted Muslim, a solid scholar who practised what he knew, a family man in the Islamic sense of the word, a proud father, humane grandfather and guardian who sponsored countless number of members of the extended family to obtain university or polytechnic education.¹⁸ Late Prof. Hashir AbdulSalam died on Friday, July 27, 2018. He was survived by wives, children and grandchildren. May Allah admit him into Jannat Al-firdaws and uphold his family after his demise. His death compelled many pens to instantly spring into the action they are meant for. It suffices to quote here, his closest friend and colleague in the Department of Religious, University of Ilorin, Prof. B. O. Yusuf:

Mallam Hashir was too humble, pious and devoted, he was too righteous, generous and too caring to succumb to mere sickness and bow finally to death but the divine verdict has always been. His demise underscores the transient nature of our existence. However,

death has succeeded only in immortalising him because of the preciousness of mark he left on the sand of time as a humble servant of Allah and a friend to all people – rich and poor, old and young as well as high and low. Born in the city of Otan-Ayegbaju in Osun State, Mallam Hashir through learning, *da'wah* work and uncommon character died as a global personality. From the totality of what has been said, so far, it can be concluded that even though he left us to go and rest in al-jannah, Professor Mallam Hashir lives on in our minds.¹⁹

Causes and Effects of Youth Radicalisation

From ISIS to Boko Haram to Al-Shabab, including other radical organizations in the Muslim world, such as *Harakat al-Shabaab* and Al-Qaeda, the Islamic world is facing a multitude challenges emanating from radicalism, spearheaded by these bodies and that poses an increasing threat to the world peace and security. The degree to which they become more transnational also raises concern for the international community. And as more and more youth — primarily Muslims — flock to join these radical groups, it becomes crucial to understand the background of those youth who seek to join and why, and what makes these groups of radicals appeal to them. Surveys, interviews, and focus groups conducted in Nigeria in 2013 suggest that poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, and weak family structures make or contribute to making young men vulnerable to radicalisation. Itinerant preachers capitalize on the situation by preaching an extreme version of religious teachings and conveying a narrative of the government as weak and corrupt. Armed groups such as Boko Haram can then recruit and train youth for activities ranging from errand running to suicide bombings.²⁰

While causes of different cases of youth radicalisation may be different, intra-religious conflict within Islam is undeniably in the backdrop of extremist ideologies, fueling individuals to kill other Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Though, not the same in all cases, this study itemizes five of the common demands and wishes that prompted Muslim youth into involvement in radicalisation:

i. Some Muslim youth seek revenge

The anger over the condition that some youth find themselves made them to be violent and therefore seek revenge against the authority that is alleged not to have done enough to save the situation. Although separating the anger that they felt before joining radical group from the anger generated by extremist rhetoric was occasionally difficult, it was clear in nearly 30 percent of the cases that young men had sought radicalisation because they were angry. In many ways, the revenge seeker is similar to someone who joins a local movement, whether political or militant, to try to change the political conditions he lives in. The major difference is that the revenge seeker who becomes a major fighter must elevate his anger to perceive a slight that he has never personally or physically experienced. To satisfy his need for revenge, he must rage against something that he has only vicariously experienced. The angry youth who fell into the revenge seekers' category often showed signs of an inflated sense of self-worth. They believed that only they could

set the world aright. Extremist group's propaganda fuels the youth's anger and channels it toward the country government and the United States, giving the youth both purpose and direction. Since the revenge seeker is most attracted to such groups their messages of intent to lash out against the West, which he sees as responsible for the ills of the Muslim community, he has been shown such ways to vent his anger.²¹

ii. Some Muslim youth seek status

These are the youth looking for recognition and are referred to as status seekers. The status seeker sees a world that does not understand or appreciate him as he perceives himself. His frustration stems from unrealized expectations that he will be successful in his new home and recognized by his community. This is especially prevalent in recent immigrants looking for work, and in international college students looking to assimilate in a foreign country. They are often not shown the kind of respect that they got before leaving their home countries. Take, for example, the young Nigerian who struggled to obtain all the required degrees but to no avail or one who travels to Europe in search of better wages or a better life. When he arrives, he finds only menial work, though the pay is much greater than in his home country. He dutifully sends money home, all the while seething over the fact that he is restricted to certain sections of town or certain jobs by a society that is interested in him only as cheap labour. Young men in these situations feel frustrated and believe that they have value and abilities and a worth to the world that their position in society does not reflect.²²

iii. Some Muslim youth seek identity

This refers to the youth who are looking for a place to belong; they are considered as identity seekers. Unlike the status seeker, who wants to stand out from the masses, the identity seeker is more concerned with assimilating into a defining organisation. Being part of something is the principal motivation for the identity seeker. The strength and stability of one's personality rests on the formation of a satisfying and functioning identity, and the motivation to define oneself by the group identity is strong and, indeed, almost universal among developing youth. It draws young people to street gangs and chess clubs, to marching bands and insurgent groups. This springs from the innate need to internalize the behaviour, mores, and attitudes of a social grouping. For identity seekers, radical group is more than just a legend—it is the best possible group to join. As with other highly exclusive groups, from fraternal orders to religious cults, radicalisation' ideology demands strict obedience to a state of mind and prescribes how members should think, feel, and behave. The behavioral framework explains the culture of suicide and violence that exists within the groups' cell. Violence and death become the norm. Anyone who rejects violence is cast out by the group and loses the positive benefits and defining principles that came from belonging.²³

iv. Some Muslim youth seek Religion through Extremism

When infected by religious extremism, Muslim youth radicalisation becomes more violent, resistant to settlement, difficult to defeat, and likely to lash out and spread.

The jihadist scholars' appeal to the youth's insurgents is their messages, resonant among Muslims, that their faith and their homelands are under attack by the West, interpreting related portion of the Qur'ān, and that they should therefore join the larger cause. Because their main targets are what they believe to be apostate governments — Western “proxies” — jihadists pounce youth radicalisation as strategic opportunities.²⁴ When these governments depend on Western military forces to survive, radicalisation can appeal not only to popular grievances but also to popular revulsion against foreign “infidel” forces. The insurgents believe that heroic defensive measures are needed to motivate suicide bombers, a virtually unstoppable weapon.

v. Some Muslim youth seek adventure

Adventure or thrill seekers represent the smallest percentage of those studied, accounting for less than 5 percent of the sample. They also represent a very distinct motivation from the other four. The thrill seeker is filled with energy and drive. He wants to prove his manhood by accomplishing an arduous task or surviving a harrowing adventure. Bored or unchallenged at home, he looks for the next trial or newest adventure. Often from a middle- or upper-middle-class family, he has no interest in the family business or what he perceives as the mundane life on his horizon. The adventure seeker is often attracted to violent video games and the fanciful tales of returning fighters. He is most impressed by the images of glory and adventure portrayed by insurgents' propaganda. For the thrill seeker, radicalism is a horror action brand that promises spectacular violence and unimaginable glory. The thrill seeker is also the most likely to quit the movement if the reality fails to live up to the legend or he is not challenged.²⁵

General Survey of the Qur'ānic Virtues

There is a fairly huge variance between believing that the Glorious Qur'ān is the word of the Almighty Allah, which was revealed to the heart of the Prophet Muhammad through Angel Jibril, and feeling that this Qur'ān is perfect source of virtues strongly related to our daily life. The Qur'ān is undoubtedly the code for the Muslims to live a virtuous and rewarding life. The Qur'ān is the book of guidance for all mankind; following it is the obedience to the commandments of Allah in this life and to gain salvation in the hereafter. It is the scheme of life for every Muslim and also the “constitution” of the Almighty Allah on Earth. Everyone can easily understand the teachings of the Qur'ān and follow the explanation of the Prophet Muhammad. This is assured by the Almighty Allah in the Glorious Qur'ān: “On no soul does Allah place a burden greater than it can bear.”²⁶

This explains the opinion that says “applicability of the rules contained in the Qur'ān should not be difficult once one is willing and has precise understanding of such rules.”²⁷ When we read the Qur'ān we come across numerous virtues regarding all aspects of life: political, social, economic, ethical, marital, and many others. We also find instructions that provide us with all the details needed to perform certain acts according to the teachings of Allah. In the Qur'ān, Allah says: “Indeed, there has come to you light and a clear book from Allah; with it Allah guides him who

follows His pleasure into the ways of safety and brings them out of utter darkness into light by His will and guides them to the right path.”²⁸

The Qur’ān gives a detailed account of virtues prescribed for human nature.²⁹ All the corruption and indecent personality traits of unbelievers are mentioned as well as the attributes and virtues of believers.³⁰ Below are some of the virtues contained in the Glorious Qur’ān that we all should implement in our daily life. The following Qur’ānic verses are among the best sources of virtues that guide to the best way of life capable of deradicalising the young Muslim scholars:

The Qur’ān teaches us to give respect and honour to all human beings irrespective of their religion, color, race, sex, language, status, property, birth, profession and so on.

We have honoured the sons of Adam; provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure; and conferred on them special favours, above a great part of our creation(Qur’ān,17:70).³¹

One should talk straight without any ambiguity:

O ye who believe! Fear Allah, and [always] say a word directed to the Right (*Qur’ān, 33:70*).

Choose the best words to speak and say them in the best possible way:

And remember We took a covenant from the Children of Israel [to this effect]: Worship none but Allah; treat with kindness your parents and kindred, and orphans and those in need; speak fair to the people; be steadfast in prayer; and practise regular charity. Then did ye turn back, except a few among you, and ye backslide [even now] (*Qur’ān,2:83*).

Speak politely while keeping the voice low:

For those who believe and do righteous deeds are Gardens as hospitable homes, for their [good] deeds (*Qur’ān,31:19*).

Always speak the truth:

Such [is the Pilgrimage]: whoever honours the sacred rites of Allah, for him it is good in the Sight of his Lord. Lawful to you [for food in Pilgrimage] are cattle, except those mentioned to you [as exception]: but shun the abomination of idols, and shun the word that is false(Qur’ān,22:30):

Do not confound truth with falsehood:

And cover not Truth with falsehood, nor conceal the Truth when ye know [what it is] (Qur’ān, 2:42).

Always say what is in your heart:

And the Hypocrites also. These were told: "Come, fight in the way of Allah, or [at least] drive [The foe from your city]." They said: "Had we known how to fight, we should certainly have followed you." They were that day nearer to Unbelief than to Faith, saying with their lips what was not in their hearts but Allah hath full knowledge of all they conceal (Qur'ān, 3:167).

Always be just in your opinion, even if it is against a relative:

And come not nigh to the orphan's property, except to improve it, until he attains the age of full strength; give measure and weight with [full] justice; - no burden do We place on any soul, but that which it can bear; - whenever ye speak, speak justly, even if a near relative is concerned; and fulfill the covenant of Allah: thus doth He command you, that ye may remember (*Qur'ān*, 6:152).

Do not be arrogant with people:

And swell not thy cheek [for pride] at men, nor walk in insolence through the earth; for Allah loveth not any arrogant boaster (Qur'ān, 31:18).

Walk with humility and sedateness:

And the servants of [Allah] Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth in humility, and when the ignorant address them, they say, "Peace!" (Qur'ān, 25:63).

If you do not have complete knowledge about anything, it is better to keep your mouth shut:

Behold, ye received it on your tongues, and said out of your mouths things of which ye had no knowledge; and ye thought it to be a light matter, while it was most serious in the sight of Allah (Qur'ān, 24:15).

Be moderate in thy pace:

And be moderate in thy pace, and lower thy voice; for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of the ass (Qur'ān, 31:19).

If, unintentionally, any misconduct occurs by you, then correct yourself fast:

Those who spend [freely], whether in prosperity, or in adversity; who restrain anger, and pardon [all] men; for Allah loves those who do good (Qur'ān, 3:134).

Ascertain the truth of any news, lest you smite someone in ignorance:

O ye who believe! If a wicked person comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth, lest ye harm people unwittingly and afterwards become full of repentance for what ye have done (Qur'ān,49:6).

Do not be jealous of those who are blessed:

Or do they envy mankind for what Allah hath given them of his bounty? But We had already given the people of Ibrahim the Book and Wisdom, and conferred upon them a great kingdom (Qur'ān, 4:54).

Eat and drink in moderation:

O Children of Adam! Wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer: eat and drink: But waste not by excess, for Allah loveth not the wasters (Qur'ān, 7:31).

Fulfill promises and commitments:

Come not nigh to the orphan's property except to improve it, until heattains the age of full strength; and fulfil [every] engagement, for [every] engagement will be enquired into [on the Day of Reckoning] (Qur'ān, 17:34).

Dress-up in agreeable attire and adorn yourself with an exquisite character from inside out:

O ye Children of Adam! We have bestowed raiment upon you to cover your shame, as well as to be an adornment to you. But the raiment of righteousness, that is the best. Such are among the Signs of Allah, that they may receive admonition! (Qur'ān,7:26).

When you enter your own home or somebody else, compliment the inmates:

It is no fault in the blind nor in one born lame, nor in one afflicted with illness, nor in yourselves, that ye should eat in your own houses, or those of your fathers, or your mothers, or your brothers, or your sisters, or your father's brothers or your father's sisters, or your mother's brothers, or your mother's sisters, or in houses of which the keys are in your possession, or in the house of a sincere friend of yours: there is no blame on you, whether ye eat in company or separately. But if ye enter houses, salute each other - a greeting of blessing and purity as from Allah. Thus does Allah make clear the signs to you: that ye may understand (Qur'ān, 24:61).

Be nice to people who work under your care:

Not those who spend of their substance, to be seen of men, but have no faith in Allah and the Last Day: If any take the Evil One for their intimate, what a dreadful intimate he is!(Qur'ān, 4:36).

Do not follow up with what you have given to others to afflict them with reminders of your generosity:

Those who spend their substance in the cause of Allah, and follow not up their gifts with reminders of their generosity or with injury, for them their reward is with their Lord: on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve (Qur'ān, 2:262).

Do not backbite about one another and also not spy upon one another:

O ye who believe! Avoid suspicion as much [as possible]: for suspicion in some cases is a sin: And spy not on each other behind their backs. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Nay, ye would abhor it ... But fear Allah: For Allah is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful (Qur'ān, 49:12).

Do not insult others by nicknames:

O ye who believe! Let not some men among you laugh at others: It may be that the [latter] are better than the [former]: Nor let some women laugh at others: It may be that the [latter] are better than the [former]: Nor defame nor be sarcastic to each other, nor call each other by [offensive] nicknames: Illseeming is a name connoting wickedness, [to be used of one] after he has believed: And those who do not desist are [indeed] doing wrong (Qur'ān, 49:11).

Correlation of the Virtues with the Life of Professor Hashir AbdulSalam

It has been indicated earlier that the death of the late teacher is one that prompted many associates, colleagues, friends, neighbours, students and others who one time or another had contact with him during his lifetime, to begin showering encomium on him by writing and posting through different media certain virtues that they knew about him. Initially, a reader may consider it as mere rhetoric but considering the number and calibre of writers of closely related reports, it becomes imperative to act in compliance with the hint in the Qur'ān:

وما شهدنا إلا بما علمنا وما كنا للغيب حافظين

We bear witness only to what we know, and we could not well guard against the unseen!³²

A hadith of the Prophet also states:

عن عبد الله بن عمر قال رسول الله ﷺ اذكروا محاسن موتاكم وكفوا عن مساوئهم (سنن الترمذی)

From Abdullah bn 'Umar, The Messenger of Allah, May the Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him said: Mention the

good things about your dead ones and resist from (mentioning) their evils.³³

In the light of this, below is a selection of few of the reports gathered in respect of Prof. Hashir AbdulSalam from different categories of people and incidentally, each report correlates with virtues of the Qur'ān as stated above. More so, the above Hadith encourages spreading good virtues of the dead for reasons that include making the living ones learn from the dead. It is hopeful therefore that the younger generation of Muslim scholars would be de-radicalise by reading this piece.

In correlation with Qur'ān, 17 verse 70, and 4 verse 54 as stated above, Prof. Hashir AbdulSalam was exemplary in according due respect to people and holding them in high esteem as this earned him a natural and unquantifiable love among his colleagues at work and beyond. Prof. AbdulSalam was extraordinarily tolerant, accommodating and hospitable in nature to the extent that he related with people of different ages, backgrounds and ideology, an act that earned him love, trust and affection of Muslims and non-Muslims among his co-workers. His kindness was extended to his students whom he always encouraged to continue enduring until they achieve success in life.³⁴

Considering the virtues in Qur'ān 2 verse 262 and 49 verse 11, a correlation is glaring with the report presented here. "During our years as students under Prof. Hashir AbdulSalam, he suffered for us; we made him leave his seat, moving from one office to another to solve our problems." The report discloses that no matter the gravity of a student's problem in the Department, Mallam Hashir would not rest until the hurdles are removed. "Just walk in to his office, tell him your problem, if it is caused by you, he would scold you and call you names like "gbekude" then he would become restless until your problem is solved. I have so many personal testimonies and some of the people I know."³⁵

Adedimeji Mahfouz, an Associate Professor with variety of relationship with the late sage gives a brief description which displays close correlation with the virtues in Qur'ān 2 verse 83 and 3 verse 134. According to Adedimeji, "Prof. AbdulSalam lived a life defined by religious devotion, impeccable simplicity and infectious humility. As a teacher, neighbour and friend, Prof. Abdulsalaam was among the rarest of his kind in interpersonal relationship and excellent character. He was an epitome of everything commendable and admirable as a Qur'anic personality."³⁶

A comparison between the remarks of AbdulHameed B. Y and virtues contained in Qur'ān 33 verse 70 and 31 verse 19 shows a perfect correlations. AbdulHameed, who was a colleague with his late teacher in the same Department, disclosed that Prof. AbdulSalam was a peace ambassador. He opines that this was not unconnected with his surname, AbdulSalam which means the servant of the Lord of Peace. To a larger extent, this name had impact on him. He was always for peace. He talked peace, walked peace, and worked for peace. It was almost impossible to see Prof. Hashir in a scuffle or even in a serious disagreement with a fellow human being, male or

female, young or old, rude or respectful. He was a gentle man to the core. The goodness in him was part of his life. He could not do or live without being good. In fact, his goodness was blind as male and female, young and old, Muslims and Christians, far and near, all benefited from his good gestures. He was ready to even solve other people's problem, though he might also have some problem to attend to personally.³⁷

The virtues of unity and certain indices that help to maintain unity as taught in Qur'ān 22 verse 30; 49 verse 6 and 49 verse 12 are perfectly reported in the life of the late Scholar. Prof. Hashir was an advocate of unity. He was never tribalistic or discriminatory in his relationship with fellow scholars. Scholars in this part of the world have studied in different schools and institutions established by notable scholars in the Yorubaland. For instance, many studied in the Adabiyah School established by the late first Mufti of Ilorin Shaykh Kamaldeen al-Adaby, in the Markaz established by the late sage Adam Abdullah al-Ilory, and in the Mokondoro School established by Shaykh Yusuf Agbaji. Very often, students of these sincere scholars of blessed memory tend to be discriminatory as they would not respect scholars other than those who taught them, neither would they relate well with those who studied elsewhere other than their colleagues. This attitude has led to unnecessary rivalry between scholars especially in Ilorin (where they all originated). But our late Prof. Hashir AbdulSalam was not like that. Though he studied at al-Ma'had al-Adabiy, under the tutelage of Shaykh Kamaldeen, he was a friend to many scholars in the Markazi and Monkondoro circles. He was an intimate friend of Prof. Badmas Yusuf who is a prominent Markazi alumnus. Their friendship spanned over four decades. Not only did he establish good relationship with him and people like him, he also facilitated unity between Adabiyah and Markaziyyah alumni.³⁸

The virtues in Qur'ān 3 verse 167; 31 verse 18 and 24 verse 61 came to the fore during the condolences. While the death of Prof. Hashir AbdulSalam is painful, many of his associates became consoled with his good character which many people, male and female, young and old, Muslim and non-Muslim, from far and near have been attesting to. He was a paragon of humility and simplicity. He would respect any person that came his way irrespective of their status! Despite his knowledge and position, he would allow students to express themselves in the lecture room or in his office. You did not need to know him before approaching him on any academic matter, especially admission. The door of his office was always open to all. Most times, his office would be full of students seeking attention on one academic problem or the other. His smiling face and soft words are sufficient to make one feel cool even before the actual problem is addressed. His simplicity and ascetic approach to life is legendary. He was never arrogant nor materialistic. His elevation to the position of professor never changed his character and how he related with the people. Such was a paragon of Good Character.³⁹

The correlation is obvious between the virtues in Qur'ān 6 verse 152 and 17 verse 34 with what some of the ex-students narrated about the late professor. Kolawole Kamardeen, a graduate of Islamic Studies in 2003 whose result was

inexplicably not released for a very long time that he missed batches of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) and it was hard to trace where the problem emanated, narrated the unquantifiable moral assistance and spiritual guidance that he received for Prof. Hashir AbdulSalam. In the same vein, Abubakar U. S. Lanre remarks that the professor “was indeed humble and always ready to assist and lead you to solve any problem. He had once left his food to follow a student to solve a problem. It is only Allah that will reward him.”⁴⁰

Conclusion

Five out of several needs of the radicalised youth that made them engage in radicalisation had been listed. Some of the youth seek revenge, some of them seek status, some seek identity, some others seek adventure while others seek religion through extremism. In each of these cases the society must seek solution to de-radicalise the youth to avoid the obvious consequences.

