

The Crisis of Belonging and Ethnographies of Peacebuilding in Kaduna, Nigeria

by

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## **Abstract**

This research uses critical qualitative and narrative inquiry methods to discuss intercommunal conflicts in Kaduna, Nigeria. This approach is with a view to examining postcolonial African crises that border on group claims to belonging, and to explore local—people-centred—peacebuilding approaches. Data were analyzed using a set of procedures including inscription, description, transcription, tidying up, coding, and interpretation of transcripts and field notes.

Violent conflicts among different communities in Kaduna have been on the rise since the 1980s. Several scholars have attributed many factors to the escalation of these conflicts, including historical, economic, socio-cultural, political, psychological, and environmental conditions of violent conflicts. This research accounts for the complex dynamics, inherent ideologies, complexities, and contradictions of the conflicts by putting the foregoing factors into a coherent framework and argues that they pivot on the crisis of belonging in postcolonial Africa.

Thus, drawing on extant works of literature on violent conflicts and fieldwork research the author conducted in southern Kaduna between 2016 and 2019, this research argues that the nature of the conflicts in southern Kaduna has accreted around controversies over Indigenous, nomadic, and autochthonous claims of belonging. The findings of the research revealed that on one side of the conflicts are those who imagine themselves as autochthonous indigenes (legitimate sons and daughters of the land) dealing with an existential threat of a foreign, expansionist, and mobile invader. The autochthonous indigenes imagine their group identity in terms suggestive of a natural, nativist, blood belonging or connection to land.

On the other side of the conflicts are those who lay claims to a notion of belonging that is both Indigenous and nomadic—if not cosmopolitan. The latter group is the nomadic indigene

who imagines land as a free resource to which no other group can lay natural claims of ownership. Hence, as the research contends, the conflicts in southern Kaduna swivel on a crisis of belonging underpinned by two diametrically opposed ideological views and dispositions of belonging: Indigenous-autochthons and nomadic-indigenes.

The research findings show that the dynamics of the conflicts reveal inconsistencies and ambiguities in these polarized idealized versions and visions of belonging in Kaduna. The ideological impetus for the conflict also raises questions about the broader predicaments of citizenship rights and nationhood in Nigeria. Simultaneously, the findings of the research revealed the groups' experiences of positive encounters and ethnographies of peacebuilding. In so doing, the research underscores the importance of advancing people's approaches to peace, resilience building, and problem-solving in the presence or absence of the state or external support.

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To God be the glory!

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# **Chapter One**

## **Setting the Scene**

### **Prologue**

Stories are common features of every human society. Stories constitute the pathway towards understanding and learning something about people and their life-worlds. Stories reflect the dynamism, creativity, life force, intricacies, and the minutiae of the daily life of individuals or groups. Stories are signposts through which we can gain insights into our lives and activities, including our triumphs and shortcomings.

Part of our mission, as human beings or persons in relationship to ourselves and with others, is to cultivate the critical space and place to tell our stories and listen intently to the stories people tell us about themselves. By way of telling our stories and listening to others tell their own stories, we can come to appreciate and understand not only our own strengths and weaknesses, our fears and hopes but also what people want us to know about them. More importantly, if we listen and tell our stories often and well enough, we may be able to grasp what we or others may not feel comfortable sharing or divulging about ourselves and our experiences.

In southern Kaduna, as with many societies battling with or recovering from conflicts, people's experiences and stories of these events are often shrouded in obscurities or glossed and passed over for mainstream narratives that are shaped by the media, ostensibly scholarly analyses, and rumor mills. These "storytelling" channels often promote hasty generalizations and produce half-truths or incomplete stories about others. In attempts to understand conflicts, the affected populations are seldom included in conventional discourses of these events. Their conspicuous silence and absence in such purported narratives seeking to explain or represent the very conditions of their existence, further reinforce patterns of out-group demonization and

essentialist thinking. This kind of attitude and thinking ineluctably raise the stakes of conflicts. Owing to the widespread death tolls, destruction of property, and tensions that often accompany violent intractable conflicts, it is beholden on critical researchers of Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS) to elicit and analyze genuine stories that bring the agency of the affected communities into the discourses of their realities.

When I was 8 years old, my family and I sought solace at a military barracks during an outbreak of religious violence between Christians and Muslims in my community in northern Nigeria. It was during that disturbing incident that I realized the delicate nature of social relationships among members of the two main religious groups—Christianity and Islam—despite the community’s ethnolinguistic pluralism and conviviality. At the time, it did not make sense to me why, and how people who cohabited the same physical place as neighbors and showed love and respect for one another could also be capable of displaying violence and hatred. Growing up, I resolved to make sense of it all and to seek ways to effect some fundamental changes. This research is partly an attempt at telling my own story and experience of intercommunal life and conflicts in Kaduna. It will also bring the narratives of the people who live through these experiences in Nigeria into the PACS mainstream discourse.



Figure 1: Map of Nigeria, showing some of the major cities and states including Kaduna.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Retrieved from the GADM database, version 2.5. The map has been modified and redesigned for the purposes of this research.

## Introduction

The Middle Belt Region of Nigeria is wrecked by widespread violence and criminality. This violence is particularly pertinent between the Fulani and other ethnic minority groups in the region. This research seeks to interrogate the stories of the affected people to understand the issues fuelling these violent conflicts and chart meaningful and context-relevant resources for peacebuilding.<sup>2</sup>

To begin with, the crisis of belonging is a symptom of a global phenomenon that was instituted by colonization through a series of conquests, displacements, and forced occupations of Indigenous territories by more “powerful” and violent groups. Globally, there are several examples to highlight this phenomenon of deterritorialization and its devastating impacts on the distorted composition of postcolonial societies. Given that colonial settlers in certain places remained in their conquered jurisdictions and continue to influence the governing and economic affairs of their “ex-colonies”, the question arises whether we can refer to such places as postcolonial societies. For example, Indigenous populations in Canada, Australia, the United States, and New Zealand are still contending not just with the excesses, plundering, and

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<sup>2</sup>What is often referred to as the “Middle Belt Region” in Nigeria was initially a contested terminology and terrain. In a January 1954 letter by S. J Moore of the Civil Secretary’s Office, Northern Region, termed “the Middle Belt Problem”, it was discussed that the “Middle Belt” should not be used in official documents. Its rejection by the colonial government stemmed from the need by the people of the area to determine their freedom and independence from colonial governance and Muslim emirate rule. Such determination by the people was perceived as an act of rebellion. According to S.J Moore from the then Civil Secretary’s Office (Northern Region), the plea for a Middle Belt region was dangerous because “it represents a rallying cry of potentially immeasurable danger to the unity of the region by those elements in all provinces who feel, since the reaction is mainly emotional and not rational, that they are ‘outsiders’ in a state which is in their view being constructed in accordance with the tenets of Islam” (Moore 1954 No. 53019/152).

At the time, the term was used to refer to areas like Benue, Kabba, Niger and Illorin (Moore 1954 No. 53019/152). Nowadays, the terminology has come to remain in the informal categorization of regions in Nigeria, and it is used in reference to the southern part of Kaduna state as well as Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Plateau and Taraba states. The region also includes parts of Bauchi, Adamawa, and Gombe states. This large region is comprised of hundreds of groups considered as minority ethnicities in Nigeria. Many are presumably Christians and share a general perception of subjugation under Hausa and Fulani leadership (Mustapha & Ehrhardt 2018). Besides its religious polarization, what is known as the Middle Belt region in Nigeria has long contended with issues of resource scarcity, contestations over land ownership and control, climate change, and ethnic tensions among the numerous ethnicities cohabiting the area.

exploitation of their land by colonial settlers, they are also gripped by fear and anxiety over the continued influx of newcomers into their societies. Thus, they harbor serious grievances and disillusionments over their perceived or real dehumanization, depopulation, and negligence in places they regard as their homeland. This homeland can both be a material place or an intangible space of emotional and spiritual significance and connection through ancestral heritage. As a result of these grievances, they have, sometimes, reacted violently against others and towards each other. The nature of intra-group violence and the episodic aggression of Indigenous communities towards newcomers in some parts of North America aptly represent some form of internalized or “homegrown” colonialism.

Not only are Indigenous populations deprived of their self-governance; they are also forcefully yoked into a so-called modernized, liberating or salvaging civilization of the liberal democratic state system with its presumably untrammelled freedom and liberty for all people. These realities of unequal relationships between colonially more powerful or populous groups and minority Indigenous communities have preponderate some of the most devastating conflicts in the modern world era—conflicts which are tied to issues of attachment to physical and intangible territories, self-governance, cultural genocide, and emancipatory justice. The citizenship and nationhood crisis, alongside contestations over rights of belonging among a multiplicity of ethnic groups in Nigeria, amply exemplifies this postcolonial tragedy.

As with other modern societies, postcolonial Nigeria, and indeed Africa, is replete with internal complexities and contradictions of belonging and citizenship rights. One of these contradictions has to do with the issue of resolving different ideas and perceptions of citizenship within a single political place, characterized by contestations over identity claims and nationhood (Mbembe, 2001). Arguably, precolonial Africa grappled with these contradictions, which

climaxed during the European colonization of the continent. The history of European colonization in Africa put in motion faulty state structures which invariably pitched groups into violent conflicts with one another. This colonial history and its attendant structures created complex emergencies for the postcolonial African state.

A major implication of the order of state structure in many African countries is that allegiance to ethnic identity ensures that groups within the state may be considered as indigenes or non-indigenes by virtue of their ethnicity and place of settlement. In this situation, groups claiming organic rights to territories within the state would consider themselves autochthones. Poignantly, however, they would consider their fellow citizens, of a different ethnicity or religion, as alien-settlers and non-indigenes. Hence, in many postcolonial African states, there are the dichotomies of Indigenous and non-Indigenous citizens, and autochthonous and non-autochthonous peoples.

The implications of this state formation cannot be overstated. This faulty colonial state system is what some scholars attribute to as “the root cause of violence” in Africa (Nhema & Zeleza, 2008). Mahmood Mamdani (1996) argues that the colonial state system in Africa ignited “a crisis of citizenship” in Africa’s postcolony. This system is also at the heart of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and ongoing wars in the Congo (Mamdani, 2001). The nature of the conflict instigated by the colonial state system is more often based on contestations over rights of belonging to a place in terms of land ownership and resource distribution (Mbembe, 2001); but equally as important is the people’s expressed right of being in a space of solace with all the attendant structures of support. It is precisely this situation of contestations over rights of belonging, which is premised on Indigenous, nomadic, and autochthonous claims and

counterclaims that this research considers being at the heart of the conflicts between the Fulani and other ethnic groups in Kaduna.

Since Nigeria's independence in 1960 and even prior to that date, conflicts have essentially been occurring between the Fulani and other ethnic minority groups in Kaduna. The prevailing view of the Fulani in the region is that they are members of a broader Fulani ethnic nation who migrated from outside of Nigeria and have settled across what is today known as northern Nigeria. In addition, as the popular imagery of the Fulani will have it, they are fundamentally Muslims by religion and nomadic cattle herders by profession. The sources of this image of the Fulani as Muslim nomads are rooted in the history of Islamic jihads across West Africa, particularly in the northern region of what became Nigeria led by the Fulani Muslim crusader Uthman Dan Fodio in the nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup>

In southern Kaduna, the other ethnic minority groups in conflict with the Fulani are equally viewed in similar stereotypical lenses as Christian—sometimes as traditionalist or pagan—communities minoritized on their ancestral homelands by nomadic Fulani herders who are propagating the territorial expansionist Islamic agenda put in motion by the Fulani crusader, Uthman Dan Fodio.

In a previous essay written as part of this research, titled “Conflicting Indigeneity and Farmer-Herder Conflicts in Postcolonial Africa”, I have argued in the broader context of Fulani relations with other groups in Nigeria's Middle Belt Region that the *leitmotifs* in the clashes between the Fulani and the Middle Belt communities in Nigeria are the conflicting notions of indigeneity (Maiangwa, 2017). I theorized that these conflicting notions of indigeneity—in which these communities perceive themselves as having equal rights or exclusionary ownership

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<sup>3</sup> Although, Uthman dan Fodio is labelled a “crusader” in northern Nigeria, it is questionable whether he actually visited or led an army into southern Kaduna.

to the land—are historically embedded trends of exclusionary politics, which breed violent conflicts and strife.

The present study focused on the specific context of Kaduna. Based on empirical data collected in the state between June 2016 and February 2019, it extends my initial argument and claims that the conflict is symptomatic of conflicting notions, not of indigeneity per se, but of belonging generally to both place and space: Place being material assets, while space implies the intangible conception of such physical assets in terms of the people's spiritual identity or connection to each other and to the land (Björkdahl & Kappler, 2017). Thus, the way the groups idealize their self-worth and importance in relation to the socioeconomic and political nature of their place and space in southern Kaduna can both illuminate the processes of conflicts and peacebuilding in the area.

The groups' opposing ideas of belonging in Kaduna are hinged on Indigenous, nomadic or cosmopolitan, and autochthonous claims. Importantly, the findings of the research highlight the fluidity and nervousness (Jackson, 2006) that these different notions of belonging evoke among the groups in Kaduna. The research also underlines the purposes that these notions of belonging serve in understanding the sociohistorical and contemporary contexts and circumstances of power imbalance and ascendancy to political positions, as well as contestations over rights and entitlements to land in Nigeria. Consequently, it examines the implications of these notions of belonging for understanding the contradictions of citizenship rights, statehood, and nationhood in postcolonial societies.

While my interest is to examine the tension arising from conflicting notions of belonging in the postcolonial state, the research also brings the largely absent—or subjugated—peacebuilding perspectives of the people of southern Kaduna into the PACS mainstream

discourse. The exploration of the peacebuilding resources of these communities is useful for examining and understanding how they negotiate significant issues of space, place, and power in the wake and aftermath of conflicts.

The exploration of the groups' peacebuilding agency is also pertinent to understanding how communities reeling from conflicts advance their own approaches to peace. More importantly, the research shows how people advance such local agency in a context of the state's apathy, orthodoxy, and complicity in conflicts and in the presence or absence of external support. It is concluded that PACS must continue to further debates along the lines of understanding how people make sense of their everyday circumstances while recovering from conflicts.

### **Research Objectives**

While there are several components of the conflicts between Fulani and other ethnic groups in Nigeria—including settlement and movement, deterritorialization, environmental degradation, religious differences, land ownership, and grazing rights—the aim of this research is to underscore the nature of this conflict as arising from contested notions of belonging. The research also aims to determine what forms of peacebuilding approaches best serve the needs and aspirations of communities engaged in conflicts over contested land rights within the problematic structures and ethnically bifurcated nature of the African state.

Therefore, the key objectives of the research are to (a) identify various forms of belonging among the Fulani and other ethnic minority communities in Kaduna; (b) examine how these notions of belonging elicit conflicts; (c) discuss the significance of the groups' peacebuilding tools for grassroots approaches to peace in response to conflicts over contested

claims of belonging; and (d) understand the nature of the “local turn” to peacebuilding (Richmond, 2010) in African societies.

### **Research Questions**

From the research objectives above, the study poses two main questions: (1) How do we make sense of the conflicts between the Fulani and other ethnic minority groups in Kaduna? (2) What peacebuilding approaches best serve the demands of these conflicts?

### **Purpose and Rationale of the Study**

This research is inspired by a series of disturbing trends of conflicts and perceptions of intergroup relations in Nigeria. The research also derives from my lived experience of community life in Kaduna. As a young child of about six or seven, a Fulani man who was crossing a busy road with his herd of cattle struck my knee with his herding stick. He struck me because I had scared off his cattle, causing them to scamper away. At the time, I was furious and could not understand why the Fulani man would react so angrily and violently to a child’s innocent behavior the way he did. Although I was excited to see cows, I was not expecting him to react in the manner that he did; to strike me with the same stick he uses on his animals. In pain, I concluded—as many people still do in various parts of West Africa where Fulani people cohabit territories with other ethnic groups—that the Fulani is an aggressive, insensitive, petulant, and violent person.

Growing up, I came to realize that my conclusions about the aggressiveness of the Fulani person were also shared by several people in Nigeria. In fact, while traveling in certain parts of southern Nigeria, many people have often referred to me, as they do to other non-Fulani, non-

Hausa northerners, as a Fulani or Hausa person. This assumption that every northerner is a Hausa or Fulani is based on the longstanding hegemony of the two groups in northern Nigeria. The hegemony of these groups has often led to other people in some parts of Nigeria collapsing and subsuming the identities of other ethnic minority groups in northern Nigeria under the larger and predominant Hausa and Fulani groups. The general assumption is that every northerner is a Hausa or that every Fulani is entwined in an imagery of someone being a hardcore uncivilized illiterate Muslim.

Partly due to the perception of the “uncivilized northern Fulani”, stories and folklores that are embellished with tales of Fulani foolhardiness and aggression abound in popular cultural narratives about the group in several parts of Nigeria. These stories inform other groups’ perceptions of the Fulani as foreigners, illiterates, and a violent Islamist group. Despite my own tawdry experience with the Fulani herder, such stories have previously informed my preconceived idea of the Fulani as a violent provocateur. While this perception may be buttressed by some realities on the ground in Nigeria, it does not capture the complexities of the conflicts between the Fulani and other groups in the country. This essentialist perception does not also explain the motivations behind the conflicts, and the perversity of criminality in Kaduna.

Since efforts to understand intercommunal conflicts from all sides of the divide in Nigeria are usually absent, that gap is often filled with provocative swift generalizations and conjectures about other groups. The human calamities and devastations that have unfolded and exploded from this kind of thinking and attitude are salutary reminders, if not cautionary tales, that conflict and its costs are too serious and grave for shallow generalizations or journalistic speculations. Dwelling on lopsided and straightjacketed arguments about the nature of intergroup

identities and relationship hardly informs the public and leads to problematic interventions, poor scoping, and analysis of the conflicting issues (Zezeza, 2008).

Thus, any serious and objective effort at unraveling the dynamics of conflicts in a sensitive, and often provocative environments like Kaduna must be hinged on the history, and the evolving sociopolitical and economic conditions and perspectives of all the parties involved in the conflicts. What this research intends to do is not just to underscore an important dimension of conflict hinged on a crisis of belonging and national (in)cohesion in Nigeria, but also to highlight people's everyday peacebuilding strategies that may be useful in designing appropriate response strategies as complementary or alternatives to the state or external intervention.

### **Overview of the Chapters**

This research is structured in two sections. The first presents some background information on the identity of the groups, their conflicting dynamics, study locale, and the enduring nature and tapestry of conflicts in Kaduna. The section introduces the sociohistorical context, group dynamics, literature review, theoretical insights, and methodology of the research. This introductory information provides relevant guidelines for exploring the crisis of belonging in Kaduna and for understanding the people's peacebuilding approaches.

The first section comprises five chapters, including the preceding introduction. The introductory chapter sets the scene of the research by providing the background information, research objectives, research questions, and the rationale and purpose of the study. This introductory chapter offers a sketchy idea of what the research entails, and how readers are to anticipate its evolution and development.

Chapter two provides the context of the research. The chapter begins with some notes on culture and the nature of cultural identities, and presents the sociopolitical, economic, and historical background of the different groups in Kaduna. The chapter explores their internal dynamics, differences, commonalities, contradictions, misconceptions, and complexities. It also provides clear insights into their dispositions and idealizations of land in terms of its physical and immaterial properties. The chapter unravels why the groups are often placed and treated as binary opposites. Thereafter, it examines the notion of intercommunal conflicts and explains its logic and manifestations in Kaduna.

Chapter three examines the literature on intercommunal conflicts and peacebuilding involving Fulani and other ethnic groups in West Africa, and specifically in Nigeria. Some of the factors identified in the literature as sponsoring these conflicts include climate change, overpopulation and resource competition, religious mobilization, cattle encroachments on farmlands and people's cultivation of cattle routes and grazing fields, the history of jihadist conquests and settlements, the absence of local resources for peacebuilding, rural banditry, kidnapping, and ethnic othering. The chapter investigates the potency of these factors as conflict enablers and theoretically explains them as symptomatic of a more complex issue bordering on the crisis of belonging in Kaduna.

The chapter argues that the groups' competing idealizations of land—in terms of its material and immaterial composites and benefits—forms the main prism through which they interpret their conflictual relationship. The chapter further exposes the ambiguities, fluidity, and complexities embedded in making autochthonous, Indigenous, or nomadic claims of belonging in a deeply divided society like Nigeria. It also discusses the basis of these notions of belonging

in the Nigerian constitution. It does this in order to understand the state's legal position on these issues and the implications of how its citizenry imagine their status and rights within it.

The second strand of the literature review underscores the idea of positive intergroup contact and peacebuilding. This section of the research highlights the nature of intercommunal life in postcolonial Africa as a hodgepodge of cooperation and violent entanglements. From this idea and tracing its manifestations in periods and aftermaths of conflicts, the section embeds the idea of local peacebuilding within PACS. It is argued that PACS must consider how people negotiate issues of space and place in peacebuilding processes in the context of state repression, orthodoxy, and where international assistance is either absent or limited.

Chapter four presents the research methodology, hinged on critical qualitative research and narrative inquiry methods. Critical and narrative research methods are useful in examining how people make sense of their everyday realities, particularly in this instance, the reality of oppression, injustice, conflict, and peace. These methods carry the potential to probe participants' experiences of conflicts and peacebuilding, and to understand and underscore their agency as peace and conflict entrepreneurs in their own rights.

The research also adopted different design techniques to obtain detailed empirical data in the field. Some of the issues associated with the research design are also highlighted in this chapter. These issues include the positionality of the researcher as an insider-outsider in the research communities. My positionality in the research reveals how I traversed the different geographies and navigated the ideologies and activists' expectations of the research communities. Other issues bordering on the research methodology revolve around the potential physical and psychological risks of the research, the type of materials and equipment used for

recording the stories of research participants, the ethics of confidentiality, and the reliability and credibility of the data.

The various themes of the research are laid out in three empirical chapters. These chapters provide the empirical data for the research. The first theme is explained in chapter five. The chapter presents empirical material on competing claims of belonging in Kaduna, focusing on how these issues play out in the southern part of the state. Following the presentation of this material, it discusses relevant findings from participants' narratives for understanding the rationale of these contestations over issues of belonging. It argues that this idea of contested forms of belonging based on binary notions of Indigenous-autochthonous and nomadic-Indigenous belonging is the crux of most of the violent conflicts over land, religion, ethnicity, and territories in Kaduna. Thereafter, the chapter discusses forms of ethnic othering arising from the crisis of belonging and the implications of the people's claims and counterclaims of belonging for understanding the contradictions and complexities of the institutional structures of the African state and citizenship rights in Nigeria.

Section two provides important findings on the nature of intercommunal life in southern Kaduna. These findings are relevant for grasping the intricacies of conflicts and peacebuilding in other divided societies. The section begins with chapter six, which argues that despite the nature of conflicts in Kaduna (or perhaps because of it), the conflicting groups are not irreconcilable enemies: they constantly navigate through a complex web of relationships involving mutual harmony and distrust. Furthermore, the chapter argues that these forms of contact and conviviality are telling of people's goodwill and their resolve, resilience, and willingness to build their own peace as they try to make sense of the forces of violence in their communities.

In chapter seven, the research takes on the “local turn” in the peacebuilding discourse and praxis to emphasize the resilience, grit, and resources that people often wield in the context of conflicts regardless of the intervention (or the lack of it) of the state or external actors. The chapter problematizes the role of the postcolonial state in the emancipation of minority fringe groups, and demonstrates how in periods of conflicts, people tap into the repertoire of their local peace resources to chart peaceful ways out of destructive forces in their communities.

The final chapter concludes the research with a summary of findings, and recommendations on reorganizing state power, reallocating resources, and reforming structures of traditional governance and values. The limitations of the research, its significance for PACS and future research endeavors are also outlined in this chapter, as well as some peacebuilding action strategies. The chapter ends with insights on the nature of “human agency” and how it informs the retrogressive and progressive choices people often make as they grapple with their existential situations and conditions of their local communities and the modern state.

### **Caveats**

This research is not an attempt at redeeming, elevating, alienating, fetishizing, and vilifying any ethnic group in Nigeria. The aim of the research is neither to exonerate Fulani communities nor indict them based on their identity, or the self-interested actions of some members of the group, as perpetrators of violence. The research does not deny that there are ongoing animosity and violence between the groups, as well as disenchantments between them and the state. It does not also intend to impugn the claims of victimhood by the Fulani and other ethnic minority communities or to absolve them as innocent and innocuous bystanders in periods of violent conflicts. Rather, through the stories of the people, the research seeks to critically

understand the forces of conflicts in Kaduna and how the people work through these violent forces to make meaning of their relationships and restore stability in their communities.

Furthermore, the conflicting groups are not what they are often depicted to be in the news media, online blogs, and everyday public discourses of conflicts and peacebuilding in Nigeria. Their complex identities, occupations, lifestyles, and dispositions to their geographies are telling of the fact that intercommunal life in most diverse societies is not as simplistic and unilinear as have been dominantly portrayed in various scholarships and public forums. The complexities and dynamics of the conflicting issues in Kaduna and the nature of the groups' sociocultural and political compositions demand a correspondingly robust analysis that is informed by the groups' history and evolving sociopolitical and economic conditions.

Thus, this research will encourage a critical understanding of how the groups in Kaduna define themselves and their relationship to each other as they try to adapt to the changing dynamics of their environment. Anything short of this agential exploration makes it difficult to appreciate who these groups are, and how they idealize their aspirations and entitlements in areas they regard and treasure as their home. In addition, pigeonholed narratives about the groups can negatively impact on understanding why they are often in crisis with each other. Such narratives also carry the potential to taint and obscure the processes through which the people carve out spaces for progressive dialogue on responding to the violent conditions of their communities.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter introduces the background of the research, including the objectives, research questions, rationale, and its general overview. It captured the general spectacle of the Indigenous rights movements across the world and the crisis of identity in postcolonial Africa. It presented

this reality as part of the contending issues that people grapple with in many African societies as they try to make sense of the demands and expectations of a modern democratic state structure, dictatorial regimes, and the continued significance or lack thereof of their everyday traditional approaches of organizing their communities and relationships. This overview outlines how the rest of the research proceeds from the context to the general findings, limitations, and significance. The next chapter describes the context of the research, including the nature and dynamics of group identities, and the political economy and geopolitics of conflicts in Kaduna.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Research Context**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter provides some relevant background information for understanding the nature of group identities and the context of the conflict environment in Kaduna. The chapter introduces and explains the notion of culture and dispels some longstanding misconceptions about the nature and composition of the different identity groups in Kaduna. The chapter explains why these groups are often presented as competing factions who are locked into an antagonistic relationship and dysfunctional conflicts. Thereafter, it examines the chronology of violent intercommunal conflicts in Kaduna, particularly since the 1980s. It ends with a synopsis of how the crisis of belonging fits into this conflicted environment. The purpose of this chapter is to provide verifiable information that will clarify concepts, ideas, and falsify the prevailing narratives of the complex nature of group identities in Kaduna. This engagement is relevant for understanding the contending issues of belonging and peace that the rest of the research sets out to explore.

#### **Culture and Its Dynamics**

Culture has been defined differently across various disciplines. Writing from a cultural studies perspective, Harry Triandis (2000) defines culture as a shared meaning-making system which allows people to function well within their social environment. Similarly, Marc Howard Ross (2007) argues that culture enables people to make sense of their life experiences. Ross defines culture as a lens for gaining distinctive insights into group identities and patterns of

behavior and rituals. These behavioral patterns may include religious worships, display of flags, clothing style, and national parades (Ross, 2007).

For his part, Clifford Geertz (1973) argues that culture is a set of guidelines expressed through rules, plans, or instructions aimed at governing people's behaviors. Similarly, Emmanuel Eze (2008) defines cultures and traditions as habits that people construct and accumulate over time. Hence, statements like "We don't do that, that's not done, it is immoral, I can't imagine anyone from our people doing that, are often mere expressions of taste.... They may also be shorthand for passing on knowledge about which ways of accomplishing a particular task have been tried and found to be useful or useless, proper or improper, right or wrong" (Eze, 2008, p. 151). Eze's (2008) definition of culture as habits that are formed and acquired over time suggests that culture is dynamic, and that cultural traits are manufactured, reproduced, internalized, and transmitted from one generation to another

Frantz Fanon (1963) defines culture as the true face of a nation, which embodies the mark and expresses the taboos, models, or preferences of a national group. Fanon's understanding of culture gives the idea that a nation has specific and static features. However, national identities are deeply complex, constructed, and multifarious. In addition, Geertz Hofstede (2011) takes on a psychological stance and defines culture as a distinctive feature of the mind that is programmed to distinguish people based on the in-group and out-group category.

The in-group are those groups to which we feel attached due to some strong connection of blood or identity. They often range from the micro family to macro communal relationship based on the categorization of race, ethnicity, gender or religion (Waller, 2007). The collective "we" in the in-group "is a unit – the nuclear family, the lineage, the community, the ethnic group or several ethnic groups – facing a perceived stranger, an 'other', an intruder, an enemy,

somebody threatening certain rights seen as the heritage belonging to the ‘sons of the soil’” (Bøås & Dunn, 2013, p. 51). This intruder or enemy is the “out-group” with which we do not usually identify or affiliate (Waller, 2007).

The in-group and out-group distinction stems from individuals’ obsession with and penchant for nurturing close relationship with their group members or a given ecology. In so doing, outsiders are feared, or their humanity undermined (Wood, 2016). The out-group can be thought of as worthless. Moreover, their very existence and alternative moral judgments could be perceived as a potential threat (Wood, 2016). This hostile tendency towards others can form the basis of conflicts. Augsburger (1992) explains it thus:

Conflict exists in this tension between ‘same and other’: conflict arises from the competition of same and other; conflict erupts as those who are [of the same identity group] control the other (and reduce its otherness), subordinate the other (and exploit its otherness), destroy the other (and annihilate its otherness), and exclude the other (p. 16).

Augsburger’s conception of the in-group and out-group conflicts is seemingly based on perceptions of group differences and goals. However, conflict is not always a spontaneous or mindless outcome of the out-group and in-group differences. Waller (2007) identifies four important elements or effects of the in-group and out-group binary that may impel conflicts: “(1) assumed similarity; (2) out-group homogeneity; (3) accentuation effect; and (4) in-group bias” (p. 174). Assumed similarity describes the inward-looking tendency of the in-group, manifested in the desire of its members to cultivate and maintain cordial relations mainly with their own members (Waller, 2007). Out-group homogeneity explains how “others” are often imagined by the in-group as a collective, unchanging, homogenous unit (Waller, 2007).

The accentuation effect describes the inclination of the in-group to exaggerate its dissimilarities with the out-group. Partly as a result of this effect, people tend to focus more on the differences of their social categories. In this way, they become less inclined and aware of their similarities (Waller, 2007). Out-group bias occurs when the in-group favor its own members or find them more persuasive and appealing than the out-group (Waller, 2007).

Waller's four effects of the in-group/out-group binary reflects Kevin Avruch's six inadequacies of thinking about culture, which entails: (1) the assumption that culture is homogenous; (2) the reification of culture; (3) the assumption that culture is evenly spread among a specific group of people; (4) the assumption that people have a single cultural identity or code; (5) the conflation of customary protocols with culture; (6) and the assumption that culture is unchanging (1998, p. 12-16).

These inadequate ideas about culture and the four effects of the in-group and out-group dichotomy may enhance the obsession within the in-group of what Ato Onoma (2017, p. 35) describes as the attempt to "capture and fix" others in essentialist ways. Such obsession can increase the onset of violent intercommunal conflicts (Avruch, 1998, 2002). In addition, Avruch (2002) admonishes researchers working in cultures other than their own, as well as researchers working within their own cultural settings, to avoid oversimplification of cultures such as seeing every person belonging to a group as possessing a single culture; to avoid stereotyping, as in respecting cultural complexity; and to avoid undermining people's agency by assuming that culture is the defining element of human behavior.

Consequently, because culture comprises moral values, group interests, and is a source of group learning and development, Eze (2008) concludes that there can be some justifications in defending one's culture. It is precisely this need to defend one's culture that has resulted in the

explosion of conflicts in certain places. Yet, the reality as Huston Wood (2016) argues, is that not all cultural values are justifiable. There are abhorrent beliefs and practices among many cultures, which excuse or normalize structural inequalities and divisions (Wood, 2016).

Furthermore, Avruch (2008) categorizes culture as either generic or local. Generic culture is what people naturally have in common such as their shared humanity, gender, and sex. Generic identities could also derive from people's profession, occupation, class, race, or region. Local cultures refer to a created system of meanings like ethnicity, race, and religion (Avruch, 1998). These local ideas of culture are also products of socialization and are ingrained in colonial traditions.