In Nigeria, the steps towards curtailing Muslim youth involvement in radicalisation should include reorientation programs that inculcate the value of peaceful coexistence. Peace education will help youth better appreciate the value of peace, making it more difficult for extremists to use them to foment trouble. According to a recommendation, “peace education should be integrated in the educational curriculum of schools, from primary to tertiary education.”⁴¹ Youth radicalisation and insidious ideologies that underpin violent extremism also can be curbed through enlightenment programmes delivered through radio, television, jingles, and group discussions.

Interestingly, Muslims are the custodians of the Qur’ān whose virtues are curative enough to solve all forms of societal problems. In other words, “utilizing the Qur’ān, stabilizesthe society.”⁴² The Qur’an has the characteristics of being a revelation which contains the rules of engagement between humankind and the Creator. It also contains guidelines on how man should live in the society.⁴³ These are generally referred to as virtues of the Qur’ān.

More importantly, it has been established in this study that certain individuals who imbibe adequately the virtues of the Qur’ān should be mentioned to the youth as role models. The Muslim scholars among these individuals, the category which Professor Hashir A. AbdulSalam belonged, should be cited as examples to younger generation of Muslim scholars to avoid further radicalisation in the society and for the existing one, this will help in the process of de-radicalisation.

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Religious Deradicalisation: A Panacea to Religious Crises in Nigeria

Shehu Zubairu

Introduction

Radicalization refers to the process of supporting or engaging in activities deemed (by others) as in violation of important social norms (e.g. the killing of civilians). Nigeria is religiously pluralistic and the adherents of these religions are often hostile to one another as a result of religious radicalism. That means going to extreme, extending far beyond the norm of the greatest severity, and immoderate expedient. An extremist advocates or resorts to extreme measures in religion or politics. It can manifest in different dimensions such as psychological, social, political, economic and religious. It is found almost in all religions although for some the problem is more apparent.

Religious radicalism manifests itself through criminal acts such as killing, kidnapping and other forms of attack. The present study gives an overview of religious radicalism, reality and extremist tendencies in Christianity and Islam that jeopardize peaceful and harmonious life in contemporary Nigeria. The paper discusses the role of Nigerian religious leaders in monitoring and curbing religious radicalism movements.

Causes of Religious Radicalism

Many factors are responsible for religious radicalism in Nigeria. However, it will be proper to classify these factors according to the nature of the radicalism. As already pointed out, Nigeria has experienced both intra and inter- religious radicalism. In the case of intra-religious radicalism, two major reasons can be identified. Firstly, there is ignorance or half knowledge of the true teachings of the very religion that the people involved claim to be defending. For example, if *Boko Haram* had been well informed enough in Islamic teachings; they would have realized that at no time did the Prophet (S.A.W) or his Companions attack anybody who has declared himself as a Muslim. They would have realized also that gentle persuasion is more effective in making people observe the true teaching of religion than force, as it is enjoined in the Qur'an:

Invite (mankind, O Muhammad SAW) to the Way of your Lord (i.e. Islam) with wisdom (i.e. with the Divine Inspiration and the Qur'ān) and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better. Truly, your Lord knows best who has gone astray from His Path, and He is the Best Aware of those who are guided.¹

The second reason is the economic factor as a cause of religious radicalism in Nigeria. In spite of the fact that the country is blessed with both human and natural resources, the gap between the haves and the have-nots is ever on the increase and this has led to frustration and disillusion among average Nigerians on the lower side of the economy. While many of them turn to outright criminal activities, many others turn to churches and mosques. That has also led to a proliferation of churches and mosques having extreme tendencies.

As for inter-religious radicalism, it is possible to identify many factors, among which are the following:

1. ***Lack of recognition of one another:*** some radicals among the Muslims believe that Christianity does not recognize Islam as a religion that is entitled to exist and consequently it does not recognize their (Muslims) other rights. They maintain that if there is any recognition of Islam by the Christians in Nigeria, it is simply because the Muslims have refused to be ignored.
2. ***Campaigns of hatred and blackmail:*** Both Christians and Muslims sometimes involved in campaigns of hatred against each other. This is manifested in various forms including: incitement, distortion of fact about each other, like what happened during the famous Kafanchan riot in Kaduna State, Nigeria in 1987. It was reported that one religious leader, a Reverend father, publicly misinterpreted and falsified some verses of the Qur'ān and made uncomplimentary remarks about the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) to the hearing of Muslims; which as a result of that caused serious problem in the State in March, 1987.
3. ***Extremism:*** Extremism from both sides is another important reason behind religious radicalism in Nigeria. As indicated above, most cases of radicalism are based on poor knowledge of the teaching of the religion being defended by the group involved. For instance, Rev. Audu Bako was unfair to Christianity to provoked adherents of other faiths as a means of propagating his religion.

It is worth noting that most outbreaks of inter-religious radicalism in Nigeria were between Islam and Christianity. The relationship between the two is so hostile to the extent that there is hardly any point of agreement except in the areas of recrimination and suspicion, even where there is no genuine ground for one. The mere fact that an adherent of one of the two faiths presides over affairs of the nation or headship of a parastatal not only provides room for accusation, but; also will instantly lead to the conclusion that he is using his position to Islamize or Christianize the nation even when the opposite is the case. Furthermore, the sense of threat felt by one of these two religions can be explained by the fact that both have much in common, when compared to other religions such as Judaism and Traditional Religion.

The position of Islam on religious radicalism is like other religions before it, sees religion as an ideal way of life that has to be shared with others by way of

propagation and preaching rather than forcing it on others as in the previous quotation (Qur'an 16:125). The position of Islam is informed by the fact that the place of faith is in the heart. When some desert Arabs came to the Prophet (SAW) and claimed that they were faithful, Qur'an replied:

The Bedouins say: "We believe." Say: "You believe not but you only say, We have surrendered (in Islam), for Faith has not yet entered your hearts. But if you obey Allah and His Messenger (SAW), He will not decrease anything in reward for your deeds. Verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."²

In spite of the fact that Islam had to engage in several self-defense wars at its advent, it believes in peace and peaceful co-existence. The most appropriate way to note Islam's attitude towards peace and peaceful co-existence is the way it dealt with the unbelievers during the Makkan period and also with the people of the book later in the Madinan period. In the Makkan period, there was no time anybody could be harassed or molested simply because he or she was not a Muslim or if they refused to become Muslims. Instead, Islam made it clear to the Makkan pagans that if they refused to change over from their idol worshipping; they were entitled to continue with their religion:

Say (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him) to these Mushrikūn and Kafirūn): "O Al-Kafirūn (disbelievers in Allah, in His Oneness, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Day of Resurrection, and in Al-Qadar, etc.)!. I worship not that which you worship. Nor will you worship that which I worship. And I shall not worship that which you are worshipping. Nor will you worship that which I worship. To you be your religion, and to me my religion (Islamic Monotheism)."³

In fact, Qur'an insists on kindness and justice to anybody for as long as he did not prevent Muslims from observing their faith:

Allah does not forbid you to deal justly and kindly with those who fought not against you on account of religion and did not drive you out of your homes. Verily, Allah loves those who deal with equity."⁴

As for the Madinah period, the situation was slightly different in the sense that the inhabitants of Madinah were largely "people of the Book" (otherwise known as *Ahl-al-Kitāb*) made up of Christians and Jewish. These are the people with whom Islam enjoys a degree of familiarity because they share many things in common, including common origin as demonstrated in the name given to them in the Qur'an *Ahl-al-Kitāb*. So, Islam first extended the hand of friendship to them by inviting them to dialogue as stated in the following verse:

Say (O Muhammad, SAW): "O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allah. Then, if they turn away, say: "Bear witness that we are Muslims."⁵

Islam also advises the faithful Muslims that they should not allow arguments between them and the people of the Book to lead to unpleasant situations:

And argue not with the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), unless it be in (a way) that is better (with good words and in good manner, inviting them to Islamic Monotheism with His Verses), except with such of them as do wrong, and say (to them): "We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you; our Ilah (God) and your Ilah (God) is One (i.e. Allah), and to Him we have submitted (as Muslims)."⁶

In fact, Islam singled out the Christians for special respect among other people of the Book because of what it terms as their affection for the Muslim:

Verily, you will find the strongest among men in enmity to the believers (Muslims) the Jews and those who are Al-Mushrikūn (see V.2:105), and you will find the nearest in love to the believers (Muslims) those who say: "We are Christians." That is because amongst them are priests and monks, and they are not proud.⁷

On a general note, Islam believes that recrimination of any form, be it verbal or physical particularly between two different faiths, will not bring any good. Hence, it forbids Muslims from abusing non-Muslims:

And insult not those whom they (disbelievers) worship besides Allah, lest they insult Allah wrongfully without knowledge. Thus, We have made fair seeming to each people its own doings; then to their Lord is their return and He shall then inform them of all that they used to do.⁸

In Islam, nobody should be killed without due process of law and only for offences that require capital punishment. *Jihād* involving physical combat is the only justification that can lead to the shedding of blood in Islam but it is a very long process before that could happen. This is because *Jihād* involves only self-defense, after exhausting all avenues for peaceful resolution, and after a formal declaration of war by the appropriate authority.

Role of Religious Leaders in Causing Religious Radicalism

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, leader is a "person followed by others". By this definition one can describe a leader as an "opinion leader" and in

the religious context it includes: *Imam*, Reverend, Bishop, Pastor, preacher of any religion, religious teacher of any form, and religious journalist. From the definition, one also appreciates the importance of leader in any organization as the person who determines the thinking and action of his followers. That explains why leaders are credited or held responsible for the considerable deeds of their followers.

Islam attaches importance to the position of leadership to the extent that no matter how small the number of Muslims in any given situation may be, be it on a journey or a gathering a leader must be appointed. He must be the best among them in terms of spiritual disposition and character. While he is charged with good and responsible leadership, he is also assured of absolute loyalty for as long as he is within his limit.⁹

The above explanation shows the extent to which a leader is responsible for what is going on within his organization. The leadership of the two antagonist religions in Nigeria – Islam and Christianity cannot exonerate themselves from the present situation between the followers of the two religions. Because whatever idea or impression is held by the followers of each religion, this depends on the kind of information passed down to them by their leaders.

A careful study of the relationship between the two religions shows that instead of using the areas of common interest between them to foster better understanding, the leadership of the two religions particularly the intellectuals use considerable amount of their efforts in terms of literature and sermons to incite or create sense of hatred and enmity among the followers. Many books have been written not to bring about reconciliation and understanding but in order to present “ugly side” of the other faith, even if this so-called “ugly side” may even be deliberately falsified. The scholars, though knowing quite well that only tolerance and the spirit of give and take can bring about peaceful co-existence, refuse to recognize and accept the right of other faiths to exist in the first place, and even less of giving other rights that make existence meaningful.

It is important to present to readers some of the utterances and published writings of religious intellectuals that, in one way or another, have influenced religious disharmony and at times caused violent reactions. While both sides are guilty of the offence, the level of bitterness and hatred felt by each other is the only determinant of which side is guiltier. In other words, this can be judged by the level of treats perceived towards each other.

Examples of Christian Polemics against Islam

Osman Bari quoted a Reverend Father, J. O. Odetayo who said in his book: *Battle for Nigeria: the Cross or the Crescent*: “Every Christian parent holds it a duty to tell his or her children as the Christians inform one another that:

1. Allah is the name of the chief of the pagan Arabian deities, being worshipped before Mohammed was born. The spirit called by the name would make sits worshippers violent and blood thirsty:

- II. Muslims put no value onto human lives and they are intolerant. Hence they can kill even when hired to do so;
- III. Muslims would not speak the truth with non-Muslim especially on political matter. Hence the Nigerian written constitution was always violated and election. No Islamic country is developed; figure falsification remained;
- IV. No Islamic State is independent of Muslim Empire whose Headquarters is in Saudi-Arabia.”¹⁰

Mohammad A. Ali who was born a Muslim but later converted into Christianity wrote a book entitle “My Encounter with Jesus Christ.” In chapter two on page 20, there is sub-head “The foundation of Islam”. He states:

Islam was built upon unreliable five pillars viz: Believing in the oneness of Allah and his messenger, saying five daily prayers, paying the poor due (Zakat), Pilgrimage to Mecca at least one in life, fasting during the month of Ramadan. But all these mentioned pillars are unreliable; hence they did not provide our need known as “salvation”. So, no matter how many pillars Islam or other religion has, whether five or ten pillars does not make sense to the wise.¹¹

Moshay, wrote a book that he called Anatomy of the Qur’an. The book consists of ten chapters all of which were devoted to the criticism of Islam and the Qur’an. Secondly, he made several attacks on the personality of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and he even described him as a liar. To Moshay, the fact that the word “salvation” was mentioned only ones in the Qur’an is an indication that Islam and Qur’an have nothing to do with salvation. This is in contradiction to the Bible, where the word is repeated many times in each chapter. On the whole Moshay presented the book as if he has come across some fact about the Qur’an that nobody before him is aware of.¹²

Examples of Muslim Polemics against Christianity

The above examples from the Christians are just the tip of the iceberg in view of huge amount of work that has been published. However, it is not all a one-way traffic, as Muslims have also made many uncomplimentary remarks about Christianity and they, too, have written much anti-Christian materials. This is either as a result of their frustration, that Christians have refused to appreciate the gesture of goodwill extended by Islam or because some Muslim scholars feel that the gap between the two faiths is so wide and cannot be bridged.

However, there is one fundamental difference between Christian criticism of Islam and Muslim criticism of Christianity. While Christians feel free to attack both Islam and the Muslims including Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and the concept of God from Muslim point of view, the Muslims feel constrained in attacking Jesus because of their belief that Jesus is one of the prophets of Allah and is an article of

the Islamic faith. This has reduced the scope of Muslim criticism to the Christian's interpretation of Christianity. Muslims also believe that even though Christianity is a divine religion, they contend that with the appearance of Islam, Christianity has ceased to be valid because, according to them, Islam was intended to replace Christianity.

And (remember) when Isa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), said: "O Children of Israel! I am the Messenger of Allah unto you confirming the Taurat (Torah) which came before me, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmed. But when he (Ahmed i.e. Muhammad SAW) came to them with clear proofs, they said: "This is plain magic."¹³

The following are examples of Muslims' attacks on Christianity, based on local rivalry between the two religions. The first book for discussion is Why You should Never be a Christian, written by Sanni and Amoo. It deals with fundamental issues that are dear to many Christians; some of these are:

1. **Jesus as the Son of God.** The authors criticize the Christian's belief that describes Jesus as Son of God and they maintain that it was not accepted by Jesus. In fact, Jesus referred to himself as "son of Man" in several places in the Bible. Examples of this were given as John 3:14, 12:34 and John 12:23.¹⁴
2. **Jesus as God.** The authors criticize the belief among the Christians that Jesus is god. They cite references from the Bible as well as opinion of other Christians to prove the contrary. Among the examples provided are Isaiah 43:10, Isaiah 44:8 and a quotation from the Gospel of Barnabas.¹⁵
3. **The two authors also take up the issue of whether or not Bible was inspired by God.** At the end, they conclude that it was not and if it was, the fact that many revisions of it have been carried out over the years has changed the contents of the original Bible.¹⁶

Similarly, another book is titled. Dilemma of the Faithful Christians and written by Suleiman, A. S. Like the previous examples, the author also criticizes Christianity on numerous issues, including the origin of Bible, Jesus as God and many others. As for the origin of the Bible, the author maintains that the New Testament, which contains many of Christianity's teachings, did not come into being until about 200 years after Jesus. The author also maintains that Christianity was to a universal religion as claimed by the Christian. In the words:

The fact that Jesus was sent to the Israelites alone is unmistakable. It is stated in various passages of the Bible that Jesus was sent to no other nation than Israel.¹⁷

Sulaiman also argues that the divinity of Jesus was not part of early Christian doctrine. According to him, it started much later. The original controversy,

according to him, was about the relationship between Christ and Godhead but as time went on he was seen as incarnate of God and finally God.¹⁸

These are not the only books written by Muslims as their contribution to the ongoing recrimination between Nigerian followers of the two religions. The title of these two books, like those written by Christians, are not in the spirit of dialogue or peaceful co-existence. Above all, the contents too are not between what the two authors need or must say before they could successfully preach Islam to somebody, as there are many beautiful ideals of Islam that could be cited without necessarily discrediting Christianity or other religions.

Deradicalisation

Deradicalisation is a way of changing an extremist person to the moderate way of life, be it religious, political or economical by making him/her to view things the way majority of the educated people view it; either voluntarily or by the use of force. As in the words of Hamed “deradicalisation” is the process of divorcing a person, voluntarily or otherwise, from their extreme views.¹⁹ Discussion on deradicalisation is too brief in this context.

Role of Religious Leaders in Religious Deradicalisation in Nigeria

Religious leaders (especially Muslims and Christians) are very respectable people in our country - Nigeria. They play a vital role in determining the dos and don'ts in the country; due to the support they have from different angles (their followers as well as government on the other hand). Nigerians are religious people; they will be easily convinced in anything that comes through their religious leaders. Nigerians will be able to overcome the challenge of religious radicalization and sustain the basic principles of *Sharī'ah*, freedom of worship, and other fundamental rights as enshrined in the constitution, only if they agree to work towards its achievement. This could be done by changing the direction of their preaching towards bringing out the good things in the religion for their counterparts to see and accept it willingly, rather than accusing and blackmailing other people's faith.

Conclusion

Radicalization is a reality of the contemporary world that will not disappear any time soon. Indeed, some radicals may never leave off their extreme views, but, if most can be persuaded to, and if more still can disengage from radicalism, deradicalisation programmes represent the best means of achieving such progress via soft counterterrorism. We should also know that, deradicalisation, as well as achieving significant success, is a relatively frugal and politically more palatable way of combating terrorism without relying solely on force.

Radicalization will continue to be an issue of concern for Nigerian authorities and the wider community. As shown in this paper, there are considerable challenges in identifying factors that lead individuals down the path of radicalization. While there are a number of recurring causes of radicalization and violent extremism, different

individuals have different motivations for engaging in such behaviour, making it hard to pinpoint exactly when alarm bells should sound for family, friends or authorities.

Recommendations

To put an end to religious radicalism in Nigeria, the government, groups and individuals have very important roles to play in their respective capacities. Some of these roles are as follows:

1. Government should set up a religious committee made up of religious leaders and intellectuals from the major religious groups in the country with representation from all the federal states. This committee should serve as a regulatory body for all religious activities in the country. It will also serve as an advisory body to the government and a link between various religious groups.
2. Government, through the Religious Advisory Committee should ban any kind of preaching that involve criticism, condemnation and abuse of other religions. Likewise, any book that contains criticism, condemnation or negative impression of other religion should be outlawed. It should also be possible for the leaders of each religion to sell their religion to others without doing so at the expense of the other religion.
3. When set up, the Religious Advisory Committee should embark on genuine dialogue and reconciliation aimed at bringing about the spirit of peaceful co-existence. Such dialogue should focus attention on identifying areas of disagreement so that they can be resolved or avoided. It should also identify areas of abuses such as the ones mentioned above and do away with them if possible through enabling legislation.
4. Government should encourage the teaching of genuine dialogue at all levels of education. If religious leaders teach people with all sincerity that they should tolerate and respect other religion they will certainly do. Religious leaders should learn to tolerate and respect others' faiths and accept them as part of the reality of life, to live with some things one does not necessarily like.

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The Effects of Killings in Some States of the Middle Belt on Muslim-Christian Relations in Nigeria: Deradicalisation as an Antidote

Sajo Abdullah Muhammad

Introduction

The origins of relationship between Muslims and Christians could be traced back to the time of Prophet Mohammad (SAW). The Prophet's first contact with Christians took place when he was travelling to Syria with his uncle Abu-Talib. Later, he (SAW) had meetings and dealings with several Christians and Christian groups, including Waraqa Ibn Nawfal and the Najran Christians. The agreement on the part of the Abyssinian king- Negus- to accept Muslims as immigrants in his land during the Makkan period was also a relevant point on the discussion.¹

Nigeria as a nation came into existence as a result of the British amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorates in 1914. However, it is believed that Islam has long been established in the part of the country later known as the Northern Region with the Christianity being the second major religion introduced into the Southern region by the Christian Missionaries on the eve colonial administration, and both faiths competed to win converts into their faith without serious friction between them¹. With a population of over 180 million people, Nigeria has been described by Archbishop Teissir of Algiers as "the greatest Islamo-Christian nation in the World."²

North-Central states known as Middle-Belt Region comprised Taraba, Plateau and Benue states. The Muslim – Christian relation in this region in the early years of creation of Nigeria was so cordial despite their ethnic and religious differences. According to John Ivungu and Patrick Iyoo interviewed both Tiv farmers disclosed that their parents, when they were kids, used to invite and beg Fulani Herdsmen to camp their cattle during dry season in their farm lands so as to get enough natural manure for their next farming season.

However, disputes over lands between those who claim to be indigenes and those who are seen as settlers struggling to get relevance in the local politics of these states have worsened the cordial relationship that have existed for several years. The so called farmer – Herder clashes which were said to have occurred between Muslim-Fulani herdsmen and Christian indigenous farmers were the cause of ethno-religious hostilities between the followers of those two religions in the region.³

Causes of Killings in the Middle Belt States

Intolerance

This has led to religious crises because religious adherents have failed to tolerate one another. Some believers feel that since they are predominant in a particular city, town or village, the faith of others should be subdued. The minority religious groups, on the other hand, also accuses the majority of marginalization⁴. This intolerance has led to several clashes, where many lives were lost in the areas between Muslims and Christians.

Prejudice and Hatred

Despite the fact that Muslims and Christians have lived together for a long time in these states of the Middle Belt, yet their relationship is characterized by prejudice and hatred at the official level⁵. On personal level however, they have related with one another cordially. The basis for the nature of the formal relations is unhealthy occurrences which has resulted in casualties and destruction of lives and properties on both sides. The fear that Fulanis want to dominate the areas under the pretext of grazing and were Islamizing the non-Muslim indigenes were the genesis of misunderstanding between them. Because of the hatred and prejudice, little differences which could have been settled amicably usually result in violent clashes.⁶

Activities of Militia Youths

Some Christian Youths in the Middle-Belt especially in Plateau State got radicalized and always convert socio-economic problems into unrest for religious sentiment. Whenever they have issues with Fulani-Herdsman the next thing they do is to block the main roads linking Bauchi to Jos and Jos to Abuja and start killing innocent Muslim travellers in what they call a reprisals attacks. The question to ask here is that, did Fulanis call for Islamization of Birom or Tiv Christians? What has led to this radicalization and militancy? Why Christian Youths are willing to burn, destroy, antagonize and kill? Many Christian parents have taught their children principles of forgiveness and respect for others. Pastors and community leaders have made attempts to stop these youths from perpetrating retaliatory attacks. Common sense and plain human reasoning teach against these kinds of inhuman and anti-social activities⁷.

Economic Effects of the Killings

The entire Middle Belt States are known as food basket of the nation, Benue specifically, but incessant killings and attacks produce an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty. The expectation of ethno-religious crises or farmer – herder conflicts could hardly provide ground for long term economic planning. This is more so when the focus of the attack has been either on farm produce or livestock. Nigeria's history is associated with massive destruction of economic facilities.⁸ The level of insecurity and ethno-religious crises in these states cannot promote meaningful economic growth in a situation like this. Wherever public properties and business

outfits are marked as targets for attacks, economic activities cannot be expected to flourish. All these violent activities are bound to scare foreign and local investors.

Religious Effects of the Killings

Religious tolerance and living in a peaceful co-existence between Muslims and non-Muslims, the Jews and the Christians, was part of what the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) taught his followers long ago. In the Nigeria's context, Muslims and Christians were living together peacefully over the years. Nationalists that struggled for the Nigeria's independence were combination of Muslims and Christians and both tolerated each other and lived peacefully. The senseless killings in the Middle Belt States for whatever reasons become a big threat to this long existing cordial relationship between Muslims and Christians. This attitude of killing innocent people for their religious belief is black mailing both two religions in the eyes of pagans.

Effects of the Killings on Social Security

The random killings in the Middle Belt Region, the spate of killings in the North as a whole, the boldness and the seeming inability of the security apparatus to do something about the situation is worrisome. This has instilled so much fear in the citizenry, and nowadays people in the Middle Belt Region live like prisoners even in their own homes. In these areas all social activities stand still such as football or games competitions, cultural and ceremonial religious activities. Marriages from one town to another must be under tight security.

Effects of the Killings as Threat to Democracy

Politics is a process of conflict resolution. However, the seemingly unending violence in the Middle Belt Region, which has covertly or overtly socio-economic and religious implications, would threaten the democratic processes in the region. The existence of Militia groups such as Berom, Fulani and Tiv youths are significant challenges to the political dispensation of the region. There is an urgent need by the state governments of these states to properly utilize their security in dealing with the threat to make sure the survival of the ongoing democracy is guaranteed.

Deradicalisation as an Antidote

Deradicalisation refers to preventive counter-terrorism measure aimed at having those with extreme and violent religious or political ideologies adopt more moderate and non-violent views.⁹ Worldwide, hundreds of deradicalisation programmes have sprung up. They typically consist of trained counsellors who proselytize, persuade or preach either to convince the extremists that their religious views are not founded on proper theology, treating the subject extremism as a mental health issue, or trying to nudge the extremists' value system away from violence.

Prevention, people say, is better than cure. Any attempt to prevent perennial reoccurrence of religious crises would save Nigeria from gross loss of human and

material resources.¹⁰ Despite the fact that the killings in the Middle Belt Region are purely socio-economic problems- such as land dispute, and Fulani herdsmen and Farmers clashes- but whenever such misunderstanding occurs it takes religious undertone. This is because majority of the indigenes or farmers are Christians while the settlers and the herdsmen are mostly Muslims.

The Middle-Belt fighters both Muslims and Christians are primarily reactionaries. Christians are unhappy with what they perceive to be the aggression of the Hausa/Fulani Muslims, and Muslims are unhappy because they perceive that they are being treated as second class citizens in the Region. Of course, both sides often become angry for revenge when their properties are destroyed and their friends and families are injured or killed.

Religious leaders should always preach peace. They should avoid provocative preaching and condemnation of other people's faith. They are to use comparative analysis of religion as a useful venture for de-radicalizing the extremists among their followers. The hard fact is that sincere comparative studies would promote proper understanding. With adequate knowledge of comparative religious studies, antagonistic religious issues would be avoided.¹¹ Such structured comparative analysis would succeed in de-radicalizing the extremists by making them to know that their religion is exactly saying the same thing as the other religion.

Comparison between Christianity and Islam as a Measure for Deradicalisation

Christians and Muslims are more alike than different and the following examples of the comparative analysis between the two religions can be used by the spiritual leaders of both sides to de-radicalize the ignorant extremists youths that are always thinking of violence and killing one another:

1. Jesus taught there is only one God and only God should be worshipped as taught in Deut. 6:4, Mark 12:29. Muslims also believe in this as taught in the Qur'an 4:171.
2. Jesus did not eat pork as taught in Leviticus 11:7, so also the Muslims as taught in the Qur'an 6:145.
3. Jesus greeted with the words "*As-Salāmu Alaikum*" (peace be with you) in John 20:21. Muslims also greet each other this way.
4. Jesus always said "God willing" (*Inshā Allah*). Muslims say this too before doing anything as taught in the Qur'an 18:23-24.
5. Jesus washed his face, hands and feet before praying. The Muslims do the same.
6. Jesus and other prophets of the Bible offered prayer with their head to the ground. Matthew 26:39. Muslims too do same as taught in the Qur'an 3:43.
7. Jesus had beard and wore a throb. It is *Sunnah* for Muslims to do the same.
8. Jesus followed the law and believed in all the Prophets, Matthew 5:17. Muslims to do as taught in the Qur'an 3:84 and 2:285.

9. Jesus's mother-Maryam- dressed modestly by fully covering her body and wearing a headscarf (*hijāb*) as found in Timothy 2:9, Genesis 24: 64, 65 and Corinthian 11:6. Muslim women modestly dress the same as taught in the Qur'ān 33:59.
10. Jesus and other Prophets of the Bible did fasting up to 40 days, Exodus 34:28, Daniel 10:2-6; Kings 19:8 and Matthew 4:11. Muslims do so also during the month of Ramadan. Muslims are required to fast the obligatory 30 days as mentioned in the Qur'ān 2:183.
11. Jesus taught to say "Peace to this house" when entering it, Luke 10:5, and to also greet the people in the house with "peace be unto you". Muslims do exactly what Jesus did and taught. When Muslims are to enter their homes and the homes of others, they say "*As-Salāmu alaikum*"- Peace be upon you- as taught in the Qur'ān 24:61.
12. Jesus was circumcised. Circumcision is one of the five *fitrah* in Islam. Muslim men are required to be circumcised. According to the Bible in Luke 2:21, Jesus was eight days old when he was circumcised. In Torah (the book of Moses) God stated to the Prophet Abraham that it is an "Everlasting Covenant". Genesis 17:13. In the Qur'ān 16:123 Muslims are required to follow the religion of Abraham. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: "Prophet Abraham circumcised himself".
13. Jesus spoke Aramaic (is an ancient Biblical language) and called God "*Elah*" which is pronounced the same as "Allah" in Arabic which also means God- the Supreme God Almighty. One can easily see the similarity in their pronunciation. It could be said from the above analysis that the God of Jesus is also the God of the Muslims and of all mankind and all that exist.

Findings

The findings of this paper are:-

- (i) The killings in the Middle Belt States are not carried out to promote any religion- Islam or Christianity- but were purely socio-economic and with element of politics that unfortunately took religious undertone.
- (ii) Regular and social media were two major instruments used in fuelling the conflicts. They spread a lot of lies, in their reports i.e. local media misinformed the whole world that the killers of catholic priest in Benue State were Fulani Herdsmen. There after a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) Festus Keyamo confirmed in an interview with the CORE TV that the killers were Tiv Militia youths not Fulanis. Social Media, on the other hand, was also misused as individuals often do post crises that had happened in either Rwanda or South Sudan and claim that they happen here in Nigeria.

- (iii) Reprisal attacks on innocent travellers across these states also complicated the conflicts and put fear in the minds of all Nigerians that do come to these states for whatever reason.

Recommendations

Federal government of Nigeria should ensure that:

- a. All militia youth groups and political thugs are banned and eradicated nation-wide.
- b. Muslim and Christian leaders should be engaged in de-radicalizing the extremist members with a view of changing their mind set.
- c. It sanctions all media houses that are bias in their reports that further escalate the killings.
- d. It executes severe punishment on all enemies of peace and their sponsors to serve as a deterrent to others.

Conclusion

The challenges of Muslim-Christian relations in the North Central States are to be understood within the context of Muslim – Christian relations in Nigeria as a whole. Despite the amalgamation of the North and the South in 1914 by the British colonial master, orientation of colonialism was responsible for the perpetuation of the dichotomy between the North and the South on one hand, and between the Middle-Belt groups converted to Christianity and the Muslim North on the other hand. And this dichotomy is said to have continued up till to date.

Intolerance has also led to religious crises because religious adherents have failed to tolerate one another. Some believers feel that since they are the majority in a particular city, town or village, the faith of others should be subdued. For the Muslim Youths, the Qur’ān is clear about the prohibition of killing an innocent soul and also stated that no compulsion in religion- that no man should be forced to accept Islam. The Christian youths in these areas who have been radicalized to the point of embracing violence as the answer to their problems, their desire always lie on punishing those perceived to be responsible for these crises and sending signal to Muslims that they would not tolerate their rights being violated. “Turning the other cheek” had been rejected and “eye for an eye” was revived.

Exaggerations and been bias in the reports of the media on the killings in the Middle-Belt also have a negative impact on Muslim – Christian relations in Nigeria. False posting of images by individuals in social media on the Middle-Belt crises is another threat to peaceful coexistence between Muslims and Christians not only in the Middle-Belt States alone but the entire country.

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Deradicalisation of Boko Haram Youths: An Islamic Perspective

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and

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Introduction

“Violent extremism” and “terrorism” are used interchangeably, but the former is often broader and can include extreme right-wing groups that aren't always deemed “terrorist.” “De-radicalization,” meanwhile, refers to the process of divorcing a person, voluntarily or otherwise, from their extreme views, while “disengagement” refers to the process of moving a person away from their extreme group's activities, without necessarily de-radicalizing that person or changing their views. Most meeting participants did not draw this distinction, but focused primarily on de-radicalization, except where noted. “Counter radicalization,” on the other hand, encompasses those measures taken to prevent a new generation of extremists, and is thus less reactive than de-radicalization. Successful de-radicalization depends upon an understanding of radicalization itself. Often due to a person's socializing with radical individuals, radicalization can take many forms. A detailed study of radicalization is beyond the scope of this paper, but a brief consideration of the paths to radicalization is important for the purpose of this discussion.

As participants frequently noted, a sound de-radicalization program needs to learn from how individuals become radicalized. Indeed, both radicalization and de-radicalization lean heavily on family or other social ties and the Internet is increasingly playing a large role in both.¹

Concept of Youth

Youth is the golden period of our life. Our youth is the most important stage of our life because this is the stage when a person chooses a path. The path may be right or wrong. This is the stage the youth perhaps would have many deviations and distractions like watching porn movies, music, girls, cigarettes, alcohol, games etc. At this age, the parents need to play a very necessary role in guiding their children to choose the right path so that they can be successful in this world and the hereafter. The parents should ensure that their children do not follow the wrong path, whereby bringing them back to a right track after a certain time would be very difficult.

It is true that every journey begins with a single step, but if our first steps have taken the wrong direction, then the complete life would be on the wrong path where returning to the right path would become very difficult. Some youths think that this

is the time to enjoy and once they come out of college they would adopt the right track not aware of the fact that returning to the right path would become next to impossible.

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) has listed seven kinds of people who will be sheltered under the shade of God on the Day of Judgment. They are:

1. A just ruler.
2. A young man who passed his youth in the worship and service of God.
3. One whose heart is attached to the mosque.
4. Two people who love each other for the sake of God.
5. A man who is invited to sin but declines, saying 'I fear God'.
6. One who spends his charity in secret, without making a show, and
7. One who remembers God in solitude and his eyes overflow with tears²

Commencing this hadith we can easily comprehend the significance given to youth by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). This is the stage when the Satan easily gains control over a person and leads him to the wrong path. So in this stage a youth should be conscious of the various activities he does.

Three common areas where Muslim youth should focus are as follows:

1. Obeying and respecting our parents.
2. Effective utilization of time (avoid wasting time).
3. Avoid seeing, and listening to, something which is prohibited by Islam.

Young people in their youth, most of them, think that they know everything. Some also think that they know more than their parents. Due to this type of attitude they tend to disobey their parents. The children might gain more knowledge in a particular field, but perhaps in terms of experience, they can hardly beat their parents. Considering our parents more knowledgeable and experience than us will help us to obey and respect them.

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: "There are two blessings which many people lose: (They are) health and free time for doing well."³ From this *hadith*, we would understand that out of the many bounties given by Allah (SWT), free time and health are the precious bounties. Thus use them for the right purpose. In *Surah Al-Asr*, Allah (SWT) also emphasizes on the importance of time. But today we see majority of the youth wasting their time in doing things which are disliked and prohibited in Islam.

Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib (RA) said: "There are two things which people do not recognize the greatness of until they lose them; their youth and good health."

This is the age where we do not have the complete control over our desires and we get attracted and addicted to things which are disliked and prohibited in Islam. It

might give us material pleasure for some time but they are definitely harmful in the hereafter.

Today's youth should be the "Youth with a mission" – a mission to contribute for Islam. A youth can contribute to Islam by giving his time, talent and money. A youth should also play an important role to bring about a drastic change in society. The youth should work with an objective of making Islam prevalent over all other ways of life. The youth is the stage of life when the individual should grasp good knowledge about Islam and make effective utilization of the time and talent given by Allah (SWT).

Allah (SWT) says in the Qur'an:

هو الذى أرسل رسوله بالهدى ودين الحق ليظهره على الدين كله وكفى بالله
شهيدا

He it is who sent His Messenger with guidance and the true religion so that He may cause it to prevail over all religions and Allah suffices as a witness.⁴

From this verse we come to know that what was the objective of the Prophet should also be the objective of every Muslim. But today's youths are living without any objective. They are living with a primary objective to satisfy their material desires.

We all should remember that all that we have today is only given by Allah alone and everything belongs to Him. Thus, we should spend everything and do everything for the sake of Allah and with sole objective of pleasing Him.

The Muslim youths are the future Islamic leaders. Therefore, it is very important for the youths to understand Islam from the right perspective by gaining the correct knowledge of Islam from the Qur'an and the authentic *Sunnah* and also to understand the real purpose of existence on this earth.

Opinions on the Boko Haram

In view of their actions against Muslims especially their attempt to assassinate some Muslim scholars, are the BH members to be considered Muslims?

Even though BH members hold some extreme views that are misconceptions and misinterpretations of Islam, they are still considered Muslims.⁵

The Prophet (SAW) is reported to have said: "*Whoever offers prayers as we do and turns his face to our Qiblah (direction faced in prayer) and eats the animal slaughtered by us, is indeed a Muslim for whom is the covenant of Allah, and the covenant of the Messenger of Allah; so do not violate Allah's covenant*"⁶

During the times of the Companions or disciples (*sahabah*) of the Prophet (SAW), a deviant and extremist group who were called the Khawarij committed acts against other Muslims that were far more hostile than what the Boko Haram did. The

Khawarij considered other Muslims as unbelievers (kuffar) and even killed many Companions of the Prophet (SAW) including Ali Ibn Abi Talib. The Prophet (SAW) had said: “To abuse a Muslim is (an act of) transgression (fusuq) and to fight him is(an act of) unbelief (kufr).” (Sahih Bukhari). Yet the Khawarij were considered Muslims by the Sahabah, who even followed them in prayers. Ali bin Abi Talib is reported to have said of them: “Had they not fought us, we would not have fought them”. BH members, who are not nearly as bad as the Khawarij, are therefore Muslims. And Allah knows best.

Muslims should therefore be cautious not to quickly denounce other Muslims as unbelievers, or to excommunicate them from Islam.⁷

Deradicalisation of Boko Haram

Since the Boko Haram insurgency began in 2009, an estimated 17,000 people have been killed and many villages have been completely uprooted and destroyed. This has resulted in high numbers of internally Displaced People (IDPs) and human flight. Nigeria’s President Muhammadu Buhari moved the military’s command center to the Borno State capital Maiduguri in June and is working with four neighboring countries in an attempt to collaborate militarily in conquering the Boko Haram insurgency. With mounting pressure from the Nigerian military forces as they have taken back territory in recent months, many insurgents see more incentive to defect from the group, although the process poses serious risks. In early July 2015, eleven members who were attempting to defect were murdered by Boko Haram in order to instill discipline among the members of the terror group. These murders, which are not uncommon, act as a disincentive that the Nigerian government must counter in the process of encouraging defections.⁸

For the women and girls who have been rescued, as well as insurgency defectors, the Nigerian government is providing a network of psychological care which contributes to the de-radicalization process. Women and defectors who are suspected of having maintained ties to members of Boko Haram are involved in more intense psychosocial therapy. This therapy process is mutually beneficial for the victims and defectors, also benefitting the Nigerian government who can derive the insider-information on the insurgency and its tactics. Through gaining a greater understanding of Boko Haram, they are more able to both address the immediate concerns of violence as well as studying the needs of a counter-radicalization framework to improve education and structure in communities prone to radicalization.

The Office of the National Security Advisor in the Nigerian government has made significant steps in the de-radicalization process with their Countering Violent-Extremism program. De-radicalization processes for former members of Boko Haram varies on a case-by-case basis. Those who have voluntarily defected from Boko Haram are provided with psychological therapy and given tools for reintegration into Nigerian civil society, while those who have been captured are required to participate in the criminal justice system in addition to the therapy provided. For both groups, post-traumatic stress disorder care is provided. This new

“soft-approach to countering terrorism,” as it is called by the government of Nigeria, was rolled out in the summer of 2014, and focuses on an understanding and opposing of the root causes of the insurgency.