The local understanding of culture is particularly useful in this research, particularly with regards to the ethnic and religious identities of the various groups in Kaduna. Both identities are interwoven in the people's psyche. That is why these identities are often collapsed as "ethnoreligious" to denote the people's strong attachment to both identities and how they use one or the other depending on their situational needs and circumstances. Thus, for the most part, local cultures will constitute the focus of this research.

Some of the features of local cultures include:

1. A sense of continuity between the experiences of the succeeding generation of the unit population;
2. Shared memories of specific events and personages which have been turning points of collective history, and;
3. A sense of common destiny on the part of the collectivity sharing of those experiences (Smith, 1990, p. 179).

Another feature of local cultures is people's strong sense of attachment to an ancestral homeland, which propels some of the most virulent communal conflicts in many postcolonial states. Quite aside from its basic features, Ali Mazrui posits that culture performs seven key functions, to wit:

- (1) lens for perception and cognition;
- (2) motive for human behavior;
- (3) criterion for evaluating human behavior;
- (4) source of identity or belonging;
- (5) means of communication;
- (6) basis of social distinction or stratification; and,
- (7) modes of production and consumption (1990, p. 7-8).

As well as these functions, Eze (2008) claims that culture contributes to the attainment of self-transcendence, stating that "culture allows us to become that which makes us who we are by making ourselves into that which we believe makes us who we are" (p. 151). This transcendental function or quality of culture denotes a sense of moral obligation of all groups to surpass their limitations and attain self-actualization and autonomy. One can also postulate that the conflicts over identity issues and belonging in Kaduna are partly a result of the need by the various groups to transcend their limitations and predicaments in an ostensibly democratized environment.

Geert Hofstede (2011) categorizes culture into six different models including the degree of power distance among people, the level of individualism or collectivism, the disposition to long-term and short-term orientation, the inclination towards indulgent or restraint lifestyle, the openness to or avoidance of uncertainty, and the level of masculine or feminine traits among people. Hofstede categorizes different countries as belonging to the high or low spectrum of

these six cultural dimensions. Moreover, it is possible to find people within the same country exhibiting the six cultural dimensions at the low or high end of the spectrum (Hofstede, 2011).

Social identity theorist, Henri Tajfel (1974) argues that people can straddle different identities in pursuit of belonging and transcendence. He claims that while individuals and groups could be members of a repertoire of identities that serve their different social needs, given certain conditions, they may be forced to sever ties with their cultural group or change the interpretation of their group's cultural belief system that may be incongruent with their changing needs and expectations (Tajfel, 1974). This ability to change and be part of a repertoire of identities reinforces the importance of "agency". It also suggests that people live in societies that are both flexible and permeable. The implication then is that as people become dissatisfied with existing conditions of their membership within a particular social group or category, they can move into another group that may better serve their interests and needs (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Tajfel and Turner (1986) also admit that individuals are not always at liberty to move seamlessly from one group to another or to reinterpret the tenets of their culture to suit their needs. Tampering with some features or facets of one's culture or simply changing one's local identity in fulfilment of some social or political goals could lead to condemnation or forced isolationism (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Such people may even be branded as "extremists" or "renegades" who are menaces to their communities. This situation obtains among some religious converts in Nigeria who are often dubbed as "apostates" or "traitors". In some other instances, some of these so-called extremists have commanded a cult following by providing an alternative system of local governance to a deprived section of their community. The case of Boko Haram and the Shiites in Nigeria are prime examples of this situation.

In bringing our conceptual discussion on culture to an end, perhaps we can surmise that culture is a complex phenomenon. As such, it can be defined as: “constructed”, “deconstructed”, “transmitted”, “shared”, “learned”, “meaningful”, “symbolic”, and “enduring” element of community life. In other words, it is a dynamic and fluid meaning-making tool guiding the practices of a specific people across different places and time (Cook-Hoffman, 2009).

To so comprehend culture, is to avoid the pitfalls of ethnocentrism that dichotomize groups into the “us versus them” binary. Such ethnocentric thinking may form the basis of intra- and intergroup conflicts. There is more to a culture that binds people together than separates them. Edward Said (1994) notes that all cultures are multifaceted and interwoven.

The foregoing conceptualizations of culture raises certain key questions: if all cultures are involved and interact with or collapse into one another, and none is purely single, what forms the basis of intercommunal or ethnic conflicts? How and why does cultural colonialism or genocide take place? Why are some cultures considered and treated as virile or superior to others?

The discussion that follows endeavors to respond to the above questions by exploring the cultural identities and internal dynamics and geopolitical features of the various groups in Kaduna. It does this with the view to determine the basis of their self-other perceptions and conflicts. First, we begin with an exploration of the cultural and sociopolitical and economic identity of the ethnic minority groups in Kaduna.

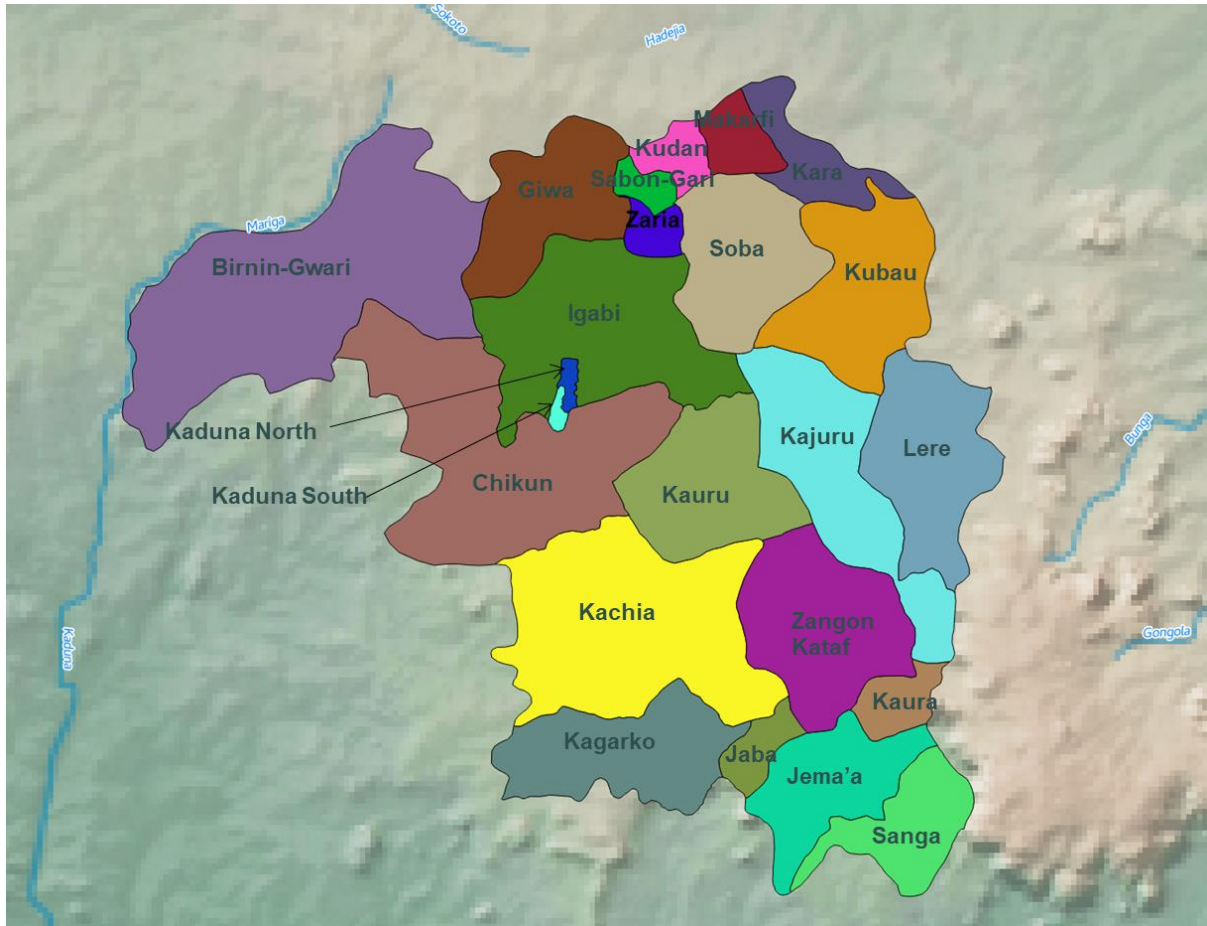


Figure 2: Map of Kaduna State, Showing the 23 Local Government Areas<sup>4</sup>

### The Ethnic Minority Groups of Kaduna

The area that is now known as southern Kaduna was formerly Southern Zaria during the colonial epoch, and it remained so in the post-independence era. Zaria, previously known as Zazzau, is a region in Kaduna, pre-eminent for its Islamic and trading heritage. As the center of the Islamic emirate in Kaduna, the ethnic minority groups were known as the southern Zaria people. They were incorporated into the Zaria emirate prior to and after British colonialism.

<sup>4</sup> Retrieved from Natural Earth Data. Edited and redesigned by author.

The ethnic minority communities of southern Kaduna are from different ethnolinguistic and religious backgrounds and compositions. The groups were conquered and subdued by the Zazzau emirate in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The emirate introduced feudalism in the area (Yusuf, 2007). The emirate of Zaria sought to control much of southern Kaduna from its base in Birnin Zazzau. Moreover, the refugee Hausa emirate based at Abuja (now re-labelled as Suleja) was the dominant force for a large area of southern Kaduna. These minority communities were considered too illiterate and incohesive to take charge of their local affairs (Southern Zaria Affairs, 1953).

In a document by a British colonial administrator, the ethnic minority groups of southern Zaria were described as predominantly non-Muslims, comprising many different clans and tribes who had no cohesive administrative units and were hostile to each other prior to the arrival of the British (Southern Zaria Affairs, 1953). The assumption then was that the British, through the Hausa and Fulani sub-colonials (Ochonu, 2014), salvaged these “barbaric” and “savage” groups by setting up a cohesive administrative unit for them under the leadership of Hausa and Fulani emirs (Ochonu, 2014). The British claimed that the difficulty they had with the minority non-Muslim groups was getting them to become interested in governing their own affairs. They blamed this difficulty on the people’s perceived illiteracy and barbarism.

Thus, the British considered their conquest of what became Nigeria, including the activities of Christian missionary in southern Kaduna, as the saving grace for the southern Kaduna people. In protesting their subjugation under the Zaria emirate council, the groups prefer to identify as the “people of southern Kaduna”. They consider the southern part of Kaduna as their only home, even though most of them can be found in other parts of Kaduna and Nigeria.

They maintain a strong sense of connection to the area as a place of respite, relaxation, and solace.

The composition of these groups varies according to size and number. Some of the most visible groups include the Bajju, Adara, Bakulu, Anghan, Takad, Ayu, Atyap, Oegworok, Ham, Moroa, Nikyob, Tsam, Fantswam, Gure, Waci, Gwong, Ashe, Akurmi, Ninzo, Numana, Nyemkpa, Ruruma, Rumaya, and a few others with whom they share a similar heritage and language.<sup>5</sup> The Hausas and Fulanis pejoratively named some of these groups (Hayab, 2017) in negative terms, denoting servitude and slavery.

For example, “the Gbagyi were called Gwari [a kind of yam or a sluggish individual] ...the Gwong, a related group of the Ham, were called Kagoma, the Nyenkpa were called Yeskwa, the Bazaar, Ashe and the Waci group were named Koro, the Bajju were previously designated as Kaje, the Adara as Kadara, and the Atyap as Katab. The Anghan as Kamantan, the Bakulu were called Ikulu, the Oegworok were named Kagoro, whilst the Nikyob became Kaninkon” (Hayab, 2017, p. 23). Most of the foreign names given to these groups are still popular in southern Kaduna.

Egged on by their sociocultural history and struggles for liberation, a majority of these groups are denouncing these pejorative names and insisting on being identified by their Indigenous names (Hayab, 2017). It also bears mentioning that some of these “tribal” names predated the coming of the Europeans. Many groups now south of Hausaland were until at least

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<sup>5</sup> According to Osaghae (1998), there are other ethnic minority groups in Nigeria’s Middle Belt and Adamawa areas who have also resisted the domination and hegemony of the “Hausa-Fulani” group, and have continued to be entangled in intra-group conflicts and in clashes with the Fulani since the creation of their states. What is also not frequently discussed in the literature are the conflicts involving Fulani and other communities in Zamfara state. In the Zamfara case, the conflicting communities are mostly Muslims, thus raising questions about the religious coloration of such conflicts in other parts of Nigeria.

the 18<sup>th</sup> century north of where they are now. Moreover, a Kaduna language like Kurama was being spoken in Kano. In short, identities historically are a complex issue.

Aside from the “Kagoro” (Oegworok), “Moroa” and “Jaba” (Ham) who had independent districts during the colonial era, other groups were largely controlled and governed by the Hausa and Fulani emirs and their appointed district heads (Southern Zaria Affairs, 1953). Most of these groups are situated in 12 local government areas of southern Kaduna including Chikun, Sanga, Jaba, Jema’a, Kachia, Kagarko, Kajuru, Kaura, Kauru, Kagarko, Lere, Zangon Kataf, and Kaduna South (Zakka, 2014, p. xvii). Given the wave of urbanization, business expansion, population growth, forced displacement occasioned by violent conflicts, many members of these groups live in the city. Many of these city-dwellers often make intermittent forages into the rural areas during festivities, and for business and agricultural ventures, social visits, and traditional healthcare purposes.

A large section of the groups are Christians, and a few others, especially women married to Hausa and Fulani Muslims, practice Islam. Meanwhile, others are traditionalists and Christians at the same time; even though the religious lines in these communities are often blurred. For the most part, these groups share and express similar sociopolitical aspirations in Kaduna. Yet, they are not always in accord with each other on these fronts due to their own internal differences in ideology, language, and history. For example, the Bajju, Ham, Oegworok, and Atyap are more dominant and popular than the other groups. In addition to championing the minority struggles in Kaduna, the dominant groups often subject the less vocal and smaller groups to their sociopolitical and economic expectations and influence.

A clear indication of this superiority posturing by some select groups among the ethnic minority communities is evident in a letter issued by the Christian Missionary of the Sudan

Interior Mission to the Colonial Resident of Zaria province, G. D Pitcairn. The letter showed their disapproval of the “pagan revolts” led by the Bajju and Atyap against Hausa and Fulani suzerainty in their districts in 1946. It reads: “I believe, in the Kaje [Bajju] than amongst the Katab [Atyap] but only because they are more enlightened than the illiterate pagans and consequently are more vocal concerning their grievances, under Hausa rulership” (Sudan Interior Mission, 1946, p. 2). In fact, when the British were pressured to incorporate members of the ethnic minority groups into their administration, they were keen on recruiting only those they believed were suitable candidates from among the more prominent groups like the “Katab”, “Kaje”, “Kagoro”, and “Jaba” to replace the “Hausawa” who filled all the departmental posts (Williams, 1955, p. 1).

Some of the groups including the Bajju, Anghan, and Bakulu, have been under Zangon Katab district—the land of the Atyap people—since British colonial rule. While there are internal differences of language, population, and dominance among the groups, there is no empirical basis for the claim that the less dominant or vocal groups among these communities in southern Kaduna were less literate or astute than the more advantageous and dominant groups like the Bajju, Oegworok, Ham, or Atyap. It was simply the perception of the Crown that the dominant and more vocal and populous groups in Kaduna—who were feared and considered as threats to the British council—were the most astute who should be palliated to avoid outbursts of violence and belligerency in the colony.

Since the pre-colonial times through British colonization of Nigeria and the post-independence era, the ethnic minority groups have been on the fringes of the governance of their jurisdictions. Hence, they have often clamored, with varying levels of commitments, for their liberation, autonomy, and self-determination from Hausa and Fulani hegemony. While they all

constitute a majority in terms of population and influence in southern Kaduna, each community, on its own, is a minority in its specific area vis-à-vis the dominant Hausa and Fulani groups. There is even a considerable number of Hausa and Fulani communities who live in southern Kaduna, partly because of the legacy of the Muslim emirate council that dominated local and native administrative systems in the area until the late 1970s after the local government reforms (Suberu, 1996).

The domination of southern Zaria/Kaduna affairs by the Hausa and Fulani district heads during the precolonial and colonial times led to bouts of unrests. These unrests were mostly stirred by the rebellion of the Atyap and Bajju communities. They created a series of disturbances in the area to agitate for their sovereignty. Their protests and rebellion, however, were downplayed by the Crown because the British administrators were not convinced that “the administrative changes evinced by a section of the tribe [were] genuine and not entirely the result of subversive propaganda acting on a discontented people whose discontent [arose] from neglect by their rulers” (Pitcairn, 1946, p. 4).

Pitcairn went on to write to the Secretary of the Northern Provinces that regarding the chiefship for which the Atyap and Bajju were agitating at the time “I could have no confidence to give them a Katab [Atyap] Chief at present. The tribe has little cohesion, and the control of the Chiefs and responsible old gentlemen cannot be relied upon” (Pitcairn 29<sup>th</sup> May 1946). The Christian Missionaries were certain that groups like the “Kaje” and “Katab” may have rebelled because of the independence of the nearby “Kagoro”. The Missionaries believed the considerable latitude enjoyed by the “Kagoro” during the British rule was a constant reminder to other ethnic groups in Kaduna of the gains of freedom in a highly constricted environment of colonial imposition from outside and within (Sudan Interior Mission, 1946).

Whatever the intentions behind the rebellions of the Atyap and Bajju, they led the British to seriously considered including members of the minority groups in the governance of their own affairs. Thus, the following strategies for inclusion and self-governance of these groups were tabled by the Resident, Zaria Province and approved by the British Chief Commissioner in the North. These included:

- (1) The Wakilai, or sub-District Headmen, in the Chawai and Kaje tribal areas, should be replaced by tribal representatives as soon as suitable men can be found.
- (2) Maigamo, the Muhammadan representative of the District Head who attends sittings of the Pagan Courts, should no longer attend the courts, but general supervision of these courts can probably be adequately ensured by periodical visits of the District Head himself and by regular examination, by him, of the Court records.
- (3) One at least, and possibly two, of the District Mallams, should in future be Pagan, recruited preferably from the Kaje and Katab tribes.
- (4) One or two pagan Yandoka should be appointed.
- (5) Liaison messengers to the tribes should be members of the tribes concerned.
- (6) A sufficient number of tribal scribes should be appointed to carry out all the Census work (under the general supervision of the District Head and his pagan staff) and to issue tax receipts and carry out all tax collection duties in the villages.
- (7) A new pagan court will be built in the site selected in Zangon Katab (Pitcairn, 1946, p. 2).

The implementation of these interventions was slow and laborious. Moreover, only the representatives of the rebellious dominant groups like the Bajju (Kaje) and Atyap (Kataf) were included in such plans. The Crown continued to propagate the idea that the ethnic minority groups were not as intellectually sound as the Hausa and Fulani to govern their own affairs. Hence, many of these groups remained under the over-lordship of the emirate appointed Hausa and Fulani district heads until the year 2000 when new chiefdoms were crafted out for these minority groups by the administration of the then Kaduna State Governor Ahmed Muhammad Makarfi. Although some of these chiefdoms were already established during the military administrative government of Ja'faru Isa in 1996, the democratic era heralded the context for the groups to vent more robust call for autonomous rule at the local level.

The people embraced the creation of the chiefdoms as an auspicious step in the fulfilment of their aspirations for self-governance and liberation from the emirate system. However, because of the strong legacies of the emirate system and British colonialism, the Muslim emirs are revered as the supreme traditional leaders in Kaduna. Thus, the ethnic minority groups have continued to feel a sense of subjugation and injustice under the directives of the state authorities. These authorities are mostly of Fulani and Hausa extractions. As well, they feel a strong resentment over the way, per their perceptions, their paramount chiefs are exposed to the ill-treatment of criminals and kidnappers in contrast to the autonomy and robust security and protection availed to the Fulani and Hausa emirs. Some few recent experiences demonstrate the people's indignation regarding the treatments of their chiefs.

In late 2017 unknown assailants assassinated the chief of Numana and his pregnant wife. In early January 2018, the chief of Bakulu—Yohanna Sidi Kukah—was kidnapped in his residence and released a few days after his kidnappers had purportedly received a ransom. Again,

in mid-October 2018, the chief of Adara, Dr. Maiwada Raphael Galadima, was kidnapped alongside his wife and a palace official. Three of his staffers were killed at the spot of the kidnapping incident. Although his wife was released shortly after the macabre event, his abductors killed the chief. The killing of the chief was said to have happened after the abductors had received ransom for his release as demanded.

Some participants share that having collected the ransom; the kidnappers shot him shortly after they told him to leave. His body was found on the Kaduna-Abuja expressway, the road leading to the Nigerian capital city of Abuja, from Kaduna. Except for the curfew declared across the southern part of the state as soon as the chief's body was found, the gruesome murder of the Adara chief would have no doubt triggered another wave of violent unrest. Even so, the October 2018 crisis in Kasuwan Magani spiraled into Kaduna metropolis. People who were affiliated on ethnoreligious grounds with victims and perpetrators of the crisis were involved in a series of reprisal attacks prior to the imposition of a curfew on the affected areas in the state. Many of Maiwada's followers, sympathizers, and community members were aggrieved over the way in which he was killed. He was reportedly killed when the state government was negotiating his release.

Other high-profile cases of abductions of politicians and clergymen abound in Kaduna. While the identities of the assailants of the Adara and Numana chiefs remain unknown at the time of writing this research, the nature of ethnoreligious tensions in Kaduna means that their deaths would ordinarily engender swift conclusions regarding the identity of perpetrators of violence as belonging to the "other" group: in this sense, as belonging to the Muslim/Fulani groups. Some participants insist that criminals did not mastermind Maiwada's abduction and murder instead it was executed with prior knowledge of state authorities. It is unfortunate that the

government's inability to prevent such attacks or apprehend perpetrators serves to further fuel allegations of the state's complicity in such crimes.

It is partly for these seeming differences of religion, culture, perceived socioeconomic marginalization and disempowerments that the ethnic minority groups are often presented as innocent victims who are perpetually soaked in an antagonizing relationship with the Hausas and Fulanis. In Kaduna, as Rotimi Suberu (1996) has found out, the cohabitation of the ethnic minority communities with the Hausa and Fulani groups has impacted enormously on the dynamics of contestations over sociopolitical and economic rights and entitlements in the state.

While the Hausa groups are just as important to this research, the focus is on the relationship between the ethnic minority groups and the Fulani. However, the research underlines the relationship between the Fulani and Hausa communities by way of drawing the readers' attention to the fluidity and ease of mobility within the two identities, as well as to explain why both groups are frequently presented as conjoined twins.

In general, while stereotyped cultural perceptions are prevalent in Nigeria due to historical and contemporary perceptions and experiences of power disparity, economic imbalance, and social stratification, this research calls for an understanding of the complexities of these groups beyond cultural differences and ideologies. It also seeks to challenge the usual sensationalist and reductionist narratives laced with religious prejudice and ethnic bigotry by considering the groups' complex lifeworld and existential conditions which are also evident of ample commonalities and communal exchanges in their sociocultural and political history. Yet, the aspects of the sensationalists and reductionist narratives are quite revealing of the character and nature of conflicts and intercommunal relationship in Nigeria as the discussion on the Fulani evinced in the next sub-section.

## **The Fulani of Southern Kaduna and Nigeria**

The origin story of the Fulani is recondite (Lott & Hart, 1977). Walker (2016) claims the group had a large presence on the Senegambian plain before they migrated to other West African societies. For their part, Winters (2010) and Scheindfeldt et al (2010) trace the origin of the Fulani to other parts of Africa. According to Winters (2010), the language and genetics of the Fulani are of the Niger-Congo. They also claim the Fulani might have settled in West Africa from Nubia (Winters, 2010). Scheindfeldt et al (2010) also affirm the African origin of the Fulani. They concluded, based on insufficient evidence, that the group cannot be traced to any geographic location in Africa.

In population and spatial demography, small or large minorities of Fulani are found in almost every country in West Africa, with a majority based in northern Nigeria (Walker, 2016). Blench (1994) asserts that the Fulani migrated from the Senegambian plain through the Mali and Songhai Empires and settled in Hausa land and the then Bornu Empire around the 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. Their population in Nigeria is estimated at about 7 million, even though this figure often fluctuates due to patterns of cross-border migration and the “nomadic” lifestyle of some Fulani groups (ACAPS Thematic Report, 2017). While most Fulani people in northern Nigeria are of the Islamic faith, it is unclear whether most of them are ardent Muslims (Blench, 2003b). Some participants of Hausa and other ethnic extractions in Kaduna repeatedly called into question the religious piety of the Fulani in Nigeria.

The Fulanis are known by several names in West Africa: the Hausas and the minority ethnic groups in the Middle Belt of Nigeria call them Fulani, while in Kanuri, they are known as *Fellata* (Adebayo, 1991; Walker, 2016). The group mostly self-identify as *FulBe* or *Pullo* in singular (Walker, 2016). They are also a very heterogeneous group and sometimes distinguishable by their lifestyle (Adebayo, 1991), occupation, age structure, and fortune

(Onoma, 2017, p. 36). The group is commonly categorized into three: the *Fulbe sire, toroobe*, or the urban or town dwellers. This category of Fulani is said to comprise the class of Fulani Muslim clerics who led the religious jihad of the early nineteenth century in what became northern Nigeria and are believed to have assimilated and settled into Hausa culture. There is also the *Fulbe na'I, bororo'en* (the highly mobile or nomadic Fulani) and *Fulbe ladde* (the semi-nomadic) or the pastoralist-rural Fulani (Adebayo, 1991; Turaki, 1993; Walker, 2016).

The Fulani—those imagined and represented in various scholarships as an urban and spiritually devout Muslim group—became politically active and relevant in Northern Nigeria after the Uthman Dan Fodio's jihad that began in 1804 (Adebayo, 1991). Prior to the jihad, Islam had already entered Kanem Borno, and other Hausa communities from the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries through contact with Arab traders (Yusuf, 2007). However, it was Dan Fodio's jihad that truly facilitated the propagation of Islam in the region through the commitment of the Fulani jihadists and their fierce dedication to the jihadist cause.

Dan Fodio aimed to utilize the jihad to reform Muslim societies, particularly Hausa land in the North (Lovejoy, 2016). The jihad won over Hausaland and several other peripheral kingdoms including Borgu and Nupe (Blench, 2003a), leading to the creation of the seat of Islam (the Caliphate) in Sokoto. The Caliphate fell to the British in 1903 (McGregor, 2017). The Caliphate has been described as the “largest unitary state in Nineteenth-century Africa” (Lovejoy, 2016, p. 255).

Dan Fodio's intent was to replace most of the non-orthodox, corrupt, and non-Muslim Hausa rulers with mostly orthodox Muslims (Waldman, 1966). Due to the forced imposition of an Islamic theocracy on conquered territories, the jihad could be explained as a form of “internal colonialism” (see Michael Hechter, 1975). This form of colonial imposition of political and

spiritual values and rule on minority groups predated and, indeed, paved the way for the European colonization of what became Northern Nigeria. Thus, the nature of the colonialism espoused in this research is two-fold: on the one hand, is the jihadist conquest of areas that now constitute northern Nigeria and the enforcement of Islam and an orthodox lifestyle on autonomous groups. On the other hand, is British colonialism. Together with Fulani and Hausa aristocrats and Islamic converts, the British spearheaded the subjugation and subservience of other ethnic minority groups in many parts of Northern Nigeria from 1800 onwards.<sup>6</sup>

On the first form of colonialism, Harnischfeger (2006) argues that the Fulani jihadists imposed strict religious practices like the Ramadan, Friday prayers, and other rites on autonomous people, particularly in Muslim communities. They did this to spread a uniform culture and parade themselves as true custodians of the Islamic faith. The success of Dan Fodio's jihad is palpable in several parts of northern Nigeria. It is also considered by many in the area as a true mark of "Hausa-Fulani" religious, sociopolitical, and economic pre-eminence (Harnischfeger, 2004). This supposed superiority was experienced not only by minority populations in Nigeria but also by other major groups like the Yoruba and Igbo who have struggled with the Fulani and Hausa groups over the upper echelons of political power in Nigeria.

After the conquests of Hausa kingdoms, most of the Fulani who participated in the jihad integrated into Hausa land. As they did so, they took on some of the characteristics of the Hausas including their language and way of life. These groups of Fulani are the so-called urban Fulani

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<sup>6</sup> The reality of colonialism does not obliterate other forms or traces of intergroup and intra-group mistreatments among the minority ethnic communities. The minority communities among these groups have also had to endure the domination of larger groups among them like the Bajju, Oegworok, and Atyap. However, it appears that they are more tolerant of their internal domination than the longstanding hegemony of the Hausa and Fulani elite. However, the nature of this tolerance could be tested if these groups were to secede or be given their own state.

group. The group is considered to have lost its ability to speak *Fulfude*, the language of the Fulani. It is also understood that this group of Fulani continued to maintain some form of cultural bonds with the pastoralist-rural Fulani (Blench, 1994). Moreover, Osaghae (1998) argues that the urban Fulani class are a dominant minority, which built their power base on the majority Hausa. He maintains that even though the groups are distinguishable, both have been fused as a political majority due to the legacy of the jihad and British colonialism (Osaghae, 1998).

The second major form of colonialism in Nigeria is British rule. It is arguable that British administrators amplified the cultural crevice and fissures within the Fulani community. It was the Crown's proclivity to favor who it deemed progressive Fulani groups from those it branded as the traditionalists. British policies of indirect rule, in which they selected Fulani and Hausa aristocrats to be the wheel of colonial governance, reinforced the urban-rural dichotomy among the Fulani group and fostered the marginalization of other minority groups. On account of the history of the Caliphate system and the indirect rule policy, the political domination of the Hausa and Fulani groups writ large in Nigeria.

Particularly, and on a significant number of levels, the historical narrative of the Fulani—whether urban or rural-pastoral—as a conqueror and a jihadist has continued to influence intellectual and political discourse on their relationship with other groups in Nigeria. Since Muhammadu Buhari, a Fulani, became Nigeria's President in 2015, the legacy of the jihad and Buhari's regime have become a referent for the assumed aggression and culpability of the Fulani in intercommunal conflicts in northern Nigeria. The cultural identity of the Fulani has become synonymous with oppression and domination in contemporary Nigeria. The Fulani's awareness of their dominance in Nigeria's politics is considered by some Nigerian communities as part of the reason engendering impunity on the part of some members of the group.

As will be shown throughout this research, the city-rural binary of the Fulani is simplistic. Moreover, the distinction made by some participants between the *Kachechere* (settled Fulani in Kaduna) and *Bororo* (the highly mobile foreign pastoralists) is also suspect. The way in which different cultural groups are described in Nigeria in terms suggestive of group statism undermines their evolution and complexities in an ever-changing sociopolitical climate. Within such a climate, people must keep adapting to survive and remain relevant. Moreover, the herding strategies of Fulani pastoralists have had constantly to adapt to local conditions: changes in herd size matter (as does who exactly is the owner of the herd, often not the *Pullo* herder: he is being hired by the wealthy who invest in cattle, literally as “capital” – even so-called “pagan” Hausa farmers and some other groups in Nigeria did or still require the herding services of the Fulani).

Given this contextual background of the cultural identities of the groups in Kaduna, and the nature of their sociopolitical and economic relationship, what requires some exploration and examination is the context of enduring conflicts in the state. This exploration will shed some light on why the Fulani and the other ethnic minority groups in Kaduna and Nigeria’s Middle Belt have been competing over issues of land, politics, identity, and power—issues undergirding the crisis of belonging in Nigeria.

### **The Political Economy and Geopolitics of Conflicts in Kaduna**

Accordingly, it bears explaining what “conflict” and “intercommunal conflict” entail before discussing the nature of enduring conflicts in southern Kaduna. Charles Hauss (2010) argues that conflict is pervasive and is a constitutive aspect of human interactions (Kriesberg, 1982). Conflict can be interstate—involving two or more sovereign states or intrastate—involving non-state actors who live within or beyond the confines of a state. Conflicts can also

be interpersonal or intrapersonal, denoting the complexities within an individual and of human relations. In this research, only intergroup and intragroup conflicts are relevant, particularly as they depict the destructive and constructive elements of intercommunal life in southern Kaduna

Conflict has been variously defined in terms of its proximate and ultimate causes. The German-American sociologist, Lewis Coser, defines conflict as contestations over different values or limited resources and opportunities in which opponents try to destroy each other (cited in Avruch, 1998, p. 24). Conflict has also been defined as an outcome of “perceived divergence of interest, or a belief that parties’ current aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously” (Avruch, 1998, p. 24). Lewis Coser’s definition views conflict as arising due to unfulfilled socioeconomic and political needs.