This program has both vertical and horizontal approaches to countering violent-extremism involving all tiers of government as well as civil society, religious groups, and community leaders. It also involves background research which provides methods of counter-radicalization. This includes education, religion, and a greater understanding of what produces an insurgent with the participation of local civic leaders, religious figures, educators, and families. By engaging community members, the program endorses a sense of self-healing and reconciliation which will promote stability for these communities in the future.⁹

It is crucial for the future stability of Nigeria – and the wellbeing of Borno State specifically – for the Nigerian government to provide aid and ongoing support for both victims and defected perpetrators of the Boko Haram insurgency. Without this aid and de-radicalization process, the result will be a generation of damaged and fragile citizens, deficient in education, and Nigeria will lack the civil society it needs to maintain economic, political, and social stability and growth.¹⁰

Politics as a Cause of Inter-religious and Inter-ethnic Violence

Ethnic, religious and regional tension is widespread in Nigeria. But episodes of violence that are ethnic or religious on the surface are often caused by competition for political and economic influence in a country, where politics is seen as one of the few avenues to wealth and comfort. When party lines and other political divisions coincide with ethnic or religious differences, the strong sentiments associated with people's ethnic or religious identity come into play in the political arena. Politicians are often able to capitalize on this sentiment in order to mobilize support, in many cases, exacerbating inter-group resentment and hostility. The majority of those killed in the resulting violence are ordinary people not directly involved in politics themselves.¹¹

Tension between Muslims and Christians in many northern states has been on the rise since the extension of *Shari'ah* (Islamic law) into these states' criminal codes. While politicians and others supporting the new laws argue that *Shari'ah* would be more effective at fighting crime, many observers see fervent backing for *Shari'ah* by northern politicians as an effort to retain support among their predominantly Muslim population despite the leaders' inability to deliver on other promises to their constituents. Riots caused by the proposed extension of *Shari'ah* occurred across several northern states in 2000, particularly in Kaduna, where at least two thousand people were killed. Since then, inter-religious tension in those states has continued to simmer. The November 2002 riots in Kaduna State, triggered by protests related to the Miss World contest that was due to take place in Nigeria, highlighted the dangerous nexus between politics and religion. Around 250 people died in three days of rioting, sparked by an article that was perceived as blasphemous by some Muslims. But virtually everyone with whom Human Rights Watch researchers spoke in Kaduna believed that the violence resulted from political tensions between

the governor, who is Muslim, and some of his erstwhile supporters who believed he was selling them out to southern and Christian interests.¹²

Inter-ethnic violence in several "middle belt" states across central Nigeria has also taken on political dimensions in some cases. Over the last couple years, serious fighting has occurred in states like Benue, Plateau, Nasarawa and Taraba between groups that view themselves as "indigenes" and those viewed as "settlers," or non-natives to the area resulting in hundreds of deaths. While these fights have not always been overtly political, competition in the approaching elections has provided a new excuse for violence.

In Nigeria's southern Niger delta region, the oil-related resources at stake coupled with grinding poverty have meant that competition for political power is particularly violent. At the community level, groups that control the relationship with locally-operating oil companies may derive at least some benefits in terms of employment of unskilled labor and small-scale development of their communities. Although this inter-communal competition does not necessarily fall along ethnic lines, when it does the violence may become even fiercer. Serious fighting in Warri, Delta State, during a senatorial primary election in February 2003 and further clashes in March 2003 provided a case in point.¹³

Involvements of Youths in Kidnapping

Kidnapping is an assault on another, whether a Muslim or non-Muslim. It is an unjust act that Allah forbids and prohibits:

إن الله يأمر بالعدل والإحسان وإيتاء ذى القربى وينهى عن الفحشاء والمنكر

والبغى يعظكم لعلكم تذكرون

Allah commands justice, the doing of good and giving to kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice and rebellion: He instructs you, that ye may receive admonition¹⁴

Allah stresses out that the mere differences in religion, even if in the context of a conflict, do not justify assaulting another.

Kidnapping is considered an act of war. In any case, it is prohibited to kill a prisoner of war. He is absolutely destined to be released:

فإما منا بعد وإما فداء

... afterward either grace or ransom....¹⁵

It is prohibited in the case of actual war to kidnap innocent people or civilians, who are (technically speaking) of the enemy. No act of war could be aimed at them. The civilians, from an Islamic perspective, are non-combatant women, children, and the elderly who have nothing to do with war, and monks and those who live in monasteries.

If kidnapping takes place during actual fighting, the kidnapped become prisoners of war, and should be treated according to the teachings of Islamic *sharia* regarding

captives, which summarize as follows: (a) Prisoners of wars should be turned over to the authorities to decide what to do with them. The person who caught the prisoner of war has no right or authority over him. (b) It is a religious obligation to be kind to the prisoners of war, to treat them well, to be generous to them, to provide them with food and clothing, and not to torture them:¹⁶

ويطعمون الطعام على حبه مسكينا ويتيما وأسيرا

And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan,
and the captive¹⁷.

The prisoners of war should be ultimately released.

It is prohibited to hold civilians from among the enemy as hostages and threaten to kill them because of an action that is performed, or not, by others, while they are not responsible for it and they cannot stop it: (a) One of the most important rules of justice among people is that no one should be responsible for the actions of others and no one should be held accountable for crimes done by others. This law of *sharia* was confirmed by the Quran in many verses:

ولا تزر وازرة وزر أخرى

"No bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another"¹⁸.

Recommendations for Deradicalisation

Governments and the society at large must recognize the threat posed by radicalization in its various forms. While currently a great deal of attention is focused on Islamic radicalization in the region, due to the global war on terrorism, there is also need to recognize other more local forms of radicalization that may either increasingly pose challenges on their own or form alliances with Islamic radicalism or camouflage within such radicalizations.

In addition, it is essential to remember that poor people care about surviving and putting food on the table. They prioritize material gains not politics. Hence, through dialogue with communities, the government should undertake genuine reforms aimed at creating socio-economic and political institutions with which citizens can empower themselves so as to identify and reject endeavors towards radicalizations and the issues emanating from it. In this regard, there is the need to address seriously the plight of the youth especially as it relates to unemployment since they form easy targets for recruitment posing a dangerous challenge because of the youth population bulge that exists in all the African countries Nigeria included.

In conclusion, although generally violent extremists adhere to diverse ideologies, the strategies that they employ to enlist youth into their ranks are often similar. Radical organizations understand and prey upon a combination of political realities, socio-economic factors, and individual characteristics that render youth vulnerable to recruitment. A primary goal of preventing youth radicalization into terrorism is to promote understanding of the drivers of youth radicalization, identify Africa's

resiliencies and coping mechanisms to these drivers, and to generate policy recommendations aimed at mitigating the drivers. This is possible, though requires time, resources and application of relative cross-section expertise.

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The Role of Islamic Scholars in Deradicalisation of Evangelisation

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Introduction

Deradicalisation can be defined as the practice of encouraging those with extreme and violence religious or political ideologies to adopt more moderate and non-violent views in inviting people to the religion of Islam. It involves human interaction and a supportive community, backing up the person's decision to turn away from extremism. It also involves personal relationships, playing major role in the transformation and involvement in non-violent activity, believing that "change" normally lings on a relationship with a mentor or friend who supports and affirms peaceful behavior. By extension, deradicalisation can be viewed as a mind liberation, a strengthening of intellectual immune systems.¹ From the above submission, deradicalisation in our mode or propagation of Islam can be said to be adoption of more moderate and non-violent views or a counter ideological component designed to induce militants to question the radical ideology. This study, therefore, intends to examine the role of Islamic scholars in an effort to deracialize envangelisation.

Concept of Radicalisation

Radicalisation is the process by which an individual or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social or religious ideals and aspirations that reject or undermine the status or contemporary ideas and expressions of a nation.² The idea of radicalisation came into vogue in the wake of 9/11, suggesting a process by which certain individuals through a series of stages from alienation to violence have long been discredited. Guidelines as to what constitute signs of radicalisation are vague beyond parody-changing one's style of dress or using "derogatory names or labels for another group."³

Islamic *Da'wah* before Radicalisation

This work is not concerned with the institution of the caliphate in general but a mention of the means, ways and procedures of succession as they were used in the spread of Islamic evangelisation (*Da'wah*) is germane to this study. Islam is the religion for mankind and its message is universal and eternal. It is an all-embracing system and code of life that does not omit any sphere of human existence. It stands for the establishment of the law of God Almighty on His universe by means of, organized, disciplined and complete guidance in all spheres of life; social, material,

moral, economic, political, legal, cultural etc. A study of the lives of the Prophet and the rightly guided caliphs enables us to understand and follow Islamic teachings of their lives. This opens before us, a treasure of knowledge and experience about the Islamic system of life that offers the only real solution to the present and future problems of mankind.⁴ Allah states in Qur'ān 38 verse 26:

We have appointed you *Khalifah* on the earth, so judge between the people with justice, and do not follow vain desires, lest it leads you astray from the way of God...

Prophet Muhammad started Islamic evangelization in Makkah in the year 610 C.E. when he was called to prophethood by Allah and migrated to Madinah in 622 C.E. as a result of persecution by the Makkah idolaters. Muhammad was the greatest revolutionary and greatest man the world had ever produced. Within a short span of only twenty years, he brought about far-reaching changes in the religious, social and political life of the world, and attained the unique distinction of a three-fold founder - the founder of a universal religion, and ideal social order and of a nation and political system. The Prophet came as an evangelist among the people to satisfy the spiritual and social needs of the time and all times.⁵

Islamic Evangelisation during the Time of the Orthodox Caliphs

After the death of the Prophet in the year 632 C.E, Abu Bakr who was regarded as the most distinguished person next to the Prophet was appointed as the successor. He reigned as the *Khalifah* of the Prophet between 632 and 634 C.E. The most crucial challenge of his reign was the war of apostasy known as *Riddah* which he did not allow to create any breach in the ranks and files of the *Ummah*. Rather, Abu Bakr successfully crushed the rebellious movements/groups and restored the supremacy of Islam in Arabia. He achieved unity among the Muslims, eliminated all acts of rebellion and took Islam across the Arabian borders. The major part of Iraq came under his rule and the Muslim armies captured many strategic cities in Syria with the prime aim of spreading the message of Islam. In addition, one of the greatest achievements of Abu Bakr was his effort to champion the compilation of the Qur'ān when some of the *Huffāz* (memorizers of Qur'ān) died in the battle against Musaylamah.

During the reign of Caliph Umar (634-644), Islam was on the move. As part of his evangelisation activities, Islam spread beyond the land of the Arabian Peninsula to the places like Iraq, Persia Syria, Palestine and Egypt. Umar separated the judiciary from the executive and made the judges completely independent of the *Amīr*.

Emergence of Radicalisation in Islamic Evangelisation

Discontent against the administration of Uthman, the third caliph grew up despite the fact that he countered satisfactorily all the allegations leveled against him. The insurgents entered Madinah in the year 656 C.E as the time of Hajj drew near under the pretext that they have come to perform Hajj. A few days later, Uthman was accused by the insurgents of sending a letter to the governor of Egypt by a special

messenger to kill Muhammad Ibn Abu Bakr. Uthman swore that he did not write the letter nor knew anything about it. The insurgents did not believe him and threatened to kill him. Uthman replied that he did not fear death but he did not wish to shed Muslims' blood. They also demanded that he should give up the caliphate voluntarily which he refused to do. In view of this, the insurgents laid siege to his house and did not permit him to come out except to offer prayer in the mosque. They later did not allow him to come out at all. The siege grew worse and went on for forty days. Eventually, Uthman was assassinated on Friday 17th Dhul-Hijjah, 656C.E. Having killed Uthman, the insurgents virtually took control of Madinah and looted the public treasury while the Madinites were fearful to come out of their houses. As a result of the troubles which broke out among the Muslims after the assassination of Uthman, the expansion of the Arab Empire received a setback.⁶

With the death of Uthman, Ali became the fourth caliph on 21st Dhul-Hijjah, 656C.E. Pledges of loyalty were sworn to him. Ali changed the governors that were appointed by Uthman including Muawiyah who was replaced by Sahl Ibn Hanif as the governor of Syria. But Muawiyah refused to obey Ali and refused to resign as the governor of Syria. Muawiyah even refused to recognize Ali as the Caliph and defied his order of dismissal if he failed to punish the murderers of Uthman which was difficult for Ali; hence, he pleaded that he should be given time to settle.⁷

From the historical account narrated above, the four caliphs who succeeded the Prophet in the leadership and administration of the Muslims engaged in Islamic evangelisation as the *Khulafāu Rāshidūn*. Their period was the most glorious age in the history of Islam where the ideals and teachings of the Prophet continued as a living force without radicalisation. For instance, the first Caliph, Abu Bakr succeeded in saving Islam from the great danger of apostasy and false prophets. Umar, the second caliph consolidated Islamic Arabia and converted the wild sons of the desert into a disciplined race of warriors. He conquered the Persian and Byzantine Empires and built a very powerful empire comprising Persia, Iraq, Syria, Palestine and Egypt.⁸ The reign of Uthman witnessed further expansion of the Arab Empire in central Asia and Tripoli through Islamic evangelisation. The reign of the fourth orthodox caliph, Ali was spent in solving internal troubles. With his death in 661 C.E, the republic of Islam came to an end. This gave birth to radicalisation as a result of the people that seceded from the party of Ali at the battle of Siffin. This group is known as the Kharijites who started radicalisation in Islamic evangelization which is guided by some principles and doctrines of the group, some of which are contrary to the teachings of the Qur'ān and Sunnah.

Causes of Radicalisation in Islamic Evangelisation

Some of the causes of radicalisation in Islamic evangelisation can be mentioned as follows:

- i. Failure to harmonize Islamic teachings and life of the early Muslims with political realities after their demise.
- ii. Ignorance about the teachings of Islam.

- iii. Misconceptions about some of the Islamic tenets.
- iv. Love and greed for political power and ostentatious life as demonstrated in the Umayyad Caliphate.⁹
- v. Lack of knowledge about Islamic Da‘wah and its methodology.
- vi. Misinterpretations of the teachings of the Qur’ān and Sunnah.

Effects of Radicalisation on Islamic Evangelisation

- i. Disunity among the Muslims.
- ii. Empowering the enemies to defeat the Muslims as a result of disunity in every sphere of life.
- iii. Loss of Islamic cultures.
- iv. Confusion about the true teachings of Islam.
- v. Loss of life and property as revealed from the activities of the Kharijites and the Shiites sects.
- vi. Breed hatred for Islam and the Muslims.
- vii. Lack of peaceful co-existence among the Muslims.
- viii. Threat to security.
- ix. Threat to Islamic welfares.

Roles of Islamic Scholars

As a matter of fact and on the basis of religious obligation, the Islamic scholars are not expected to keep silent on issue of radicalisation in Islamic evangelisation, for this will be unfair and unjust. In connection with this, Allah says in Qur’ān 16 verse 90:

Lo! Allah enjoins justice and kindness, and giving to kinsfolk, and forbid lewdness, and abomination and wickedness. He exhorts you in order that you may take heed.

Therefore, in compliance with the injunction of Allah, it is the duty of the Islamic scholars to call people to Islam with wisdom and beautiful exhortations in order to curb the inhuman tendency of the radicals in their cause of Islamic evangelisation. The Qur’ān enjoins:

...Call unto the way of Allah with wisdom and beautiful exhortations...¹⁰

Islamic scholars must as a matter of religious obligation enlighten people on what is permitted and forbidden in Islam as the Qur’ān establishes that there should be a group of people enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. It says:

Let their arise from you a set of people inviting to what is good and forbidding what is bad and believing in Allah.¹¹

In addition, Islamic scholars should avoid issuing any religious teachings other than those contained in the Qur'ān and Sunnah. Some religious scholars, however, in defiance to the Qur'ān have created religious laws never authorized by Allah as commanded in Qur'ān69 verses 43- 47 and 75 verses 16-19.

Islamic scholars must also use the media to pass their messages to the whole world. This can be done through the print and electronic media, through the use of the Internet and through all the modern means of communications. Moreover, Islamic scholars must spread the true teachings of Islam to humanity as a whole. The spread of distorted messages about Islam by the radicals must not be allowed to go unchallenged by Islamic scholars.¹²

Islamic scholars must project the wonderful image of Islam as the religion of peace and not the religion of radicalisation. They must project its image as the religion of unity of mankind with the spirit of brotherhood and equality of mankind. A religion that promotes good human relation with the manners, the best being the most God Conscious. Moreover, they must also demonstrate the teachings of Islam through their social and private life. This is because one of the greatest disservices to Islam is for an Islamic scholar to commit the act of preaching one thing and yet doing the opposite. This will pave way for the radicals to mislead people.¹³

Conclusion

This study examined the Islamic evangelization activities of the orthodox caliphs and their contributions to the spread and development of Islam after the death of the Prophet. It also x-rayed the emergence of radicalisation in Islamic evangelisation towards the end of tenure of the third caliph, Uthman b. Affan who was killed by some Muslims who felt his administration of the government was not Islamic. The Kharijites and the Shiites' teachings and practices in the cause of their Islamic evangelization in radical forms were also discussed. The radical approaches of the Muslim Students' Society of Nigeria and the Salafi group towards Islamic evangelization were not un-discussed. It is, therefore, recommended that the causes and effects of these radical groups on individuals and the society should not be allowed to go unchallenged by Islamic scholars. To ensure peaceful co-existence among Muslims and the non-Muslims, it is also recommended that Islamic scholars must involve themselves in Islamic evangelisation at all levels of the government, local, state and federal. Moreover, local and central mosques should serve as centres of learning and for the Muslims to learn the true teachings of Islam in order to protect the Muslim Ummah from the exploitation tendency of the activities of radicals in Islamic evangelization. Therefore, Islamic scholars should form a body that would censor Islamic evangelization in ensuring that certified scholars are involved in Islamic evangelization.

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Deradicalisation of Muslim Youth from Politico-Religious Thuggery in Nasarawa State

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Introduction

The literature on radicalization and deradicalisation suffers from a lack of agreement on how some important terms should be defined. Therefore, this paper seeks to first, clarify some key concepts to avoid confusion. Generally, the term radicalization is “the process of adopting an extremist belief system, including the willingness to use, supports, or facilitates violence, as a method to effect societal change”. On the other hand, deradicalisation, is the process of abandoning an extremist ideologies and principles as well as concluding that which is not acceptable to use violence to effect social change.(Source) As part of the deradicalisation process, there is a recognition that social, political, and economic transformation will only occur slowly and in a pluralistic environment.

Radicalization and thuggery among youth remains a growing concern to the people of Nasarawa State especially during election periods with an increased fear of homegrown terrorism. According to a survey conducted by Yahaya in 2015, nearly two-thirds of people of Nasarawa State (62%) believed that homegrown thuggery was a serious threat. While Nasarawa State has experienced radicalization and thuggery leading to destruction of lives and property some years back, modern radicalization and thuggery has evolved to include those who conduct violent acts in the name of politics, religion or ethnicity¹.

Definition of Terms

Youth

The transitional age of youth needs to be operationalized in the context of this study to ensure validity. The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs defined youth between the ages of 15 to 24 and understood this as “a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood’s independence . . . as members of a community.”² Gaudet also contended that youth is a fluid and transitional period and does not halt at the age of 18. In fact, “the symbolic age of majority (18) is but one of numerous benchmarks along the path to adulthood”. With de-radicalization and thuggery techniques, the youth’s life-course must be analyzed from the start of the formation of their identity. Therefore, age 15 to 24 encompasses the transition to adulthood “within a temporal context in order to

avoid categorization that disregards the conditions which led them to experience various types of transitions.”³ This marks the beginning of self-autonomy, which can place youth at risk and cause feelings of isolation from support networks, increasing the risk of radicalization and thuggery and requiring de-radicalization and thuggery techniques.

Radicalization

The definition of radicalization in the literature differs. Scholars have offered definitions that vary within temporal and global contexts. Definitions varied from simply describing radicalization as a “process of developing extremist ideology and beliefs⁴” to a “movement in the direction of supporting or enacting radical behaviour.”⁵ While according to Bartlett and Miller, radicalization is a process non-violent or violent in nature. Therefore, radicalization is the process of forming an extremist view that has a high propensity to result in violent attitudes or violent action.

Thuggery

Thuggery is a violent behavior that is associated with criminal nature. It is defined as an act of violence or behaviour by ruffians hired or instigated by politicians to intimidate their opponents. Indeed, the Nigerian political scene has experienced violence and thuggery in varying degrees. It is therefore safe to say that thuggery in Nigerian politics is a means to an end. Consequently, thuggery and radicalism in Nasarawa State hinders public accountability of elective officers and thus is a bane to good governance in Nasarawa State. In fact since independence in 1960, Nigerian government and politics have been characterized by political thuggery, radicalism, electoral mal-practice, violence, political killings and lack of democratic dividends⁶.

Deradicalisation

Deradicalisation in literature has focused on general approaches and provided less attention to a working definition. Despite this, some soft explanations of de-radicalization have been offered. Dechesne believed that de-radicalization sought “to prevent further escalation of violence” and “creates the conditions conducive to dialogue”. Deradicalisation has often been viewed as the reverse process of radicalization, but the concept can be vague and subjective in its meaning⁷. Porta and LaFree asserted that the deradicalisation process had two components that were often overlooked or conflated. One part contained the “deradicalisation of attitudes and beliefs” and the other included “the disengagement from violent behaviour and the process of leaving violent groups and reintegrating into other social groups⁸.” El-Said agreed that de-radicalization and thuggery referred to disengagement from violence: deradicalisation is “a package of policies and measures designed and implemented by authorities in order to normalize and convince groups and individuals who have already become radicalized or violent to repent and disengage from violence⁹”. In sum, deradicalisation is a formal or informal approach aimed at

reducing commitment to an extremist viewpoint that has led or could lead to violent action.

Causes of radicalization and thuggery in Nasarawa State

Scholars have in different forum identified causes of radicalism and thuggery among youth in Nigeria. Some of these causes include among others:

1. **Poverty and unemployment** –Majority of youth in this nation are jobless, with no means of livelihood. They are impoverished and mercenary politics becomes the way out. The politicians capitalize on this and recruit the youth who not only constitute the pillar of society but also the most vulnerable to the self-inflicted poverty as their thugs and touts to perpetrate violence.
2. **Sit-tight Syndrome** – This has become a phenomenon in Nigerian politics. It is a situation in which an individual tries to hold on to power for personal aggrandizement or gains. In an attempt to hang on to power, leaders often create a regime of violence, repression and bloodshed. They organize political thugs, hooligans and scavengers to sing their praises, intimidate opponents and kill them if they become intransigent. The unnecessary and uncoordinated urge to control, dominate and amass wealth for their progeny in the infinite future by the politicians informs the emergence of the sit-tight phenomenon¹⁰.

Prebendal Politics: Prebendalism refers to political systems where elected officials and government workers feel they have a right to a share of government revenues and use them to benefit their supporters, co-religionists and members of their ethnic group. In Nigeria, politics is conceived as an investment. The politicians, having invested colossally on campaigns and other political activities, coupled with the existing system of winner takes all, would want to win at all cost. And the need to employ the use of thugs and touts to destabilize and rig elections becomes inevitable, especially when such politicians are not popular candidates. For example in the just concluded (2019) primary elections in Nasarawa State both APC and PDD (or PDP?) delegates were paid the sum of N200-300,000 (two hundred- three hundred thousand naira) for electing an aspirant in all the elections starting from governor down to members of state houses of assembly.

Refusal to accept defeat: Refusal to accept electoral defeat in good faith is also a fertile factor that can breed thuggery and trigger violence in politics.

Foreign Policy: References were made by many people to foreign policy as a driver for youth Radicalization and thuggery. Certain groups of youth are unable to articulate their anger at foreign policy decisions that they perceive is attacking their identity or other groups that share their identity. In addition, there is usually misinformation that for example, the foreign policy of the land that they are living in, sometimes conflicts with their faith. The Government of Nasarawa State is at loggerhead with their neighbours particularly over herdsman clashes. So if the youth grow up seeing this, and there's nobody to show them how to channel their

emotions using the proper avenues, then they are going to channel their emotions somewhere. This is in addition to foreign and national media propaganda and distortion going on that is practically bias and not really portraying the real picture of what is happening.

Esew summarizes the causes of radicalism and thuggery as follows: Domination and marginalization of sections and groups and persons in the acquisition and sharing of political and religious positions, rigging of elections and manipulation of process in favour or against certain groups, sections and persons; and falling apart of sponsors and those sponsored (Godfather and God sons) over contracts, appointments or methods of management of State¹¹.

Unfortunately, today, radicalization and thuggery have become a matter of national security affecting sustainable democracy, especially during campaigns and elections. Security is thus elemental in governance as it is the protection of the lives, rights, dignity and property of the citizens and the resources, territory, sovereignty and the lawful institution of the country. It is also when these institutions utilize the resources of the nation for the provision of security, just and equitable living conditions for the citizens of the country that they own their legitimacy. Usman, however, insisted that in Nigeria and Nasarawa State in particular, the rulers of the states constitute the major threat to the security of the lives and properties of their own citizens. Meanwhile, the security agencies that exist to checkmate the excesses of such leaders become the propagators of disunity because of their political ambitions. These and much more have spoiled the process of sustainable democracy in Nasarawa State¹².

Allah instructs in the Glorious Qur'ān about those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger and try to cause mischief in the land thus:

The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger, and strive with might and main for mischief through the land is: execution, or crucifixion, or the cutting off of hands and feet from opposite sides, or exile from the land: that is their disgrace In This world, and a heavy punishment is theirs In the Hereafter; (Q5:33).

Solution to Radicalization and Thuggery in Nasarawa State

The youths are the major part of the Nigerian population generally and Nasarawa State specifically as shown by statistics and data on record, which conforms to the globally accepted view that the youths of today are the nation of tomorrow. Political, religious, ethnic, academic, or economic controversies usually lead to violence by youths in the society. These factors have always been the major sources of youth radical behavior and thuggery in Nasarawa State ever since the history of violence in the State. This is a reflection of what will become of the State tomorrow if something is not done now.

Despite the fact that Nasarawa State government has a major role to play, it is not an issue of the government alone but a responsibility of each and every average citizen of the State to deradicalise the society and make it a violent free society devoid of thugs so that Nigerians may inherit a better legacy for their future.

Youth welfare/development is one of the major important issues that should concern any State for a better tomorrow. By “youth empowerment” it means total empowerment of youths for a better tomorrow from an average skilled/unskilled youth walking on the street, youths in various institutions of learning to the youths in the “world of work” because each and every youth has an inbuilt potential that is definitely unique. These skills are supposed to be useful in one way or the other for the growth of the nation as a whole through every individual’s optimistic effort backed up by the collective effort and support of the “society”.

By society, it means government, non-government, private (join with the following line) and corporate voluntary support, which will enhance the youth for a better tomorrow.

The university system which is supposed to be a place of peace and production for turning out peaceful and useful youths for the society now yields a contrary result because the aggregate quality of the university system in a nation directly determines the quality of youth capital development as well as the overall national economic, health and growth of the society. There is quite a large amount of skilled youths in Nasarawa State who are graduates in the society and are supposed to be part of the working force for the growth of the State economy but they have been subjected to an idle state of “unemployment”. Unemployment is one of the dark clouds threatening the future of the State and thereby leading many youths to deviate in the mission of joining hands for peace; instead it yields the contrary¹³.

In order to eradicate youth violence and thuggery in the society, the society needs to invest more in the areas that will benefit and develop the youths which will automatically give strength to the State political, economic, social, geographic as well as cultural/ethnic issues.

Below are suggested solutions for youth violence in the society:

- a) Good home training by parents or guardians
- b) Smooth and better access to quality education for all
- c) Good example by the leaders
- d) Finding solutions to the economic problems
- e) Social welfare package for youths
- f) Programs of self-employment to educate and encourage youths to start their own business through workshops, research groups, and discussion groups, to reduce the level of unemployment

- g) Availability of cheap loans and grants for those who wish to become self-employed, i.e. start their own business

Recommendations

The recommendations in this paper are divided into three categories,

- 1) Policy makers,
- 2) Schools, and
- 3) Religious institutions.

Recommendations for Policymakers

1. Increase funding in the youth initiatives sector, especially within schools. While education is a provincial responsibility, youth well-being is an investment for the State. Therefore, the State government should establish a funding program where school districts, neighbourhood houses, community centres, and youth centres across Nasarawa State can apply directly. This fund should be used strictly in developing social and extracurricular activities. These programs can include recreational or outdoor activities, youth employment programs and training in vocational programs. Consequently, engagement remains one of the key factors in de-radicalization and helps in forming an identity within the Nasarawa State culture.
2. While the State is doing relatively well with integration practices and policies as an indirect de-radicalization effort, it remains paramount for the government to participate more actively in any current and future de-radicalization programs and initiatives to maintain trust between the public and service providers. As the funder, the government should also maintain transparency and openness about what the program involves and detailing how information collected from this initiative is used. Collaboration with law enforcement Agencies is necessary in these programs and should proactively strive to include community stakeholders in these discussions.
3. Collaboration between police, security agencies, and religious leaders is necessary. Most of the religious leaders acknowledged that they have the responsibility to report any suspicious activity or imminent danger, but police and security agencies in Nasarawa State should also notify a trusted person from the religious group if they become aware of an at-risk youth. The expectation is that moderate religious leaders can engage in a dialogue with the at-risk youth, provide religious guidance, correct misperceptions of religious teachings and text, or simply provide a safe space for the youth to express his or her worldviews. This type of engagement can form a trust relationship, where religious leaders can play a major role in de-escalating the process of radicalization and thuggery in the State.

4. Religious leaders play a major role in de-radicalization for their perceived legitimacy by youth and their respected position within their community. The government should provide free and formal counseling training to religious leaders that are willing or interested in working with at-risk youth. This will enhance the professional ability of religious leaders based on theoretical and practical knowledge. This form of training should be given to religious leaders representing places of worship, in the form of scholarships to educational institutions that provide professional counseling program. These programs should be offered in a flexible model to allow religious leaders to continue their community and religious commitments.
6. Policymakers need to involve youth in the process of discussion, planning and decision-making for designing deradicalisation approaches.. It remains ineffective to develop a policy for a generation or a group of people where policy makers cannot relate to their challenges, worldviews, problems and needs.

These issues need to be addressed directly from youth through the planning stages. This will enhance inclusion, belonging and participation in society among youth. When it comes to specific policies in developing de-radicalization programs or approaches, de-radicalized youth should be made to participate in the discussion at policymaking level..

Recommendations for Schools

1. Schools need to allow time for open dialogue. Youth need to express their worldviews, perceived injustices, social and political concerns. While schools are busy teaching principles of math, biology and other technical subjects, open learning is forgotten where youth can speak on topics that are absent in the curriculum. As the school is a community, students should have the opportunity to critically discuss current issues in a safe and protective environment. Otherwise, youth tend to find an alternative through online platforms. A class of 40 minutes every second day dedicated to a discussion of worldviews will not only channel youth anger but will also enhance learning that is not offered in textbooks. Encouraging debate and expressing worldviews gives the opportunity for youth to discuss their belief system and channel their anger.

Recommendations for Religious Leaders

At-risk youth in the process of radicalization may rely on advice from well-respected religious leaders. If youth are turned away or discouraged from questioning beliefs, they may find an alternative source that validates their viewpoint. Religious leaders are encouraged to follow these recommendations:

- a. Have the flexibility to discuss any topic, thought or idea in a non-judgmental manner, including those that oppose religious principles to assist youth in maintaining open-mindedness and have clear view of religion.

- b. Strive to become informed on world issues, politics, and even on social media to relate to youth and understand their worldviews. This will help religious leaders to better understand the difficulties youth are facing. Assistance does not need to entail religious advice or discussion of a religious text, but can be in the form of achieving a sense of social belonging.
- c. Reach out to the media. It is not only the media's responsibility to report accurately, it is also the responsibility of the community to reach out to the media. By religious institutions maintaining an open dialogue with the media, they can offer their account of events, correct a misinformed report and even give local youth a chance to present their voice.
- d. Emphasize that all interpretations of religion have evolved with changing attitudes and beliefs. This would help prevent youth from falling victim to misinterpreting religious texts and passages.

Conclusion

Generally, the effects of radicalization and thuggery basically included creating fear amongst the citizenry, hindering electorates, killing innocent people, violating human rights, destruction of valuable properties, insecurity during and after elections and poor political and religious culture in the society. It is observed that radicalization and thuggery is being religiously, politically and socially motivated affecting different people in different areas. As a result, government and private properties were burnt, valuable properties of different political parties and different individuals were destroyed.. Innocent individuals were affected by different degrees of injuries ranging from wounds to loss of lives and valuable properties in their shops, and at homes.

Finally, activities of radicals and thugs have fueled insecurity that negatively affects sustainable democracy. It is characterised by killing, kidnapping, street attacks, house break-ins, shoplifting, frightening and threatening innocent individuals by losing their lives and valuable properties that invariably exacerbated violence in Nigerian politics especially during campaigns, rallies, and election-related religious activities for which different people have been scared and frightened.

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The role of Da'wah in deradicalisation of Boko Haram's Kharijite ideology in Nigeria

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Abstract: The menace of Boko Haram sectarianism in the contemporary time among the Muslims of Nigeria has reached a point whereby misinterpretation the Qur'an in defense of their sentimental views is gaining acceptance by the ignorant Muslims. This situation led to the emergence of Boko Haram insurgency which started in 2009 when they started an armed rebellion against the government. Since then, thousands of people lost their lives. In 2013 for example, about 1000 people lost their lives and by 2014 the death toll escalated to 10, 849 lives. The conflict also escalated to Cameroun, Chad and Niger republics thereby causing more death toll than ever witnessed. These make Boko Haram the world's deadliest terrorist group. This article highlights the radicalisms' approach of Boko Haram sect. It is counted among the heterodox movements for it considered all Muslims outside their creed as polytheists. The paper provided some of their misinterpretations of the precepts of the Qur'an thereby justifying the killing of Christians and other non Muslims living with the Muslims as well as the Muslims who do not join their ideology. Also, Boko Haram's Kharijite ideology is exposed and finally the role of da'wah scholars in tackling the deviant ideology of the sect through deradicalising Boko Haram extremism in Nigeria through da'wah was highlighted, and finally the conclusion.

Introduction

The *Jama'at Ahlus Sunnati lil-Da'wati wal Jihad* popularly known as *Boko Haram* was established under their assumption of restoring Islam to its pristine values according to the practice of the earlier generation of Islam. They assert that Islam has been wiped away by polytheism enshrined in the so-called democracy and western education in addition to innovations and superstition that characterized the Muslims. In their creedal statement,¹ their leader Muhammad Yusuf stated that, sovereignty belongs to Allah alone and that democracy is in conflict with Islam. Therefore all Muslim politicians who participate in the election are *kuffar* for their involvement in a system that contradicts Islam. Ruling by manmade laws is a clear *kufr*. That western education is prohibited for reason that it was established by the Missionaries and the Colonialists to serve their interests among the Muslims. They replaced functional Islamic education system with western education which resulted in turning the Muslims infidels and other forms of immoralities attached to it. Again, working under *kufr* system is aiding *kufr* as such it is prohibited. There is no way a Muslim will work under any sector of the government for it is a *kufr* system. And that only Muslims who subscribed to their sect are the saved sect.² They

focused attention in fighting three categories in the course of their so called *jihad*. These are the security services i.e., the Police, Military, State Security and other security operatives of the government, Christians, Muslims who do not join them, defectors and Whistle blowers.

The Boko Haram insurgency started in 2009 when they started an armed rebellion against the government. Since then, thousands of people lost their lives. In 2013 for example, about 1000 people lost their lives and by 2014 the death toll escalated to 10, 849 lives. The conflict also escalated to Cameroun, Chad and Niger republics thereby causing more death toll than ever witnessed. This destruction of lives and property make Boko Haram the world's deadliest terrorist group.³

Boko Haram's Misinterpretation of Qur'anic Passages

Their ideology was built upon twisting various Qur'anic passages to mislead their followers and the ignorant Muslims. An example of these is that when the *Boko Haram* sect have concluded that time has come for waging *jihad* against the kufr system, they called on their members to get ready for the combat. To strengthen their spirit, and from where to start, Mallam Muhammad Nur quoted the following verse of the Qur'an,

O ye who believe! Fight the unbelievers who gird you about, and let them found firmness in you: and know that Allah is with those who fear Him. (Surah al Taubah:123)

He commented as follows:

Allah (SWT) said: Kill those (Kuffar) that are closer to you first and then you move ahead. It is a must. Unbelief (rebellion against Allah)? It will start from you... even if we are of the same father and the same mother and you join police or military, we are firing (on war front) I will not say that you should be saved. Never, you will (only) be asked to return to the Qur'an. As soon as you return, we then carry you along. But if you refused, we will start with you. That, it is imperative for everybody to learn to clear ourselves of them. Everybody. Because, By Allah, if we didn't learn to clear yourself of them, don't see somebody and said he is your father, do not see someone and said he is my junior brother... my brother....my friend while he is fighting Allah's government, he is fighting the religion of Allah. You have no any relationship except with the one who holdfast the religion of Islam. Allah (SWT) said "O ye who believe! Take not for protectors your fathers and your brothers if they love infidelity above faith: if any of you do so, they do wrong." (Surah al Taubah:2) I hope it is understood... The listeners gave a roaring applause of Allahu Akbar!⁴

Here he justified the killing of Christians and other non Muslims living with the Muslims. He also legalized the killing of all the security agents whether they are Muslims or even one's relation for their support to kufr system.

In *Tafsir of Surah al Nisa'i* verses 47-50, Muhammad Yusuf has cautioned the Muslims to avoid *shirk*. He stated that *shirk* involve associating other things with Allah in areas of the knowledge of the unseen, obedience to constituted authority, devotional acts, slaughtering or seeking for protection. He who died committing *shirk* without repentance will not be forgiven by Allah. He quoted the following verses to support his view:

Allah forgiveth not that partners should be set up with Him; but He forgiveth anything else, but to whom He pleaseth; to set up partners with Allah is to devise a sin most heinous indeed. (Surah al Nisa': 48)

...Whoever join other gods with Allah,- Allah will forbid him the garden, and the Fire will be his abode. There will for the wrong-doers be no one to help. (Surah al Ma'idah: 72)

... If anyone assign partners to Allah, is as if he had fallen from heaven and been snatched up by birds, or the wind had swooped (like a bird on its prey) and thrown him into a far-distance place. (Surah al Hajj:31)

From the above quoted verse he concluded that:

This shirk which if you commits Allah will never forgive you, and that you will not enter paradise but Fire, it is better to know it so that you abstain from it. ... it is for your own good to struggle and absolve yourself (from shirk). Based on this my brothers, constitution is shirk. By Allah, it is shirk, it is idol worship. Whoever is working under it is committing shirk. By Allah, this democracy is shirk, whoever is working under its government is committing shirk. He is loyal to it, it is shirk.⁵ what is the meaning of ⁶ Loyalty. What is the meaning of ⁷ you should ask. Those people who entered Fire in the Day of judgment will say:⁸ O Allah! We have followed our leaders and our scholars and they led us astray. Had it been we knew we should have obey Allah and His messenger. You see, obedience constitute shirk here. Your loyalty to this government and anything that constitute obedience to it is shirk. The (Nigerian) Flag that is raised and respected is shirk....Legislators are polytheists. What they are doing is polytheism. They themselves are idols, they are Taghut (false gods).⁹ By Allah, brothers, if we didn't clear ourselves of them and show that we have dissociated ourselves from them, Allah the Most High will not accept one's Islam.¹⁰

On western education which was brought by the missionaries and the imperialists they maintained that it was to apostatize the Muslims who will later on serve their religious interest. Abubakar Shekau has this to say in relation to it.