Identity theorists have regarded human needs as fundamental to human development (Fisher, 1990). Identity theory claims that all cultural groups “have fundamental needs and rights for recognition, identity, security, resources, self-determination, and participation which, when [denied] or frustrated, result in an exorable push for redress and satisfaction” (Fisher, 1990, p. 103). One criticism of such a standpoint is that not everyone resorts to violence due to unmet expectations and needs. Violence is a deliberate choice of action. There are cases, however, where people (particularly minors or children) are compelled to fight through force or inducement.

In the second definition of conflict presented by Avruch above, the divergence and competition between groups with different psychocultural interests and interpretations are understood as the root causes of conflict (Avruch, 1998). Stella Ting-Toomey renders a similar definition, arguing that conflict is symptomatic of an intense breakdown of communication, “bounded by the cultural demands and constraints of the particular situation” ... which

“dictate[s] what the appropriate and inappropriate ways of behaving and communicating in a given system are” (2001, p. 46). There is an implicit connotation from this definition that cultural demands and constraints of different groups could create the basis of violent relations. The probing question then is why do intercommunal conflicts become pervasive in certain contexts of cultural diversity and not in others?

This research adopts a holistic explanation of intercommunal conflict to include its historical, structural, economic, political, geographic, spiritual, and psychocultural elements (Carter & Byrne 2000; Byrne & Senehi, 2012). In this sense, intercommunal conflict can be defined as the misunderstanding or disagreement between two or more communities whose perceptual, symbolic, political, economic, and psychocultural values, needs, and aspirations are perceived as the central forces of these disagreements. Thus, groups engage in conflict with others to defend their positions or secure and maintain their sense of identity, group pride, meaning, and security. Johan Brosché and Emma Elfverson (2012; 2015) define intercommunal conflicts as violent conflicts fought mostly by non-state actors because of local cultural identities.

In certain instances, intercommunal conflicts can degenerate into “Protracted Social Conflict (PSC)”, due to what Edward Azar and Chong In Moon (1986) describe as “conflicting socio-cultural ethnic relationships amidst chronic underdevelopment” (p. 394). Azar and Moon (1986) argue that PSC is characterized by “temporal protractedness, fluctuations in intensity and frequency, conflict spill-over from one realm to another, a tendency towards partial equilibrium, the absence of an explicit termination, and the blurred demarcation between internal and external causes of conflict” (1986, p. 395).

Some notable examples of intercommunal PSC include conflicts between African and European Americans, Indians and Pakistanis, Turkish and Greek Cypriots, Tamils and Sinhalese in Sri Lanka, Israelis and Palestinians, Kurds and Arabs in the Middle East, Sunnis and Shia Muslims, Malays and Chinese, and Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland (Azar & Moon, 1986). Given the persistent devastations caused by longstanding intercommunal conflicts in Kaduna, the nature of these conflicts could be verging on PSC for reasons discussed below.

Kaduna is a prominent city in northern Nigeria, founded by the British in 1916 as the then capital of the region of Northern Nigeria (Meagher, 2018). The state was formally created in 1975 during the military administration of General Murtala Muhammad, and it has 23 local government areas (Yusuf, 2007). According to the 2006 census, there are about 6.1 million people living in the state (Nigeria Data Portal, 2006). The state has witnessed a geometric population rise over the past decade or so; even though spates of communal conflicts have decimated many of these people and led to the increased movement of people to other parts of the country.

Kaduna is indubitably the most deeply diverse and segregated state in Nigeria. Although Jos, the capital city of Plateau state, formerly the Home of Peace and Tourism due to the peace that once flourished there and its tourism potential, has become infamous for ethnoreligious crises since the early 2000s. Kaduna has a significant population of Christians and Muslim groups from various ethnolinguistic backgrounds and societies. Members of the different religious groups live in distinct geographic enclaves, with most of the Christians and Muslims residing in the south and north of the state, respectively. Meanwhile, a sizeable number of Muslims live in the south, and a considerable Christian population still live in the north (Musa, 2016).

The religious difference in Kaduna, as with other pluralistic societies in postcolonial Africa, coincides with the ethnic divide. Kaduna's minority ethnic groups are mostly portrayed as Christians while the Hausa and Fulani groups are represented as mainly Muslims. In this way, conflicts over land, politics, elections, resources, and so on, are easily perceived not only based on the religious identities or differences of these groups but on their ethnic backgrounds as well. These identities—ethnic and religious—are often deployed by the various groups in Kaduna to serve their interests. At any opportune moment, one of these identities could become more potent and useful than the other. One of these moments was in the 2019 gubernatorial elections. Governor Nasir El-Rufai of Kaduna selected Hadiza Balaraba as his running mate in the elections in which they were acclaimed victorious.

Dr Balaraba is from the Numana community in Sanga local government area of Kaduna state. While some participants consider Balaraba's selection as a way of assuaging the Numana people over the killing of their chief and his wife and fulfilling the aspirations of the ethnic minority groups, others are more critical of the Governor's choice. They neither considered Balaraba's selection as an appeasement nor her candidacy a representation of their collective achievement and progress. They argue that her selection is in no way going to be beneficial to them because while she is from one of the minority groups in the state, her Muslim identity isolates her from the majority ethnic minority Christian groups. Thus, some view her selection by the Governor as a scheme to exclude the ethnic minority communities and Christian populations in his administration.

The groups concluded that the governor was inciting religious animosity by opting for a Muslim-Muslim ticket instead of the Muslim-Christian or vice versa ticket that was the norm in the state. However, despite their discontentment, most of them were willing to vote into power a

Muslim, Alhaji Isa Ashiru of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), as their governor. Ashiru had selected Hon. Katung Marshal, a Christian and Bajju (Kaje), as his running mate. Thus, the groups considered Ashiru a more inclusive and magnanimous candidate than El-Rufai whom they viewed as an Islamic bigot and a divisive leader. However, the groups' consideration of Ashiru could also be revealing of their impotence in the context of the political dominance of the Hausa and Fulani groups; although his choice of a Christian running mate played a key part in their decision to support him.

Since the British colonial times, prominent political positions in Kaduna have been under the tutelage of the Hausa and Fulani elite. Besides, most of the federal and state institutions and infrastructures of power and influence including universities, major government ministries, and hospitals are in the northern part of Kaduna where the Fulani and Hausa groups are a majority. The way in which the disparity in resource distribution and allocation of political power is perceived by the different groups in the state has often been a source of serious grievances and conflicts among them (Musa, 2016).

The minority ethnic groups generally feel a sense of continued subjugation from what they view as the stranglehold of the emirate system in northern Nigeria. They also harbor perceptions of government's ineptitude and negligence of their aspirations for socioeconomic liberation, autonomy, security, and political independence. The politically dominant Hausa and Fulani groups also feel threatened by the minority populations especially with regards to determining who rightfully belongs to the state. This apprehension on the part of the Fulani and other fringed groups in the state over their rights of indigeneship and citizenship may partly explain why the governor abolished indigeneship rights in the state; a move that was vehemently deplored by the ethnic minority groups.

Given its ethnoreligious polarization, complexities, and the concomitant tendency by various groups to contrive and manufacture identity differences in periods of elections or during political upheavals, Kaduna has become a hub of some of the most violent cases of ethnoreligious crises in Nigeria since the 1980s and even during the British era. In the colonial era, the conflicts mostly occurred because of the propensity of the colonialists to privilege the Muslim Hausa and Fulani groups over Christians and other non-Muslim groups who were lumped together as nonentities with “strangers” from southern Nigeria.<sup>7</sup>

Aside from the anti-colonial struggles and conflicts over religious ideologies like the Sharia contestations in the 1960s, some of the most notable episodes of violent conflicts in Kaduna include the 1981 Kasuwan Magani crisis, the 1987 Kafanchan crisis, the February and May 1992 Zangon Kataf crisis, the 2000 Sharia crisis, the 2002 Miss World crisis, and the 2011 post-election violence. These crises were executed with frightening intensity and led to substantial loss of lives and destruction of valued properties. Several factors accounted for these crises, not least the crisis of belonging seen through contestations over resources and power, and the insider-outsider perceptions of socioeconomic and political disparities among the various ethnoreligious groups in the state.

In the 1987 Kafanchan crisis, a young preacher trying to convince students at the College of Education Kafanchan of the veracity of the Christian “Born Again” message was alleged to have touched on some sensitive issues in the Quran (Ibrahim, 1989). This singular act ignited an inferno that engulfed Kafanchan and parts of Kaduna in an era marked by rising tensions of

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<sup>7</sup>The British created “strangers’ quarters” (*Sabon Gari*) in some northern states, especially in Kano, where visitors from other parts of the country were hedged in. One of the reasons for this policy was to check against Christian proselytization activities in northern Nigeria, as well as to ensure that the core “North” remains free of any form of adulteration that could pose as a dangerous threat to the administration of the pliable “pagans” of Northern Nigeria. In Kano, for example, David Ehrhardt (2017, p. 469) argues that the *Sabon Gari* neighbourhood is considered by some Muslims as the “Christian” or “godless” section of town.

global religious fundamentalism (Ibrahim, 1989). According to Jibrin Ibrahim, many residents of the wider Jema'a area where Kafanchan is situated felt abandoned by the state and fled to their "homelands". These residents included the Hausa and Fulani communities deemed as settlers in the area (Ibrahim, 1989).

Another significant crisis was the February 1992 Zangon Kataf crisis in which the non-Muslim Atyap community in Zangon Kataf Local Government Area (LGA) became entangled in a struggle for a living and business space with the Hausa community in Zango. The issue began when the administration of the LGA under Yari Babang Ayok—the then LGA chairman—ordered the relocation of the largely Hausa dominated Zango market from the center of the town to its outskirts. Since many Hausa business people had established their businesses and homes in that area, they were unwilling to relinquish this position because it would entail a shift of power to the Atyap community, and loss of their business space and sphere of influence in the central town (Oláyokù, 2017).

Complicating matters further, the proposed new site for the market was at proximity to the place of worship of the Hausa community and inhabitable at the time (Yusuf, 2007). Thus, the Hausa marketers in Zango interpreted the injunction to relocate to the new area as a plan by the Atyap people to defile their Mosque and make them nonentities in the area (Oláyokù, 2017). Kraxberger (2005) supports this view, arguing that the Atyap community were simply trying to displace the Hausa settlers to assert themselves properly in the area as the Indigenous people. The editorial of the Citizen Magazine of May 1992 reports that the Atyap insisted the Hausa community did not belong there and should be uprooted from the area.

Whatever the merits of the foregoing arguments, the crisis must also be understood in a wider context as a product of the two forms of colonialism, especially the long-term subjugation

of the ethnic minority groups under the emirate system in Zaria. Within this colonial milieu, groups like the Atyap and the Bajju have consistently challenged the metanarratives of the Islamic behemoths. They have asserted themselves within their jurisdictions and often demanded self-governance for their people. Their resistance to colonial rule in 1946 prompted the Crown to reconsider self-government for the minority groups (Zaria Province Correspondence Jacket, 1946). Seen in this historical light, the unrests of 1992 become more intelligible: it was partly a continuation of the liberation struggle of the Atyap in Zangon Kataf over the dominance of Hausa and Fulani communities in the area.

At any rate, bouts of violence broke out from this contentious market relocation issue, leading to the loss of hundreds of lives. The violence also dislocated what harmony and trust had hitherto existed among the many groups in Zango including the Atyap, the ethnic minority groups, and the Hausa and Fulani groups. Fulani settlements in Zango were attacked by Atyap nationalists (Yusuf, 2007) because they were in cahoots with the Hausa. The Fulani's integration into Hausa communities after the jihad and the fact that many are Muslims, implicated them in the crisis.

One major consequence of the Zangon Kataf crisis was that it instilled deep fear and apprehension among the disparate groups in Kaduna. In periods following the crisis, the people became highly paranoid about their safety in relation to the "other". The crisis led to an unprecedented security dilemma and vigilance among the groups. In some quarters, people started acquiring crude weapons such as bows and arrows and short guns to safeguard themselves and their communities in case of any recrudescence of violence.

Aside from the excesses and shenanigans of the military regime, there were no other high-profile violent incidents in Kaduna until Nigeria's return to a democratic government in

1999. This democratic transition paved the way for the assertion of group rights, especially rights to religious and political freedoms. Some Muslim politicians, notably the governor of Zamfara state—now Senator Ahmed Sani Yerima—introduced the controversial Sharia law in his state in accordance with Islamic principles. Although the application of the law was not uniform across the country, about eleven other states in the federation adopted some variant of the Islamic law.

When the Sharia issue was broached in Kaduna in early 2000, the ethnic minority communities, with a majority Christian population, resisted and protested the proposed implementation of the law by the Kaduna state government. The protests were staged under the directives of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN). They feared the continued suppression of Christians in northern Nigeria under the strictures of Islamic judicial and legal systems. For many Christian groups, the implementation of the Sharia law would sound the death knell for their “birthrights” in their homeland. The application of the law would also undermine their struggles for self-rule and religious freedom. Understandably, the apprehension of these groups intensified despite a report issued by the Muslim Ummah in Kaduna, claiming the new law would not interfere with the freedom and liberty of non-Muslim groups. Authors of this report also insist on exercising their full religious rights in accordance with the stipulations of their religious books (Kaduna State Muslim Community, 2000).

The Christians groups were poised to maintain the secularity of the state (The Christian Community in Kaduna, 2000). Thus, CAN organized a protest for Christians in the state to express their disapproval of the law. On the day of the protest, Bilkisu Yusuf (2007) argues that the Christian demonstrators forced themselves into the government house in Kaduna because they were not allowed in. Moreover, she also claims the Christian protesters harassed and intimidated motorists to support their cause as they left the government house (Yusuf, 2007).

However, the general understanding among many Christian groups in Kaduna was that they were ambushed and attacked by some Islamic extremists on their way back from protesting the implementation of the law at the government's house.

Whatever the case, the situation ignited a wave of religious crisis on February 21, 2000. As the conflicts brew, Christians and Muslims attacked each other with reckless and outrageous savagery. The crisis, intermittently, lasted until May 23, 2000. The ensuing massacres fuelled the suspicion among many Christian groups in the state that the Muslims were harboring a political agenda to Islamize, control, and populate the state and country. Consequently, the different religious groups in Kaduna retreated into their geographic and mental enclaves.

The Sharia crisis became the true apotheosis of the geographic split between both religious camps in the state. The two different geographic camps are colloquially referred to as the "New Mecca or Palestine" and the "New Jerusalem or Israel", denoting the longstanding territorial conflicts between Palestinians and the Jews as representing the Muslims and Christians in Kaduna, respectively. This geographic and ideological split is like the case of Belfast, Northern Ireland, where Protestants fly the Israeli flag in their neighborhoods and Catholics fly the Palestinian flag.

The Sharia crisis also accelerated the migration of some southerners living in Kaduna to their states of origin in other parts of Nigeria.<sup>8</sup> The destructions, migration, and loss of lives that ensued in the wake of the Sharia crisis challenged the "liberal state" motto of Kaduna state

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<sup>8</sup> In Nigeria, as in other postcolonial societies, one's state of origin remains the basis of identification as a *bonafide* indigene worthy of enjoying all the facilities, resources, and opportunities in the state. This situation is one of the bases of exclusionary politics in Nigeria where identification within a specific part of the country is not made on the basis of citizenship, but indigeneship. Thus, it is commonplace for people to migrate to their states of origin once they feel targeted or threatened by violence in areas in which they have "settled" for business and other purposes. This situation is compounded when such people are not received back into places they also consider as their homes. It is less wonder many people in the country and some scholars have been calling for the abrogation of the indigeneship identity in the country in order to create an egalitarian society where citizenship rights trumps that of indigeneity.

which, prior to the crisis, was so brazenly brandished on the number plates of vehicles. The crisis, perhaps, necessitated the change of the motto to “Centre of Learning”, which could literarily mean a place of educational opportunities and advancements due to the collection of institutions of higher learning in the state. Metaphorically, it could also mean a place of coming to terms with the horrors and ravages of violent conflicts.

Another equally ferocious violent incident in Kaduna was the 2002 Miss World crisis. The event was clearly a result of religious absolutism, extremism, and sentimentalism. The pageantry, which was slated to be held on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2002 in Nigeria was canceled due to various misgivings about its appropriateness and suitability at a time of Ramadan (the Muslim fasting period) (Kperogi, 2013). While the organizers of the pageantry eventually changed the commencement date to December of the same year, other issues surfaced. Some of these issues had to do with the government’s support of the event and the move by some nine foreign contestants to boycott the event. They boycotted the event as a protest to the death sentence imposed by the Sharia Islamic law on a woman (Amina Lawal) convicted for adultery in Katsina state (Kperogi, 2013).

In response to the misgivings regarding the pageantry, a fashion journalist of ThisDay Newspaper (Isioma Daniel) wrote a column article on 16 November 2002 titled “Miss World 2002: The World at Their Feet” (Kperogi, 2013). In the said article, the journalist states that the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) would have chosen one of the beauty pageants’ contestants as a wife (Kperogi, 2013). This newspaper article became the catalyst that sparked the Miss World crisis in Kaduna as religious zealots burned down Christian structures as well as the ThisDay Office in Kaduna. Some few hundred people died in the process, while the columnist fled the country and remained in exile.

For many of the ethnic minority groups, the ThisDay article about the Prophet Muhammad (SALW) was unconnected to them: they did not own the ThisDay Newspaper outlet, and the columnist was not one of their community members. Hence, they considered the targeted killings of Christians in Kaduna and destruction of their belongings and places of worships that ensued in the wake of the publication of the article as a calculated attempt by the dominant Hausa and Fulani Muslim groups to decimate them in order to expedite their expansionist programs in the state (Southern Kaduna Elders Consultative Forum, 2002).

The report issued by some southern Kaduna elders also faults the state for orchestrating the killings. The report argues that, “the heavy presence of Military/Police personnel in the Christian and Southern Kaduna people dominated areas now has led to the wanton arrest of innocent Christians and Southern Kaduna people in their houses, while they had nothing to do with the initiating or perpetrating the mayhem in Kaduna and environs” (2002, p. 8). It is noteworthy that Muslims were also aggrieved over the way in which the state handled the 1992 crisis. They claim there was no even-handed managing of the crisis and that so long as the authorities are seen to be partisan in identifying and punishing perpetrators of ethnic and sectarian clashes, Kaduna will perpetually be mired in violent sectarianism (Citizen, 1992).

Another turning point for the people of Kaduna, especially in terms of the relations between the Fulani and other ethnic minority communities in the state, was the 2011 post-presidential election violence. In Kaduna, the crisis began in the city after the results of the Presidential and Gubernatorial elections had been announced. Muhammadu Buhari, who was the Presidential candidate of the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) was defeated by incumbent President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan of the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) (Bello, 2015). Goodluck Jonathan and the late Patrick Yakowa—the Presidential and gubernatorial

representatives of the party—both Christians, became President of Nigeria, and the Governor of Kaduna, respectively. The victory of Patrick Yakowa in Kaduna marked the first time a representative of one of the ethnic minority groups would become an elected governor in the state.

What seemed to be the tradition or unwritten law in the state was that the governor would come from the politically dominant Hausa or Fulani group while the deputy would be selected from one of the ethnic minority groups. Initially, Patrick Yakowa was the deputy governor to then Governor Namadi Sambo. Sambo was later appointed Vice President to Goodluck Jonathan. Consequently, Yakowa segued into the governorship position. In this capacity, he campaigned in his own right to become governor in the 2011 elections and won. Members of the ethnic minority groups heralded his victory as a triumph of their liberation struggles. They also considered his death in a helicopter crash in December 2012 as a major setback in the attainment of their liberation and the development of their rural communities in southern Kaduna.

While the ethnic minority groups were celebrating Yakowa's emergence as governor, Human Rights Watch reports that Buhari's supporters took to the streets to protest after the election results had been announced. The report states that, "Muslim rioters targeted and killed Christians and members of other ethnic groups from southern Nigeria, who were perceived to have supported the ruling party, burning their churches, shops, and homes... In predominantly Christian communities in Kaduna state, mobs of Christians retaliated by killing Muslims and burning their mosques and properties" (Human Rights Watch, 2011). In southern Kaduna, Christian groups from the ethnic minority communities attacked Muslims in places like Kafanchan, Kwoi, Matsirga, and Zonkwa.

The Fulani's narratives in southern Kaduna are framed that they were attacked in the 2011 crisis because of their identity as Fulani. The group shares the same ethnicity with Muhammadu Buhari, the incumbent President of Nigeria. However, many of them claim they benefited more from the government of Goodluck Jonathan than they have from Buhari's. However, the other ethnic minority groups widely allege that "Fulani herdsmen" mostly instigated the 2011 crisis because their candidate lost out to a Christian (Ducrotoy et al., 2018). Some Fulani participants disabuse any notion of instigating the 2011 crisis. They argue that some were only passing through southern Kaduna with their cattle at the time of the crisis and had to escape from becoming sacrificial lambs in its vortex.

Feeling unease in the aftermath of the 2011 crisis, some of the Fulani in southern Kaduna fled to Ladduga, a reserve area that was established in the 1960s for cattle grazing. For many non-Muslim communities residing in southern Kaduna, the 2011 post-election violence and other similar violent episodes in the state serve as signposts of Fulani conquests. Moses Ochon (2014) argues that "the jihad and its many myths had been the rhetorical idiom of victimhood in many non-caliphate areas" (p. 193). The 2011 crisis became another "chosen trauma" (Volkan, 1997) for all communities involved in the mayhem. Several participants highlighted this conflict as the main source of their grievances, in which they were outdone and on the verge of being uprooted from their ancestral home by the "outside" enemy.

The crisis also resulted in a change of conflict dynamics in southern Kaduna. The 2011 conflict took a spiral of retaliatory attacks between Fulani and the ethnic minority groups rather than the previous pattern of periodic ethnoreligious riots. The conflict did not exclusively entail the "farmer-herder" dichotomy, but rather religious and ethnic mobilization more generally, reflective of the crisis of belonging.

In the light of this conflicted environment in Kaduna, the so-called “farmer-herder” crisis is neither new nor unique. The crisis represents a disturbing trend of the evolving reality of intercommunal violence in Nigeria. These conflicts are sometimes inaccurately described as seasonal conflicts—driven largely by livelihood conflicts around crop damage and cropland encroachment. Admittedly, these livelihood issues are part of the malaise. Yet the conflicts are a product of a complex relationship between different ethnolinguistic and religious groups in terms of how they negotiate their economic and political resources in a context of resource contestations, state weakness/complicity, and identity politics occurring within a space the groups cohabit and conceive of as their “home”.

This research is an attempt at understanding how the different communities in Kaduna make sense of their identity and cosmology within a debilitating socioeconomic and political context. It is also an exploration of the peacebuilding resources of these communities in response to the crisis of belonging and the nature of modern statehood and nationhood in Nigeria.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has examined the ethnoreligious composition of the ethnic minority groups and the Fulani in southern Kaduna and Nigeria. It grounded the discussions within the broader concepts of culture and intercommunal conflicts. The chapter discussed why the groups are often perceived and designated as intransigent enemies. It also explored why and how the groups’ perceived antagonism towards each other is used to explain the intensifying and violent ethnoreligious conflicts in Kaduna.

The main finding of the chapter is that the disparate groups in Kaduna are not monolithic entities. Rather, they are a complex heterogeneous identity of different sociopolitical and

ethnoreligious and linguistic backgrounds. So understood, it appears that the terminologies employed in this research to describe the nature of these groups such as “ethnic minority communities” and “Fulani communities” are inadequate. These terminologies fall short of truly capturing the very essence and diversity of the groups or unraveling their deepest aspirations and needs. This reality denotes the complexities of cultural identities; which is hardly decipherable through reductionist and essentialist lenses of analyses.

There are no known or universally acceptable terminologies to encapsulate the dynamic intricacies embodied in the identity of the different groups in Kaduna. This conceptual gap hints at an intellectual limitation in grasping the postcolonial African reality. It is a reality where matters of political, social, and economic interests are constantly in a state of flux. Nevertheless, the terminologies that are adopted in this research to describe the groups seems more fitting than the reductionist or essentialist “farmer-herder” categorization. This categorization proliferates much of the scholarship on intercommunal conflicts in northern Nigeria and signifies a form of linearity and uniformity which flies in the face of the true composition and complexities of group identities and intercommunal conflicts in Kaduna.

Having situated the research within the foregoing background and context, the next chapter critically examines the literature on intercommunal conflicts and peace in Nigeria. It also explores these realities in similar societies elsewhere in West Africa where there are prevailing patterns of contestations over issues of identity and belonging.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Literature and Theoretical Insights**

#### **Introduction**

A careful review of scholarly literature highlights how disparate material and intangible factors have coalesced to sponsor conflicts in Kaduna. Some of these factors include the overbearing impacts of climate change manifested through droughts and desert encroachment, overpopulation of urban centres, contestations over limited land spaces, indigene-settler disputes, identity mobilization, cattle encroachments on farmlands, drug abuse, kidnapping, banditry, and the cultivation of cattle routes. More importantly, the review suggests that most of the prevailing scholarship on the issue treat the sources of the conflicts in isolation rather than collectively analyzed them into a coherent framework.

Therefore, the chapter introduces the competing or conflicting claims of belonging as the theoretical lens that can elucidate the material and immaterial nature of intercommunal conflicts in Kaduna. The theme of the crisis of belonging will become the theoretical contribution of the research. This theme underscores how the groups in Kaduna understand and imagine their identity and relationship to each other as they contest their cohabited territories. Beyond these competing claims, the chapter explores the dynamics of positive contact among groups recovering from conflicts. Thereafter, the peacebuilding literature is also examined.

#### **Insights from the Literature**

Conflicts between the Fulani and other ethnic communities in Nigeria are not only commonplace, they have attained frightening heights in several communities in northern Nigeria. Between 2011 and mid-2018, sporadic incidents of violent conflicts between the Fulani and other

Nigerian ethnic groups were reported in Kaduna, Plateau, Taraba, and Benue states. These states have become killing fields of violent internecine conflicts and criminal activities. The International Crisis Group (ICG) (2017) reports that in Benue and southern Kaduna alone, more than two thousand people were killed from such crises in 2016. From 2013 onwards, an Early Warning Directorate (EWD) Thematic Report by the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS) states that intercommunal violence involving Fulani and other groups intensified in places like Kaduna, Benue, Taraba, Nasarawa, and Adamawa states (EWD Report, 2019).

The widespread killings of civilians in Benue and Taraba states from 2017 to early 2018 had to do with the interdiction of open grazing and the recommendation by the states' authorities for the establishment of cattle ranches. Taraba signed the law in May 2017, and it became effective the following November. The law took effect in Benue in January 2018, although it was suspended in February 2018 (EWD Report, 2019). Prior to the adoption of the law, large-scale killings were attributed to "Fulani herdsmen" in these states. For example, Azuana (2013) has reported how hundreds of people were maimed, killed, and wounded by "Fulani assailants" in the Tiv, Agatu and Jukun communities.

Benue has been an epicenter of raucous carnage attributed to Fulani assailants in Nigeria. Moses Ochonu (2016) alleges that in 2016, "Fulani herders" killed about 300 people in Agatu, destroying their homes, places of worship, farms, and displacing countless others. The major difference between the Benue and southern Kaduna crisis is that in the case of the former there are two major identities involved: The Tiv and Fulani communities. Whereas in the latter, the crisis is often cast in terms of a strict dichotomy between Fulani assailants and members of other

ethnic minority groups. It should also be noted that there are several other groups enmeshed in the conflicts alongside the Tivs and Fulani in Benue and Taraba states.

For all intents and purposes, the anti-grazing bill was passed in Benue, Ekiti, and Taraba as a response to the massacres attributed to “Fulani herdsmen” in those states. Shortly after the law had been passed, MACBAN (the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria), which is the national organization of the Fulani in Nigeria, openly condemned the bill as an insidious and obnoxious plan.<sup>9</sup> The organization considered the bill an outright attack against the economy of the Fulani, as well as an infringement on their rights as Nigerian citizens and Indigenous peoples of the country. Some few months after the proscription of open grazing in Benue and Taraba states, scores of people were violently attacked by alleged “Fulani herdsmen”. These attacks rapidly spread ripples in Plateau and Kaduna states where there are violent contestations and tension between the Fulani and other ethnic groups in the states.

Much has been written about the conflicts between Fulani and other ethnic minority communities in Nigeria, and the West African region. The literature is replete with discussions regarding issues of resource scarcity and competition, migration, climate change, overpopulation, political mobilization, the indigene-settler binary and, to a lesser extent, a culture of othering and stereotypes. For example, Ubelejit (2016, p. 1) attributes what he calls the “menace posed by Fulani herdsmen” to desert encroachment, and argues that due to drought and scarcity of grazing fields, Fulani herders graze their cattle on crops belonging to farmers from other ethnic communities, which most often results in conflicts (2016, p. 27). This issue of Fulani cattle

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<sup>9</sup>Although MACBAN is the national organization of the Fulani, which protects their general interest and wellbeing in Nigeria, there are other sub-national and state associations of the group. These include ALHAYA (Shuwa Arabs and Koyam Breeders Association) in the North East, FulBe Development Association of Nigeria (FULDAN) in the North West, Kautal Hore Fulbe Development Association in some North West states, Mobgal FulBe Development Association, mainly in Southern Kaduna, Tabital Pulaaku in Adamawa, Njamu Nasti FulBe in South West Nigeria, and the Ngam Allah in Oyo State (Olaniyan, 2017).

encroaching on farmlands of other ethnic communities is considered by some participants as the default and most common denominator in the conflicts between pastoralists and farmers in West Africa.

Eghosa Osaghae and Rotimi Suberu (2005) underline the issue of competition over scarce resources such as land, grass, and water in the conflicts. Given that this direct competition often occurs during the rainy season, Moritz (2006) contends that the conflicts are escalated by “the stresses of hunger, intensive labor demands, and uncertainties about rains and yields” (p. 6). Similarly, Okoli and Atelhe (2014) did a politico-ecological analysis of the conflicts, arguing that the conflicts stem from the ambition of the groups to protect their economic interests in a context of scarcity and a burgeoning population. The authors’ assumptions are based on the Malthusian idea that in the context of dwindling resources people would inevitably compete to scarp for what is available and would more often do so in a violent manner. Abbass (2012) also argues that communal conflicts involving Fulani and other ethnic groups in Nigeria are a result of the survival needs of Fulani pastoralists who use militancy as a vengeful reaction against the cultivation of their grazing routes by farmers from other ethnic groups.

Others argue that the aggression or vengefulness of the Fulani is part of their culture of herding cattle. Lott and Hart (1977) have argued that the aggression of Fulani herders is mainly a product of handling cattle. They contend that this aggression is also expected in social relations, especially in provocative situations in which the Fulani may feel the need to defend themselves and their animals (Lott & Hart, 1977). This view is supported by Moritz (2008) who argues that violence and aggression are part of the Fulani everyday herding routines given that they are expected to defend their cattle against raids by other herders. For his part, Isah Abbass (2014) contends that the Fulani are inclined towards violence largely because of their obligation to

ensure the safety of their animals in the wild. Lott and Hart (1977) deduced that it is such courageous disposition and a general tendency to suffer hardship for the sake of their cattle that have imbued the Fulani with an “unrestrained and easily provoked aggression” (p. 183).

The Fulani “vengefulness” and “aggression” are subjects of intense public and scholarly debates within Nigeria and beyond. Some scholars note that the vengefulness of the Fulani may be a reaction to the “foreigner” status that had been imposed on them in several parts of West Africa. For example, Emmanuel Etsename (2007) attributes the tensions emanating from the relations between the Fulani and other groups in northern Nigeria as arising from the conceptions of the Fulani as strangers having no landholding rights. He claims this conception may explain why the group has often and, intentionally, grazed their cattle on farms belonging to sedentary communities out of spite.

Some Fulani participants argue that it is the tendency by farmers from other ethnic groups to cultivate on their (Fulani) cattle routes that pitches them into conflict with farming communities. Some members of the minority ethnic communities state that they cultivate land on such routes—which originally belongs to them—because of increased population and the attendant need to acquire more space for agriculture and the construction of new settlements. The notion that an increase in population is sponsoring the acquisition of Fulani cattle routes is questionable. This is so because most of the places where the grazing routes are situated in the rural areas are being vacated by the inhabitants of such places, many of whom have taken on new occupations and lifestyles in the urban centres. It would also seem that some of these grazing routes had been transformed into roads or other modern facilities by the government.