When they started their plans centuries ago on how to crush Islam, they sent one of the men to...to study the secret of the powers of the Muslims. The person returns with a copy of the Qur'an. The person stated that as long as the Muslims read and practice the injunctions of the Qur'an they will be powerful. Therefore they deliberated on how to tactically make the Qur'an insignificant and unimportant. At the end of the meeting they outlined many programmes which was centered on making the Muslims occupied so that they have all no time for the Qur'an. The program include secular education, sport and music. As a result of these, today many Muslims lost their Islam while others claim to be Muslims but have no trace of Islam. What? All in the name of being educated.¹¹

On the interpretation of the verse,

(The Pagans), leaving Him, call but upon female deities: They call but upon Satan the persistent rebel! (Surah al Nisa'i: 117)

Abubakar Shekau stated that all objects of worship other than Allah are in feminine form. Nigeria itself is female because it is worshipped. This is one of the conspiracies of western education (*Boko*). All students must worship Nigeria every morning under the national pledge and anthem. He further stated that national pledge is a formula of *Tauhid* directed to Nigeria instead of Allah. He said that if you replace "Nigeria" with Allah in the national pledge you will see that it is a pure Islamic *Tauhid*. He recited it in this form,

*I pledge to Allah my creator
To be faithful, loyal and honest.
To serve Allah with all my strength.
Do defend His Unity.
And uphold His honour and glory.
So help me Allah.*

He said that each statement here has its equivalent verse in the Qur'an. That is why we are against *Boko*, it is *haram*. It is unIslamic.¹²

The above were but few examples of radical approach of *Boko Haram* sect. They interpret the verses of the Qur'an to convince their followers that Nigeria is a kufr system that is fighting Islam, as such the Muslims must wage war against her to justify their views. They presented their version of Islam through misinterpretation of the Qur'an so as to win people's sympathy. Their aim was;

... to establish an Islamic state where Islam is practiced. Islam according to him (Mohammed Yusuf, leader of the sect) frowns at Western education and working in the civil service because it is sinful. Hence, for their aim to be achieved, all institutions represented by government including security agencies like police, military and other uniformed personnel should be crushed.¹³

Boko Haram's Kharijite Ideology

The above approach of Boko Haram in its ideology could be seen from the Kharijite's ideology. Kharijite is the sect that the khawarij belong to. Boko Haram ascribes itself to the Islamic faith claiming to be part of the Sunni ideology. However, textual and historical facts in the Islamic literature indicate that it is a heretical extremist group that derails from the actual teachings of Islam in many of its fundamental principles. Thus, it is believed that the ideology of Boko Haram originated from the *Khawarij*. They are the ones who legalize the rebellion against the Muslim Ummah and its constituted authority, they assumed that the entire Ummah are upon astray and misguidance while they are the ones on the true religion and guidance. In addition, they are in opposition to everyone who disagrees with their understandings and even go to the extreme extent of rendering lawful his killing, destruction of his property and reputation.¹⁴ They vary with time or place or in some of the programs and designs of conducting their religious affairs but their origin remain one and they all converge at their fundamental point of common interest which collectively situates them under the same umbrella of Khawarij. This sect manifested itself when a group among the Muslims rebelled against Caliph Ali bn Abi-Talib (RA) after His ascension to the seat of the caliphate consequent to the assassination of Khalifa Uthman bn Affan (RA). This indicates that its manifestation as a religious sect was established during the caliphate of Ali (RA), despite the fact that the sect's manifestation was first ignited during the caliphate of Uthman (RA) and this same mayhem eventually became the cause of his death.¹⁵ The word Khawarij is the plural word of khariji and it comes from the Arabic root word Kharaja 'which means to leave' or to exit' or secede from the constituted authority.¹⁶ The Khawarij or Kharijites first appeared during the course of the battle when the camp of Ali, under the leadership of Malik al-Ashtar, Ali's forces were on the point of victory when Amr ibn al As, Mu'awiyah's leader, resorted to a truce.¹⁷ The copies of the Qur'an fastened to the lances and were raised seeking for arbitration (*tahkim*). Caliph Ali called upon his followers to cease-fire and arbitrates as required by the opposition camp. The parties agreed with the arbitration proposal. Amr bin al-As was appointed from Mu'awiyah's group while Abu Musa al-Ash'ari represented Ali's camp. So when the arbitrators came out with their decision to relieve both Ali and Mu'awiyah of their posts and elect a new *caliph*, no reference was made to any Qur'anic text that could support their arbitration. Consequently, 12,000 people withdrew from Ali's camp and declared that "*La hukmu illa lillah*" meaning there is no judgment except to Allah alone and that all those who accept the arbitration were grave sinners and condemned. The argument of this group is that the arbitration involves no text from the Qur'an as it

was the copies of the Qur'an that were raised for the arbitration proposal.¹⁸ They moved to a place called *Harurah* and elected Abdullah bn Wahab al Rasibi as their *Amir al Muminin*. They were later known as *Khawarij* meaning those who withdrew or seceded. That was the first instant of schism in Islam.¹⁹ Al-Shahrastani defines a Khariji as: "Anyone who walks out against (seeking to overthrow) the true appointed Imam (leader) upon whose leadership the majority is in agreement is called a Khariji. This is the case, whether the walking out (against the Imam) occurred in the days of the rightly guided Caliphs or other than them from the *Tabi'een*."²⁰

They formed themselves into a distinct group with new set of beliefs contrary to the Muslim majority. The following were the principles or beliefs of Kharijites.

1. *La hukm illa lillah*. There is no a judgment or arbitration except to Allah. According to them only Allah can judge and settle between the people not human beings. Caliph Ali's reply to this principle was that "*these are true words intended for falsehood*".²¹
2. The *Kharijites* believed that the act of sinning is analogous to *Kufr* (disbelief) and that every grave sinner was regarded as a Kafir (disbeliever) unless he repent.²² He should therefore be killed and his property is confiscated and deposited in the Muslim treasury on account of his grave sin. It was based on this belief that they killed caliph Ali, for they charged him and Mu'awiyah with the crime of killing the Muslims and acceptance of arbitration that was not based on any Qur'anic text.
3. They considered the caliphate of Abu Bakr and Umar to be rightly guided but believed that Uthman bn Affan had deviated from the path of justice and truth in the last days of his caliphate, and hence was liable to be killed or displaced. They also believed that Ali bn Abi Talib committed a grave sin when he agreed on the arbitration with Mu'awiyah.²³
4. *Khilafah* (Leadership) is not necessary in Islam. Islam can stand without a designated leader hence there is no course for the Muslim to fight each other because of leadership.²⁴ They believed that it is not a must for the caliph to be from the Quraysh. Any pious Muslim nominated by other Muslims could be an eligible *caliph*.²⁵ It was based on this, that they elected *Al-Rasibi* as their caliph who was not a *Quraishite*.
5. Any Muslim who is outside their creed is considered as *kafir*. To them all non-Kharijites are *Kuffar* and that their blood was made lawful.²⁶
6. Any *caliph* who misused his power is to be killed. It was based on this doctrine that they murdered *Caliph* Ali.
7. The children of non-believers are also unbelievers who will enter hell fire with their parents.²⁷

Deradicalising Boko Haram through Da'wah

The concept of Da'wah has been technically defined by many scholars. All the definitions have one common background which is to disseminate the teachings of Islam in theory and practice. For the purpose of this paper the definition of Al-Ilori will be adopted. He sees Da'wah as drawing people's attention and rationality toward an ideology which is of benefit and advantageous to the people. It is also, rescuing people from going astray or from tribulations which beset them.²⁸

Accordingly, the definition required the *da'i* to provide *Da'wah* based on priority. The first priority in Islam is ideology, that is why Boko Haram use the Kharijite's ideology by questioning the belief of any Muslim who do not join their sect. It is narrated on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas that when the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) sent Mu'adh towards Yemen (as governor) he said to him:

Verily you would reach a community of the people of the Book, the very first thing to which you should call them is the worship of Allah, may His Glory be Magnificent, and when they become fully aware of Allah, instruct them that He has enjoined five prayers on them during the day and the night, and when they begin observing it, then instruct them that verily Allah has made Zakah obligatory for them which would be collected from the wealthy amongst them and distributed to their needy ones, and when they submit to it, then collect it from them and avoid (the temptation) of selecting the best (items) of their riches.²⁹

The Ulama' and Islamic organisations are the major stakeholders that should lead in the process of deradicalising captured and repented Boko Haram insurgents. They are the best people to tackle the deviant ideology of the sect through deradicalising Boko Haram extremism in Nigeria through da'wah. According to the secretary general of the supreme council for Shari'ah in Nigeria, the Ulama' and Islamic organisations have been excluded from deradicalising prisoners of Boko Haram that defected from the group by the Government. He emphasised the role of the scholars in the process by highlighting that since the Boko Haram are using scriptures from Islamic faith to unleash their terror, the right people that can change their narrative is the Ulama' and Islamic Organisations.³⁰

Conclusion

The role of contemporary scholars in *da'wah* is tremendous and important. They are the heirs of Prophets and Messengers³¹ and hence should facilitate *da'wah* to address the rising menace of Boko Haram's deviant ideology. The activities of the scholars in Da'wah should cut across deradicalising the ideological belief of the sect and their major factor towards recruitment of the ignorant Muslims who knows nothing about the Kharijites ideology. The attention of *'ulama* are drawn to the consideration of these in their preaching sessions and Friday sermons. The *'ulama* as custodians of Islamic scholarship should also helped in the spread of correct ideology in their Qur'anic and Islamiyyah schools to the students throughout

Nigeria. This does not mean the da'wah scholars are not preaching against Boko Haram, however, a lot is needed on their part because of the little number of da'wah activities against the sect and proliferation of their ideology to many ignorant Muslims. These will help tremendously in disseminating correct interpretation of Islamic knowledge, spread of moral discipline and general religious consciousness in the entire life of the Muslims in Nigeria.

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5. "And follow not the bidding of those who are extravagant,-" Q26:151
6. "And hearken not to the Unbelievers and the Hypocrites..." Q33:1
7. "They take their priests and their anchorites to be their lords in derogation of Allah, and (they take as their lord) Christ the son of Mary..." Q9:31
8. "And they would say: Our Lord! We obeyed our chiefs and our great ones, and they misled us as to the (right) path." Q33:67
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The Role of Islamic Scholars, Religious Organisations and Muslim Leaders in Combating and Managing Radicalization

Maryam Ya'u Zamau

Introduction

This paper examines the potential contributions and the roles of Islamic scholars in *da'wah*, religious organisations and Muslim leaders in combating and managing radicalization. Therefore, scholars, religious organizations and Muslim leaders have an important role to play in stopping violence. Radicalisation as a term has been historically linked to the concept of political violence. The Islamic scholars in *da'wah*, being morally and highly educated, have the utmost responsibility in managing radicalisation among people. This is because, when we take the meaning of *da'wah* by the Qur'ān, it generally refers to Allah's invitation to live according to His will. Thus, when used in early years of the advent of Islam, it usually referred to that message and was sometimes used interchangeably with Islam or Din. In a nutshell, *da'wah* is a duty to actively encourage fellow Muslims in the pursuance of greater piety in all aspects of their lives. In fact, the word "*da'wah*" is an Arabic word which means calling to the way of Allah and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad. Scholars in *da'wah* are those people preaching in the way of Allah and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet. They are people of spirituality who devote themselves to the Islamic progress and their teaching of morals serves as the bedrock for individuals. Academic scholars, policy makers and law practitioners are far from agreement on common definition of radicalisation or a shared understanding of the process and causes of radicalization. Some people emphasize religion as a driving factor in radicalisation, while others view religion as a thin layer of justification spread over social and political motivations. Likewise, some argue that radicalisation represents a process with distinguished phases, while others deny this linear model and emphasize the diverse trajectories of radicalism. Despite this lack of clarity and rooted understanding of the problem, policy makers in Europe and elsewhere have often felt obliged in the recent years to formulate policies and measures designed to combat and prevent radicalisation. It is against this background that this paper intends to explore the vital role played by the scholars in *da'wah*, religious organisations as well Muslim leaders in combating and managing radicalisation.

Conceptualising Radicalisation

The meaning of "radicalisation" is a relatively unexplored concept compared to "terrorism" which has not locked academic attempt at conceptualisation and definition over a sustained period.¹ When applied to Islam and Muslims, the term radical is often being used interchangeably and opaquely with terms such as

fundamentalist, Islamist, Jihadist and neo-Salafist or Wahabbist with little regard for what these terms actually mean, and instead indicate signals about political Islam that members of the media and politicians wish to transmit.² In such cases, Islamic radicalism can mean those people who believe that Islam is under threat and that they pledge to defend Islam from that threat.³ Often Islamic radical fundamentalism is used interchangeably with fundamentalist radical Islamism. Fundamentalism is a term generally being used to denote religious practice based on literal interpretation of a sacred text applied to Muslims and Christians. In other cases, radical Islamist is a euphemism for violent Islamist.⁴

In academic literature, the terms radical, radicalise, and radicalisation have been used in a variety of ways which were used to indicate forms of populism related to revolutionary opportunity,⁵ a revolutionary act in response to declining power and interchangeably with fundamentalism.⁶ An ultra-form or intensification of existing political orientations and behaviours is typified by a shift from peaceful activity to ever more violent extremism.⁷

Definitions of Radicalisation

- Radicalisation is the process by which a person gradually accept extremist's idea, methods and possibly supports organised groups.⁸
- Local residents or citizens gradually adopting an extremist religious or political ideology hostile to the west, which legitimises terrorism as a tool to affect societal change. This ideology is fed and nurtured with a variety of extremist influences. Internalizing this extreme belief system as one's own is radicalisation.⁹
- The growing preparedness to strive for and/or deep interventional changes in society that are in odds with the democratic legal order and/or where by undemocratic means are employed.¹⁰

The Role of Religious Leaders in Establishing Community Values

Religious leaders either Muslims or Christians have a huge responsibility to discharge to their people. Furthermore, the mistrust against political leadership who have consistently failed their people despite huge natural and human resources endowed by God Almighty to Nigeria made the faith leaders to be source of hope and rescuers of the masses. Some of the immediate roles of religious leaders in preserving community values include the following:

1. **Total Commitment to Their Call:** The calling of an Imām is a responsibility to be discharged to people. Through this calling and serving as ambassador of God on earth, he shall continue to serve Allah's creatures in guiding them to what pleases Him, and abstaining from evil habits and behaviour that ruin life and drain away acceptable core values among the people.
2. **Utilise Divine Authority:** Religious leaders should preach the truth and preach peace without fear. Calling of an Imām is not from man himself but

from God, so he should avoid sycophancy. It should be remembered that every Friday, Muslims go to the mosque and pray to Allah as well as listen to what the Imām or Shaykh will direct them to do in the service of Allah, and their day to day dealings in the society. In the same vein, every Sunday, Christians go to church to hear what their pastors will tell them, and they will be ready to put them to practice. The religious leaders therefore have the right (authority) to correct, rebuke and encourage their listeners to do the right thing that will promote peace.

3. **Identify fully with their Community at all Times:** Religious leaders are supposed to lead by example. The Imām or pastor should fully identify with his members religiously, politically and socially. Thus, they can practically demonstrate peaceful values, habits and characters for their followers to emulate. That is why the hadith describes what Prophet Muhammad did. Let religious leaders practice what they preach by living a peaceful life in their communities.
4. **Inculcate the Culture of Accountability in the Adherents:** Religious leaders should emphasize the necessity of accountability for every action whether good or bad. Leaders should always remind their followers that the great judgement is coming on the last day. Thus, they themselves should shun craze for materialism that has penetrated most religious institutions e.g. mosques and churches. Religious institutions must not accommodate, encourage, support or connive with any corrupt individuals and group of organisations, and establishments in religious practices, running on charity, donations or humanitarian activities. In addition, they should be able to publicly denounce and dissociate themselves from those associated with corrupt practices like stealing of public funds, drug trafficking, cultism both in Nigeria and abroad.

In Islam, leaders have as their primary and essential responsibility to enforce morality and fight evils in the society. This, they have been charged to do in a number of ways some of which are:

“Enjoining Goodness and prohibiting Evil.” (Q. 3:110)¹¹ Allah also says:

Those who when we establish them in the land, will keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and enjoin good and forbid evil; and Allah’s is the end of affairs.

Salisu¹² defines leadership as “a process by which one person influences the thoughts, attitudes and behaviours of others. Leaders set a direction for the rest of us, they help us see what lies ahead; they help us visualize what we might achieve, they encourage and inspire us”. He further explains that leadership is the ability to get other people to do something significant that they might not otherwise do; it is energizing people towards a goal. He further stresses that regardless of the complexities involved in the study of leadership, its meaning is relatively simple. Leadership means to inspire others to undertake some form of purposeful action as

determined by the leader.¹³ The importance of leadership cannot be overstated, it is instructive to note that even among non-humans, as we read in biology, leadership system and structure do exist. Talking about leadership is in fact a discussion about human destiny. It is therefore clear that such an important issue like leadership can and should not be left to chance or at the mercy of charlatans. It cannot and should not be left to the dictates of human desires or caprices. It must be based on uprightness, righteousness and honour. Islam considers the question of leadership as very important such that it gives clear guidance on how leadership in an Islamic society is to approach the affairs of those under them. The Qur'ān summarises in its admonition to the leaders on how to behave with the governed. It states:

(O Muhammad!) It is a great mercy of Allah that you are very gentle and lenient towards them: for, had you been harsh and hard-hearted they all would have broken away from you: so pass over (their faults); and ask for Allah's forgiveness for them: and consult them in affairs (of moment) then, when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah. For Allah loves those who put their trust in (Him). If Allah helps you, no power can overcome you, and if He forsakes you, who is there after Him that can help you? ¹⁴

Educating Muslims about Moderate Islam

A large proportion of community, which has the main challenge in developing a strong Muslim who can counter radicalization is an issue related to the quality, orientation and public profile of Islamic religious and community leaders in Nigeria. Qualified leaders are those with stronger relationships between moderate Muslims and youth and who have better representation of moderate Islamic views in public forums, and have more effective measures to limit the influence of those leaders whom they saw as inciting division and radicalising with the community.¹⁵ Although an *Imām* is important, he must have good knowledge and be a real scholar otherwise people particularly those who are vulnerable, may be at risk of showing the wrong path. It is also important to train our community *Imāms* who understand values and laws. That is why it is important for our leaders to ensure that *Imāms* are trained to understand the context of the Qur'ān and Hadith of the Prophet as well as to know how to interpret them in the right way. Our young people do not emerge in a vacuum; they are supported by those who are teaching them. To stop the teachers from change in the policy of lessons here is to provide or establish youth centres and let them socialise with *Imāms* who do not have wrong views and can develop a trust and relationships in different settings and get different views.¹⁶

A significant proportion of community leaders suggested that the time may have come to replace or supplement traditional approaches to counter radicalisation which many see as potentially or actively divide. With more affirmative and positive action, they also believed that assertive measures of national identity and unity would help limit the success of extremists and radicalisation. Radicalized Islam is a social movement and a banner, which connects them to a big banner of a

call to cooperation that others can see as a way of building a better way.¹⁷ There is a very strong support from both the government and community leaders on the idea that formal education in schools was among the best ways to reduce radicalization and extremism. They wanted to see a stronger educational focus on alternatives to violence and better understanding of moderate interpretation of Islamic religious doctrines in public and Islamic based schools for Muslim youth. Education is the solution to this. Muslim kids themselves need to be educated and our kids who grow up today are critical minded and they know how to ask many questions.¹⁸

The Role of Da‘wah Scholars in Combating and Managing Radicalisation

In this section, the study examines how Islamic scholars (known as ‘*Ulamā*’, the plural of the Arabic term ‘*Ālim*, which means the learned) may ideologically contribute to counter radicalisation through their sermons, lectures, and public pronouncements that are recorded in compact discs (CDS) and sold through various outlets.¹⁹ The biggest asset of the scholars is their religious learning through which they construct Islamic identities norms, beliefs and practices. They are deeply rooted in their communities in ways that allow them to articulate community concerns. Their mosques and Islamic schools give the scholars not only institutional platforms but also extensive social networks and channels of effective communication through which the scholars influence their large and loyal followers.

Scholars can play active roles in promoting radicalisation as well as counter-radicalisation and deradicalisation through the multiple roles they play in the society. But, it is important to note that scholars are not monolithic entity in a heterogeneous group with many significant differences. However, the influence of the scholars can hardly be emphasised. Yet, it is not unlimited that sectarian divisions have confined the influence of specific ‘*Ulamā*’ to their disciples only, and they have reduced the likelihood that they will speak with one voice. Intense competition on followers and influence has fragmented the religious authority of the scholars, allowing self-starters, troublemakers and autodidacts to claim and exercise religious authority.²⁰

Constitutional provisions for freedom of religion, expression and association mean that government cannot impose on the scholars to speak with one voice. Similarly, constitutional provisions against establishment of state religion limits the powers of government to sponsor the popularisation of the religious discourses of those scholars who are opposed to radicalisation. Over the last four decades, some Nigerian scholars have contributed to radicalization in different ways says:

- i. Articulating division and raising tension through religious polemics;
- ii. Creating a climate of opinion favourable to radicalization;
- iii. Constructing Muslims victimhood through farfetched conspiracy theories;
- iv. Resorting to ridiculing and demonizing opponents and perceived enemies; and
- v. Producing implicit justification for physical violence.²¹

Conclusion

Peaceful coexistence in Nigeria is possible but not easy. Religious and political leaders should relentlessly preach peaceful lifestyles both privately and publicly. Thus, our nation will become a better and a more peaceful country to live in if this is done. Our religious values that are consistently being under assault by foreign non-African, and non-religious/ cultural values must be defended by *da'wah* scholars, religious organizations and religious leaders as well. This is because religion itself has been based on values and accepted norms and practices. With that, we can jointly better our societies.

Recommendations

- i.** Scholars willing to articulate authentic Islamic theological refutation of radical discourses are clearly potential partners, and should be given all the encouragement to do so. Demonisation of the others can be exposed as contrary to the Islamic respect for human dignity. Constructions of Muslims victimhood and supporting conspiracy theories must be challenged with convicting empirical facts. In addition, the high potential of demonisation which leads to violence should be highlighted to serve as a deterrent.
- ii.** The grave potential of radicalisation to escalate into violence should amply be illustrated by publicising the terrible consequences of violence on the lives of specific individuals who have been traumatised in so many different ways. Video recording of their testimonies should be massively aired in order to make potential recruits to realise the grave consequences of radicalisation on fellow human beings,
- iii.** The centrality of mass and portable media in creating a climate of opinion favourable to radicalisation should be frontally confronted through constant monitoring of the radical discourses recorded and spread in mass and portable media as well as cell phones, internet websites and social media. Once new radicalising discourses are identified, forceful rebuttals should be immediately mounted through the same media.
- iv.** Radicalised individuals and groups who resort to violence should be firmly contained. Where it is necessary to deploy security forces, utmost caution is imperative. Rules of engagement should be observed scrupulously to minimize negative impact on law-abiding citizens. Radical groups and individuals who eschew violence should be monitored and controlled through policies and programmes that should be geared towards preventing them from becoming violent. The struggle against radicalisation is going to be long and hard, but it must be pursued with carefully crafted policies and programmes that should be tactfully implemented.

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THE ROLE OF MUSLIM WOMEN DA'WAH ORGANIZATIONS IN DERADICALIZING POLITICAL ACTIVITIES IN NASARAWA STATE

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Introduction

The call to Islam is not confined to one person or group of persons for a particular time or place; it is a responsibility to be shared by every Muslim (Men and Women), each according to his capacity and potential. Allah says:

Say (O Muhammad S A W) This is my way; I invite to Allah (i.e. to the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism) with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me (also must invite others to Allah i.e. to the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism with sure knowledge). And Glorified and Exalted is Allah (above all that they associate as partners with Him). And I am not of the *Mushrikun* (Polytheists; those who worship others along with Allah or set up rivals or partners to Allah). (Q 12:108)

This command is found in the following Hadith of the Prophet SAW. The reads thus:

He who amongst you sees something abominable should modify it with the help of his hands; and if he has no strength enough to do it, then he should do it with his tongue, and if he has no strength enough to do it, (even) then he should (abhor it) from his heart, and that is the least of faith. (Muslim, Vol. 1, 79).

The above Qur'anic verse and Hadith indicate that *Da'wah* is a responsibility of every Muslim irrespective of his gender. This is why Muslim women have actively participated during the early Muslim generations in the spread of Islam and general religious, social, economic, political and even military affairs of the Muslim community in order to maintain the true teaching of Islam and safeguard it from decay and contamination.

Political thuggery, especially at election may range from such acts as inciting or causing others to act in disorderly manner, being in illegal possession of or usage of offensive weapons with the aim to scare or intimidate voters, snatching or destruction of election materialism resulting into undue influence as by compelling

any person to vote or refrain from voting against his/her with ballot stuffing (Kabiru).

This illegal interference with the electoral process no doubt is electoral fraud, is criminal and has severe consequences on democratic stability in general and national security in particular.

In a broader sense however, what has been the political thuggery witnessed in the nation democratic experience especially in 2007 and 2011 dispensation? In what ways does this affect the nation's democratic development and security? How does Islam grapple with this?

Islam is a religion of peace. It is a religion that leads mankind from the depths of darkness and ignorance towards the path of light and knowledge (O. Abdul Fatah). The literal meaning of Islam, which is derived from the Arabic word '*Salaam*', means peace. In short, Islam means peace acquired by humans through total submission to the will of the Almighty Allah. (Abou El. Fadl).

Political Activities in Nasarawa State

Nasarawa State comprises thirteen local government areas namely Akwanga, Awe, Doma, Karu, Keffi, Kokona, Keana, Lafia, Naasarawa, Nasarawa Eggon, Obi, Toto and Wamba which are divided into three senatorial zone as Lafia zone comprises of Awe, Doma, Keana, Obi and Lafia local Government respectively. Geographically, Nasarawa State is bounded in the North by Kaduna State, in the East by Plateau, in the west by Taraba State and in the South Benue State. A network of roads exists within the State, linking all the rural areas and major towns.

The political structure of the area comprises the Governor, members of the National Assembly which consist of One Senator representing each senatorial zones and Two members of the house of representative, twenty four members of the State house of Assembly, thirteen Chairmen of Local government councils and their councilors as well as the overall elective democratic political structure which has to do with the President of the Federation

The political activities of Nasarawa State has been one of tension and with various vices whereby the politicians will use any means to get into power and this is usually made manifest during election periods when various form of election malpractices are manifested. This includes stealing of ballot boxes, intimidation and threats to opponents, assault, assassination, harassment, maiming and killing. This trend is not a recent phenomenon as thuggery, brutality and violent political behavior have been with us since independence (Kabiru 12).

Activities of Muslim Women Organization in Nasarawa State

The activities of women *Da'wah* organization in Nasarawa State may be seen as very significant considering the activities of politics and politicians in the State. We can, however, identify a handful of the qualified women who propagate the message of Islam in Nasarawa State from different Islamic organizations. Among them is

Hajiya Lantana Muhammad *Dan-Iya* of *Jama'atu Nasrul Islam* who champions the course of *Da'wah* among women in Lafia. Again, Malama Safiya of FOMWAN is also another figure in the activities of women in *Da'wah* in Nasarawa State, for she has been trying tirelessly in educating and enlightening Muslim (men and women) not only in Lafia, but the state at large.

These women scholars in Nasarawa State and the efforts made by them is so significant. These women scholars includes Hajiya Sa'adatu Hassan Liman, Malama Fatima and others who often engage in the propagation of the message of Islam thereby helping in reforming both moral and intellectual disposition of people of Nasarawa state. However, let it be clear that Muslim women from various Islamic organization involved in *Da'wah* activities in Nasarawa State and helped tremendously in deradicalizing political activities in the State facing many challenges while engaging in *Da'wah* activities. This can be seen in the way and manner the respondents (who are mainly involved either directly or indirectly in the activities of *Da'wah* in Nasarawa State), have cried out about the nature of the challenges they have been faced with each time the *Da'wah* activity takes place.

One important aspect of *Da'wah* in Nasarawa state is the establishment of state-owned women Islamic *Da'wah* groups as well as the introduction of women wings of branches of different Islamic organizations in Nigeria. Such organizations include Women in *Da'wah*, *Jama'atul Nasril Islam* (JNI), *Jama'atul Izalatil Bid'awa Iqamatis Sunnah* (JIBWIS), Muslim Students Society of Nigeria (MSSN), Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria (FOMWAN) and a lot of others in different communities of Nasarawa State.

The activities of Women Da'awa in Nasarawa State include among others, house-to-house visits by women da'awah leaders, public interactions by women da'awah leaders to the markets, business centres etc with many people, office-to-office visits for reminder and interaction, media campaigns through television, radio, facebook, social media, which include whatsapp, instagram, wechat and even in digital media satellites in the State. The women da'awah also perform the activities of preaching, teaching, recitation, communication, organization of conferences, seminars, workshops and other means of conveying and communicating the message of Allah to the public. Infact the use of whatsapp medium for da'awah activities has become so common and effective among wowed in Nasarawa State as it is becoming more effective in Nasarawa State where Muslim women are seen opening channels and forum for whatsapp communication and interaction. Musliim women are seen on television and radio delivering sermons and preaching to the public particularly the youth for them abstain from radicalism and thuggery as it is a mischief in the land.

Role of Muslim Women Organization in Deradicalizing Political Activities in Nasarawa Stete

In an oral interview with one of the du'at, Hauwa Abubakar, she lamented that “we undertake *Da'wah* in different ways; we undertake it through radio, through posters or billboards; we undertake it by writing and sometimes we organize events where

we invite politicians and their supporters across the State”. According to her, they took *Da’wah* from one local government to the other, starting from Akwanga Local Government to Keana Local Government, to Doma Local Government and back to Lafia Local Government, all within the state. She also noted that sometimes they take it themselves (meaning they organize the *Da’wah* events themselves), other times the government or security agencies invite them to go and conduct *Da’wah*, most especially when there is an election, either at the State or Local government levels. When asked about what they preach to politicians and their supporters who were their target audience, Hajiya Hauwa said: “we preach the truth; we tell our Muslim brothers and sisters to uphold the religion of Allah in any way they can; like being .obedient completely to their Creator... in upholding the religion of Allah, praying as at when due and holding their tongues against backbiting is also upholding the religion of Allah”. We also preach to them to desist from anything that has to do with radicalism, mischief making and thuggery. This is in reference to the verses of the Qur’an where Allah SWT detest mischief making, thuggery and waging war against Allah and His Messenger. The Qur’an says:

The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger and strive to make mischief in the land is only this, that they should be murdered or crucified, or their hands and their feet should be cut off on opposite sides or they should be imprisoned, this shall be as a disgrace for them in this world; and in the hereafter they shall have a grievous chastisement (Q5v33).

One member of audience, by name Salamanu Idris (from Wamba Local Government) who has benefitted from the *Da’wah* provided more information on how he got involved in political thuggery to the extent of promising to kill anybody who opposed him but when one of the officials came and preached to them telling them what is expected to them as candidates in one of their meeting with the security he understand that its Allah that gives power when He wishes to those He wishes and at the time He wishes . Not only that, they had earlier taught him along with other contestants the rules of politics and how to go about getting things right. In another oral interview with Uwan Masu from Ungwar Maina, Lafia, it was revealed that “the activities of the women who work under Jama’atu Nasrul Islam is propagation of the religion of Islam in all ramifications. This is because despite a number of challenges that they’ve been facing, e.g. inadequate number of women *Da’wah* workers and some logistics problems, they are working tirelessly to discharge their duties”. Look at how they undertake the work of preaching peace to people during the 2015 election campaign which make people to behaved in a normal sense and that election differs with the other previous ones in terms of peace and credibility.

In an interview with one of the women who have been attending *Da’wah* programmes organized by FOMWAN in Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Hajiya Sa’datu Maji, it was noted that the group is really doing well in their activities. The only problems with the activities of the group are that of language barrier which made their target audience think that their programmes are elite centred, and that they do not organize the programmes regularly, unless when

there are events such as Hijab day, wedding or naming ceremony, rituals like burial rites, etc. In her words Hajiya Khadijat Liman Bala: “The language they are using is mostly English; and not everybody understand English but they used it because most of their programmes on politics is carried out via television and radio and those that handle the programmes are using English in anchoring them . Again, they organize programme, and when people enjoyed it, they advance it and people do come in their numbers. On her own part, *Munirat* Shehu Abdullahi, a member from Lafia Local Government of the state, she noted that the participation of women in FOMWAN related events is by women who are western-based, and that most times they talk in foreign language. “Let me ask you, how many of us women understand English? You hear them on radio, or you see them on TV speaking English! Let them employ the services of people who will speak to us in the language of our forefathers.

Regarding the messages they spread about Islam Hajiya Lantana Babansoro, the *Ameerah* of women in Da’wah in Nasarawa State, she said they include, “enjoining people to show total obedience to Allah and to render their services to their Creator, because Allah, the most High says:

And I (Allah) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone) (51:56).

She continued by highlighting the highpoints of their messages to the people like telling them about the kind of politics Muslim should involve in doing it, which she said “must most not be a do or die affair, and that they should fear Allah wherever they are even if nobody can see them, because surely Allah sees them from their hiding places. Corroborating her point further, *Malama* Lantana quoted a prophetic Hadith about *Ihsaan*, where the Prophet (SAW) was asked about it and he said:

Worship Allah as if He is in front of you visible (as if you were seeing Him), for if you are not seeing Him, He is seeing you (Muslim 2, vol, 1).

At this juncture, she narrated a heartrending story about some groups of political supporters in the State where they received a report through some women who came to attend to their sensitization workshop that some sisters who followed politicians from one places to another majority of them were Muslims but involving in political thuggery to the extent of taking drugs that will make them to be out of their senses.

However, on a general note, there is progress in our activities despite the challenges they face, she noted. Adding that with the *Da’wah* they undertake to towns and villages, there is real improvement now. “People are trooping in to attend our programmes. And with our monthly official meetings, where we meet and brainstorm with *Ameerah* of each local governments and other officials, new ideas on how to take Da’wah higher in Nasarawa State keep coming. And like Allah (SWT) says in the Qur’an:

...Allah is with those who are patient ...(Q 2:153)

Again, Allah says to His Messenger (SAW):

Invite (mankind, O Muhammad S A W) to the Way of your Lord (i.e. Islam) with wisdom (i. e. with the Divine Revelation and the Qur'an) and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is best. (Q 16: 125)

If the Prophet of Allah had had difficulties administering *Da'wah* himself (which was his sole objective as declared by Allah), because people had taunted him, said and bad things to him and Allah Himself was calming him down, telling him to be patient, that He is with those who are patient, then who are we not to expect such things or even worse? This serves as a light to our guiding principles. So, wherever we go and we are faced with any kind of challenge, we adapt and rise above it. And if they still invite us another day, we gladly accept the invitation and respond to it".

In her final words, Lantana wished to develop the upcoming youngsters (younger ladies who are conscious of Islam) into full-fledged scholars of tomorrow so that "as time is no longer on our side, while we are gone or too old to handle the *Da'wah* activities, the younger ones can continue from where we stopped. That has been my dream".

Moreover, a participant who has been attending the programmes of Women in *Da'wah* in Nasarawa State from Nasarawa Local Government Area of Nasarawa State in person of *Alhaji Bawa* lamented that most of the programmes of this women group "are so interested...like the those held in Lafia, Keffi and *Doma*. They are here too but and we really feel their impact. May be because we are in the remote place or so, it takes long before we see them organize programmes here to teach us moral things".

From the Nasarawa State Coordinator for Women in *Da'wah* in Nasarawa State, Hajiya Aisha Ibrahim *Madayana* we were made to understand that the group does attend different kinds of programmes when invited even if the programmes are not really Islamic inclined. According to her, "This is one of the ways we can penetrate in moulding the behavior of people politically and otherwise in the state, and to sell the idea of what is good and what is bad so that the things they will be told that things they are doing have no place in Islam". She also added that it is a good omen that people, do cooperate and attend their programmes en masse, unlike before when even their political background used to prevent them from attending programmes of this nature.

The Journey Sofar

It is observed that these problems of political radicalization if not tackled by giving an immediate attention through writing an academic research, especially at this point in time, the situation will escalate and become worst. Daily occurrence of the activities of political thuggery which even went to the extent of communal and religious crisis in Nasarawa State in particular and the country at large makes it necessary for an academic writing to suggest solution to Muslim and a way forward

for our people concerning their involvement in political thuggery. With the assistance and role played by women women Da'awah organization in Nasarawa State, to people involved in political activities peacefully without any bitterness. Most of the contestants accepts defeat and their supporters also support without fighting each other. In an interview with officials of different Political groups and their supporters such as Hon Idris Sulaiman Dan Sauka, Hon Ayuba wandai, Hashimu Gurku, Bar. Brass Yaji and Muhammad from Keffi, Nasarawa, Karu, Kokona and Toto respectively, they affirm that political radicalization is reduced with the efforts of Muslim women Da'wah in that zone unlike before when their political activities is characterized by hatred, black mail, killings and hate speeches.

In their parts Umar Muhammad Jibrin, Muhammad Abdullahi and Yusuf Wamba from Akwanga, Nasarawa Eggon and Wamba, they lamented that the efforts of Muslim women Da'wah organizations in radicalizing political activities in Nasarawa North senatorial zone in particular and Nasarawa State in general cannot be over emphasis, since with the role they played things are now going smoothly without any rancor. To the politicians from the Southern zone including Muhammad Sarkin Gabas, Gambo baba Okoshi, Abdulkarim Abdullahi, Alhaji Uba Doma and Muhammad Gadara of Lafia, Obi,Awe, Doma and Keana respectively, agreed that the activities of Muslim Women Da'wah organizations helped greatly in reducing the problem in the political circle of Nasarawa State.

Conclusion

Based on the foregoing analysis and summary, the researchers has found a common ground to conclude upon. This is because the entire work from the start to this point has given the researchers some lights to conclude on the fact that all women *Da'wah* groups actively present in Nasarawa State have been playing their roles (to an extent) in the propagation of the message of Allah in deradicalizing political activities in Nasarawa State.

It may also be concluded based on the research findings that most of these women *Da'wah* groups do hold *Da'wah* programmes regularly which may have been one of the factors helping the speedy development of the women *Da'wah* activities in Nasarawa State. It could finally be concluded based on the findings that despite facing some challenges, the women *Da'wah* groups in Nasarawa State have had positive impact on the lives of Muslim in the state.

Recommendations

Following the findings of this study as summarized and concluded upon here, the study wishes to put forward its recommendations for improvement that:

1. The government as well as the private individuals should show readiness to augment the efforts of the women *Da'wah* groups in Nasarawa State through financial and any other support to get them well prepared for the service of Allah whenever and wherever they are called upon to deliver *Da'wah* services;

2. The women *Da'wah* groups, especially the FOMWAN and the MSSN should try to identify from amongst them those who are at home with the leading language of the community where their programme is held, so that even if it means holding two sessions (one in English and the other in language of the community in question) in order to get their message well delivered;
3. To the people of the State generally who have been attending and benefitting from the *Da'wah* programmes organized by the aforesaid women *Da'wah* groups, they should be patient, active, resilient, respectful towards their visitors who often come to deliver the word of truth about their religion and put whatever they hear in to practice.

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Table of Interviewees

S/N	Name	Age	Occupation	Organization/Rank	Place of interview	Date of interview
1.	Hajiya Hauwa Abubakar	45	Civil Servant	Civil Servant	Nasarawa State Muslim Pilgrim Board	23/6/205
2.	Idris Sulaiman Dan-Sauka	38	Politician	APC Cheftain	Keffi LGC Secretariat	22/2/2018
3.	Hon. Ayuba Wandai	48	Politician	APC EX officio I	Ang. Dutse Nasarawa	30/05/2018
4.	Bar. Brass Yaji	47	politician	Former Commissioner of Commerce	Ayi's Palace	22/2/2018
5.	Hashimu Gurku	42	Politician	Present Chaiman Karu LGC	Karu LGC Secretariat	14/06/2018
6.	Uwan Musa	45	House Wife	Member J.NI	Lafia	27/05/2018
7.	Muhammad Toto	40	Student	Principal GSS Toto	GSS Toto	30/05/2018
8.	Sa'adatu Maji	42	Civil Servant	Formwan Member	Angwan Yan Sanda Keffi	22/9/2018
9.	Munirat Shehu	37	Civil Servant	Member Formwan Member	Emirs Palace Lafia	14/06/2018
10.	Lantana M. Dan Iya	55	House Wife	Amirah Women in Dawwah	Rimi Uku Lafia	30/5/2018
11.	Malama Fatima Abdullahi Keffi	49	House wife	Member Dawah	Pada Keffi	10/06/2018
12.	Aisha Ibrahim Madayana	45	House wife	Nasarawa State coordinator women in Dawah	Kadarko Keffi	14/06/2018
13.	Khadija Liman Bala	33	Civil Servant	Amirah MSSN	Ungwan Nepa Keffi	14/06/2018
14.	Umar Muhammad Jibrin	29	Student	PDP Member	ANG Dan Kanzo	18/05/2018
15.	Alh. Uba Muhammad Doma	50	Student	APGA cHAIMAN	Collage of Agric Lafia	27/05/2018
16.	Yusuf Wamba	61	Retired Civil Servant	PDP member	Angwan Traffic Wamba	22/05/2018
17.	Abdulkarim Abdullahi	41	Politician	APC Chairman Awe	APC Secretariat Awe	27/05/2018
18.	Muhammad Gadara	39	Civil Servant	Youth Leader	Keana LGA Primary Education Authority	28/06/2018
19.	Baba Okoshi	43	Teacher	Islamic Scholar	Sheikh Sarki Hayatul Iman Lafia	28/05/2018
20.	Sarkin Gabas	72	Traditional Title Holder	J.N.I Official	Lafia LGA Vetinary	28/05/2018

Lessons from Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) Dialogue in Madinah: A Solution to Radicalization among the Muslims in Nigeria

Shehu Abdur-Rahman Aboki, *Ph.D*
and
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Introduction

Nigeria is currently experiencing increasingly volatile relations between its Muslim and Christian communities. Destabilization of this strategically crucial West African state would ripple through the region and beyond if precipitated by new confrontations among politicized Muslims and Christians. (Dickson 5).

Nigeria has one of the largest concentrations of Muslims in the world, and Islam has played a leading role in its politics. Nigeria is not an Islamic State, as it is under a democratic government with a 'multi-faith constitution' and the rule of law. Nevertheless, Islam is important in Nigeria, with impacts on politics and social life. It is a old religion, with millions of people subscribing to the faith. In many historical periods, Islam has served as a unifying force (as in the case of the Sokoto Caliphate during the nineteenth century). It has also contributed in many ways to Nigeria's development, notably in providing the sources to organize politics and society, fostering community cohesion, and creating an ideology of change (Falola3).