Nevertheless, Roger Blench (2017) examines the conflicts in Nigeria as a symptom of population growth, arguing that in the context of scarcity and the geometric rise in human

population in Nigeria, the ideological disposition of the pastoralists to accessing free grazing fields and rivers conflicts with the farmers' sedentary lifestyle and their concept of ownership of such fields and rivers.

Azaigba (2018) discusses this issue of land contestations, arguing against proffering simplistic solutions to the crisis. His contention is that the government should establish cattle ranches for the Fulani. In this way, he believes cattle ranching will be a more beneficial option for cattle breeders than open grazing or establishing reserve areas for Fulani and their cattle. He notes that creating reserve areas will lead to more conflicts since such areas would have to be taken from settled communities.

For his part, Mahmood Mamdani (1996) points to the role of the British in instituting conflicts between settled and pastoralist communities in parts of Africa and, in so doing, instigating a unique identity crisis in the postcolony.<sup>10</sup> He claims that an important element in the conflicts between these groups is the British policy of sedentarization of pastoralists groups. Through this policy, the British created official borders to demarcate their acquired colonies in order to ensure the effective collection of tax from herders—known as *Jangali* or cattle tax (Adebajo, 1995). The ICG (2017) reports that pastoralist groups tried to evade the *Jangali* tax in Nigeria—and droughts—by migrating southward. As they did so, the report claims tension between these groups and farming communities heightened (ICG, 2017).

These burdensome borders also separated other groups from their kith and kin, birthing serious territorial issues that led to the expulsion of people who were considered foreigners in the

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<sup>10</sup> In an article titled “The Nation as Corporation: British Colonialism and the Pitfalls of Post-colonial Nationhood in Nigeria”, we use the postcolony, as Mbembe (2001) did, to suggest not just “a given historical trajectory—that of societies recently emerging from the experience of colonization and the violence which the colonial relationship involves”, but also “a series of corporate institutions and a political machinery that [...] constitute a distinctive regime of violence” (p. 102). Thus, in our reckoning, the post-colony represents both a postmodernist idea of “independence” or self-governance, as well as a condition or situation of violence (Maiangwa et al., 2018, p. 2).

postcolony. Often, those expelled from societies wherein they are branded as “foreigners”, share ethnicity, religion or blood ties with the acclaimed Indigenous peoples of such places. In situations where groups were not expelled, the more dominant, favored and so-called “original inhabitants” treated them as nonentities. Thus, Olaniyan et al. (2015) argue that the tendency by other groups to treat the Fulani as foreigners may have laid the foundation for conflicts between the groups and so-called settled communities, and between the Fulani and some West African states.

For their part, Bukari and Schareika (2015) discuss how socially construed stereotypes regarding the Fulani people as migrant communities are informing local and national policies of expulsion and evictions of Fulani communities from their settlements in parts of Ghana. They assert that the attribution of negative labels to the Fulani such as their assumed vengefulness, foreignness and propensity for violence, has been informing the group’s exclusion in local and national policies in Ghana. They argue that this policy of expulsion has increased the Fulani’s resolve to fight back against the state, and the Indigenous groups (Bukari & Schareika, 2015). In Nigeria, however, the violence attributed to the Fulani is hardly ever against the state, but defenceless civilians. The state is seen to represent the Fulani’s interest and hegemony in Nigeria’s politics.

Conceived as nomadic settlers, the Fulani is often indicted for inflicting atrocities against settled groups. Thus, in Nigeria, public discourses and scholarly representations (see Muhammad-Baba & Tukur, 2015) of intercommunal and ethnoreligious conflicts are awash with images and depictions of Fulani people as aliens and hostile Islamic proselytizers. To some extent too, other ethnic minority groups are depicted in these narratives as insensitive and violent to the nomadic groups. For example, Shuichi Oyama has found in several parts of the Sahel that

Fulani communities consider other groups as rude for treating them with disdain whenever they graze cattle around their farmlands. The author claims some of these groups who are mostly farmers would sometimes throw stones at or engage Fulani pastoralists in a fight with knives, hatchets, bows and arrows, slingshots, and muskets (Oyama, 2014). Adebayo (1991) also notes that one of the factors that have aided the spread of Fulani communities in northern Nigeria is the aggressiveness of settled communities. He claims that this aggressiveness often prompts herders to move about in search of safe spaces (Adebayo, 1991).

Meanwhile, Mark Davidheiser and Aniuska Luna (2008) argue that groups who perceive themselves as indigenes or sedentary communities in parts of West Africa typically treat the Fulani with mistrust and caution. Since the Fulani is perceived as an outsider, there is often the implicit assumption that the group is capable of inflicting harm on host communities or usurping their land. This assumption about the Fulani prevailed during the colonial era and in subsequent periods where discourses on the Fulani have become replete with claims and condemnations of the groups' nomadic or wandering proclivities and destructive tendencies.

During the colonial era in Nigeria, the British distinguished between the backward from progressive Fulani groups. This distinction is evident in the writings of some British administrators. For example, writing shortly after the British occupation of Nigeria, Burdon (1904) distinguished between "urban" and "nomadic" Fulani. He argues that the urban or ruling Fulani have a finer and admirable character than their nomadic counterparts. He describes the nomadic Fulani as uncivilized people with an attitude of "bucolic stupidity" (p. 642). Burdon further contends that the urban Fulani who had settled and ruled among the Hausa people in northern Nigeria were intelligent individuals who, although fine and stern gentlemen and rulers, were, nevertheless, pleasant to associate and to work with (Burdon, 1904).

Similarly, M.B. Ibrahim describes the “nomadic Fulani” as the most faint-hearted and easily excitable and extremely reserved individuals. He likened the group’s behavior to the unpredictability of the English weather (Ibrahim, 1966). Ibrahim (1966) states that the nomadic Fulani’s lack of clarity in communication is so common in northern Nigeria such that the word “*Fillanchi*” (derived from the term ‘Fulani’) has been couched as part of the Hausa parlance to describe situations where people would say the opposite of what they intended. Ibrahim (1966) narrates a story that mirrors the gullibility and folly he had attributed to the nomadic Fulani in Nigeria. The rendition of the story goes:

A party of ten *Borori* went to bathe in a river and when they emerged from the water their leader tried to make sure no one was left in the water. He counted the nine others but failed to count himself. In the belief that one of them was missing, every man took his turn to count the lot, but it did not occur to any of them to include himself in the count. Having made sure in their minds that one of their party was still in the water they sat down to brood over the calamity.

When a Hausa man appeared on the scene, he was promised a cow to fish out the missing man from the water. After counting the party and making sure there were ten men in it, the Hausa man asked them to go into the water again and come out after a little while, which they did. The Hausa man then asked them to group up in pairs, and it was only by seeing the five pairs that they realized they were still ten in number (1966, p. 172).

Ibrahim (1966) contends that the reader who is unfamiliar with the peculiarities of Fulani herders may find the above story incredulous. He surmises that the Fulani could even be simpler than what he had portrayed in the story.

Ibrahim (1966) also claims the nomadic Fulani can be quick to suspect and be alarmed by people's words and actions. He argues it is for this reason that the group has always tried to avoid contact with other people and government authorities; denoting a form of a restraint tendency. This notion that Fulani nomads possess a reserved or restraint attitude or that they are unobtrusive in people's affairs is partly why they are regarded in many parts of Nigeria as uncivilized people who need to indulge in the allures of modernity like everyone else. Such portrayal of the Fulani as depicted in Ibrahim's narratives saturates popular folklores in northern Nigeria, fomenting the "uncivilized" and "bush" imagery of the group.

Francis Nyamnjoh (2013) discusses the stereotyped narratives about the Fulani in relation to the Mbororo Fulani of Cameroon.<sup>11</sup> He argues that given the idea of colonial civilization in terms of how the archetypical modern person should conduct themselves, the Mbororo Fulani are often judged by dint of their mastery of the English language as well as how they express wonderment at the slightest contact with the accouterments of modernity such as cars, public lampposts, and electricity. Nyamnjoh (2013) further claims that under the British administration, the Fulani's physical attributes such as their fair skin and long hair, may qualify them as "superior inferiors": "Inferior to whites, as everyone else was meant to be, but superior to the rest" (p. 111).

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<sup>11</sup> According to Micheala Pelican (2015a), the Mbororo of Cameroon actually originated from Northern Nigeria as cattle pastoralists and settled in Cameroon around the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. She posits that the group also make claims of indigeneity, which is at odds with the indigeneity and autochthonous claims of the local Grassfields societies in Cameroon (Pelican, 2015b). Aside from Cameroon, Fulani populations are also found in Chad, Niger, Senegal, Mali, Ghana, and several other communities in West Africa and the Sahel.

Be that as it may, the British distinguished between the Fulani elite class from the uncivilized rural, poor, and nomadic Fulani. The elite class was considered a superior race, largely because of the success of the jihad. As previously stated, the British conception that the Fulani and Hausa aristocrats are superior to other groups due to their assumed spiritual and administrative prowess became the basis for their selection and incorporation as local administrators in the indirect rule project in Northern Nigeria.

Along with the Hausa aristocrats, the Fulani elite were the “sub-colonials” (Ochonu, 2014) in the British indirect rule system in Nigeria. The portrayal and recognition of the Hausa and Fulani elite as a spiritually and politically superior class prior to, during, and after British colonialism, led to the subjugation and oppression of minority ethnic groups in Nigeria. The Fulani and Hausa groups are also closely associated with many conflicts that have taken place within the country. While apportioning blame to these dominant groups for the underdevelopment of Nigeria may constitute an act of ethnic essentialism, it may not be entirely misplaced since, for the most part, the country (particularly the northern region) has been under their tutelage during the pre and post-independence era.

In all these, it remains debatable whether the “pastoralist or rural Fulani” is who they have been depicted to be in Nigeria. Is it practically or analytically rewarding to distinguish between rural and city Fulani? Are the groups essentially different?

William Honeychurch and Cheryl Makarewicz (2016) argue that ethnographically, groups known as “pastoral nomads” might devote much of their time to non-herd-related activities. Such groups settle in urban areas and move as the seasons dictate. Thus, they engage in urban activities and work like everybody else, and some of them also keep cattle. Moreover, there are cases in which families who have not herded animals for decades would identify as

pastoral nomads (Honeychurch & Makarewicz, 2016). Therefore, pastoralism is a complex term, denoting movement, settlement, and a medley of other activities.

Akin to other groups in the area, the Fulani in southern Kaduna are a highly diverse and eclectic people with different lifestyles and occupations. Thus, the appendage of “pastoral Fulani”, “nomadic Fulani” or “rural Fulani” identity on them does not, properly speaking, do justice to the complexities of the group in contemporary Nigeria. The city-rural dichotomy of the Fulani is unhelpful for understanding their dynamism and involvement in conflicts with other groups in Nigeria. Yet in several write-ups about the group in Nigeria (see for example, Ahmadu, 2011; Omitola, 2014; Abdulbarkindo & Alupse, 2015, Omilusi, 2016), the so-called rural Fulani remains the very “figure of the strange,” to borrow an expression from Achille Mbembe’s (2001) depiction of European imagination of the African continent.

In this sense, the Fulani as an ethnic group becomes an object to be feared because the group is considered a symbol of unrestrained violence including the gruesome killings and decapitation of their (Fulani) victims, rape, robbery, kidnapping, displacement, and widespread destruction of farmlands and properties. Ultimately, such “portrayal/stereotype” of the Fulani as a violent mobile invader inhibits understanding of their own experiences and aspects of the motivation driving their clashes with other communities in Nigeria.

Such scholarship as cited above is derived from popular sentiments shaping how communal crises in parts of Africa are understood. This kind of scholarship is problematic at least in two major ways. First, in their description of the Fulani, these scholars construct the group as essentially nomadic herders, and as nomadic herders, the Fulani, as described in this scholarship, lacks a sense of rootedness to a place. In addition, the Fulani group, in striving to

feed their cattle, is inevitably drawn into an existential crisis with communities who occupy the land.

The second problem emanates from the first. To so imagine the Fulani as nomads is to assume that they are perennially in conflict with autochthonous agrarian groups. In other words, one group is fundamentally nomadic and violent by nature and profession and the other is settled, agrarian, victimized, and rooted in a place. Among several other issues with such a reductionist view of group identity including the inability to imagine group complexities beyond primordialist stereotyping of ethnicity as an agricultural economic group, such scholarships narrow the scope of understanding conflict in terms of “farmer-herder” conflicts. More importantly, such scholarships reinforce popular sentiments based on constructions of citizens in terms of binary oppositions of African countries as natives and/aliens, indigenes and/settlers.

In the Nigerian context, there is an additional emphasis on religious identities. In the popular imagination, the Fulani as earlier described is a Muslim foreign crusader who wants to conquer and Islamize others. The other ethnic groups in conflict with the Fulani in Kaduna and the Middle Belt region of the country are supposedly non-Muslims and innocuous and unfortunate actors or victims of the conflicts. Other proximate factors like the use of drugs by young people such as Tramadol or Marijuana as well as kidnapping and cattle banditry have equally increased the scale and intensity of intercommunal conflicts and criminality in Nigeria.

I have argued elsewhere that conflicts between Fulani and other groups in Nigeria over land, resources, mobilization of identities, historical injustices, religious identities or climate change are perceived by the conflicting groups and sometimes sponsored by how the different groups idealize their relationship to the land or environment in which they cohabit. As well, the conflicts are instigated by how the groups understand their rights and entitlements within such

environments (Maiangwa, 2017). I used the concept of contested indigeneity to explore this phenomenon. In this research, however, I am deploying the idea of “contested belonging” to underscore how the groups understand their relationship to each other as they negotiate and contest different places and spaces they consider as their homeland in Kaduna. This idea of belonging encapsulates notions of indigeneity, autochthonism, and nomadism; the understanding and manifestations of which require some in-depth explorations of the sociohistorical and political developments of Nigeria, particularly the northern region.

### **The Dynamics of the Crisis of Belonging in Nigeria**

To unravel the intricacies of the crisis of belonging in postcolonial societies, there is a need to explore the historicity of the colonial legacy, “including such reprehensible practices as exploitative mercantilism, the slave trade, imperialism, apartheid and neo-colonialism” (Ndlolu-Gatsheni, 2013, p. 6). In Africa, this crisis is a product of the activities and policies of European colonizers, especially their proclivity for distinguishing between natives and non-natives (Mamdani, 1996). The logic of conquering the colonies and keeping the people in check was executed through rigid taxonomies of difference (Jackson, 2006).

However, while it may be true that our conception of conflict and human diversity and the nature of the current peacebuilding paradigm, are largely informed by Eurocentrism (Brigg, 2010), it will be remiss if the colonial structures set up by Africans against Africans are not acknowledged as reprehensible acts that distorted cultural identities and intensified violent intercommunal conflicts in several parts of the continent.

Due to the lack of documented sources, not much is known about pre-colonial patterns of intercommunal conflicts and internal colonialism in Africa (Veit et al., 2011). However, the few

large centralized political systems that existed alongside many stateless societies reportedly employed violence to orchestrate and consolidate their rule (Veit et al., 2011). Besides, slavery flourished in many pre-colonial African societies and reached exponential heights when the Arabs surfaced on the continent some nine centuries ago (Tuso, 2014).

The Arabs turned patterns of communal slavery into a market economy that was favorable for the European trans-Atlantic slave trade (Tuso, 2014). There were also wars of conquests like those of Uthman Dan Fodio's jihad and King Shaka of Zululand in South Africa. These wars represented forms of Indigenous attempts at creating a modern state structure through violence (Veit et al., 2011). The West African Islamic jihad succeeded in establishing what was then regarded as a prosperous and viable statehood based on the assumed legitimacy of Islam (Veit et al., 2011). While the *Mfecane*, which means forced migration in IsiZulu (Veit et al., 2011), entailed the dispersal of people in Southern Africa after 1800 for the purposes of expanding the Zulu kingdom (Veit et al., 2011).

Given the violence involved in executing the Islamic jihad in what became northern Nigeria and the ambitious expansion of the Zulu Kingdom by King Shaka, it is conceivable that the structures of internal colonialism existed within several African societies. Arguably, these structures provided institutional and administrative bedrock for European colonialism in the continent. Moreover, the exploits of King Shaka and the inroads of the jihadists in West Africa served as warning signs for the actualization of European colonial ambitions in Southern and West Africa.

Thus, if there were forms of colonialism within African communities prior to the European colonization of these communities, the European colonizers embraced and entrenched these internal structures of colonialism and created their own peculiar institutions for various

administrative and economic purposes. They created façades of “nation-states” in a continent where ethnoreligious identities were not clearly defined (Bayart, 1993). Terrence Ranger (1983) notes that there were flexible and loosely defined customs in Africa such that “most Africans moved in and out of multiple identities, defining themselves at one moment as subject to this chief, at another moment as a member of that cult, at another moment as part of this clan, and at yet another moment as an initiate in that professional guild” (p. 248). Besides, the mobility of people in pre-colonial Africa was fluid and more tolerable to the people. This ease of mobility was partly because there were no clearly defined borders separating most African communities at the time. As Morten Bøås and Kevin Dunn point out, “pre-colonial Africa was characterized by flexibility of boundaries and a general willingness to accept others” (2013, p. 12).

The European colonizers constructed the “nation-state” or properly speaking, “nationless states”, in several parts of Africa by controlling migratory movements of people (Mamdani, 1997). As well, they redrew borders and fixed national details to ethnic groups through birth certificates and national identity cards (Bayart, 1993). Through these processes, the colonialists helped to disabuse communities of the notion that a territory “belonged” to them and created a dangerous precedent of the making and remaking of territories (Mac Ginty, 2015). Based on this colonial idea of territoriality, various communities the world over, “whether physically located in a locale or transnationally networked, have sought to construct and reconstruct themselves” (Mac Ginty, 2015, p. 250).

Overall, the colonial idea of the “nation” in Africa introduced a curious but dangerous dynamic among different cultural groups spread across the continent (Akokpari, 2008). John Akokpari (2008) explains this dangerous dynamic in the following way.

While citizens recognize and show allegiance to the territorial state within which they reside, they simultaneously empathize with members of their communities in neighboring countries [known or unknown]. Strong attachments with community members in other countries have caused communities in one state to develop an interest in, or even to attempt to influence the politics of countries beyond their borders (p. 94).

The above statement hints at Benedict Anderson's (1991) notion of imagined communities. This idea explains how groups who may not have met each other and are separated by borders could imagine themselves as legitimate communities sharing strong emotional attachment. This imagination does not mean African people always thought of themselves as a nation or that there were stable national identities in most African states. For as Mama (2007) argues, national identities in Africa have been in a state of flux, "less homogenous, less clearly imagined, more precarious than, say, 'Englishness' or 'German-ness'" (p. 16).

What is noticeable in most parts of Africa are pockets of small groupings and identities whereby clusters of ethnic groups or communities think only about their group members and those with whom they may be affiliated elsewhere, regardless of whether they have met them. Such we-thinking can easily precipitate cross-border conflicts in which certain groups may rise up in arms in solidarity with persecuted groups elsewhere with whom they imagine having some relations, however tenuous. It is not surprising that intercommunal conflicts occurring in one country in Africa have often spilled over into other countries in the region. However, the notion of conflict "spill-over" does not fully capture the ethnic and regional configuration of African communities. The "spill-over" notion assumes a separation where clearly there is none. Ethnic

groups in Africa are spread across official borders that are not marked, and these borders do not play a significant role in people's everyday life.

Moreover, the European colonialists used racist criteria to claim that they were imbued with innate intellectual and cultural superiority over the black natives. They transposed and applied this racialized taxonomy of difference to their treatment of various African groups by privileging and favoring those they considered to be of superior stock at the expense of those imagined as the weaklings (Turaki, 1993). They categorized natives into tribes, and defined non-natives in purely racial terms (Mamdani, 2012). Splitting the colonized people into natives (tribes) and non-natives (races), the European colonizers found it expedient to favor and play one group against another (Mamdani, 2012).

This form of group favoritism and manipulation was predicated on how such groups could advance the interests of the colonial project at different stages during the colonial era. Mbembe (2001) argues that since the colonizers considered themselves superior to the primitive natives, the natives became subjects of violence and were treated as strangers in their own land. They inhabited the colonial land, constituted the raw materials of colonialism, and endured control and arbitrary punishment and exploitation in their locality (Mbembe, 2001). Although considered as "natives," they were never conferred citizenship rights or treated as people with rights.

Thus, Mbembe (2001) submits that the colonial experience was "first, the assertion of a right (not negotiated but simply arrogated) over persons and things" (p.34). Such a mode of power and control was always going to engender chaos and violence. For as Mamdani (2001) argues, the colonial native/non-native dualism birthed genocidal violence: first was the genocide of the natives by the colonial settlers, and second is the natives' genocide against the "other",

mainly targeted at those on whom the status of “strangers” and “enemies” was imposed on the basis of the colonial binary standards. The second form of genocide is a form of “internalized colonialism”. Franz Fanon (1963) argues about lateral violence among the colonized in the following manner:

Whereas the colonist or police officer can beat the colonized subject day in and day out, insult him and shove him to his knees, it is not uncommon to see the colonized subject draw his knife at the slightest hostile or aggressive look from another colonized subject. For the colonized subject's last resort is to defend his personality against his fellow countryman... By throwing himself muscle and soul into his blood feuds, the colonized subject endeavors to convince himself that colonialism has never existed (p. 17).

How victims become perpetrators over a historical period in an Africa-specific context has been well researched by authors such as Frantz Fanon (1963), Albert Memmi (1965), and Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo (2003).

Furthermore, the British policy of indirect rule in Northern Nigeria was an embodiment of the colonial native/non-native or indigene/settler dichotomy. Through this policy, also called a “mediated—decentralised—despotism” (Mamdani, 1996, p. 17), the British incorporated “natives into a state-enforced customary order” (Mamdani, 1996, p. 18-19). In this order, subjects (natives) are indirectly ruled by state-appointed “customarily organized tribal authorities” that are mostly viewed as foreigners or migrants in the land (Mamdani, 1996, p. 18-19). The Fulani who participated in the 1804 jihad were represented as an untainted and superior race in this distorted colonial system (Oláyokù, 2017; Turaki, 1993). Together with their Hausa

Islamic converts, they were adjudged worthy administrators and rulers over the lesser and weaker races. These races were mostly the minority ethnic groups of Northern Nigeria.

Moses Ochonu (2014) compares the indirect rule system to a pyramid in which the British sat atop, having all the sociopolitical and economic leverage and authority; the Hausa and Fulani elite were placed immediately underneath the British as their stooges, orchestrating the colonial agenda; while the “primitive” and benighted non-Muslim “pagans” (as they were conceived by the colonialists) of the Middle Belt were relegated to the lowest rung of the pyramid as the underlings. What this hierarchized system wrought was the destruction of the age-old balance of power among different ethnic groups in the country (Falola, 2009). The minority ethnic communities of southern Kaduna displayed their non-compliance with this hierarchy by resisting the Hausa and Fulani chiefs for their cultural insensitivities and their foreignness to southern Kaduna districts (Ochonu, 2014).

Crucially, the colonial duality of native-non-native or indigene-settler relations carried into the postcolony. As Mbembe notes, this duality was transmitted to and “re-appropriated by Africans” (2001, p. 40). The categories of the settler and the indigene carried into the postcolonial moment with internal mobilities within the postcolonial state described in terms of the indigene and the settler (Maiangwa, 2017). That is, “the crisis of postcolonial citizenship is found in the political process that constructed racialized ethnicities by decreeing those who belong and those who do not” (Anyaduba, 2016, p. 515).

In the postcolony, the term indigene is often preferred to that of the native. Moreover, groups who feel a deeper sense of “belonging” subscribe more forcefully to a “higher” notion of belonging—autochthony—to assert their identity and connection to a homeland as opposed to those they regard as “outsiders” or “foreigners” in the same area, often “citizens of the same

country” (Geschiere, 2009). An understanding of the concepts of indigeneity and autochthony could be useful to unraveling the dynamics of the crisis of belonging and intercommunal conflicts in Kaduna.

### **Indigenous and autochthonous belonging.**

The issue of indigeneity became significant due to the history of colonial expansion of European settlers into the Pacific and the Americas (Pelican, 2015a).<sup>12</sup> The European settlers did not only dispossess Indigenous peoples of their lands but also introduced them to new forms of governance. These forms of governance conflated and even threatened Indigenous peoples’ worldviews and approaches. Thus, settler colonialism accounted for the dehumanization and decimation of the settled groups and ignited the rise of liberation movements among the Indigenous peoples fighting for their autonomy and freedom.

These movements crystalized into the Indigenous rights struggles. Their activism set in motion series of events leading to the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in 2007. The global progress on the rights of Indigenous peoples informed several processes of healing and reconciliation in certain parts of the Global North. One of these was the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). Canada’s TRC began proceedings in 2008 and completed its findings and recommendations in 2015.

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<sup>12</sup> It is hardly surprising that countries like the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand abstained from adopting the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007, partly because of their longstanding violence against the Indigenous populations. African countries were also hesitant to adopt the Declaration, thinking it would set a precedent for secession by ethnic minority groups. More than any other region of the world, many of the issues of Indigenous rights including autonomy, decimation of populations, forced displacements, and the binary choice of “tradition or development” (Pelican, 2015a) are prevalent in the West where the distinction between the Indigenous communities and the settlers is palpable, both on ethnic terms and socioeconomic and political disparities.

In the UNDRIP, the UN emphasizes the collective and individual rights of Indigenous peoples to self-determination, belonging, education, freedom from discrimination, nationality, peace and security, life, cultural preservation and the practice of traditional customs, and other rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (General Assembly, 2007). The document did not explicitly define Indigenous groups, probably because of the contentious nature of the term and the disagreements that ensued among the world leaders who adopted it.

However, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (n.d) defines Indigenous peoples as people who inherit and practice different cultural norms that are congruent to the realities of their environments and unique from those of the dominant groups in the societies in which they live. However, even this definition seems to exclude the right of the dominant groups or cultures to claim Indigenous belonging. This is because the attachment to an environment is considered differently by various groups in different contexts.

The foregoing is why the terminology of “indigeneity” or “indigenous” belonging has been variously debated and explained in scholarly works. For example, Mbembe (2001) defines an indigene as a person born in a country. He claims an indigene means “son or daughter of the soil,” not someone who had settled at a place through conquest or immigration (Mbembe, 2001). Mbembe’s understanding of indigeneity, taken to mean “people of the soil,” is somewhat similar to the notion of “autochthony”. The similarity of the two concepts has led to conclusions in some quarters of their interchangeability. However, to be Indigenous is mostly used to refer to people born in a specific environment or people “born inside” or “inside a house” as used in classical Greek (Becker, 2015, p. 19).

Since the adoption of the UNDRIP, many groups in Africa and elsewhere have been latching on to the indigeneity trope to assert their cultural distinctiveness. Some groups have also

used the concept to react to political marginalization of their constituencies and communities (Pelican, 2015a). Although research participants did not allude to the UNDRIP, they clamored for international support and recognition of their plights and rights as Indigenous peoples.

The genealogy of autochthony as a concept is also traced to classical Greek history. This was an era characterized by a preoccupation with purifying the city-state of strangers (Clarkson, 2014). Autochthony denotes a material connection to the soil itself, implying an “intimate, aboriginal connection with territory” (Jackson, 2006, p. 98). The concept is commonly used to refer to “people of the soil” (Jackson, 2006) or people who claim entitlements to a given place because of their perceived ancestral rights in that area (Bøås & Dunn, 2013). Yet while the notions of indigeneity and autochthony are often used interchangeably and are primarily connected to the Anglophone and Francophone contexts, respectively, sometimes a distinction is made between both concepts. The slight difference, it seems, is that autochthony is used mostly to denote “something more and, sometimes, even less than ‘indigenoussness’” (Jackson, 2006, p. 96).

At any rate, however, indigeneity and autochthony inspire similar themes in scholarly discourses. These themes include “the need to safeguard ‘ancestral lands’ [or homelands] against strangers...and the right of first-comers to special protection against later immigrants” (Becker, 2015, p. 19). The ancestral homeland, whether regarded in its material or immaterial form, is often considered by people as a commodity or entity to protect or something to attain (Mac Ginty, 2015). The material home is the physical space where people live, work in, and actualize their aspirations; whereas the immaterial home is the spiritual or organic connection that groups have and feel to a place as well as to each other. This connection to a space also speaks to the

people's belief or sense of obligation to maintain their ancestral lineage and protect their homeland from foreign invaders and preserve it for posterity.

For all intents and purposes, both concepts (though mostly related to the notion of autochthony), depending on where they are deployed, can be ambiguous, empty, dangerously flexible, and slippery in its politics (Jackson, 2006). Autochthony evokes the language of fear, nervousness, and paranoia (Jackson, 2006). These concepts can hardly be applied to certain groups in some locations at the expense of others without rancor, confusion and chaos. In addition to both concepts, some scholarly works and participants also invoked the notion of nomadic belonging, which is discussed below.

### **Nomadic belonging.**

Another term that is often used, sometimes, in connection and in contrast to indigeneity and autochthony is “nomadism”. For the most part, it is deployed to refer to mobile communities. These communities, like the Fulani, are regarded as having no sense of origin or rootedness in a place because they are wild people, wandering, settling, and scattered across different places. Sedentary groups mostly use the term “nomadism” or “pastoralism” to indicate pastoral groups' separateness from and unfamiliarity with the civilized world (Honeychurch & Makarewics, 2016). The movement of such groups is often associated with the need to find better pastures for their livestock (transhumance). In Africa, such groups abound in Kenya, Sudan, Niger, Mali, Chad, Ghana, and Nigeria.

Some Fulani participants employed the concept of nomadism to mean a form of cosmopolitan belonging which enables them to move about and settle in any environment. In apportioning such identity upon themselves, they are challenging the notion of nomadism as a

form of mobility that denotes “foreignness” or “strangeness” in a place. They consider “nomadism” as a highly malleable concept, reflective of a broader form of indigeneship and citizenship. This understanding of their nomadic identity is hinged on the understanding that land is a freely God-given resource.

The implication of this nomadic form of belonging is explored in chapter five. What is worth noting at this point is that nomadism is not simply the movement of people and their settlements into new and foreign environments or communities. Rather, it implies a form of identity that allows people to move about freely, with full rights to live, participate, and execute their daily sociocultural, economic, and political activities wherever they may settle. Given the way groups latch on to these different and contested forms of belonging in Nigeria, it bears asking whether the Nigerian constitution identifies with these concepts.

### **The stipulations of the Nigerian constitution.**

Section 25:1 of the 1999 Constitution accords citizenship rights to the following persons: those born before independence in 1960, “either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents belongs or belonged to an Indigenous community in Nigeria: those born in the post-independence era, either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents is a citizen of Nigeria; and those born to Nigerian parents outside of the country” (Section 25:1 1999 Constitution). Nigerian citizenship can also be attained through an expressed desire or intent to swear the oath of allegiance and live in the country (Section 26:1 of the Constitution).

Thus, although the Constitution recognizes Indigenous communities, it does not define the concept, nor does it say anything about autochthony or nomadism. Instead, it defines “belong to” in Part VI “or its grammatical expression when used regarding a person in a state to refer to a

person either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents was a member of a community Indigenous to that state” (1999 Nigeria’s Constitution Part IV: Interpretation, Citation, and Commencement).

The implicit assumption in the constitutional provisions is that “every citizen is a member of a ‘community’ first, and that only that membership guarantees his/her membership of the Nigerian community” (Adebanwi, 2009, p. 352). By implication, people are first indigenes before they are citizens. It is no wonder that Indigenous rights trump citizenship rights in several parts of the country, and elsewhere in Africa. As a result, resources and power are often allocated based on people’s assumed origin in a village, state, province or country. Ethnic identity is more relevant and meaningful to most people in Nigeria than a sketchy and shadowy notion of national identity. Ethnoreligious affiliation or in-group solidarity in Nigeria continue to inform the mistreatments of “others” even though the Constitution also prohibits discriminatory practices on the grounds of origin, ethnicity, language, or religion (Adebanwi, 2009).

Taking into consideration the literature and theoretical insights explored in this chapter, and the dynamics of belonging this exploration has evinced, my interest in this research is to broadly explain and analyze how and for what purposes these conflicting and competing concepts of “indigeneity”, “autochthonism”, and “nomadism” are used for interpreting intercommunal conflicts between Fulani and other ethnic minority groups in southern Kaduna. Moreover, the research intends to examine whether these notions of belonging are congruent to the sociopolitical, cultural, and economic sensibilities of the postcolonial state. A diagrammatic representation of the three different forms of belonging and their characteristics is represented as follows:

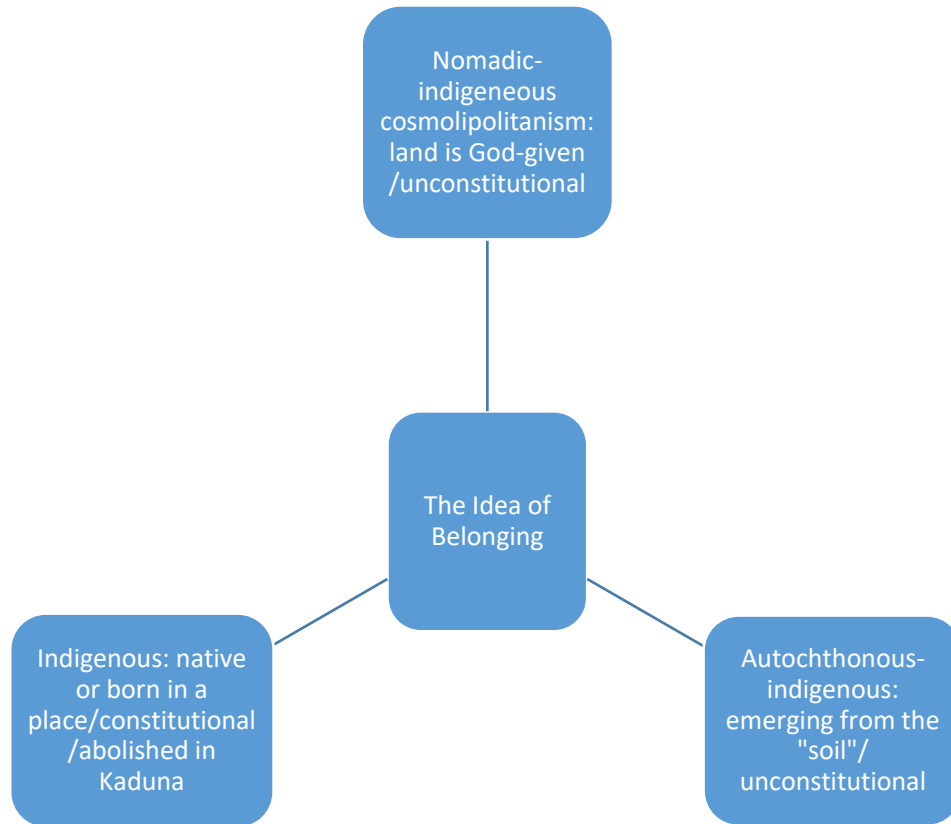


Figure 3: Different Idealizations of Belonging in Kaduna

At this point, the second strand of the literature review underlines an important element of intercommunal relationships in Nigeria as elsewhere; that it is characterized both by a history of positive interactions and violent entanglements. This dynamic is a testament to the complex relationship of the groups in Kaduna. It also reinforces the need to explore the concept and history of positive contact and complementary relationship among the different cultural groups in Africa.

## **Intergroup Contact and Complementarity**

Some Africanist scholars have observed that studies on intercommunal life in Africa are often replete with barbaric tales, suggestive of people's innate propensity for violence (Mbembe, 2001; Mkandawire, 2008). Tales of genocides in Rwanda, Congo, Sierra Leone, Sudan, and the Central African Republic (CAR) are often imagined and depicted as taking place in a dystopia where various ethnolinguistic and religious groups are interminably locked into a cycle of bestiality. Notable works on these lopsided and essentialist accounts of African conflicts and realities include Chabal and Daloz's "Africa Works" (1999), Kaplan's "Coming Anarchy" (2001), and Karl Maier's "This House Has Fallen" (2002). Maier's study specifically depicts a grim portrait of Nigeria's sociopolitical realities.

Such studies do not explain the vagaries of intergroup life in African communities and the logic in which many of these societies operate. As Mustapha and Ehrhardt (2018) have recently underscored in relation to intercommunal life in northern Nigeria, most Muslims and Christians coexist rather peacefully. The authors claim that there is nothing intrinsically violent about the different religious groups in the region. For the most part, people have lived together rather peacefully and often supported each other to circumvent difficult situations.

Gordon Allport (1954) popularized the idea that positive intergroup contact can reduce prejudice and help forge harmonious relationship in divided societies. Some scholars describe the contact process as the "actual face-to-face interaction between members of clearly defined groups", whereby "greater intergroup contact is generally associated with lower levels of prejudice" (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008, p. 766). Some basic conditions necessary for initiating positive contact and activities include "learning about the out-group, changing behavior, generating affective ties [with others], and in-group reappraisal" (Pettigrew, 1998, p. 70). These processes of forging positive contact with others chime in with the ethno-relational stages of the

Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitive (DMIS). These stages emphasize the need for acceptance, adaptation, and integration as opposed to the ethnocentric stages of defense, denial, and minimization of cultural differences (Bennett, 2014). Learning about the out-group entails a cognitive effort at acquiring new insights or understanding about others. These new insights can create a positive change of behavior that may transform the thinking and attitude of a large group towards others. Accordingly, a reduction of prejudice is said to induce the positive effect of compassion, understanding, and empathy. A reduction of prejudice can also generate a greater disposition to understanding others, which may help to foster cordial intergroup relationship (Everett, 2013).

Therefore, the contact hypothesis is self-evident in the sense that people have always coexisted with others. People have often devised different means of nurturing and sustaining relationships in various situations of stability or conflicts. As Louis Kreisberg (2009) argues, there are always people interested in forging stronger relations with others from different cultures and social dispositions who may also be perceived as enemies. People with progressive views or a demonstrable goodwill about human coexistence can serve as catalysts in intractable conflict situations. They can provide mediums for people to encounter and change their mindsets about the “other” (Kriesberg, 2009).

Hence, contrary to dooms-day scholarships about divided societies, meaningful manifestations of positive contact and complementarity abound among different ethnolinguistic and religious groups in different situations and periods in history. For example, in the wake of the Ottoman occupation of Cyprus, it is reported that Greek and Turkish Cypriots coexisted peacefully. Both ethnic groups also cooperated to challenge the Ottoman administration and the Orthodox Church of the time (Mavratsas, 1997). In fact, Varmik Volkan contends that for the

most part during the Ottoman period, Greeks and Turks were more cooperative with each other than violent (Volkan, 1997).

In addition, despite the longstanding turbulent relationship between Jews and Palestinians, Kaufman and Hassassain (2008) claim that a few thousand Jews who remained in the land or resettled before the 1860s resided in the ancient cities of Jerusalem, Safad, Hebron, Haifa, Tiberias, and Jaffo and were friendly with their Palestinian neighbors. They maintain that Palestinian families even rescued their Jewish neighbors in life-threatening situations in Hebron. Moreover, Jewish settlers also assisted Palestinians to evacuate their lands during the Arab-Israeli war of 1947-1948 (Kaufman & Hassassain, 2008). In addition, many Jewish and Palestinian youths have formed grassroots peace organizations. These organizations aim at bridging the divide and healing the wounds of traumatic violence through storytelling and problem-solving workshops. These activities are often organized in safe areas within and outside their countries (Bar-On & Kassem, 2004).

Furthermore, despite the turbulent years of conflicts in Northern Ireland, intergroup complementarity has also characterized relations between the country's Protestants and Catholics. This relationship subsisted among the working classes beginning from the 1930s to the 1960s. Around this period, both communities showed deep solidarity with each other as the border issue between them became less significant (Byrne, 1995). Since the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) was signed in 1998, there have been renewed interest and goodwill by the Northern Ireland communities to work through their issues and rebuild their societies. Economic peace funds from the European Union and the International Fund for Ireland supported these communities through grassroots peace projects across Northern Ireland's communities (Maiangwa & Byrne, 2015). A good example of these projects is the storytelling forums

organized at the Junction in Derry/Londonderry. These forums bring former disputants together to share common stories of love, pain, and forgiveness while working through their ideological differences (Byrne, 2002; Senehi, 2008).

Other cases of positive intergroup contact have occurred during and after wars or violent conflicts. A well-known story is that of Oskar Schindler who, despite his business interests, played deceitful tactics during the Holocaust and employed hundreds of Jews to work in his factory, thus allowing them to escape the genocide (Dudai, 2012). Some individuals demonstrated goodwill and saved many Jews by hiding them in their properties and issuing them with false documentation to facilitate their escape from Nazi-occupied areas (Dudai, 2012).

In Rwanda, many civilians, religious people, UN peacekeepers, medical practitioners, and businesspeople risked their lives to save hundreds of Tutsis from Hutu extremists during the 1994 genocide. For example, Therese Myrabayovul, a sixty-seven-year-old Hutu midwife, hid eighteen Tutsis in her house during the genocide. She rescued them despite death threats to her life by Hutu militias (Dudai, 2012). One Father Celestin Hakizimana, a Catholic priest, also provided shelter to hundreds of Tutsis at his Parish in the St. Paul Pastoral Centre in Kigali (Dudai, 2012).<sup>13</sup>

Perhaps, the famous story is that of Mr. Paul Rusesabagina—the Hutu Hotel Manager in Kigali—who created a buffer zone for Tutsis in his hotel, while risking his own life and his family's (Dudai, 2012). Several UN peacekeepers in Rwanda also risked their lives to protect Tutsi civilians. The *cause célèbre* case of Romeo Dallaire is a prime example, and so is the less celebrated story of the United Nations (UN) Senegalese Peacekeeper, Captain Mbaye Diagne.

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<sup>13</sup> It is important to note that while some clergymen and women protected victims of the Rwandan genocide, some pastors and Hutu priests assisted and “co-operated with the death squads, either out of fear, or because they were integrated into the structures of power that the genocide was intended to defend” (Graybill, 2004, p. 1121).

Diagne bribed his way through checkpoints and roadblocks operated by Hutu rebels using food items, alcohol, and cigarettes to enable hundreds of Tutsis to escape the genocide (Boyle, BBC 4 April 2014).

Intergroup contact and complementarity are central to the philosophy and spirituality of Indigenous populations across the world. Morgan Brigg and Polly Walker (2016) have reported historical examples of how some Indigenous communities around the world welcomed adversaries into their communities as part of a reconciliation agreement. Moreover, in efforts to address colonial violence in the United States and Canada, Brigg and Walker (2016) argue that Indigenous peoples have embraced immigrants and accepted the descendants of settler colonialists to work through power imbalances in their society. The hospitality of Indigenous communities in places like North America, Australia, and New Zealand may partly account for the ease with which new immigrants settle into those societies; even though the relationship between them have also been turbulent in certain quarters.

Conflicting groups have also embraced and reconciled with each other in the immediate aftermath of war. Most times, they express this goodwill long before post-war peacebuilding processes are initiated. The excitement to embrace the “other” at the cessation of violence is vividly captured by Ratnavale (2008) in the case of Sri Lanka thus:

As checkpoints were removed and boundaries became porous, civilians were free to travel without fear, as never before...a burning curiosity to see ‘the other side’ followed soon after the ceasefire. Busloads of Sinhalese headed northward for the Jaffna peninsula without even caring if they would find accommodation. On returning, they regaled their friends with stories of people who received them with warmth and great kindness (p. 170-171).

A similar incident occurred when many Jews went to the West Bank to link up with Palestinian Arabs after the Six-Day War in 1967 (Ratnavale, 2008). Various Jewish and Palestinian people have often crossed borders to forge an alliance for the reduction of violence and prejudice in their communities.

In Nigeria, long-time neighbors have lived in relative amity, often showing support and protection to each other during conflicts. However, as ethnopolitical instabilities smoldered since the late 1980s, such existing structures of intergroup support have been severely tested and stretched. The challenge is even grave for communities in Kaduna, where ethnoreligious conflicts have been prevalent. Given the intense nature of violence in certain areas of the state, more and more people are relocating from integrated areas and settling in segregated enclaves. One important advantage of such migration is that it has allowed members of the ethnic minority groups to develop the southern part of the state, build their own houses, and set up businesses. However, the broader implications of such migration and segregation is that it will encumber the search for harmonious relationship and peace among the different groups in the state.

At the same time, my observations during field research and participants' stories indicate that there are several communities that have remained resolute and resilient in sustaining their mutual bond with each other to heal the scars of conflicts and build sustainable communities. There are copious stories of people from the warring parties standing by the houses and Churches or Mosques of their neighbors to prevent members of their individual groups from destroying such structures or killing people.

Many of these individuals who reach out to others during difficult periods are peacebuilders trying to negotiate the continued coexistence of the different religious and ethnic groups in the state. These peacebuilders are from different communities in Kaduna, exploring

innovative and creative ways to maintain cohesion and heal the broken-hearted. We will now turn to exploring the development of the peacebuilding concept and practice in order to properly acknowledge, situate, and appreciate people's efforts at creating nonviolent alternatives in Kaduna.

### **The Peacebuilding Concept and Practice**

Peacebuilding emerged as a key concept in the 1990s, popularized by the former Secretary General of the United Nations, Boutros Boutros-Ghali. In his 1992 "Agenda for Peace", Boutros-Ghali introduced peacebuilding into the United Nations (UN) system to shore up the three important processes of preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping, and peacemaking (Boutros-Ghali, 1992). The Secretary-General argued that for peacemaking and peacekeeping processes to make any impact, a comprehensive attempt at consolidating peace, building confidence, and enhancing people's wellbeing must be made through disarming combatants, reforming the security sector, protecting human rights, integrating refugees, organizing credible elections, strengthening state institutions, and creating avenues for civic participation in politics (Boutros-Ghali, 1992).

Since the publication of the Agenda, the peacebuilding objectives have been expanded to include "support to basic safety and security; support to political processes, support to the provision of basic social, health, and educational health services...support to restoring core government functions, and support to economic revitalization, as well as rehabilitation of basic infrastructure" (United Nations, 2009, p. 6). After reviewing its peacebuilding architecture in 2015, the UN introduced the concept of "sustaining peace" to suggest that peacebuilding is much more than a top-down, institutionalized affair, but rather a political and social process that is

rooted in local capacities (de Coning, 2018). The idea of peacebuilding has journeyed through different trajectories and approaches as discussed below.

**First generation: conflict management.**

According to Richmond (2010), the conflict management approach to peace theory and practice focuses on strengthening and preserving interstate relations using traditional forms of UN peacekeeping, negotiation, mediation, and diplomacy. The conflict management approach represents the realist approach to resolving conflict, which relies on neutral third parties' preoccupation with violence reduction (Richmond, 2010). This approach views conflicts broadly, including the regional and international ramifications, but considers culture secondary to processes of interstate rivalry and international mediation (Brigg, 2010). Overall, the first-generation approach to peacebuilding seems quite detached from the realities and needs of conflict-affected populations.

**The second generation: conflict resolution.**

The conflict resolution approach focuses on removing the impediments to peace and resolving conflicts by addressing and providing basic human needs to conflict affected populations (Richmond, 2010). This approach holds that conflict is stimulated by psychological, socio-biological, and structural factors. Thus, its proponents view conflict as arising from the unfulfillment of people's basic needs (Richmond, 2010).

The conflict resolution approach prioritizes the needs of individuals within the context of conflicts and creates avenues for states and civil society groups to cater to these needs where and when necessary (Richmond, 2010). Thus, second generation peace theory is dependent upon the

agency of civil society actors and the individual (Richmond, 2010). Rather than dwell on the formal institution of the state and international diplomacy, the conflict resolution approach emphasizes human needs and human security frameworks and acknowledges the role of informal and grassroots actors as peacebuilding agents (Brigg, 2010).

Although the second-generation peace theory is critical of the state-centric orthodoxy, its proponents have been criticized for treating culture as secondary to its program and using Western theoretical frameworks to address people's basic human needs (Brigg, 2010). Lederach criticizes this approach for its focus on addressing issues pertaining only to the onset and end of conflict, which detracts from the structural propellers of conflicts (Lederach, 1995).

### **The third generation: the liberal peace model.**

The liberal peace model focuses on large-scale, tangible, and multi-dimensional approaches to peacebuilding through the institutions of the state, global governance, and legal instruments. The constitutive elements of the liberal peace framework include constitutional reforms, the strengthening of the human rights framework, and the organization of free and fair elections (Richmond, 2010). The model focuses on stabilizing and building state institutions in post-agreement societies (Chandler, 2017).

Liberal peace was vigorously applied towards the end of the Cold War. Around this time, more ambitious forms of peace approaches were developed to address the spiraling rise of civil wars and ethnic conflicts (Chandler, 2017; Richmond, 2010). Despite its varying degrees of success in enabling some societies to adopt democracy in the aftermath of wars, the model has received scathing criticisms. Roger Mac Ginty (2011) argues that the term "liberal", as used to describe the kind of peace that its actors preach and deliver, is a misnomer because it describes

peacemaking or peacebuilding processes that are often illiberal. In some cases, the model is debunked because of what its opponents have termed its technocratic bias and insensitivity to locally based frameworks of peacebuilding (Chandler, 2017; Mac Ginty, 2010; Richmond, 2009). The US war against terror in Afghanistan and Iraq are often cited as the two abysmal failures of the liberal peace. This is largely so because of the widespread civilian casualties, destruction of properties and, consequently, a general distrust and local resistance of the model and its advocates (Thiessen, 2011).

However, as Mac Ginty (2010) has observed, some efforts have been made by the advocates of the liberal peace model to include local actors in their activities. They do so by establishing forums for engaging in dialogue, acknowledging trauma, and storytelling, even if such forums do not always conform to local cultures of peace (Mac Ginty, 2010). Moreover, Richmond (2009) also highlights an issue with the liberal peace model regarding the “romanticization of the local”. This tendency explains a situation in which liberal actors accept the agency of the local in relatively negative and destructive forms.

According to Richmond (2009), the act of romanticizing local populations by liberal actors are often realized in four ways: first, the local is depicted as an exotic (or quixotic), informal, and indecipherable group; second, they are portrayed and treated as incapable of being constructive players in building their own peace because they are lacking training in the pedagogy of the liberal peace; third, they are seen to be deceitful and uncivil; fourth, they are admired and manipulated for their wealth of Indigenous capacities, which the liberal peace actors can effectively co-opt at their discretion (Richmond, 2009). Richmond (2009) claims all four comprehensions of local populations by liberal actors are often used to justify blueprint top-down approaches rather than positive engagement with the local.

Besides, the general plea by liberal peace actors for a “local turn” to peacebuilding is sometimes considered a strategy that the liberal actors formulated to effectively shift the responsibility of the negative outcomes of peace processes to local actors (Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015). Liberal peace actors are also faulted for often consulting with the same known local informants (Bräuchler & Naucke, 2017; Seay, 2011). Seay (2011) has observed this tendency in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) where certain UN and Western diplomats who visit on a short-term basis to discuss pressing issues of war and development would consult the same informants that were interviewed by the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), or UN peacekeeping consultants (Seay, 2011). She argues that the problem with this kind of approach is that the real narratives of the people that matter in a conflict setting are seldom considered or acknowledged (Seay, 2011).

Conceivably, a key element of the liberal peace is its resources, which its actors and institutions bring to a war-ravaged society including the skills of an external mediator to facilitate between conflicting actors. They also provide monetary funds which humanitarian and aid agencies can use to safeguard and provide relief materials and healthcare for war victims (Mac Ginty, 2010; Watson, 2010). However, Watson (2010) claims that despite all these resources, liberal peace has remained rooted in top-down institutionalism.

Mac Ginty (2010) also problematizes the sustainability of the liberal peace model, stating that liberal actors operate within a set time limit, abscond to other conflict zones and abandon local populations to their devices. Post-Ghadaffi’s Libya is a salutary example. Given these manifest drawbacks of liberal peace, it is conceivable that local cultures of peace can have an important role in how conflict resolution and peacebuilding practices are executed. The

importance of culture and the agency of witnesses of conflict creates an avenue for a purportedly more humanistic and agential fourth generation peace model (Brigg, 2010).

### **The fourth generation: the post-liberal peace model.**

The liberal-local hybridity peace model (Richmond, 2010) or what Oliver Richmond (2009) refers to as the “post-liberal forms of peace” (p. 577) constitutes the fourth-generation approach to peace theory. The hybrid peace model is consensual, legitimate, and emancipatory (Richmond, 2010). The hybrid model of peace moves beyond a hegemonic peace approach of liberal peace towards an everyday notion of peace.

This peace model entails the collaborative engagement of the local, state, regional, and global actors in peacebuilding practice (Richmond, 2010). Hybrid peace assumes that exceptional mass violence such as civil wars is beyond the capability of the local institutional frameworks of peace and justice, but that such local mechanisms can rely on the incentives or insights of external liberal actors (Bräuchler, 2015). Oliver Richmond describes hybridity as a form of post-liberal peacebuilding that is characterized by:

Detailed understanding of local culture, traditions, and ontology; acceptance of peacebuilding as an empathetic, emancipatory process, focused on everyday care, human security, and a social contract between society and the polity; a peacebuilding contract that reflects the social contract between international and local actors...local decision-making processes to determine the basic political, economic, and social processes and norms to be institutionalized; international support for these processes; an economic

framework...and a representative political process that reflects the local groupings and their ability to create a consensus (2010, p. 33-4).

In other words, hybrid peace is achievable with the consent and agency of grassroots actors, working together with their international counterparts. The notion of hybridity has often been misunderstood and oversimplified. Some scholarships on hybridity tends to consider hybrid outcomes as plannable and predictable or as something that the international community can easily formulate and dispatch at will in any local context (Millar et al., 2013).

Timothy Donais (2012) argues that hybridity is more about the dynamic relationship of agency across the international-local divide than a planned process. Citing Bhabha, Mac Ginty (2011) argues that hybridization “is usually a gradualist, everyday process whereby entities (actors, structures, norms) negotiate and renegotiate their own place in the social, political, and economic spheres, and negotiate and renegotiate this place with each other” (p. 72).

Thus, in the context of peacebuilding practice, hybridity could be an outcome of different actors working together for peace. In some cases, attempts have been made by liberal peace actors to somehow engineer hybridity through the cooptation of local actors (Maiangwa & Suleiman, 2017). Roger Mac Ginty (2011) has developed a four-part model to describe the nature of the hybrid peace process as follows:

- (1) The compliance powers of the liberal peace;
  - (2) The incentive powers of the liberal peace;
  - (3) The ability of local actors to resist, ignore or subvert the liberal peace; and
  - (4) The ability of local actors to formulate and maintain alternatives to the liberal peace
- (2011, p. 8).

The compliance power of the liberal peace is the ability of liberal peace actors to ensure compliance among states and warring parties in post-accord societies. They ensure this compliance either through hard diplomacy such as military incursions as has occurred in Libya, Iraq, Afghanistan; soft programs of stabilization as executed in Iraq, the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, and Afghanistan; robust state-building programs as implemented in Sierra Leone and Liberia, intrusive democratic-governance programs as practiced in Timor-Leste or the rigid marketization policy introduced in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Mac Ginty, 2011). Mac Ginty (2011) argues that the claim that liberal peace is the only viable peacebuilding option is its most insidious compliance tool. However, he contends that the liberal peace model has faced stiff competition and resistance from regional powers like the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), and other behemoths like Nigeria (Mac Ginty, 2011).

The incentivizing power of the liberal peace is based on the claims that the model has the power to emancipate societies from conflict through its commitments to elections, human rights norms, constitution-writing, market reforms, and aid to ensure good governance, thus offering security and peace to an otherwise chaotic environment (Mac Ginty, 2011).

The extent to which peace intervention in post-accord societies can be hybridized is highly dependent on the disposition of local actors to resist, ignore, or adapt to the liberal peace (Mac Ginty, 2011). Resistance to liberal peace can be vocal and physical. Such resistance can occur either through discursive deconstruction or cooption of liberal institutional frameworks or through a process of negotiation of the type of liberal peace that is being offered (Richmond, 2009). Mac Ginty (2011) argues that people may be able to create alternatives to the liberal peace through their efforts at side-stepping the demands of the liberal paradigm.

The hybrid model also has its limitations. First, the model seems to implicitly assume a sort of internal shortcoming in conflict-affected societies, which cries out for and often justifies outside help (Finkenbusch, 2016). Second, there are questions regarding different assumptions, practices, and values, which must, inevitably, be faced, not only between local and international actors but sometimes between local-everyday actors as well. For example: whose understanding of peace or human rights should be adopted? What kind of humanitarian programs is required? What kind of justice or reconciliation practices—Western rule of law versus customary law or Indigenous traditional reconciliation processes? Even at the everyday local level, how does one combine justice and reconciliation in specific cultures? Who is included—women, youth, LGBTQ, ex-combatants and people living with disabilities?

There is also the related problem of the multiplicity of peacebuilding or reconciliation initiatives based on diverse cultural perspectives and changes within a culture. Christoph Schaefer (2010) argues that even cultural conceptions and practices can vary within one identity group because culture evolves, especially as people interact with their external environment (Schaefer, 2010). Another issue with hybrid peace processes may arise due to the exploitation and manipulation of traditional practices by external actors (Bräuchler, 2015).

Moreover, outsiders may misconstrue the complexity of local peacebuilding processes because they are ignorant of how such complex processes function or how they may have been tainted and or damaged through long-term processes of colonization, state repression, genocide, and civil war (Bräuchler, 2015). The complexity of the hybrid model also raises the following questions: what happens when the liberal peace actors leave? How do local actors make sense of their reality in the absence of external support? How do conflicting parties deal with conflicts where the states have lost legitimacy, or are complicit in conflicts?

In many instances of intercommunal conflicts, the UN and other Western and non-Western countries do not always commit resources or personnel to intervene in such conflicts. Moreover, if the general assumption that states are responsible for safeguarding the lives of the citizens and territories is true, then it is expected that they will use the apparatuses of governance and security—including their armed forces and the police (Elfverson, 2015)—to carry out such pivotal tasks within their jurisdiction. However, in some conflict-ridden societies, the state is either complicit in conflicts or simply lacks the capacity to function on its own, let alone cooperate with others to manage a regional crisis.

Moreover, state actors may not intervene in conflict if one of the conflicting parties controls the state's security apparatuses. In a situation where states are complicit in conflicts, they lose the trust and legitimacy of some sections of the citizenry. Emma Elfverson (2015) argues that the state has often acted directly or indirectly to instigate intercommunal conflicts within and beyond its territories, especially where its political system is organized along identity lines. A state's incapacity or unwillingness to protect its populations has led to other actors who are not usually part of the liberal peace conglomerate—such as clan elders, district heads, village chiefs, traditional healers, community leaders, spiritual leaders, and paramilitary groups—fulfilling this function on their own (Elfverson, 2016; Boege, 2016).

Moreover, too often, liberal actors do not appreciate the severity of the colonial influence and history in the intervened communities. The reality as Roland Bleiker (2012) notes is that:

Too dramatic were the destruction of cultures and civilization, the expropriation of land and the subjugation of local people through slavery and other means. The deeply seated legacy of this colonial tradition also makes it difficult today to appreciate non-Western cultures and people on

their own terms: too often the tendency is, as it was during the colonial days, either one of disrespect or one of romantic fascination with the exotic (2012, p. 296).

This “colonial residue” is somewhat embedded in the hybrid peace discourse and practice. In some quarters, hybridity is taken to mean the partnership of unequal entities. Jones and Jenkins (2008) argue that hybridity which, to them, is a code word for sameness, dissolves the hyphen between the indigene-colonizer relationships. They argue that the hybrid process allows Western researchers to write across this hyphen and recolonize people in the process (Jones & Jenkins, 2008). The main issue here pertains to agency: “of who engenders and controls change, within what has been termed the ‘post-conflict agenda’?” (Lundy & McGovern, 2008, p. 103). Hence, there is a need to reconsider the four-generations approach considering what has been termed “emancipatory peacebuilding” (Thiessen, 2011).

The notion of the local or ground-level peacebuilding will be used interchangeably in this research to underscore the resilience of local communities who are often at the forefront of everyday invisible peacebuilding practices during and after conflicts. With the dearth of scholarship on the issue of the “local” possessing its own agency (Paffenholz, 2015), it seems particularly timely and critical to examine how communities affected by or recovering from conflicts build their own peace with the resources at their reach. They often do so without much assistance from external third parties including the state or international agencies. One of the peacebuilding schools that advances this local resilience is the Conflict Transformation School, which is discussed below.

## **The Conflict Transformation School**

John Paul Lederach introduces the conflict transformation lexicon into PACS to emphasize that conflicts are deep-rooted processes that cannot be easily resolved or managed because they are part of a structural system. Within this system, conflict transformation requires a comprehensive approach to justice, and the forging of social cohesion and relationships. As Lederach argues, conflict is a human creation, which is inherent in social relationships (Lederach, 1995). Hence, peacebuilding is not only about resolving or managing a specific process, as it is about changing a system within which the processes that engender conflict prevail. Peacebuilding is about building shattered relationships and reconfiguring the social system to be more habitable and congruent to people's realities (Lederach, 1995).

The conflict transformation approach accepts that conflict is integral to human relations, and it defies quick fixes; yet requires careful attention to the systemic issues instigating conflicts or the breakdown of relationships (Lederach, 2003). Lederach argues that conflict has the potential to change people's perception of the "other" and create inclusive narrative of self-other reflectivity (Lederach, 1995). Moreover, Lederach asserts that the idea of conflict transformation hints at the need to "prescribe" constructive patterns like improving relationships and cooperation rather than allowing conflicts to linger with destructive consequences (Lederach, 1995). Thus, he argues that the process of transformation is both descriptive of the conflict processes as well as prescriptive of the peace processes, geared at improving destructive relationships, leading to systemic change (Lederach, 1995).

While the conflict transformation idea is noble and addresses social structures rather than focusing on a specific conflict process, the idea is also quite prescriptive of how peace is to be achieved at the local level by stressing the need to work on human relationships and the social

system. There are instances where people may not be interested in repairing human relationships and would prefer separation as a form of conflict preventive measure. Others may also frown on the notion of forgiveness as a restorative justice tool. People battling trauma of various kinds may also prefer to forget the atrocities they faced than memorialize them; thus, challenging the prevailing idea of memorialization as a necessary pathway to healing trauma.

For this reason, this research finds the conflict transformation idea useful, yet not wholly exhaustive of peacebuilding processes in different contexts. Therefore, I am suggesting ground-level understanding of peacebuilding in which people decide and practice the kind of peace they are familiar with in their communities. This ground-level approach does not mean that the idea of conflict transformation, resolution, management, hybrid peace or even liberal peace are ineffective. Acknowledging a ground-level peace process is an attempt at drawing attention to how people at the ground are deciding what forms of peace processes would work for them, which may or may not be inclusive of the aforementioned peacebuilding models. This local understanding of peace can transform the peacebuilding practices of outsiders to be more humane and meaningful to the sensibilities of local populations.

### **Ground-Level Peacebuilding**

Ground-level peace is different from other peacebuilding processes like a hybrid, liberal, conflict resolution, alternative dispute resolution, conflict management and conflict transformation. In a way, it resonates with the Appropriate Dispute Resolution (ADR) (Byrne & Senehi, 2009) and conflict transformation schools because of its focus on people's local approaches to resolving disputes. However, ground-level peacebuilding differs from these schools because it acknowledges that local everyday peace processes are ubiquitous and these

processes may or may not resonate with dispute resolution, conflict management, resolution, and transformation.

Moreover, the other peacebuilding schools suggest that peace practices require some form of skills and training in dispute or conflict resolution, conflict transformation, liberal ideology, conflict management, and hybridity. However, the fact that violent conflicts in many parts of the world have persisted despite the application of the above skills and processes is instructive. This reality suggests that working for peace may not be a skill that should be learned, imitated, and uniformly applied but is an integral part of human communication, conscientization (Lederach, 1995), and relationship-building within a given context. The ground-level idea of peace is an acknowledgment and appreciation of this human capability and agency.

Thus, ground-level peacebuilding does not proffer a specific process or medium through which peace can be achieved. It only acknowledges and underscores the often “forgotten” physical place and immaterial space in which people utilize their resources and agency to fashion out various processes of peace. It belongs to the school that emphasizes the “local turn” (Paffenholz, 2015) to peacebuilding. Yet, it furthers the idea of this school to underscore that the “local” has always been there and will scarcely cease to exist.

The critique of liberal emancipatory practices stems from the idea of people building their own peace with little or no assistance from state or external actors. Critical and emancipatory peacebuilding is the idea that people should be free of international or the state’s technical top-down approaches to peacebuilding. In this way, even the “emancipatory” concept denotes a separation of the local from liberal institutions. What this research is suggesting is the acknowledgment of a purely local agency where we stop putting the liberal at the center of everything.

The reality in several societies is that many local actors operate independently of the state or international actors by simply engaging in their routine acts of justice, reconciliation, forgiveness, and other practices contained in their peacebuilding paraphernalia. In this way, peacebuilding is not emancipatory per se, but purely local and rooted in people's daily practices. In some specific situations and contexts, the absence of state structures of support may force people to secure and govern their local spaces (Mac Ginty, 2011).