Nigeria cannot be understood without Islam. The areas of intersection between Islam and politics are significant. First, the government's inability to promote development or enhance living standards will continue to make Islam an alternative "ideology" to organize change and seek better or alternative solutions to a myriad of problems. In different historical epochs, Islam has expressed itself as a revolutionary religion and political ideology. Second, and consequent upon the first, tensions will continue to mount in the country, and they will take various forms, including inter- and intra-religious conflicts. Within Muslims, sectarian conflicts are unlikely to disappear and different political parties and interest groups will seek to gain political power to further specific interests. Economic decline can promote such tensions and the political class can manipulate them to its advantage. Third, Muslim leaders and Organizations are very efficient and astute at building regional and international solidarity networks to push their claims and gain strength in greater numbers. (Falola 6).

Muslims and non-Muslims do not necessarily agree upon a number of major issues: the nature of the Nigerian foundation; the distribution of federal positions to ambitious members of the political class; the continuation or not of the English legal system; the retention of Nigeria as a federal structure etc.

Peace is viewed as an outcome and goal of life to be achieved only after full submission to the will of Allah. Thus, peace has internal, personal as well as social applications, and Allah is the source and sustainer of such peace. Accordingly, the most effective way to ensure peace is by total submission to Allah's Will expressed in Islam without going to the extreme, which is a precursor to radicalisation. Shunning violence and aggression in all its forms has been another primary focus of Islamic values and tradition. Many verses of the Qur'an stress this principle, among them is thus:

Whenever they kindle the fire of war, God extinguishes it.
They strive to create disorder on earth and God loves not those
who create disorder. (Qur'an 5:64).

Nigeria is a pluralistic country with over two hundred and fifty languages and four hundred dialects, many political parties with a good number participating actively in general elections, two major world religions many natural resources scattered all over the country essential for our corporate existence. The indices are therefore looming for conflicts if not well managed and unfortunately, Nigerians have had to and will still face the consequences if a proper way of relating together as a nation is not found. In order to achieve peace and promote peaceful co-existence, the paper considers the concept of dialogue as the most potent instrument especially as it is contained in the Madinan Charter, anchored by Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Fortunately, the President has promised to reduce the spate of crises in the country and bring trouble makers to book. Because of the easy way people interpret the crises in the northern states as religious, it was proposed to concentrate on how dialogue could help reduce the frequency of crises in the northern parts of the country (Idowu-Fearon 2).

The entire Qur'an gives a message of hope, faith, and peace to a faith community of over one billion people. The overwhelming message is that peace and justice among fellow human beings are to be found through faith in Allah (SWT). Throughout the Qur'an, Muslims are reminded that they are not the only ones who worship Allah. Jews and Christians are called "People of the Book," meaning people who have also received previous revelations from Allah Who we all worship. The Qur'an also commands Muslims to protect from harm not only mosques, but also monasteries, synagogues, and churches all in the bid to foster unity and peaceful coexistence (Qur'an 22: 40).

Conceptual Definitions

1 Dialogue

Dialogue is a conversation between two different positions. (*Dia* – two; as opposed to monologue). It implies negotiation of opposing points of view with the specific aim of achieving consensus or agreement. It is a process of shared thinking and enquiry, using words to explore complex situations, a formal discussion between

two groups or countries especially when they want to solve a problem, end a disagreement etc. (Oxford Advance Learners' Dictionary)

David Bohm saw dialogue as “a stream of meaning flowing among and through us and between us... out of which will emerge some new understanding”. Some other terms that could imply this meaning include the following:

Discussion – unpicking other people's arguments, and refining your own.

Deliberation – more reflective conversation – trying to establish a consensus or decision.

Debate – winning (or losing) an argument.

Dialogue – process of mutual exploration to create mutual understanding.

Dialogue from all genuine perspectives is aimed at conflict resolution, understanding the other, mediation, family counselling, business strategising and a host of other purposes for which dialogue sessions are held. It is essentially to get people talking to each other in an open and respectful way. By participating in inter-faith dialogue; members of faith communities are encouraged to undertake positive interaction, learning and exploration of each other's' beliefs, with the purpose of developing understanding and respect.

Dialogue can lead to people developing a better understanding of one another; celebrating the values held in common whilst acknowledging distinctiveness. There are a range of approaches to inter-faith dialogue. One of such approaches might focus more on sharing personal understandings of religion and society or discussing the basis in different religions for social action and doing something together such as volunteering.

To speak about Dialogue there are four forms, without claiming to establish among them any order of priority:

- a) The dialogue of life, where people strive to live in an open and neighborly spirit, sharing their joys and sorrows, their human problems and preoccupations.
- b) The dialogue of action, in which people collaborate for the integral development and liberation of those in bondage of any kind.
- c) The dialogue of theological exchange, where specialists seek to deepen their understanding of their respective religious heritages, and to appreciate each other's' spiritual values.
- d) The dialogue of religious experience, where persons, rooted in their own religious traditions, share their spiritual riches, for instance with regards to prayer and contemplation, faith and ways of searching for Allah or the Absolute. (Riyanto 3). Dialogue is often challenged by radicalisation, a process leading to extremism.

2 Radicalisation

There is no universally accepted definition in academia or government as to what is actually meant by ‘radicalisation’. The concept of radicalisation is by no means as solid and clear as many seem to take for granted. Above all, it cannot be understood on its own. The Expert Group on Violent Radicalisation established by the European Commission in 2006, tasked to analyse the state of academic research on radicalisation to violence, in particular terrorism, noted in 2008 that ‘radicalisation’ is a context-bound phenomenon par excellence. Global, sociological and political drivers matter as much as ideological and psychological ones’. (Expert Group 7) This expert group utilised a concise working definition of violent radicalization, ‘socialization to extremism which manifests itself in terrorism’. (Expert Group, 7)

Radicalisation referred to the actual use of violence, with escalation in terms of forms and intensity. It may be understood as a process leading towards the increased use of political violence; a process characterized by increased commitment to and use of violent means and strategies in political conflicts. Radicalization from this point of view entails a change in perceptions towards polarizing and absolute definitions of a given situation, and the articulation of increasingly ‘radical’ aim and objectives. It may evolve from enmity towards certain social groups, or societal institutions and structure. It may also entail the increasing use of violent means. It could be more profitably analysed as a process of interaction between violent groups and their environment, or an effect of interactions between mutually hostile actors. (Alex 6)

Functionally, political radicalisation is increased preparation for and commitment to inter-group conflict. Descriptively, radicalization means change in beliefs, feelings, and behaviours in directions that increasingly justify intergroup violence and demand sacrifice in defense of the group. Radicalization can be generally understood to be the strategic use of physical force to influence several audiences. (Donatella *et all* 4)

Dialogue in Islam

Dialogue in Islam is predicated upon Qur’an edict where Allah (SWT) commands believers to call on non-believers to a common subject that binds them. (Q3:64)

Dialogue in Islam would be seen in the Prophet’s Diplomacy, particularly in the popular Madinan Charter. This is the first Constitution that existed in the History of mankind. The Prophet (SAW) constructed the Laws and the Constitution of the people of Madinah. This was neither conference constitution nor the Prophet’s opinion but is the Revelation of Allah to guide mankind towards a strong and sustained political Administration, and was the most just Constitution in human life which people accept with appreciation. Meanwhile the relevant portions of the Madinan Charter will form the next discussion.

The text of the Constitution

Below is the constitution of Madinah which is also known as the Madinan charter.

BISMILLAHIR RAHMANIR RAHIM

1. This is a document from Muhammad the Prophet (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), governing relations between the Believers i.e. Muslims of *Quraysh* and *Yathrib* and those who followed them and worked hard with them. They form one nation - *Ummah*.
2. In case of war with anybody they will redeem their prisoners with kindness and justice common among Believers. (Not according to pre-Islamic nations where the rich and the poor were treated differently).
3. In case of war with anybody all parties other than Muslims will redeem their prisoners with kindness and justice according to practice among Believers and not in accordance with pre-Islamic notions.
4. *The Bani Saeeda, the Bani Harith, the Bani Jusham and the Bani Najjar will be governed on the lines of the above (principles)*
5. *The Bani Amr, Bani Awf, Bani Al-Nabeet, and Bani Al-Aws will be governed in the same manner.*
6. Believers will not fail to redeem their prisoners; they will pay blood money on their behalf. It will be a common responsibility of the *Ummah* and not of the family of the prisoners to pay blood money.

Allah is the Protector of the good people and those who fear Allah, and Muhammad (May Allah bless him and grant him peace) is the Messenger of Allah (He guarantees protection for those who are good and fear Allah) (Gloush 231).

It is about 57 clause that stated in the charter.

These provisions of the Madinan Pact if appropriately studied give an impression of agreement between people of diverse backgrounds on a promise to live together with common understanding, peace and harmony. It is important to point out however that differences actually exists among those who formed the pact either as a larger group of Muslims or non-Muslims but the acceptance of the agreement among them is an indication of a commitment to live in peace with each other. It was indeed, a pointer to dialogue, – process of mutual exploration to create mutual understanding of one another for peaceful coexistence against radicalization.

The first part of the Charter was a consensus over the established custom and nobody acts contrary except that the entire community will rise against such uprising. Secondly, no one suffers any inequity on account of his religious, tribal or cultural affinity on a strong resolve for astute unity of the community. In this

situation, any form or traces of radicalization is considered a case against the State. Thirdly, every member of the Pact will contribute to the welfare and success of the Community in times of peace within and or war against a common enemy. Finally, the affairs of the Community under the Pact, is committed to the protection of Allah (SWT) and Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is the witness to that agreement. The implication is that all matters revolving around all groups involved in the Madinan Agreement are to be referred to Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW). Thus no group grew radical against peaceful coexistence of the Community. If Nigeria on a larger scale can trade along the same spirit, the nation will once again experience peace to the glory of Allah (SWT) the Creator. Reference at this point in time should be made to *al-Qur'an* and *Sunnah* of the Prophet (SAW) on divine provisions for peace-building against radical attitudes.

The teachings of Qur'an and Sunnah on Dialogue - Peace-Building and non-Radical attitudes

Al-Qur'an is very clear about dialogue with people of other faiths. Many people are under the impression that Muslims are close-minded and unwilling to engage in discussion with people of other faiths. The Qur'an offers very explicit guidelines and encouragement for Muslims to engage in interfaith dialogue. At all times, Muslims must show the best of manners and wisdom when speaking of faith to others. One must listen carefully, and share opinions with careful thought and patience. Qur'an says;

Invite (all) to the Way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: for thy Lord knoweth best, who have strayed from His Path, and who receive guidance. (Qur'an 16:125).

Muslims and non-Muslims alike must realize that invitation to the truth is premised upon wisdom and considerate reference to background of the person been invited. In the event that argument ensued, it (dialogue) must be carried out in ways that are best and mutually benefitting to both parties. Qur'an also confirms:

And do not argue with the followers of the Book except by what is best, save with those of them who act unjustly, and say: We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you, and our God and your God is One, and to Him do we submit" (Qur'an 29:46).

A very critical point of dialogue is initiated in this verse. As seen in provisions of the Madinan Pact, a common ground for all parties to the dialogue process is to recognize the supremacy of Allah as the Creator of all; and submission to Him cannot be compromised. More so, the entire community will rise against any unjust perpetrators as well as those found with radical tendencies. And Qur'an says again when it comes to dealing with such attitudes, that justice must be upheld even in the

minutest aspects of speech and the greatest part of fulfilling the covenant of Allah (SWT).

...Whenever you speak, speak justly, even if a near relative is concerned; and fulfill the covenant of God. Thus does He command you that you may remember" (Qur'an 6:152).

Recognize that guidance is the prerogative of Allah and of Him alone. Do not feel discouraged if people seem unconvinced by your beliefs, and are unwilling to share your faith. Allah (SWT) alone is the One to guide peoples' hearts to truth and there is no compulsion in accepting your call. Qur'an confirms:

Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error: whoever rejects evil and believes in Allah hath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks, and Allah heareth and knoweth all things" (Qur'an 2:256).

If Allah (SWT) had so willed, He could have made mankind one people: but they will not cease to dispute because of divergence of opinions and backgrounds (Qur'an 11:118) What is required is patience, for patience is from Allah; nor should there be grieve over them or distress oneself because of their plots. Allah is with those who restrain themselves and those who do well. (Qur'an 16:127-128).

If you face someone who persistently ridicules or mocks your faith, and is obviously unwilling to listen to your point of view, quietly withdraw from the situation. Do not become angry or engage in un-healthy arguments. Qur'an explains:

He has already revealed to you in the Scripture, that when you hear the signs of Allah held in defiance and ridicule, you are not to sit with them unless they turn to a different theme. If you did, you would be like them..." (Qur'an 4:140).

Our best bet in these situations as enunciated in the Glorious Qur'an is patience with what they say, and to celebrate (constantly) the praises of Allah at all times so that we might achieve spiritual joy. (Qur'an 20:130)

Scholars as practitioners of peace-building in Islam explain the need for an Islamic non-violent paradigm in the following ways:

- 1 The historical period has changed and therefore, the use of violence as a means to resolve differences or to spread the faith is no longer religiously permissible. Whatever Muslims used to create, establish, or spread their faith fourteen hundred years ago is not valid for today's reality. Therefore, if Islamic culture and tradition would thrive and prosper again, both Muslim leaders and people have to adopt a non-violent approach to address their differences and conduct their lives;
- 2 The status of the Muslim community in a global system and in local communities has changed enormously, and it does not permit the use of

- violence. Many Muslim communities live as minorities in the world; their economic, social, and political status is different from six to seven centuries ago, when they were the majority or the dominant force in their regions and outside of them;
- 3 Global economic and political systems that have been developing over the last century prohibit the use of violence, particularly weapons of mass destruction, in settling conflicts;
 - 4 The new global reality, weaponry systems, and warfare leave neither Muslims nor Christians any choice but to abandon violence because the prescribed limits of violence cannot be assured; (5) the use of violence as a means to address conflict was a minor element in the life of the Prophet (SAW) and in Scripture, therefore, it should not occupy as much attention or importance today. The *Hadith* and Islamic tradition, and history and culture are all rich sources for examples of non-violence and peace-building. (Satha-Anand in Abu-Nimer 28);

Supporters of the non-violent Islam hypothesis often rely on the Makkan period of the Prophet's life (SAW), (610-622 C.E.), when the Prophet (SAW) showed no inclination towards the use of force in any form, even for self defense. Of the 23-year period of prophethood, the initial 13 years were spent by the Prophet (SAW) in Makkah. He fully adopted the way of pacifism or nonviolence during this time. There were many such issues in Makkah at the time which could have been the subject of clash and confrontation. But, by avoiding all such issues, he strictly limited his sphere to peaceful propagation of the word of Allah (Khan 25). So he lived a life of non-violent resistance, which was reflected in all his instructions and teachings during that period when Muslims were a minority. His teachings were focused on values of patience and steadfastness in facing oppression. This was also evident in Madinah and that was the spirit inherent in the Madinan Pact.

Moreover, many *Ahadith* of the Prophet (SAW) illustrate the importance of peace building and patience. Jawdat Said summarizes several of these sayings in an attempt to prove the pacifist nature of Islam, particularly when the dispute involves two Muslims:

I don't see anyone in this world who clearly explained when it is incumbent upon a Muslim to behave like (Abel) the son of Adam! Nor does anyone teach the Muslims that the Messenger of God said to his Companion Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas, '*kun ka-ibni Adam* (Be as the son of Adam)!' at the time when Muslims turn to fight one another. The Prophet ((SAW)) said to his Companion Abu Dharr al Ghifari in a similar situation, when Abu Dharr asked him, 'But what if someone entered into my home (to kill me)?' The Prophet replied: 'If you fear to look upon the gleam of the sword raised to strike you, then cover your face with your robe. Thus will he bear the sin of killing you as well as his own sin.' And

in the same situation, the Prophet (s) told his Companion Abu Musa al-Asha'ri: 'Break your bows, sever your strings, beat stones on your swords (to break the blades); and when infringed upon by one of the perpetrators, be as the best of Adam's two sons' (Abu Dawud 35, no. 4246).

The lessons herein support a non-violent response, even in a confrontational context. It is reflected in the story of Abel (*Habil*) and Cain (*Qabil*), personalities representing the two opposing ways of approaching life and conflict. Abel is representative of justice and righteousness, refusing to soil his hands with blood. Cain represents aggression and readiness to use violence or even kill on any pretext. Allah mentions this:

God accepts the sacrifice only of those who are righteous. If He has not accepted your sacrifice, how is it my fault? If you will lift your hand to slay me, I shall not lift mine to slay you. I am afraid of God's displeasure, who is the Creator of the worlds (Qur'an 5:27-28)

Peacemaking and negotiation are recommended as the first strategy to resolve conflicts, as clearly expressed in the Qur'an:

If they incline to peace, you should also incline to it, and trust in God" (Qur'an 8:39).

Even if justice rather than non-violence and peace were the ultimate goal of Islamic religious teaching, pursuing peace through non-violent strategies is a viable and effective method to achieving that justice, particularly when such methods are used to empower the victims of injustice. Scholars identified several principles and techniques in Islam that support non-violent resistance, such as tolerance, persuasion, arguing, suffering, patience, civil disobedience and withdrawal of cooperation, rejecting injustice, strikes, emigration, boycotting, diplomacy, publicity, propaganda, and special rituals (fasting, parallel lines of prayer, religious chanting) (Abu-Nimer 34).

Nigeria should learn from Malaysia and use that as a role model to re-define inter-communal relations. Islamic Malays, Hindu Tamils, and Confucian Chinese, don't love each other, never have done, and never will that is for sure, but one thing they have learnt via determined and enlightened political leadership, is to respect and accommodate their differences while being able to politically share power. Nigerians have never had enlighten political leadership, instead Nigerians continue to have leaders who are bigoted, corrupt and are on a constant (ethnic) self validation trip, who get high on the fact that 90% of Nigerians live in abject poverty (earning less than 20 cents a day and living in shacks without access to education, health care systems, infrastructure). It seems that religion seems to serve those who wish to see that the population continues to remain ignorant and devoid of any sense of betterment and human progress (Onubogu 11).

How should Muslims treat Christians? With violence? Anger? Hatred? The answer is none of the above. Below is the English rendering of a letter written by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to all Christians.

In a time when tensions between Islam and Christianity seem to be at an all time high, we remind our Christian friends that a true Muslim cannot hurt a Christian in any way, neither by his hand, nor by his tongue.

The below letter requires no explanation. I hope it provides credence and comfort that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) truly celebrated his Christian friends. (The original letter is now in the Topkapi Museum in Istanbul) The letter is thus:

“This is a message from Muhammad ibn Abdullah, as a covenant to those who adopt Christianity, near and far, we are with them. Verily I, the servants, the helpers, and my followers defend them, because Christians are my citizens; and by Allah! I hold out against anything that displeases them. No compulsion is to be on them. Neither are their judges to be removed from their jobs nor their monks from their monasteries. No one is to destroy a house of their religion, to damage it, or to carry anything from it to the Muslims’ houses. Should anyone take any of these, he would spoil God’s covenant and disobey His Prophet. Verily, they are my allies and have my secure charter against all that they hate. No one is to force them to travel or to oblige them to fight. The Muslims are to fight for them. If a female Christian is married to a Muslim, it is not to take place without her approval. She is not to be prevented from visiting her church to pray. Their churches are to be respected. They are neither to be prevented from repairing them nor the sacredness of their covenants. No one of the nation (Muslims) is to disobey the covenant till the Last Day (end of the world)” (Zahoor 167).

Conclusion

This study assumes that non-violent methods, if applied correctly and systematically, will lead to justice and peace-building. Peace-building scholars argue that Muslims already possess the values and principles in both their religion and daily practice which are compatible with the adoption of non-violent actions as tools to fight injustice. The values that underlie the five pillars of Islam are also core values for Muslim non-violence action. With the hope for Nigeria in particular and world at large, full of peace instead of war, mercy instead of violence, justice instead of injustice, and negotiations instead of war, the paper calls for a complete application of the model of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) of non-Violent strategy as contained in the Madinan Constitution and his (SAW) practical life style in the face of confrontation. With this, Nigeria will be a peaceful nation for both Muslims and non-Muslims through dialogue.

Recommendations

After x-raying the relevant portions of the Madinan Constitution to the subject of dialogue and the non-violent life style of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as divine strategy for peaceful coexistence against radicalization, the paper recommends that:

- 1) Nigerian Muslim should obey Allah and the Prophet (SAW) only.
- 2) Muslims and non-Muslims alike must practice discipline through religious edicts and other necessary provisions for effect inter-faith dialogue and peaceful co-existence;
- 3) We must show solidarity and support against injustice and radicalization in all realms;
- 4) We shall practice self-sacrifice, suffering and patience in relating.
- 5) We must embrace unity and brotherhood; and
- 6) Nigerians should complete domesticate the model of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) of non-violent strategy as contained in the Madinan Constitution.

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