Regarding this idea of ground-level peacebuilding, Paulo Freire's probing questions are worth stating. He asks: "Who are better prepared than the oppressed to understand the terrible significance of an oppressive society? Who suffer the effects of oppression more than the oppressed? Who can better understand the necessity of liberation?" (2005, p. 45). His apt response to these questions is that only the oppressed can truly liberate themselves through their recognition for the need of freedom and their insatiable quest for it (Freire, 2005).

Paulo Freire believes that education must transcend the usual banking system of feeding people with ideas to a model that leads to "conscientization"; a general awareness of the nature of oppressive conditions (Freire, 2005). Conscientization places agency at the center of change by empowering oppressed people or witnesses of conflict to identify the conditions of oppression themselves and conceive of collective actions to overcome them (Lundy & McGovern, 2008). The idea of ground-level peacebuilding which entails the ability and agency of people to autonomously conceive of workable solutions to conflicts and rebuild the fabric of their societies with minimal resources and autonomy seems to align with Freire's dialogic pedagogy of education. This idea can better be understood and appreciated if viewed from its experiential manifestations in several conflict settings as discussed below.

### **Ground-level peace in practice.**

It is a truism that local peacebuilding actors are often hamstrung by limited resources or injuries and find it difficult to cater for their basic socioeconomic and health needs (Lederach, 1997). However, there are copious examples in societies recovering from conflicts of how ordinary people affected by conflicts have shown resilience in the face of brutality, while “developing forms of resistance to what they perceive as insufferable oppression” (Nordstrom & Robben, 1995, p. 8). To begin with, faith-based actors have mediated between different warring parties in local communities in the northern part of Central African Republic since the 2013 sectarian crisis. They have also provided safety and assistance to people, as well as organized trauma-healing and problem-solving activities for Christians and Muslims affected by violent conflicts in the state (Neal, 2014).

Despite the absence of a central governing system and institution in Somalia, ordinary people in the central and southern parts of the country are reactivating informal and clan-based security and governing mechanisms to organize their communities (Hagmann & Péclard, 2010). Christopher Clapham (2012) reports that since 1991, Somalians have developed their own conflict management mechanisms precisely because of their stateless status and history of violent conflicts. He asserts that no matter how time-consuming, uncertain, and often exasperating these local mechanisms for managing conflicts may seem to outsiders, they provide the plausible way ahead for the people (Clapham, 2012). He recommends that such local mechanisms of peace should be insulated from external interference if they are to remain sustainable (Clapham, 2012).

In Northern Uganda, the Acholi community operate a system of conflict resolution and reconciliation known as *Mato Oput* (drinking the bitter herb) (Pouligny, 2010). The *Mato Oput* serves as a process of maintaining law and order within the society (Albert, 2008; Murithi,

2008). The system is based on consensus building through a high degree of participation in public assemblies known as *Kakoke Madit*, which is led by a council of elders, comprising men and women. The chiefs and elders play an advisory function and listen to the views of members of the community who can address the victims of conflict directly and make suggestions to the council (Murithi, 2008).

In some parts of Liberia, among the Kpelle people, acts of peacemaking and conflict resolution are conducted through the “house of palaver”—*a berei mu meni saa*—or moot system (Albert, 2008). Through this system, conflict issues are publicly discussed, and wrongdoers are asked to apologize to the aggrieved parties, sometimes through the rendition of gifts. At the end of the process, disputants share drinks in a symbolic gesture of reconciliation (Albert, 2008). Kenneth Omeje (2008) claims that the Palaver Hut is a common conflict resolution strategy in several other communities in Africa such as among the Fanti of Ghana, and the Oromo of Ethiopia. The system is also practised in Sierra Leone, where during the civil war, Patrick Tom (2016) notes that villagers in Sangema established “peace huts” for settling disputes and discussing pressing issues affecting their communities.

In Somaliland, efforts have been made by clan elders to organize inter-clan reconciliation conferences since the breakdown of state institutions in Somalia in 1991 (Elfverson, 2011; Murithi, 2008). For example, a January 1993 conference in Erigavo led to the adoption of a peace charter that ended hostilities in the land and upheld the rights of individuals to engage in trade and pursue other vocations within their territories (Murithi, 2008). The agreement reached at this conference enabled a restructuring of the constitutional order “that included elected party representatives as well as a clan oriented upper house” (Richmond, 2013, p. 280). Somaliland offers an example of a political entity that lacks international recognition, but has “para-

sovereignty”: “a non-state political order that shoulders local state functions, but operates in parallel and independently of the national power centre” (von Trotha & Klute 2004 cited in Hagmann & Péclard, 2010 p. 542).

In her ethnographic research in southern Africa, Carolyn Nordstrom (2004) has documented how people, especially children, have demonstrated remarkable resilience to build peace in the absence of external support within the context of the breakdown of state institutions in countries like Mozambique and Angola. She argues that although many wars of the past and present centuries have had devastating effects on people’s wellbeing and governing institutions, those without weapons—usually average people—have tried to find ways to turn things around (Nordstrom, 2004). The crux of her argument is that the processes of peacemaking and societal rebuilding are most visible on the front lines among those who have been most affected or were never prepared or armed to fight (Nordstrom, 2004).

Moreover, Nordstrom’s field experience in Mozambique, Angola, and Sri Lanka, indicates that despite the devastations that war had caused in these societies, many people still tried to live normal lives. They do so by finding safe farmlands, trading with other war-affected communities, setting up healthcare centers, opening schools for children, and attending to the physically and psychologically wounded (Nordstrom, 2004). Nordstrom also describes how ordinary people become volunteers in schools for children, set up places for refugees and organize dispute resolution councils—based on traditional authority structures, community groups, and councils of elders—to recover in the aftermath of war (Nordstrom, 2004). What is particularly instructive is that these people often operate as individuals without any support from their governing institutions. For the most part during conflicts or wars, these governing institutions are often non-functional (Nordstrom, 2004).

Taken together, “ground-level” peace seems to significantly rely on the authority of elders, and the values of forgiveness, hospitality, community, storytelling, healing, rituals, and culture. However, because everyday actors are not homogeneous entities and rarely speak with one accord (Wild, 2014), context and experience are crucial in understanding peacebuilding and peacemaking processes in various local settings (Brigg & Walker, 2016). Determining what constitute ground-level peacebuilding in different contexts will require context-specific evaluations and analysis of the impacts and sustainability of such peacebuilding projects at a given time and space.

Thus, contrary to conventional wisdom that peacebuilding begins with liberal actors, coming in after a ceasefire to support the afflicted populations, it seems more convincing to maintain that peacebuilding begins in the “thick” of conflicts, spearheaded by the most affected people (Nordstrom, 2004). These peacebuilders may include elders, young people, village chiefs, and spiritual leaders. The taxonomy of these actors in a conflict environment is better understood through John Paul Lederach’s three-tier description of peacebuilding actors below.

### **Lederach’s three levels of peacebuilding actors.**

Lederach (1997) has identified three different actors in peacebuilding practice. These include first-level, middle-range, and grassroots actors. The first-level actors are the military or religious leaders or the highest representatives of the government who are considered the spokespersons for their constituencies (Lederach, 1997).

The middle-range leaders are respected individuals in various positions of formal leadership in education, healthcare, agriculture, or the business sector, and are usually highly popular among the people and the top-leaders (Lederach, 1997). Lederach (1997) argues that

middle-range actors are well placed to initiate and lead peacebuilding activities due to their network of support and connection to the top and grassroots levels, as well as their ability and capacity to influence actors at these two levels (Paffenholz, 2015).

Grassroots actors are the everyday people in settings of conflict and war, whose leaders include chiefs, elders, young people, and refugee camp leaders (Lederach, 1997). Thus, top-level actors organize high-level negotiations and mediations, middle-level actors provide training in conflict resolution and problem-solving workshops, and grassroots actors provide grassroots training and prejudice reduction and reconciliation processes (Lederach, 1997).

While the responsibilities of these three-level actors may seem straightforward, the reality in many settings, especially in Africa, is that it is possible to find them occupying overlapping positions of leadership. As Goran Hyden (2015) points out with reference to the African context, the “local” is not restricted to the grassroots but extends to the elite level of leadership as well. For example, actors categorized in the middle-range level may have once held high profile political positions (first-level actors). For example, the leader of the Islamic community in Kano, Nigeria, Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, was the Central Bank Governor of Nigeria before he became Emir.

Besides, middle-range leaders can also be grassroots local-level chiefs and international experts through studies or involvement with international institutions. The Chief of Anghan (*Ngbiar Anghan*) (grassroots leader), an ethnic group in Kaduna state, Nigeria, was previously a College lecturer (middle-range leader). In this sense, there is an overlap and convergence of peacebuilding activities and leadership—especially in collectivistic societies—between grassroots, middle-range, and top-level actors.

It also bears mentioning that the roles of these three-level actors have not always been pacific, nor have they been tolerant of each other's peacebuilding approaches. Hancock and Mitchell (2012) have argued that in most cases, "grassroots' calls for peace are often ignored by those at the national level...who often argue that, as either incumbent or insurgent elites, they already represent the 'will of the people' and, thus, do not need to respond to initiatives sponsored by a few malcontents" (p. 167).

Meanwhile, the inclusion of a variety of local actors in peacebuilding could both be constructive and destructive, especially when they abuse their roles and the trust the people placed on them. While grassroots, middle-range, and first-level actors can all be involved in peacebuilding in conflict settings, the ground-level peacebuilding practice is more about the agency of everyday people who are building peace in the absence of state or external intervention. It is conceivable, however, that in many collectivistic societies some of these everyday peacebuilding actors could be grassroots, middle-range, and first-level actors all at the same time.

### **The pitfalls of ground level peace.**

There is always the tendency to conceive of local peace practices as benign and conducive to building social cohesion and fostering development in conflict-ravaged societies (Pouliny, 2010). However, just like other peacebuilding models, ground-level peacebuilding has its challenges. Some of its intangible features including the notion of forgiveness and its reliance on the professed wisdom of elders can be practically problematic. The idea of healing through forgiveness can be challenging to individuals who may be forced to forgive perpetrators against their wish as part of a government strategy of reconciliation such as the TRCs. TRCs could also

be used to champion individual interests and humiliate others under the guise of truth-telling and forgiveness. Such processes could also derail the attainment of justice for the oppressed.

Moreover, forgiveness does not necessarily bring about healing or reparations for the harm and loss that people may have suffered during conflict or in a predatory state system.

Yet, some communities accept that whatever its defects forgiveness is the only way out of trauma and hatred. Despite its many flaws, the *Gacaca* (peace on the lawn or grass) peace process of dialogue, truth-telling, and forgiveness in Rwanda is a prime example of a peace process in which many benefitted from reconciliatory procedures that would hardly have been achieved if they had only relied on the state's judicial system (King & Maiangwa, 2020).

Besides, the use of elders in local peace processes can be discriminatory and highly critical of the agency of women, young people, and disaffected communities or minority groups. Indeed, pre-existing cultural and social divisions can easily be reinforced by community-based approaches to peacebuilding (Haider, 2009). According to Murithi (2008), the historical exclusion of women by African, Western, and Eurocentric traditions and cultural practices from the political decision-making and problem-solving roles has also contributed to relegating women in peacebuilding and peacemaking processes (Murithi, 2008). The tendency to exclude women, young people and oppressed minorities in local peacebuilding processes has served to undermine the legitimacy of such processes in certain contexts (Pouligny, 2010).

Moreover, despite being attuned to the needs of people, cultural resources and local approaches to peace are often distorted or obliterated during violent conflicts (Pouligny, 2010). Thus, cultural worldviews and customs may not be able to halt the spiral into violent conflicts in many settings (Mac Ginty, 2011). Given that war and conflicts can diminish the potency of traditional or cultural modes of peace, it is possible that what is often labeled as "returns to

traditions” in the aftermath of conflict “may, in fact, be inventions, recalled or resurrected ideas layered on and informed by new information” (Culbertson & Pouligny, 2007, p. 274).

The foregoing challenges are indicative of the fact that ground-level or local peacebuilding may not, perhaps, be sustainable or always be a useful peacebuilding approach. Everyday peacebuilding initiatives can both be legitimate and illegitimate in the eyes of people. The awareness of this reality “suggests a need for greater attention to the institutional history and economic and political pressures shaping particular non-state orders” (Meagher, 2012, p. 1081). However, because local peace will continue to be part of every conflict environment, McEvoy and McGregor (2008, p. 9–10) stress the need to critically appraise such challenges rather than dismissing them (cited in Bräuchler, 2015, p. 183). This appraisal is important, because as already stated, people affected by intercommunal conflicts would have to first rely on their own efforts and resources to heal their communities. They will continue to do so for as long as they live, both in the context of state or external intervention and, crucially, in their absence. Below is a diagrammatic trajectory of the theories of peace research and practice.



Figure 4: The trajectory of Peace Research and Practice

While the above diagram may indicate a circular progression of these theories, in practice the models have often been used concurrently. In many cases, ground-level peacebuilding has functioned concurrently, and at cross-purposes with state and international peace models. It is the substratum that provides form and material to other peacebuilding models and agents while having potency and agency on its own right.

## Conclusion

This chapter has examined the theoretical explanations for violent conflicts, including instances of positive encounters, and peace practices in societies recovering from conflicts. Some of the factors cited in scholarly works as engendering intercommunal conflicts in southern Kaduna are well captured in the 2017 ICG report on the issue in Nigeria. The report claims the crisis is borne out of the following factors: climatic change as evidenced by frequent droughts and desertification; overpopulation and the attendant loss of grazing lands and cattle routes to the

expansion of human settlements and farmlands; inability to meet up with the demands and challenges of new forms of livestock and farming practices; criminality in the form of kidnapping, rural banditry, and cattle rustling; the collapse and destruction of cultural peacebuilding practices; dysfunctional legal system; and ethnopolitical competition intensified by the spread of illicit weapons.

Other issues highlighted in the literature and by research participants include the destruction of crops by Fulani cattle; the cultivation of cattle routes by members of other ethnic groups; and the mobilization of ethnoreligious identities by the elite and religious leaders from all sides. What is common in most of this scholarship is the use of the problematic “Fulani and Farmer” categorization of the groups in Kaduna, and the lack of a coherent exploration of the issues from the perspectives of the affected populations.

One of the contributions of this research then is to go beyond the foregoing factors to unravel the inherent assumptions undergirding them. The implicit assumption embedded in previous scholarships is that pastoralism and nomadism—denoting the essence of the Fulani—are a code for “foreignness,” and agriculture (as other ethnic groups are conceived), is closely associated with “autochthony” and settlements (Jackson, 2006).

However, as we shall later see in the chapters that follow, participants’ narratives, while partly based on the above assumption, are more complex and nuanced, revealing of competing ideas of belonging. In other words, while most research participants alluded to the factors in the ICG report regarding the onset of intercommunal conflicts in Nigeria, they view these issues through their competing idealizations of land and belonging. Overall, the competing ideas of belonging based on diametrical but inherently symmetrical forms of autochthonous-Indigenous and nomadic-Indigenous belonging constitute the theoretical basis for this research.

Beyond their conflictual relationship, the groups in Kaduna have positively engaged in various convivial encounters and peace initiatives. Thus, the contact hypothesis was examined in order to highlight the complementary nature of the relationship between the different groups in Kaduna. The chapter also traced the development of peace research and practice using Oliver Richmond's four generations of peace theory, and Lederach's Conflict Transformation School. This section went beyond these five schools of thought and proffers the ground-level peacebuilding. It argued that this ground-level peace has been a feature of many societies affected by conflicts, and it differs from emancipatory approaches, which are often tied to the liberal peace paradigm.

The inclusion of "ground-level" peacebuilding in the genealogy of peace research is important to underscore the agency of people who build societal ties and construct local forms of governance and security with little or no support from their state governments or external actors. The section argued that these "grounded" practices of resilience and agency must be understood as contextually relevant. This practice, if acknowledged and developed, might potentially be capable of complementing or even substituting states and international organizations when they fail to act or are complicit in conflicts. Having set this background, the next task is to examine the methodological approaches for foregrounding the ideas in this research.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Research Methodology and Design**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter provides detailed information on the empirical research process carried out in Kaduna between April 2016 and February 2019. It explains the theoretical underpinnings of the research design, which derived from critical qualitative and narrative inquiry methods. Both research methods use a phenomenological approach to investigate people's subjective experiences and stories as encapsulated in their ideas about conflicts and peace.

As expected of any research of this nature, there are issues that must be addressed including those of ethics, physical and psychological risks, confidentiality, objectivity, credibility of facts, and the positionality of the researcher. These issues reveal the dynamics and challenges of doing research in troubled communities where people are simultaneously hamstrung by conflict and are resilient because of it. The chapter describes how these issues manifested and were addressed on the field and during the writing process. It begins with the theoretical insights of the research methodology, which hinges on Critical Qualitative and Narrative Inquiry Methods.

#### **Critical Qualitative Method (CQM)**

The term "critical" in relation to research methodology is used to describe both a social activity and an ideology (Thomas, 1993). As a social activity, critical thinking implies a call to action, ranging from a modest rethinking of prevailing thoughts to more active and direct engagement in political activism and social justice (Thomas, 1993). Critical thinking provides the theoretical lens for understanding the connections and consequences of knowledge systems,

as well as the obligations of researchers to the research communities (Thomas, 1993). In a Foucauldian and postmodernist sense, critical thinking or analysis implies an examination and deconstruction of those knowledge and structural systems that constrain discourse, exclude certain knowledge systems or create a “scarcity of discourse” (Foucault, 1981, p. 73).

CQM can best be described as a form of research that advances the noble or “righteous” cause of marginalized communities. CQM also lends itself to Indigenous research given its ethical, participatory, healing, decolonizing, performative, dialogic, and autonomous practices (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008); hence the label “Critical Indigenous Qualitative Research” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Critical scholarship has been used by Indigenous researchers to advocate for cultural preservation, recognition, and self-determination (Smith, 1999; Wilson, 2009).

A CQM practice can enhance the conditions of the research communities by seeking ways in which to make a difference that will impact the socioeconomic and political wellbeing of people. In so doing, critical research promotes and fulfills people’s cause for social justice and restores their dignity where it may have been damaged (Denzin & Giardina, 2009). Therefore, CQM is “any research that recognizes power—that seeks in its analyses to plumb the archaeology of taken-for-granted perspectives [for example, unequal educational opportunity, racism, exclusive liberal interventions, military incursions, etc.] to understand how unjust and oppressive social conditions came to be reified as historical givens” (Canella & Lincoln, 2009, p. 54).

In contrast to other conventional qualitative research methods, CQM is not solely about generating new forms of knowledge mainly for its own sake. Rather, it seeks to uncover and construct truths that can guide the researcher and the research communities in their quest for equality, inclusion, and social justice (Denzin & Giardina, 2009). Thus, any knowledge system

that is generated through a CQM method is to be assessed on its direct relevance to the concrete, everyday, experience of people (Denzin & Giardina, 2009). That is, CQM is grounded in the lived socioeconomic, cultural, and political experiences of the research communities (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008).

CQM research is shaped and guided by the following questions: “How are particular groups represented in discourses, practices, and social systems? What knowledges are silenced, made invisible, or even erased in research locales? Are the stories and viewpoints of research communities considered in knowledge production? What are the examples of oppression (and/or new forms of exclusions) that are being made to sound equitable through various discourses? How do elite groups from different social backgrounds define values, constructs, and rhetoric in ways that sustain the prevailing matrices of power?” (Canella & Lincoln, 2009, p. 69).

In addressing these questions, critical researchers often build alliances to engage with research communities to address their plights (Canella & Lincoln, 2009). A critical research has the potential to advance the social justice agenda of research communities. However, this critical strength can also be a weakness. Given their progressive disposition to fostering or promoting social change, adherents of CQM are criticized for advancing value-laden claims (Carspecken, 1996; Thomas, 1993).

Moreover, given that critical researchers have often supported the social justice needs of research communities, this tendency could be seen as a partial exercise especially if such researchers originate from the very same communities they are researching in (see Lederach’s (1995) “insider partials”, and Kriesberg’s (1991) “quasi mediators”). Critical researchers are also criticized for covertly or overtly replacing old forms of power imbalance with new forms of oppressive structures and ideas (Canella & Lincoln, 2009). Pepi Leistyna (2012) argues that in

the process of seeking just ways to empower marginalized groups, researchers could inadvertently advance the rule of an oppressive majority or a dominant minority.

Further, there are instances where the emancipatory struggles of researchers and people can become dictatorial and totalitarian, especially through popular demands for political inclusion and national sovereignty (Leistyna, 2012). The challenge for critical researchers is to ensure their critical mandate does not also create alternative systems of oppression. Beyond these challenges, however, CQM has the potential to refine and engage with specific research questions that illuminate, challenge, and change certain knowledge claims, narratives, power, and disempowering structures (Canella & Lincoln, 2009). In this way, CQM could be a beneficial exercise for researchers and research communities rather than an academic obligation (Charmaz, 2014).

Arguably, then, a CQM carries the potential to reveal and explore the hidden dynamics and unexplored narratives of the conflicts and peace processes of the disparate communities in Kaduna. It can get at the heart of the oppressive and social justice issues underpinning the crisis of belonging not just in Kaduna but on a larger scale in many postcolonial societies. Another method that is also crucial for representing and analyzing people's subjective experiences of conflicts and peace is the narrative inquiry, which will be introduced in the next sub-section.

### **Narrative Inquiry Method**

The use of narrative inquiry in this research stems from the idea that people's experiences of peace and conflict can be learned and appreciated through the stories they tell about themselves and their environments. Stories can take a person on a journey into the lives of the storytellers (Katz & Csordas, 2003). Consistent with CQM, the narrative method is modeled on

phenomenology (Moen, 2006); a method that studies an issue or topic from the perspectives of the individual(s) who experience(s) it (Groenewald, 2004; Lester, 2009).

One of the purposes of phenomenological research is to explain a specific issue or phenomenon as it is perceived by the people who grapple with or and are affected by it. This approach “normally translates into gathering ‘deep’ information and perceptions through inductive, qualitative methods such as interviews, discussions and participant observation, and representing it from the perspective of the research participant(s)” (Lester, 2009, p. 1).

As a phenomenological practice, storytelling provides a description of sequences of events from the perspective of the storyteller (Moen, 2006). John Paul Lederach (1997) writes about the realm of subjective experience as an important element of building peace in troubled societies. He recommends that people should find and create spaces to recount their stories and relieve the memories of trauma and loss to each other, and the pain and injustices they may have experienced during conflicts (Lederach, 1997). In this sense, the narrative inquiry method could be a medium through which communities that are either stricken by conflict or recovering from it can acknowledge their feelings and listen to others share their challenges. Sharing and acknowledging each other’s stories can help to restore a sense of community spirit and relationship where such have been damaged or broken (Lederach, 1997).

Lederach (1995) also discusses the importance of elicitive peacebuilding, which bears semblance to the storytelling method/ology. The elicitive peacebuilding training approach describes a situation in which peacebuilding trainers or practitioners can use their skills to facilitate local participation, creativity, and discovery in peace processes (Lederach, 1995). This approach provides an avenue and opportunity for conflict-affected populations and those at the war front to explore certain questions regarding their practices of peacebuilding and how they

can improve upon them (Lederach, 1995). The elicitive approach differs fundamentally from the prescriptive approach. The latter assumes that the peace trainer or researcher can easily transfer knowledge from one cultural setting to another (Lederach, 2001).

The storytelling or narrative inquiry research is a form of elicitive practice that helps to unravel people's frustrations with oppressive and constraining forces in their society. This practice encourages people to chart constructive pathways that are congruent to their needs and aspirations, and to restore their dignity and sense of community. While the elicitive practice is suggestive of the idea that external peacebuilding actors or researchers are well-placed to help people bring forth ideas about how to rebuild their societies during or in the aftermath of war, it is important to recognize people on the "ground" experiencing conflicts and other forms of oppression as agents in themselves. As such, they often utilize their historical and context-relevant cultural resources to work towards sustaining peace in their communities.

A crucial issue in many settings of violent conflicts and recovery is the lack of a hospitable space for people to share with each other and to tell others about their experiences. This issue reinforces the need to create time and space for people to tell their stories as a way forward in achieving reconciliation, healing, and restoring relationships in societies that have been ravaged by conflicts (Lederach, 1997). PACS researchers can either situate themselves within spaces where communities are already telling stories of their experiences of conflict and peacebuilding as part of a critical practice or work with communities to create safe and convenient spaces where such stories could find appropriate outlets (Bar-On, 2006).

A safe space could be technical and emotional (Bar-On, 2006). A technical space includes the material aspects of organizing storytelling research or programs. These materials may involve securing a quiet and safe location, providing adequate time, and the necessary

resources and equipment including food, and audio/video-taping gadgets (Bar-On, 2006). An emotional space relates to researchers' readiness and willingness to share their stories and provide the emotional attentiveness and atmosphere for others to tell theirs. This emotional space can give witnesses of violent conflicts a renewed sense of respect, self-importance, and pride (Bar-On, 2006).

While narrative research seems like an authentic and harmless practice, people's stories may not necessarily be a truthful or authentic representation of facts (Moen, 2006; Nordstrom & Robben, 1995). Dan Bar-On (2006) considers this situation a potential challenge to narrative researchers. To be sure, the views and narratives of research communities are often products of subjective experiences, which could either be tainted or imbued with fictitious and unsubstantiated facts. To address this issue of subjective bias in narrative research, Bar-On (2006) calls on researchers to always allow people the freedom to express themselves rather than overpower them with sophisticated theoretical concepts or theories. More importantly, he suggests looking beyond stories into subtexts that illuminate the narrative to better understand the situation and the people involved in it (Bar-On, 2006).

Similarly, Lee Ann Fujii, cautions that in assessing the veracity of narratives, researchers should not only rely on the truthfulness of the content, but also on the meta-data that accompany the narratives including the unexpressed thoughts and emotions, and the silences and invented stories people tell (Fujii, 2010). She claims that ignoring such meta-data can lead to "misinterpreting ambiguities, overlooking important details, drawing incorrect conclusions, and leaving respondents vulnerable to reprisals for having talked to the researcher" (2010, p. 232).

For an insider-researcher, the challenge of determining the "veracity" of a narrative or personal testimony could not be more acute. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) argues that the known

methodological risks for an insider-researcher range from the potential for bias and lack of objectivity to underplaying the need for rigor and research integrity, and even conflating the role of the researcher with an advocacy role (Smith, 2012).

Smith (1999) contends that the general rule of conduct for insider-researchers is to remain critical “about their processes, their relationships and the quality and richness of their data and analysis” (p. 137). This rule also applies to outsider-researchers, though it bears prominently on insider-researchers who live through the consequences of their actions in the research community (Smith, 1999). In any event, both insider and outsider researchers are always involved in the research community they are working in by being a part of the larger human community or maintaining a non-violent disposition (Hermann, 2001). Thus, it is questionable whether there is such a thing as a “pure” outsider within a conflict-ridden society where there are urgent needs to respond to the suffering of people (Hermann, 2001).

Whatever the identity or positionality of the researcher, it is crucial for narrative researchers to respect the stories people tell them. Respecting such stories does not mean agreeing with the stories they hear, “but rather trying to understand why a group has come to see the world as it does, the consequences of the view it holds, and what would have to happen for it to change its current understanding” (Ross, 2001, p. 239), assuming that such change is desirable.

Moreover, while narrative research holds several advantages including eliciting people’s subjective experiences of a phenomenon, the method is not always constructive or useful (Senehi, 2002). Jessica Senehi (2009) distinguishes between destructive and constructive forms of storytelling. She notes the destructiveness of storytelling when ethnic groups intensify social crevices and privilege some stories and cultures at the expense of others; when such stories

portray other groups in negative light; and when such narratives ignore the structural inequalities in the society and misrepresent reality (Senehi, 2009).

On the constructive spectrum, Senehi (2009) contends that narratives may contribute to peaceful relations when they create spaces for dialogue where there is a balance of power; when they engender mutual recognition and acknowledge the humanity of others; when they raise consciousness of real issues that can respond to domination; and when they inspire novel or unique strategies of conflict resolution.

Moving further, it is expected that not all people will be disposed to share their stories in a conflict environment. This indisposition might either be due to the severity of people's trauma or the silence that often overshadows survivors in the aftermath of war. Post-war environments can be places of immense trauma and pain in which afflicted populations may be struggling to meet up with their daily survival needs. In such condition, they may be least interested in sharing their stories or simply not able to (Jackson, 2002). Therefore, the narrative methodology may not always be conducive for eliciting people's insights about conflict or peace. It is also not justifiable to tell traumatic stories if the stories will have no impact on the reorganization of structures of injustices, oppression, and power imbalances in society.

Arguably, stories can be cathartic in conflict-ravaged societies. Yet more than being an antidote to trauma, people harbor questions about reparations, restitution, justice, apology, and, importantly, issues of autonomy and sovereignty that must be addressed through other forms of peacebuilding and transitional justice processes. These processes may entail not just the agency of the afflicted people, but also structural changes and restructuring of power and institutions at the federal, state, and local levels of governance.

This issue of advancing people's social justice and removing structural impediments is where a CQM intersects with narrative research. Both theoretical methodologies emphasize the importance of listening to the perspectives and stories of communities in insufferable situations. Using these critical methods also help to attenuate the impacts of oppression and give agency to local populations to advance their social justice causes, aided, sometimes, by the intervention of the state or external actors.

Since the state, international agencies or leading Western countries are not always forthcoming—and sometimes are complicit in conflicts—to provide palliative measures to people's suffering, this research places premium on people's resilience and agency. It does this to understand how they fashion out different forms of coping mechanisms and build peace in difficult situations. It also explores what we can learn from these local "grounded" peace approaches for (re)building sustainable and resilient societies. The next section describes the procedures for the collection of primary data based on critical and narrative research methods, seen through participants' stories of conflict and peace in Kaduna.

## **Research Design**

The research design describes the procedures in which the empirical data was gathered in Kaduna. These procedures involve the rationale for the selection of participants and the research locale, the style and technique of discussions with participants, the research materials/equipment used, the positionality of the researcher, the data analysis and interpretation methods, some ethical considerations, as well as the risks and benefits of the research for participants and the scholarly community.

### **Research participants and locale.**

As explained above, the research adopts critical qualitative and narrative inquiry methods by way of unstructured storytelling interviews, and conversations with 50 participants in southern Kaduna. These methods were necessary to elicit the people's conflict stories and ideas about achieving peace (Donais, 2012; Milne, 2010). Out of the 50 participants, 27 are Fulani, while 23 are members of other ethnic minority communities in Kaduna. I used snowball and purposive sampling techniques to recruit the research participants. A purposive method was useful in sampling participants from various ethnolinguistic and religious backgrounds living in the city; whereas I found the snowball method useful in the rural areas where people live in close-knit communities and know each other well.

My initial focus was on the Fulani community. The purpose of focusing on this population was intended to document their stories of peace and conflict for public knowledge, particularly for forging stronger bonds between them and other Nigerian ethnic groups. I was also interested in challenging other groups' ingrained stereotypes about the Fulani. However, following preliminary discussions with a few Fulani participants, they urged me to seek the views and stories of other ethnic communities as well. They were interested in knowing what other ethnic groups think about them, and how they view their longstanding coexistence and relationship in periods of turbulence. For this reason, and given my own judgment in the field, I decided to include the narratives of both Fulani and other ethnic minority groups in the research. I did so to compare their idealizations of conflict and peace processes in Kaduna.

I conducted the research between 2016 and 2019. Within these periods, I visited five villages in Anghan and Bakulu chiefdoms in southern Kaduna including Lenak, Yangal, Agwon, Ashafa, and Kamuru. These two chiefdoms are situated in Zangon Kataf LGA of Kaduna.

Participants from these five villages are mostly traditional chiefs, clerics, agro-pastoralists, elementary and secondary school teachers, informal businesspeople, local government workers, community development personnel, and the elderly. There were also participants from Kachia, Jema'a, Kaura, Sanga, Kajuru, Kaduna North, Birnin Gwari, Kaduna South, and Kaura LGAs. Many of these participants live and work in Kaduna city. Most of them are government workers, while some are businesspeople, politicians, social activists, and civil service retirees.

The research was carried out in areas that were considered safe and convenient for participants and the researcher. These areas include the chiefs' palaces, marketplaces, make-shift cattle ranches, restaurants, family homes, government offices, and civil society organizations. The selection of these places was largely the choice of participants, and it was necessary to ensure their safety and comfort. Some prominent civil society organizations also participated in the research including the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN), and the Southern Kaduna People's Union (SOKAPU). MACBAN has its branches in many parts of the country, especially in the Middle Belt Region of Nigeria where most of the Fulani population in Nigeria reside. The organization is established to support the socioeconomic and political developments of the Fulani in Nigeria.

SOKAPU was formed to unite southern Kaduna's ethnic minority communities, as well as to address and champion their political, economic, and social justice issues. MACBAN and SOKAPU also serve as liaisons between their members, the state, and the federal government.

Research participants comprised middle-aged people (aged 36-49), elderly people (aged 50-85), and young people (aged 18-35), thus exploring intergenerational continuity and change. My choice of elderly research participants was based on their role as storytellers and custodians of knowledge for their communities. Many of them are traditional rulers or clerics. These elders

also serve as the first point of contact in their communities for visitors and researchers. In accordance with tradition, I introduced myself and related my research intentions and ideas to them as a prerequisite for accessing and doing research in their communities.

The middle-aged participants are mostly involved in peacebuilding and social activism in their communities. Some are local government workers, politicians, and schoolteachers. They facilitated my meetings with elders and young people in Anghan and Bakulu chiefdoms. The choice of young people is based on their over-representation as instruments of violence and under-representation as change-makers in their communities.

However, based on my field observations and experience, many young people are actively taking various peacebuilding roles in Kaduna. They speak and write against social vices and crimes through social media channels and at community gatherings. Besides, in areas where illnesses or the overbearing impacts of conflicts have decimated the elderly or rendered them inactive, it is the young and middle-range people that are performing critical peacebuilding tasks such as leading dialogue forums and attending to the displaced and wounded.

It is also worth noting that the roles of these various actors in Kaduna are neither fixed nor stable. Their roles are not unrelated to each other, except when it comes to making serious decisions; in which case, elders and chiefs seem to hold the *de facto* and *de jure* positions of having the final decision-making power. The role of elders in conflict resolution is also prominent in situations of resolving serious community issues involving land or intergroup conflicts. Also, there are no clear-cut or neat vocational and occupational categories among the research communities. There are, for example, young people who are clerics and a few others who have a good historical account and knowledge of their society.

However, there are some disparities with regards to the gender distribution of participants. Given the highly patriarchal nature of the conflicting communities in southern Kaduna, only seven women, including four Fulani and three others from the ethnic minority groups, participated in the research. The women's ideas about conflicts and peace were not dissimilar to the views held by the men in their communities. This similarity reflects deep patriarchal influences in the research locale.

While some participants were directly involved in incidents of violent conflicts—mostly as witnesses and victims—, a majority had a deep understanding of their historical and contemporary experiences of conflicts and peacebuilding in the area. Moreover, it was outside the scope of the research to identify, indict, or label participants as victims or perpetrators. The fact that many of them described their positions as victims or witnesses of conflicts was largely their choice. For some, the sense and admittance of their victimhood came up inadvertently during the research process.

The Fulani and Anghan community in Anghan chiefdom were the first research participants. Anghan chiefdom has its headquarters in Fadan Kamantan, the largest district in the chiefdom. Although the people are also called Kamantan, they prefer to identify as Anghan, and they refer to their geographic location as the Anghan chiefdom, with its headquarters in Agwon. This preference for such nomenclatures is in line with their ethnic stipulations and need for self-definition. The Anghan people live alongside some Fulani and members of other ethnic minority groups like the Bajju and Bakulu. I selected Anghan as the initial research locale due to my knowledge of the people and general familiarity with the terrain. By beginning the research with the people familiar to me in Anghan, I was able to extend its parameters to other communities through the assistance of gatekeepers from Anghan land.

Moreover, Anghan land is relatively peaceful compared to some other communities in southern Kaduna. To borrow a phrase from Björkdahl and Kappler (2017, p. 15), the Anghan chiefdom is “an island of peace in a landscape of violence”. Thus, beginning the research from a relatively stable locale as Anghan was necessary to ensure the stability, safety, and comfort of the researcher and the participants early in the research. Some participants were curious to understand what the Anghan people were doing differently to maintain stability in an area marked by incessant communal disturbances.

Thus, the Anghan chiefdom became my initial study area, and also serves as a focal area for understanding the complexities of intercommunal life. The stories of Anghan people shed light on ideas of inclusive belonging. This idea was insightful in examining the potential for working through conflicts bordering on the crisis of belonging in Kaduna. It should be borne in mind that the relative peace in Anghan land does not imply that the community has not contended with violent skirmishes. The land has also had its own fair share of conflicts; though these conflicts are relatively minor compared to other flashpoints in southern Kaduna.

For example, several participants in Anghan narrated an incident in which alleged Fulani assailants attacked and killed seven people at a funeral in Yangal community in 2016. The chief claimed that the Fulani carried out the attack partly in response to an earlier attack on some of their members. The alleged attack by the Yangal people on the Fulani was reportedly executed in response to the encroachment of Fulani’s cattle on their farmlands. There were other cases in which Fulani families were attacked by assailants and bandits in Anghan land, and the Fulani had to flee the area.

Since the Yangal incident, participants in Anghan insist they have not had any further attacks in their communities. I conducted a focus group discussion with a few families from

Yangal regarding the Yangal incident and its impacts on their relationship with the Fulani in the village. Although they were saddened and traumatized by this violent incident, they seemed sanguine about the prospect of peace with their Fulani neighbors.

I selected four gatekeepers from Anghan chiefdom who were well known and respected in the area. Three of them were Anghans and the other person was a Fulani. Most of the Fulani in Anghan have a good grasp of the Anghan language and they blend very well with the Anghan people. The Anghan people view the area as their only homeland but also regard the Fulani—with whom they have lived together for a long time—as Indigenous to the land. It is through the advice and support of my research associates from Anghan that I was able to reach out to the Fulani participants in the area and across neighboring communities.

On one occasion, one of my research associates from Anghan planned for me to visit the premises of two Fulani *ArDOS* (chiefs) in two different communities in the chiefdom. While I was preparing for this mission, the chiefs surprisingly came at different times to see me in the village that I was staying in. They knew I was staying in this village because the research associate who had organized my meeting with them was from the same community and had informed them of my presence.

Their visit to the village humbled and perplexed me. They said they had wanted to learn firsthand about my research and were curious and eager to establish some rapport with me. They also said it was easier for them to come by the village I was staying in because it was located along their way home from a community where they had attended a meeting on the same day. Above all, they were motivated to come because of their strong cordial relationship with my research associate in the village who had introduced the objectives of my research to them. It is even possible they might have been protecting me or their community from what might be

regarded as an outsider intrusion in their respective communities. This idea is hardly misplaced, considering I was conducting the research in a period of deepening anxiety, suspicion, criminality, and conflicts among various groups in Kaduna.

While, I appreciated their gesture and effort, I thought I might have benefited substantially from a visit to their communities. Nevertheless, with the assistance of the Fulani associate, I visited several Fulani homesteads in Bakulu and Anghan chiefdoms where I interacted with both elders and young people. I also gained privy to some of their mundane activities like preparations for family feasts and everyday house chores.

It is worth noting my observations as the Fulani chiefs arrived at the community I was staying in Agwon. As the second Fulani chief arrived, a couple of hours after the first had left, a few community members came out of their homes and were staring at us with what seemed to be an element of surprise or confusion on their faces. Several years back, such visits could have gone unnoticed, as it was not untypical for Fulani chiefs and people to mingle freely with other groups in most southern Kaduna communities. Yet these were not normal times.

Since the 2011 crisis, mutual hatred grew among these groups, and intergroup visits, as both cases described above indicate, have become something of a rarity and a cynosure of the eyes. It was, therefore, not surprising to see some people in this community a bit puzzled at the sight of the chiefs with their entourage parading in and out of their village. A young lady whom I knew very well, facetiously remarked that I was creating problems for them in the community by inviting the Fulani chiefs into their midst. Although her remark was meant as a joke, it, nevertheless, speaks to the apprehension and tempestuous nature of the relationship between the Fulani and other ethnic communities in Nigeria.

In the main, Kaduna was the research area. Yet there are some specific areas within southern Kaduna like Ladduga that merits further exploration. Ladduga means wilderness in *Fulfude*. The area was established for pastoralists by the then Northern regional government in Kaduna in 1967. Ladduga was so named by its first inhabitants to describe its initial uncharted features of thick bush, wild plants, and animals (Okello et al., 2014). The area was carved out for pastoralist communities to address issues associated with pastoralism. It was assumed that the contestations over land and the encroachments of cattle on farmlands belonging to other ethnic minority communities would be addressed through the creation of reserve areas.

Aside from Ladduga, several other reserve areas were created around the same period. They were established with the anticipation of increasing livestock productivity, providing vegetation and water and access to markets, as well as reducing clashes between pastoralists and farmers over limited land space (Ducrotoy et al., 2017). A large section of southern Kaduna's Fulani families has resettled in Ladduga since the outbreak of the 2011 post-election violence.

Two research participants were from Ladduga, and they were interviewed in the city as I could not visit Ladduga unaccompanied. Due to the restive security situation at the time and my apprehensions about being an outsider in a largely Fulani-dominated environment, I was concerned that I would not be allowed entry into Ladduga. Given the uneasiness and antagonism brewing among Kaduna's disparate groups at the time, I thought going into the area alone might be considered an intrusion of sort.

Thus, I arranged with a participant from Ladduga to accompany me as I observe the area and confabulate with the people. This proposed meeting never took place as scheduled. I could only surmise, due to different engagements during the festive period in December 2017 that he

was indisposed to take me there. Nevertheless, I was able to drive around Ladduga with one of my research partners to observe its vicinity, which is spacious and largely underdeveloped.

Some people situate Ladduga in Kachia LGA. While others, especially the ethnic minority groups, insist the area is in Zangon Kataf LGA. Hence, there are disagreements among the various groups in Kaduna over where Ladduga should be placed. These disputes are mainly political, but also historical. The issues speak to the deeper crisis of territoriality among the groups and the role of the state in exacerbating these conflicts. Some key ethnic minority groups in Kaduna are from Zangon Kataf LGA and they believe that Ladduga is part of the LGA, belonging to the Bakulu people.

These groups perceive Kachia as an area that is susceptible to capture and usurpation by the dominant Hausa and Fulani groups. Their trepidation regarding the capture of Ladduga by the dominant Fulani group is not unconnected with the large population of Fulani in Kachia, and the government's tendency of situating Ladduga in Kachia LGA. The Kaduna government's geopolitical strategy of situating Ladduga in Kachia is seen by the other ethnic minority groups in Zangon Kataf as a ploy by the state government to shift and wrest control and responsibility of the area from them.

By and large, Ladduga has remained a deeply contested terrain and a symbol of the crisis of belonging between the Fulani and other ethnic minority groups in southern Kaduna for reasons that are explored in the research. In general, however, Kaduna state is used in this research as a specific context to discuss broader historical and contemporary experiences of conflicts and peace processes in the Middle Belt and Central Nigeria. Below is a list of research participants, highlighting their occupations, gender, locale, and age. Although some of them live

in Kaduna city, they belong to different communities in southern Kaduna. Most of them were born in those areas before relocating to the city in search of educational and job opportunities.

<b>Research Participants</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Locale</b>	<b>Age Structure</b>
Numfa	Male	Government worker	Kaduna city	50-55
Bello	Male	Activist	Kaduna city	50-55
Ardo I	Male	Traditional chief	Anghan Chiefdom	60-65
Ardo II	Male	Traditional Chief	Anghan Chiefdom	65-70
Yunusa	Male	Activist	Kaduna city	50-55
Daro	Male	Politician/Businessman	Ladduga/Kaduna city	55-60
Khalifa	Male	Activist	Kaduna city	45-50
Shehu	Male	Government worker	Kaduna city	45-50
Safiya	Female	Activist	Kaduna city	35-40
Muhammad	Male	Government worker	Kaduna city	65-70
Idrisu	Male	Government worker	Kaduna city	60-65
Kurum	Male	Community leader	Ladduga/city	35-40
Iliya	Male	Agropastoralist	Anghan chiefdom	50-55
Yusuf	Male	Agropastoralist	Anghan chiefdom	35-40
Nura	Male	University lecturer	Kaduna city	50-55
Four men in a focus group discussion	Males	Agropastoralists	Bakulu chiefdom	35-85
Three women in a focus group discussion	Females	Businesspeople/farmers	Bakulu/Anghan chiefdoms	35-80

Table 1: List of Fulani Research Participants

<b>Research Participants</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Locale</b>	<b>Age Structure</b>
Isa	Lecturer/Activist	Male	Kaduna city	55-60
Paramount Chief	Traditional Leader	Male	Anghan	70-75
Kalma	Farmer/Entrepreneur	Male	Anghan/city	35-40
Casan	Government worker	Male	Anghan/Taraba	35-40
Kajo	Government worker/farmer	Male	Anghan	35-40
Garba	Lecturer/Activist	Male	Kaduna city	60-65
Lucas	Teacher/Activist	Male	Kaduna city	45-50
Gado	Journalist/Activist	Male	Kaduna city	40-45
Kaki	Lecturer/Activist	Male	Kaduna city	35-40
Local Chief	District Head	Male	Anghan	65-70
Audu	Community Leader	Male	Anghan chiefdom	50-55
Two women in a focus group	Teacher/Farmer	Females	Anghan chiefdom	40-45
Caleb	Farmer	Male	Anghan chiefdom	35-40
Government Representative	Politician	Male	Kaduna city	40-45
Two men in a focus group	Farmers	Males	Anghan chiefdom	40-45

Table 2: List of Participants from the Ethnic Minority Groups

### **Data collection methods and procedures.**

Prior to conducting this research, I had prepared some discussion topics that were mainly targeted at Fulani participants because they were the initial target of this research. The discussion topics were organized into three topic domains as follows:

1. Topic Domain: History

Growing up, my grandmother and uncles told me stories about creation and cosmology. I was also wondering whether you had storytellers in your community who shared similar stories with you.

2. Topic domain: Conflict and peace

Some of the stories that my parents and uncles told me were about community peacemaking processes. I would like to learn some of your cultural views and resources for peacebuilding.

3. Topic domain: Intervention

Are there ways, you think, we can explore how your peacebuilding tools and strategies could be used to address intercommunal conflicts in Kaduna?

These initial discussion topics were formulated with the aim of unravelling the cosmology, history, and peacebuilding initiatives of the Fulani group in Kaduna. I noted in the research proposal that these topics might have to be altered or improved upon as the research progresses. I figured that these potential changes could be necessitated by the reception of the participants to the topics and the recommendations of the research advisers. Besides, making such flexible changes can help to avoid cultural taboos (Norman, 2009), emotionally charged issues (Martin-Ortega & Herman, 2009) or some implicit assumptions in the topics that may be deemed by some participants as irritable or too problematic to discuss. Moreover, Carspecken (1996)

recommends that critical researchers should “anticipate possible directions the conversation could go and then formulate possible questions that could be asked if responses are [inadequate]” (p. 157).

Based on the above merits, I made the following changes. First, besides the initial target community (the Fulani), I included participants from other communities in order to achieve a balanced perspective of the issues impacting conflicts and peace in southern Kaduna. Second, and more importantly, participants demurred my invitation to read the informed consent letters independently and sign them. For many, it was not culturally appropriate for them to accept and sign a consent form from a researcher whom they considered a member of their community. Thus, because they regarded me as one of their “own”, they wished the consent forms away. This procedure of obtaining consent may be different if I were an outsider, having no knowledge of their language or environment. According to them, my only obligation in return is to use what information they provided me to document their suffering and resilience for the world to see.

I then explained their role in the research and how they should respond to the research objectives and questions through stories and conversations. Most participants shared their stories without being prompted by specific questions or discussion topics. I allowed this process to flow, which produced themes around the crisis of belonging. The process also demonstrated the people’s capacities for and history of intergroup contact. When these themes emerged, I explored them further with more intent. Based on my experience living in Kaduna, I had initially hypothesized the crisis of indigeneity as the main issue undergirding intercommunal conflicts in Kaduna. However, my explorations and discussions with participants around this overriding theme raised complex questions and concerns, not only about indigeneity, but belonging

generally. These complex questions had to do with the people's perceptions of "home" in relation to the notions of "indigeneity", "autochthony", and "nomadism".

This free-flowing narrative research style assured participants of their comfort and agency. This assurance became necessary because of the sensitivity of some of the issues that emerged from the research. Some of these sensitive issues revolve around the trauma of experiencing fear, anxiety, violence, displacements, and loss of loved ones during conflicts. In general, participants were simply keen to tell their stories, perhaps, because these stories became cathartic outlets for those with traumatic experiences of conflicts and or historical injustices. Conversations were conducted in Hausa and English language based on the convenience of participants.

All participants, except for the government officials, were keen to have their names included in my dissertation as a testament to the veracity of their stories. As they conceived it, they do not need to be protected since they were telling the "truth" about the conditions of their lives. They want their stories to be heard, and their names remembered as the people who stood for truth and justice in their communities. I found this attitude rather striking and courageous.

Despite the plea to publish their names, I consider it my own ethical responsibility as a researcher to use pseudonyms to mask their identities for security purposes, confidentiality, and in accordance with the ethical principles of the University of Manitoba. References to participants' identities have been written in such a way that readers may not be able to infer their identity. There were certain cases when I thought it useful to indicate their identities, especially when dealing with areas of general or public knowledge about a specific individual or group in Nigeria. For example, the case of some of the chiefs who were abducted, killed, or actively involved in peacebuilding in Kaduna.

I have saved a copy of the transcribed data on my personal computer alongside the audio recordings. Field data were complemented with secondary and primary sources obtained through a desktop library search of the University of Manitoba's library database and acquired from certain individuals in Kaduna. For example, the Kaduna State Peace Committee Report (henceforth, KSPCR) and the Kafanchan Declaration were provided by a staff of the Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC) of the Catholic Archdiocese of Kaduna.

Meanwhile, in January 2019, I visited the National Archives in Kaduna, one of only two in the country. While at the Archives, I gathered historical documents on the following themes: the history of British colonialism and their administrative and economic activities in the governing of southern Kaduna/Zaria people; the history of Islamic propaganda and Christian proselytization activities in Northern Nigeria; the history and functioning of the Hausa and Fulani emirate system in Northern Nigeria; the dynamics of intermarriages between Muslims and non-Muslim groups; and the nature of minority rebellion and religious intolerance in Kaduna. These archival materials provided robust historical accounts and facts on the identity, cosmology, and changing sociopolitical realities of the different groups in Kaduna.

The research was also inclusive of an action research component. In the context of peacebuilding, action research can be a form of critical research because it enables researchers to coordinate activity with witnesses of conflict (Millar, 2014). The aim of action research is to create pathways for positive contact and to break down barriers between conflicting groups. Action research is also a prerequisite of critical methodology because it allows researchers to democratize their research and “do research with others rather than on them, thus speaking with rather than to people engaged in eradicating injustice” (Leistyna, 2012, p. 217).

On several occasions during the field research, participants on all sides were simply excited to sit together over food and drinks while recounting their stories of the shared history of conviviality, as well as prospects for continued coexistence in a shared place and space. Some participants, particularly the Fulani, were appreciative of the fact that they could tell their stories, especially to someone from another community who could potentially build bridges of trust and harmony between them and their neighbors. Their suggestions and recommendations will be used to create programs that will forge and renew cross-community activities and peaceful in southern Kaduna.

#### **Research materials/equipment.**

With the approval of the participants, a digital recorder was used to audiotape field conversations and stories. The recorded information was then transferred to a personal computer, where it was transcribed, translated, and analyzed. I also used a field note journal to record conversations with government officials and to reflect on some of the emerging themes from each conversation I had with participants. I also utilized the journal to record observations of the feelings, emotions of participants, and specific atmosphere at research sites. The inclusion of a participant observation component to the research allowed me to engage with participants while simultaneously observing their behavior and analyzing why they are doing things their own way (Wilson, 2008). The use of multiple channels of recording participants' stories and views is part of ensuring that critical information and events are not lost.

Furthermore, Carspecken (1996) advises critical researchers to share their field journal notes with certain members of their research circle to check whether they have overlooked any important aspects of the experience, people, and events, or given too much attention to

“unimportant” issues or activities. The ultimate role of the researcher is to respectfully present their materials and activities (Stewart et al., 2009). Researchers are to also ensure that participants have access to the reconstructive analysis of the information elicited from them prior to publication. For this purpose, I conducted “meaning checks” with participants and research advisers at the end of each conversation session. I also double-checked interview transcripts and recorded conversations and discussions to guard against what Thomas (1993) cautions about the risk of imposing one’s preconceived ideas or theories through misrepresentation of facts and leading questions.

As part of the credibility check, I sent my manuscript to one of my advisers who was present during most part of the field research to have a thorough read-through of the representations of the participants’ stories. This research associate read the manuscript and corrected certain information I may have misinterpreted while transcribing and translating the data. The triangulation of methods provided a credible representation of the data. This process ensured that the interpretation of the data was free of biases and half-truths that may impact the credibility of the research. Moreover, the need to ensure data credibility brought to the fore the importance of my identity and place within the research community, which is discussed below.

### **My positionality.**

It is worth highlighting how my positionality as a researcher impacted the research, particularly in terms of my preconceived beliefs, values, membership of a group, and the positions I held onto as I went into the field. An awareness of the researcher’s positionality can be an important step forward for the researcher and participants to appreciate group diversity and increase understanding of the cultures and environments they study (Thomas, 1993).

Prior to undertaking the field research, I had some preconceived notions of the theories that might help to explicate the conflicts and understand local peace processes in Kaduna. However, I was able to identify and set aside my perspectives while conversing with participants in order to be open to their reality as they understood it. Thus, I noted this change of perception and thought processes in my mind and wrote them down in my field note journal. I was conscious of how my questions to participants and positionality might be impacting my interpretations of the issues under investigation. What helped me further was to keep asking these questions: am I just hearing what I want to hear from participants to make their comments fit into my framework? Do I really understand the views of my participants? Asking these questions helped to eliminate some of my preconceived theories about the sources of conflicts in Kaduna.

Moreover, I was invited and challenged to become involved with the issues that my participants were grappling with in the field. Members of the minority ethnic groups considered me an insider because I am a member of one of the groups. Growing up in the area, I was also socialized into the general belief that many Nigerians share regarding the inherent aggression and folly of the Fulani. Yet, while studying about ethnic conflicts and the insider-outsider group dynamics in heterogeneous societies, I have begun questioning this form of socialization as a form of stereotype and out-group “othering”.

Over the years, my experience of intercommunal life in Kaduna, particularly with Fulani communities, has also been instrumental in enabling me to reorganize my thought processes about group identities in Africa. Going into the field, this experience enabled me to maintain a high level of awareness of my own biases and stereotypes about others, particularly the Fulani. I

was careful to constantly check my preconceived assumptions and stereotypes about others and weigh them against the backdrop of observable facts and participants' narratives.

My positionality as a member of one of the ethnic minority groups in Kaduna also makes this research an autoethnography. As an insider from one of the minority communities, I used my knowledge and experience of the people and of the area throughout the course of the research "to look more deeply at self-other interaction" (Holt, 2003, p. 3). This insider-knowledge formed part of my primary data. For as Ellis et al. (2010) argue, autoethnography helps the researcher to understand his or her experience based on their cultural biases and perceptions.

I was also aware of my own ethnoreligious ties with certain groups in southern Kaduna, and how that might shape my understanding of the information they may share with me and their expectations of my role as a researcher and a member of their communities. Thomas (1993) argues that the critical researcher is expected to play an active creative role during the research process rather than being a passive recorder of events. Madison (2009) argues that it can be a risky research endeavor not to assist in other people's struggles and understand their forms and tactics of resistance. Additionally, she states that "ethics requires responsibility (and the ability to respond); it is inherently antithetical to apathy" (2009, p. 193).

Moreover, there is also a danger of romanticizing the research participants and becoming blinded by their participation or adversarial role in the conflict. Sometimes, one may also become disillusioned, cynical or hostile towards research participants (Thomas, 1993). Indeed, several participants from the ethnic minority groups considered me a redeeming voice of their struggles. They expected me to take on a social activist role and use their stories to document the struggles and atrocities they face, as well as to mobilize international support for their cause. This expectation partly reflects people's assumptions that researchers—particularly from the

Western world—have an “empowering” ability that can de-silence or uplift the “powerless”, the “oppressed”, and the “voiceless” (Milne, 2010, p. 81).

This impression that researchers are social agents or activists was largely sustained by the fact that early researchers and ethnographers came from former colonial and powerful societies and from positions of international power (Milne, 2010). In my own case, the people perceived my international student status as a possible intervening leverage for their plights. They believe I could use this assumed vantage position to impress upon foreign governments the need to respond to what they consider genocidal atrocities in Kaduna.

I challenged this implicit assumption of foreigners having the answers to the insufferable issues of local people in Africa. Instead of sustaining this position, I tried to underscore the people’s own actions as vital to fashioning context-based approaches for peace and resilience-building. I listened to their admonitions without promising an activist involvement in their struggles. However, even as I stressed my position as a researcher, I still wondered whether I have a responsibility to respond to the issues raised by research participants; considering my own rootedness and history in the research context. Amina Mama’s (2007) question is instructive in this regard; she asks: “Can we develop the study of Africa so that it is more respectful toward the lives and struggles of African people and to their agendas, studies that contribute to the good of Africa?” (p. 7).

I think that researchers in certain contexts of oppression and violent conflicts should have an ethical mission to contribute more meaningfully and participate in restoration of trust and a just social order through their professional life and community engagements. Moreover, part of the reasons for undertaking this research is based on my conviction that it would form an

important conflict intervention mechanism. The research can serve as a platform for documenting people's narratives about their lived experiences, while enhancing their agency.

Furthermore, I was considered an insider-outsider in Fulani communities. I was an insider of sorts because of the long-term relationship between my group and the Fulani, and an outsider because I am not a Fulani. Given the turbulent relations between the Fulani and other ethnic communities in Nigeria over the past few years, I was concerned that my role as an outsider researcher in Fulani communities might not bode well for me and certain members of the group. This potential issue was partly why I had to use research advisers and gatekeepers from the Fulani and other ethnic communities. These advisers and gatekeepers were well known to the Fulani and respected as community builders in the area. Some of them also participated in my research because of my own drive for forging peaceful coexistence among the disparate groups in Kaduna.

Throughout the various research stages in the field, I tried to remain conscious and reflective of how my sociocultural background and views as a researcher from one side of the conflict may influence the research process. Soyini Madison (2006) calls on critical researchers to not hide their identity nor make themselves the primary subject of their own research. Instead, she suggests they should remain critical and self-reflexive of how they think about their positionality and the implications of their thoughts and activities on research communities and the process generally (Madison, 2006).

Thus, to the best of my ability, I have tried to capture and critique participants' views and stories regarding the sources of conflicts and prospects for peaceful coexistence in their communities. Although some of their views are conflicting and sometimes partial, they speak to the difficulty of obtaining objective stories about communal conflicts in pluralistic societies. At

any rate, such conflicting stories are integral to understanding the complexities and dynamics of ethnoreligious and political conflicts in a complex and evolving society like Nigeria.

### **Research risks, benefits, and ethics.**

In addition to issues of positionality, there are also physical constraints (direct violence, diseases, and sickness) and psychological challenges (stress, trauma) that may impede a research process. Such issues may potentially pose life-threatening risks to researchers and study participants in troubled societies (Millar, 2014). Considering these potential risks, I noted the benefits of the research to participants by taking proper steps to advise and inform them about the objectives of the research so that they can be well informed of their role and be able to decide whether or not to participate in it. Thus, I clarified that the goal of the research was to first fulfill the requirements of a Ph.D. dissertation. At the same time, the research aims to provide and document relevant knowledge and information on the conflict and peacebuilding processes of the people of Kaduna.

In view of the fact that the stories and viewpoints of my participants are largely absent in the literature on inter-communal conflicts, the following are the potential benefits of the research: it will offer a platform to represent their communities in the scholarly community and policy forums by sharing their largely absent views of peace and conflict; the research will be published as policy papers and journal articles for ease of access and intervention by governments and relevant agencies. These agents could also use the findings of the research to work out plans to implement the people's suggestions and ethnographies of peacebuilding. More importantly, I highlighted the importance of healing their communities through listening, acknowledging, and rehumanizing each other during conversations.

Moving further, all forms of research in a conflict context are “inherently risky”. The risk could be about the physical and psychological harm the conflict may pose to the researcher and participants. The danger could also be about what participants and researchers may disclose about themselves and their perspectives of the conflicts and how others may receive these disclosures (Stewart et al., 2009). The major risk associated with this research is that the conflict in Kaduna is an on-going reality. The perversity of the conflict in certain areas confined my explorations to specific areas of the state. I had to ensure my safety and that of my research participants throughout the process.

Indeed, considering the nature of the environment in which peace researchers work—which can be politically and culturally sensitive—it is expected that they will be dependent on the assistance of gatekeepers. Contacting gatekeepers can help to ground peace research locally and can enable trust and confidence to develop between the researcher and the research community (Brounéus, 2011). I also envisaged that some participants may be understandably skeptical or concerned about the impending risks that participating in my research may pose to them. This potential issue was partly addressed through the help of my research advisers who introduced the objectives of my research by words of mouth to potential participants.

In general, the research did not subject anyone to unnecessary risks that can be physically or emotionally damaging. Relatively stable and safe areas, which were well known to the researcher and suggested by participants, were used to conduct conversations and storytelling. At no point during the process of the research were participants traumatized or emotionally stressed. Although some participants indicated their “victimhood” status and were bereaved of loved ones lost in violent conflicts, they, nevertheless, seemed passionate to share their stories with me.

They hoped the research would bring their stories to the awareness of the general public, government bodies, and the international community. The purpose of highlighting these stories is not only to create publicity for their plights, but to also serve as a testament to their suffering and enduring resilience, which is a form of justice. In this way, the research provided the emotional and physical space not only for the telling of stories but also for the participants to encounter and learn from each other the vicissitudes of their predicaments and to share their ideas about peacebuilding, including their hopes and fears for the future.

Besides the aforesaid risks, there were also some ethical issues regarding the privacy of the research participants. To ensure that participation in my research was truly voluntary, the participants were informed of their voluntary role in the research and how to withdraw from it if they feel any sense of discomfort. In truth, however, most participants wanted me to spread and document their stories as a deontological obligation for the atrocities and trauma they experience. Although I was struck by their display of courage in the face of danger, I clarified my ethical obligation to ensure their anonymity and confidentiality in the research using pseudonyms.

Finally, participants received no financial compensation or other material incentives for their involvement in the research. However, some were provided transport fares to the research sites, and refreshments were made available wherever and whenever possible.

### **Methods of data analysis and interpretation.**

LeCompte and Schensul (1999) argue that data analysis and interpretation are crucial in making the field research intelligible and meaningful to the research community and to outsiders. The aim of the analysis is to create fewer data from the bulk of elicited fieldwork data. Analyzing data entails the ability to code and summarize information succinctly in order to bring

order to the data and discover useful patterns and themes (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999). Interpretation of data, on the other hand, “involves attaching meaning and significance to the patterns, themes, and connection that the researcher identified during analysis, and explaining why they have come to exist” (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999, p. 5). Data interpretation is also about indicating how the data might impact future research and or actions.

Interpretation of data requires that the researcher attends to all aspects of the social system. These include “institutions, actions, images, utterances, events, customs, and all the usual objects of scientific interest, as well as to those on whom these objects of interest bear most heavily” (Geertz, 1980, p. 167 cited in Thomas, 1993, p. 43). When interpreting data, Thomas (1993) asserts that critical researchers should defamiliarize themselves with what they have seen in the data collection stage and attempt to translate it into something meaningful and objective.

To defamiliarize oneself from the actual data is to become critical of one’s field experience, particularly the taken-for-granted aspects of the research (Thomas, 1993). In doing so, “we take the collection of observations, anecdotes, impressions, documents, and other symbolic representations of the culture we studied that seem depressingly mundane and common, and we reframe them into something new” (Thomas, 1993, p. 43).

Accordingly, data for this research were coded and interpreted manually, following some steps in qualitative research. The first step involved a set of procedures including observation and inscription—critically thinking through the observable facts and jotting down words or phrases for recollection—, and description—expounding ideas to provide deep accounts of field observations and notes (Gulati et al., 2011; LeCompte & Schensul, 1999). At this stage, field observations and conversations with participants were collected using a journal and audio recorder. Some preliminary analyses were also carried out at this stage.

In the second stage, field notes and audio recordings were transcribed into Microsoft Word format. Aside from some few participants that shared stories in English, most of them communicated through the Hausa language, which is widely spoken in northern Nigeria. Thus, after transcription, the data were translated into English, while retaining some important Hausa phrases for originality.

The data was tidied up in stage three, where I explored and structured the information in the text (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006; LeCompte & Schensul, 1999). In this stage, I separated the narratives and stories of Fulani communities from those of the ethnic minority groups. The separation of the different narratives and stories was useful for comparing ideas and themes emanating from the transcripts. I also went through the data transcripts and highlighted texts that were crucial. I also noted some preliminary comments through tracked changes, which guided the thematic coding of the data (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006).

In stage four, I coded the comments derived from stage three by categorizing them into themes. In fact, the coding and analysis of the data began at the first stage of inscription and recordings. At this stage, I identified some important patterns in the data, which provided more clarity and information on the data and themes for discussions. These patterns and themes served as an indication that the data was becoming redundant and I was no longer learning anything new. It was a signal to bring the research process to a close. It is at stage four that I named the themes and itemized them to identify broad meaningful units (Gulati et al., 2011). Only then did ideas, structures, and patterns (Schensul & LeCompte, 1999) of the crisis of belonging and stereotypes among the groups became most apparent in the data.

At the emergence of this theme of contested belonging, I delved further into it to explore its ramifications in Kaduna. The ideas that emanated from the thematic coding of the data led to

some changes in terms of my initial assumptions and hypothesis regarding intercommunal conflicts in Kaduna. This initial assumption was based on my understanding of the conflicts as outcomes of six interrelated elements of the Social Cube including the psychosocial, history, economics, geography/demography, politics, and religion (Carter & Byrne, 2000; Byrne & Nadan, 2011). To be sure, participants identified these elements of the conflicts at various stages during the research. However, the nuances of the crisis of belonging penetrated through these factors and surfaced more clearly as participants were narrating their stories. I established greater meanings to the patterns, themes, and ideas of belonging and connected them to the existing literature in terms of how they modified, informed, or challenged the prevailing understanding of the conflicts between the Fulani and other ethnic groups in Kaduna.

Arguably, the methodology adopted for interpreting and analyzing the data for this research is not all-exhaustive. I could have benefited from using an ethnographic approach through a long-term stay and engagement in the field of research. However, because I am from the research locale and have lived through the experiences there, such an approach seemed unnecessary. Moreover, the security situation at the time also restricted an ethnographic exploration of the investigated issues. However, I returned to the research site from December 2018 to February 2019 to further witness happenings in the area and determine how things may have changed. I was also able to confirm and falsify some of the preliminary findings of the research. Indeed, some of the dynamics of the relationship of the conflicting groups changed in certain areas where stricter laws on cattle husbandry were implemented. For example, the Fulani has been banned from open grazing during the rainy season in one community in Anghan chieftdom.

The ban on open grazing in this community was a result of the elders' decision rather than a regulation of the state as in Benue, Ekiti, and Taraba states. It is interesting that some communities in Anghan land, which has been a beacon of strong solidarity among its populace and a prime example of positive contact activities, are also using punitive measures to address the incursions of Fulani cattle into the farmlands of other ethnic groups. Still, there has been no outbreak of conflicts in this area as a result of this ban.

In the final analysis, it should be borne in mind that critical or narrative research is never fully conclusive as it is open to a variety of interpretations by the public and the academy. As Ricoeur (1981) has argued, "the narrative that is fixed in a text is thus considered an 'open work' where the meaning is addressed to those who read and hear about it" (cited in Moen, 2006, p. 6). Academic research does not "end with the article, thesis, or book but continues as a dialogue that perpetuates itself beyond the text within the subject communities" (Tomaselli et al., 2008, p. 369). Thus, the overarching contribution of this research would depend on the type of debates and arguments, as well as the actions it will stir or provoke among the researched communities, the general public, government, international agencies, and scholars of PACS.

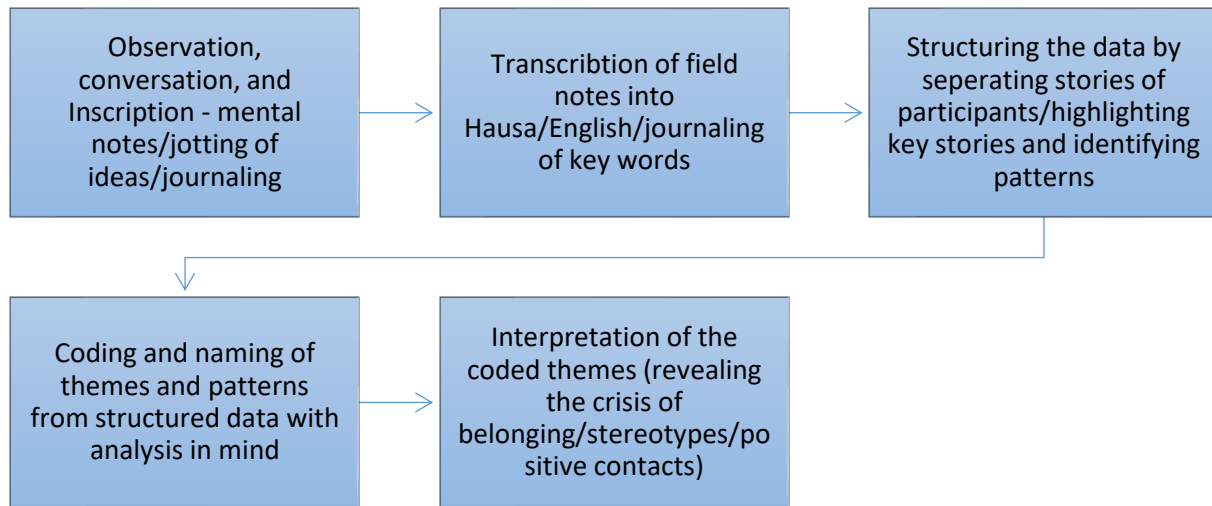


Figure 5: The Five Stages of Data Analysis and Interpretation

## Conclusion

This chapter detailed the methodological approaches and design for the research using critical qualitative and narrative inquiry methods. These methods underlined the need to understand reality from people's perspective. The chapter described the step-by-step procedures in which the stories and views of the people were gleaned. These procedures revealed some potential risks, benefits, as well as some positionality and ethical issues. Working with human subjects entails the ability to be careful not to exploit or harm them. At the same time, listening to people's stories must also be done with a view to scrutinizing such stories as products of subjective experience. I also identified the steps I have taken to engage, translate, analyze, and interpret data transcripts.

In addition, I enumerated various ways of ensuring the credibility of the data and participants' safety and confidentiality. Overall, participants were willing and passionate to engage in the research in anticipation of its potential benefit as a channel through which their stories will be enlivened and memorialized. This enthusiasm for the research facilitated their enlistment with minimum stress, enabling me to maximize quality time in the field. In the next chapter, I will turn to present the first empirical theme and findings that emerged from the research.

## **Chapter Five**

### **The Crisis of Belonging in Southern Kaduna**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter examines the theme of contested notions of belonging which emerged strongly from the people's stories and explorations of the sources of conflicts in their communities. Their narratives emphasize issues of elite instrumentalization of ethnoreligious identities, the clash of different economies and religions, contestations for limited land area and space, overpopulation, the complicity of state authorities and lack of urgency to protect civilians against atrocities, criminal profiteering, and the erosion of local peacebuilding initiatives due to conflicts and or state orthodoxy. For the most part, participants interpreted the foregoing factors based on claims and counterclaims belonging expressed through notions of indigeneity, autochthony, and nomadism.

#### **Narratives of Fulani Participants**

My conversation began with Numfa, a middle-aged government worker, who shares his experience of growing up in the Plateau and Kaduna states of the 1970s. In narrating his story, he had the following to say:

I met my parents there. We started whatever there until they started the indigenization policy, when [if] you are not an indigene, you are a settler. This kind of indigene-settler thing is the issue that is causing us problems. Government and influential people introduced it. And what has all these brought us? Nothing but conflicts...I have an indigeneship [certificate] of a

local government where I was before, but now it has been withdrawn because they say that I am a settler and I cannot benefit from there.

As stated in a previous section, the Nigerian constitution recognizes the notion of indigeneity to the extent that one of the criteria for citizenship status is to be born into a community in Nigeria prior to independence by at least one parent who is Indigenous to that community. However, there is no clear definition of the indigeneity concept in the Constitution or even a concrete and nationally applicable criteria of who can identify or be defined as such. As David Ehrhardt (2017) has discussed, “the Nigerian constitution gives indigeneship distributional significance and a hint of primordialism but fails to provide a definition of what makes an indigene” (p. 465).

Perhaps, the fluidity of the indigeneity concept in the Constitution explains why the basis for identifying or making indigeneity claims varies considerably among different communities in the country. This situation allows political elite and local leaders to “apply local informal norms of belonging that prioritize the rights of certain ‘native’ ethnic and religious groups over others” (Ehrhardt, 2017, 265). What is also peculiar in several parts of Nigeria is that groups that are often regarded as “settlers” or “strangers” in certain areas would have resided in such places for a long time (Adebanwi, 2009).

Thus, in Nigeria, as with several postcolonial countries, people mostly decide their status of belonging to a place through their processes of space- and place-making. This issue explains Numfa’s dismay and indignation over his alleged “settler” status in a place his family had resided for years; a place he also regards as his ancestral home. Given his consternation about his contested indigeneity status in southern Kaduna, I asked Numfa about his conception of home and he responds:

Home is where you live, where you grow and meet your parents. It is the place where your parents also met their own parents and grandparents. This means that they are the owners of the place in which they live. But then after some years, people will come and tell you that this land that you think is yours is no more your own

In general, when I say I am going home now, I am thinking of a place where I began my life. But to some extent, I have been displaced, somebody else has taken over and they say that place does not belong to me anymore because I am not an indigene of it. Because I can remember most of these places you are seeing, all these places, it was the Fulani that settled there first before others came.

The idea of who is the “first settler” or “first comer” at a given place is the overriding theme of the autochthony debate. Two participants claim that the Fulani were the first to settle and explore the uncharted territories of southern Kaduna. They claim it is due to the Fulani’s initial settlement in those territories that such places became habitable for other ethnic groups. However, this claim is difficult to establish. Conceivably, some Fulani communities may have extended the hitherto uninhabitable areas of certain villages in southern Kaduna through consistent grazing and farming routines.

Numfa also argues that “in the law of Nigeria it is said that wherever you have lived for ten years has automatically become yours”. Confident of the veracity of his assertion, he asks, “Why is it that we have people who have lived in a place for ten, fifty, and even hundred years yet it is said that they do not belong there? These are all the things that are bringing confusion”. His assumption is that indigeneity and, by extension, citizenship status are acquired simply by

one's birth and a ten-year residency in an area. However, Numfa's understanding of how indigeneity is attained in Nigeria is not recognized by the Constitution. The Constitution is conspicuously silent about the number of years a person will have to live in an area to become a citizen or indigene of that place.

Therefore, the indigeneity concept as contained in the Nigerian constitution is problematic on many levels; one of which is the basis of its inclusion in the Constitution and a lack of clarification of the concept. Besides, it is always going to be problematic defining indigeneity in postcolonial societies, taking into consideration the arbitrarily drawn borders, migratory and exploratory patterns, and routines of social connections and business exchanges among different groups in the continent.

Given the history of the jihad and Fulani conquests in parts of what is now northern Nigeria, the group is largely considered to be a "foreigner" by the minority ethnic groups. For most of these groups, their status of "peoples of the soil" in Kaduna is a foregone conclusion. For this reason, Numfa argues that it is not surprising that the Fulani are subjects of intense "othering" by many groups in Nigeria. He claims other groups consider "Fulani herdsmen" as modern-day terrorists in the mold of Boko Haram, the radical Islamist sect in the northeastern part of the country.

As he further explains, herding animals is not a preserve of the Fulani alone, even though they are more *au fait* with such activities than are other groups. This assumed or apparent adroitness of the Fulani herding capabilities owes to the groups' long-term attachment to cattle. Even so, Numfa admonishes people to not conflate the essence of the Fulani with pastoralism. He adds that the group should not be perceived as having a violent tendency simply because they may have a predilection for keeping and tending cattle.

Bello, an activist who grew up in southern Kaduna, shares how he has become a subject of “othering” by other ethnic communities due to his Fulani identity. He narrates two peculiar stories as follows:

I went to a community and somebody called my phone, and I answered. While I was speaking on the phone, I saw a mother and child standing by and the mother telling her child that this is a Fulani man. The child then asked her: how is it that the Fulani person has legs? So that is the story they are hearing. They assume that the Fulani might be an animal or something worse.

There is also a checkpoint in Makera [Kakuri] where a girl is selling avocados and I parked my car along the road, and she came. I was pricing the avocados with her, and my phone rang. As soon as I spoke my language [*Fulfude*] she threw away the avocados and ran away. She was stopped by the security men at the checkpoint who asked why she was running, and she responded that she had seen those who kill people. Later, I traced their house. Now, I do go to their house so that she will see I am not who she has perceived me to be. I have paid her school fees twice.

Bello specifically call on religious leaders to use their positions to tell people the truth and encourage their followers to be more magnanimous and embrace the dignity of other people. Most participants plead that people should reduce the vituperative attack on the personhood of the Fulani in order to attenuate some unfounded fears that have shrouded some people’s minds regarding the assumed cruelty of the group.

Salisu, an activist, narrates how the Godogodo crisis in 2016, in which some farmers allegedly attacked two Fulani boys, bolstered the suspicion and acrimony between the Fulani and

the minority ethnic communities. As his recollection of the incident goes, he had this to say on the issue:

Two Fulani children were passing by on a cattle track when they strayed into a farmer's land, and the farmer throttled one of the boys almost to the point of death. On seeing this, the other boy took a sword and struck the farmer. Bystanders called the Fulani leader in the village to intervene. But before then, young people from farming communities had killed the leader and the disturbances that ensued led to the death of more than 300 people and spread ripples to other parts of Kaduna state between 2016 and 2017.

Rather than attest to their sense of victimhood, other communities insist that incidents like the Godogodo crisis only reveal the vengefulness of the Fulani. However, Salisu claims the Fulani are not inherently violent unless they have been provoked or attacked. Several participants note that if a Fulani person has not been attacked or their animals killed, they would be less inclined to attack others. Daro, a businessman and politician, makes a similar contention stating:

The origin of Fulani men or our genesis or by genealogy, we are Jews. There is a limit to which a Jew can take. A Jew and a Fulani man [they] do not forgive wrongdoing committed against them no matter how many years it takes. And that is a known fact. The only thing, do not touch the person, do not cause [draw] first blood on the person or something of that nature. If you stop touching a Fulani man, he will not touch you.

Daro may also be accentuating the “othering” of the Fulani by suggesting that the group can hardly forgive a wrongdoing. Pate and Daudu (2009) seem to also ratify the argument of the

Fulani “vengefulness”, insisting that the Fulani in Adamawa, Nigeria, only resort to revenge attacks as a means of conflict resolution.

The above claim chimes in with the assertion of one participant, who insists the Fulani often resolves or at least tries to settle any issue they may have with other groups first before considering waging a violent response. However, Salisu clarifies that “revenge attacks” do not testify to the unforgiving temperament of the Fulani. His argument is that it is only when the group’s perceived sense of injustice is not redressed that they sometimes carry out reprisal attacks. He articulated that it is often in the context of such reprisal attacks that the Fulani is wrongfully perceived as an unforgiving group.

Shehu, a civil servant, states that “the Fulani does not invite violence. You will find good and bad people in any group. There are those among us that are very stubborn, but you do not despise them, you try and help them by doing good things to them”. Shehu, nonetheless, may be wrong to think that doing well to criminals would cure them of their propensity for violence. Bello has this to say on the general understanding of the violent personality of the Fulani in some parts of Nigeria:

Fulani is like a bee. When you touch them, anything can happen. But if you do not touch them, they will remain where they are. But it is very difficult for him to touch you first. If he touches you, follow it slowly, maybe something happened. There must be a reason for that. I have never seen a situation where a Fulani deliberately attacks other groups. Unless maybe he transfers aggression. If he has no way of finding a solution for something done to him, he may strike you.

While exonerating the Fulani, Bello equally indicts them for carrying out violence as a way of transferring aggression and avenging wrongdoing. In any case, it seems that at the heart of the crisis in Kaduna is the absence of the state as a sole possessor of superior power and a guarantor of security. Given that key representatives of government authorities in Nigeria are Fulani, the hegemony of the group is considered by other groups as informing the unwillingness and indecisiveness of their elite to contain crises involving the Fulani and other Nigerian ethnic communities.

At any rate, the impression of the violent nature of the Fulani prevails in various parts of Nigeria, leading to conclusions in some quarters that the “farmer-herder” categorization of intercommunal conflicts in some parts of Nigeria is a misnomer since the conflicts are necessarily instigated by “Fulani herdsman”. For most Fulani participants, the key issue is more about criminality than their actual involvements in conflicts with other ethnic groups.

Some participants argue that it is such wrongful accusations of the Fulani as a violent group and the repudiation of their indigeneity status that often irk and propel some of them into becoming provocateurs of conflicts. Thus, for Safiya, a female activist, the denial of indigeneity rights to Fulani by other ethnic minority groups is an integral cause of intercommunal conflicts in Kaduna. She noted in her story that “the Fulani people do not accept that the place they stay does not belong to them because they do not know any other place. Where they stay is where they were born, and where their parents and great grandparents were born”. Thus, according to her, it is wrong and presumptuous for some groups to claim “first comer” status and deny others the right to do so.

Safiya also stated that there are some disparities between the highly mobile Fulani (the *Bororos*) group in West Africa and the settled ones in Kaduna (the *Kachecheres*). One of the

disparities, she says, lies in the fact that the *Bororo* Fulani are still highly mobile and attached to their cattle while the *Kachecheres* are mostly settled and traced to specific locations. Conflicts, she claims, occur when other ethnic communities lump all the Fulani groups together and say they do not belong to the place where they have been staying.

Safiya's position is that the *Bororo* Fulani, who are constantly on the move and migrate into Nigeria from neighboring countries like Niger and Chad, can rightly be categorized as "strangers" or "foreigners". While she asserts that the *Kachechere* Fulani are indigenes because they have been in Nigeria prior to and after independence in 1960. Thus, she claims the *Kachechere* Fulani have legitimate rights—as indigenes and citizens—to live in Kaduna and anywhere else in Nigeria.

A few other participants, like Mahmud, a government official, described the *Bororo* Fulani in terms suggestive of the group's innate propensity for violence. He argues that they strike their victims at night and disappear before daybreak. Kurum is a young activist and community leader who also implicates the *Bororo* Fulani in his narrative regarding the onset of violence in Kaduna. He explains the issue in the following manner:

The *Bororos* are the ones having problems with the Farmers. They are the ones on the move. They can decide to strike a town and flee, and nobody will see them. But this one that is settled, why will he go and cause a commotion and come back and live here? It is not possible. People do not understand this, and many people will not believe it even if you explain it to them.

I know the Fulani in Ladduga. I promise you if they say they are going to revenge what they did to them in 2011 like the killing of their families and

all that, things will not be like this. But we sat down and told them that it is God that decides for things to be like this. So, let us leave this. Everything comes from God, and God will replenish you.

The understanding of some participants is that it would not make sense for the Fulani to attack those with whom they share the same neighbourhood. Attacking other communities in the same neighbourhood seems to them an act of foolishness since they could be traced back to their own homes and be attacked in return. Moreover, the idea of leaving everything in the hands of God” rings true for most participants. This idea of an ever-present and powerful God enables them to make meaning of their violent traumatic experiences in Kaduna.

Going further, Safiya, Kurum, and other participants explain their understanding of the nomadic identity of the Fulani. They argue that the Fulani consider land as a physical and spiritual gift from God. This conception suggests that land is both a material and immaterial entity. Consequently, they contend that the Fulani does not claim ownership of land because land belongs to God alone. Safiya explains this divine-nomadic disposition of the Fulani to land as follows: “if you go to a place where there are issues between Fulani and farmers, and the farmers are saying that this place belongs to them and that the Fulani should leave the place for them, Fulani people will ask: did you create this place? It is God that created this land and the world and keeps everyone where they are”. The implication of Safiya’s narrative is that because land is a gift from God, it cannot be the preserve of any group.

Kurum also asserts that the Fulani does not claim that the land on which they live or any land for that matter belongs to them. He explains the issue as follows:

The Fulani does not bother whether he belongs or not. As far as he lives with people peacefully, he does not bother about such distinction until other

people raise the issue. The exception is in our grazing reserve in Ladduga, because it is a grazing reserve and Fulani were put there, and the grazing reserve is carved out from Ikulu land.

You see, the Ikulu [Bakulu] people are thinking that it is their place that has been carved out and given to the Fulani without compensation. You see in that place, there are some Fulani who are saying that this place belongs to us. There are more than 30,000 Fulani in Ladduga. But even with this number, they have not had any serious conflicts with neighboring people.

Participants from other ethnic groups jettisoned the idea that Ladduga is exclusively a Fulani reserve area. They believe that the area remains a part of their jurisdiction. However, Kurum asserts that other ethnic groups and the Fulani could live together in Ladduga. He explains how this coexistence may happen in this way:

Truthfully, you know it is called a grazing reserve and any pastoralists can come in and stay. People can also farm in the area, and not just tend their cattle. People have been saying that if you enter Ladduga, you will be killed. But some people have understood that if you come to Ladduga, nothing will happen to you. People from Zonkwa, Sanga, and Samaru do come into Ladduga on market days and go back and nobody says anything to them. They also come to farm beans and because of this, maybe people can come and stay there, and they may be given a place to stay and nothing will happen to them.

Despite this assurance of the accommodative attitude of the Fulani people in Ladduga, several members of other ethnic communities consider the area a dangerous place to visit.

Another activist, Khalifa, insists that the Fulani never make exclusive claims to land because the land is not the property of anybody, but something God bestowed as a gift to humanity. This contention is in line with the understanding of Pate and Daudu (2009) who argue that the Fulani, especially those in Adamawa, are always willing to migrate to other parts of the state whenever they are threatened by conflicts. The authors explain that this tendency of the Fulani to move swiftly in crisis periods does not indicate weakness or fear but a reflection of the belief of the Fulani expressed in the tenet: *Lesdi Allah dundi* (God's land is aplenty) (Pate & Daudu, 2009). This belief means that the land is something the Fulani could always have access to anywhere they find themselves. Land is not a property worth dying for.

As we shall discuss later, other ethnic communities would argue against this cosmopolitan and divine disposition to land, contending that the idea that land—in this instance, the southern Kaduna precincts—belongs to everyone is baseless, mischievous, and nothing short of a Fulani grand scheme to dispossess autochthonous and settled groups of their ancestral homes.

Kurum reported that even though the Fulani person hardly makes land ownership claims, the group still has a strong sense of belonging to the places they live in southern Kaduna. He explains the Fulani's unique sense of belonging in the following manner:

For the Fulani, the idea of belonging to land is two-fold: first, the land belongs to God, and God gives everyone a place to stay. They also know that the place has been occupied by others before they came. In places like Kagoro, they believe that they started staying there with the Kagoro people. So, if you are going to say the land belongs to the Kagoro people you must

also say that it belongs to them. They have been there for more than 100 years, and so they feel that they belong to the place.

Some members of other ethnic groups accept Kurum's explanation that living in a place for a long time is a testament to the people's deep rootedness in and belonging to that place.

Other participants implicate their elite as the masterminds behind issues of land contestations and opposing dispositions to the geography of southern Kaduna. Idrisu, an elite himself, states that "we the elite from both sides of the divide create a lot of problems. The elite from the farming community will say "ah, no, these people are not from this area. They came and met you, they are aliens, they are not Nigerians; they are not from this country. But somebody who has been in the country since independence you are still calling him an alien?"

Salisu reiterates Idrisu's point, arguing that the scuffles between the Fulani and other ethnic groups over the issue of belonging in southern Kaduna are mostly instigated and sponsored by political actors from all sides. He was particularly critical of non-Muslim leaders who sponsor violence by mobilizing their members and followers to rise in arms and resist the incursions of Fulani foreigners into their land. However, this "blame-game" tactic is also reflected in other ethnic groups' idealizations of land.

Furthermore, while Idrisu and Numfa consider Indigenous status something that can be attained through ones' birth in a specific community and by virtue of one's citizenship rights in Nigeria, their conceptions of home differ significantly. Idrisu's conception of a home is more inclusive and metaphysical than Numfa's. His rendition is illustrated in the following manner:

Home is a place where I stay, I go out, I have a neighbor that is not the same with me, I do not speak the same language as them, I go to the market, I meet somebody different from me, that is from the other divide, whom I

have to understand, understand their culture, language, and religion, so that I can live in peace with them. The only place you call home is the one where you can make peace. Home is not where you are born. My home is where I can make peace with other people.

Idrisu's idea of "home" is suggestive of an emotional and social space of connection and activities with others (see Watson, 2019) rather than a physical structure or mere physical presence in and attachment to a place. Yet he shares that the perception of the Fulani as nomadic settlers continues to threaten the continued existence and "homemaking" processes of the group in Kaduna. According to most participants, it is partly as a result of the tensions that stem from their exclusion in the area that compelled many to migrate to Ladduga; a place they believe is their new God-given "home".

Daro explains this mass exodus of the Fulani to Ladduga, especially after the 2011 crisis, as a protective belt against targeted violence. He reported that what makes the Fulani the target of attacks in southern Kaduna is their assumed "foreignness" in the area. Conceived as foreigners, he believes other groups are bent on expunging the Fulani and denying them their citizenship and Indigenous rights. Additionally, Daro gives a divine spin to this narrative. He claims that "there's a divine issue in God that look, if these people must prosper, they must be like this. A lot of Fulani people died in the southern part of Kaduna in 2011. Nobody planned it. Maybe God wanted us to come back to Ladduga, and that is why we are now here".

Daro's divine disposition to land differs slightly from that of Safiya. Both believe in the divine mission of God to settle the Fulani at any place in any given time. However, while Safiya and a few others claim this settlement could happen in any environment, Daro believes there are

special places like Ladduga that God specifically designed for the Fulani as a bulwark against harrowing attacks and hate crime targeted at the group in Nigeria.

In conversations with other ethnic minority communities, none admitted to asking Fulani people to leave their communities. They surmise that the Fulani who fled to Ladduga in the wake of the 2011 crisis might have done so for fear of brutal reprisal attacks given the way some of them acted violently against other groups during the crisis. The narratives of these minority communities are presented in the next section.

### **Narratives of the Ethnic Minority Communities**

My first participant from these communities was Isa, a lecturer, and an activist. Isa has since lost his job due to his activism for the liberation of his community in Kaduna. He expresses strong convictions that the swift migration of some Fulani families from southern Kaduna communities to Ladduga on the heels of the 2011 crisis is simply part of the group's expansionist plan in Kaduna. He bitterly noted the following in his story:

If you do not know that they want to set up an [Islamic] emirate in Ladduga, then you have not yet gotten your information correct... [they have] already declared an area where they call an international grazing area. The grazing reserve is not for Fulani alone, but they are now saying that it belongs to them. Not only that, the grazing reserve is thirty-three thousand hectares. They have more than double it to 70 thousand hectares. Now, the governor wants to take over our land and make a grazing reserve. But much more than that if you want to talk about collaboration with people, why do you need to go and kill them?

Isa and other participants articulated that the history of Fulani jihad and the group's continued dominance in Nigeria's politics have emboldened their resolve to act with impunity against other ethnic groups who are repulsed by the alleged brutality of the Fulani. Yet while several participants are apprehensive of what they consider an imminent ploy by the Fulani elite to usurp Indigenous peoples' land, some were less agitated. For example, the paramount chief of one community had the following to say on the issue:

The ones we call our Fulani [the *Kachecheres*], some of them do not even know where their origin is. If you send them away from here; where do they go? That is why they can lay claim to the land because a lot of them were born and bred here. Their grandfathers that brought them here are no more, and some of them have even intermarried with the natives. So, for that reason, if they lay claim to the fact that this is also their land, they will not be wrong. If people have lived in an area for a certain number of years, beginning to look at them as strangers or visitors is wrong.

The chief acknowledges that the Fulani's birth and long residency in the area lend credence to their rights as Indigenous people of Kaduna. Some of the chief's subjects like Kalma equally accept the claims of Indigenous status of the Fulani in Kaduna. Kalma's disposition is based on his understanding that Fulani families who live in his community were born there and have coexisted with other groups in the area for many generations. Such understanding of having a shared indigeneity shows how people can engage in some form of space-making that includes "others" in their cosmology despite the views of hardliners in their communities.

However, some participants from Kalma's community clarify that not every member of these minority groups shares the peaceful and inclusive disposition to the land that they

experience with the Fulani in their community. These participants also accept that their harmonious relationship has also been hamstrung by violent insurrections in Kaduna, as well as the invasion of the *Bororo* Fulani in their communities. For example, despite his inclusive ideology, Kalma shares Safiya's contention that the *Bororo* Fulani are foreigners and troublemakers who intrude into their communities at night to attack innocent people while they sleep. Even so, he reckons that this group of Fulani could be incorporated into their communities if they are willing to observe their regulations.<sup>14</sup> Another young man, Casan, speculates on the possibility of foreign Fulani groups invading southern Kaduna communities. He claims that some are from Niger, some from Cameroon, and some from Mali. He adds that they are indistinguishable because they speak one dialect. Casan also states his desire for his group and the Fulani to flourish together as they did in the past.

Some participants consider both the *Kachechere* and *Bororo* Fulani as members of the same stock. They argue that even if they concede indigeneity status to them, they cannot be autochthonous people of southern Kaduna. Here is where the issue of autochthony is introduced as a higher form of belonging than indigeneity. In the context of rising tensions and violent conflicts, Isa shares how he questioned the indigeneity claims of some Fulani representatives at a community meeting in Kaduna. At that meeting, he raised the following questions and proffered responses as follows:

When does the Fulani man go to *Kudanchi* [southern Kaduna] for him to say that he is an indigene? They cannot claim to be indigenes because they said

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<sup>14</sup> In a study on "Farmer-Herder" conflicts in southwestern Nigeria, Roger Blench also depicts the *Bororo* Fulani as a naturally violent group. He argues that the group is usually armed with crude weapons like swords and machetes and is often disposed in using such weapons during conflicts with other communities. He also suggests that the understanding among people in southwestern Nigeria is that the *Bororo* Fulani are cruel and heartless people who not only kill, but also steal and destroy other people's crops by intentionally digging up root crops to feed their cattle (Blench, 2017). He attributes this "malicious attitude" to the group's grievance with the cultivation of cattle routes by farming communities who also consider such lands as theirs or as unclaimed territories (Blench, 2017).

they have been there long enough and they do not know where they came from, which is not true. All of them know where their forefathers came from. But I said I concede to them that they are indigenes, but are they autochthones to that place? The land bears the names of the group that occupies it. They are the autochthonous people of that land. Anybody else [there] is a comma, after them.

Isa shares that after he had broached the autochthony issue at the meeting, none of the Fulani questioned him any further. According to Isa, the claim that the Fulani are ignorant of their origin is false, outrageous, and deceptive. His conviction is that every group, regardless of where they live, knows its origin and cosmology.

Other participants equally question the Fulani's sense of belonging in southern Kaduna. Thus, Kajo, a young farmer and government worker, insists that "Fulani came here [to southern Kaduna] as visitors...and conducted themselves with respect and integrity. When we saw this, we thought we should just accept them as part of us. Then over time, they started going into people's farms and doing things they were not supposed to do. And if they are reprimanded, they would say that they too have rights because they are also Nigerians". Kajo and some other participants recognized that the encroachments of Fulani cattle on farmlands belonging to other ethnic groups are deliberate; done with the intention to impose Fulani presence and hegemony in the area by destroying the means of livelihoods of these minority communities. He claims that it is such attitudes that make his community to label the Fulani as "foreign invaders" even if they were initially welcomed and accepted into the area as visitors.

Others insist and allude to the history of the jihad and British colonialism as salutary reminders of the expansionist ambition of the Hausa and Fulani groups. Thus, Garba,

emphasized the need to delineate the boundaries between indigenes and settlers in southern Kaduna. He claims the ethnic minority groups are the true indigenes of southern Kaduna, to whom the land rightly belongs. He argues that it is the Indigenous people that provided land to the Fulani to use when the Fulani first settled in their communities.

Garba's contention is that due to their accommodating nature, the Indigenous groups have never sold land or forcefully taken away the land that their ancestors had bequeathed or leased to the Fulani. He claims that the problems they are having with the Fulani stem from the fact that the Fulani have been trying to expand the areas they were previously given to settle in. The people consider such alleged expansionist tendency of the Fulani as threatening to their own sense of autonomy and socioeconomic development. This problem is not unrelated to the issue of population boom and inheritance among southern Kaduna groups, as a result of which many of these groups are reclaiming land they had initially willed to the Fulani. Others are unilaterally farming on routes that were initially designated for Fulani pastoralists because they believe such routes were theirs in the first place. However, the fact that several members of these minority groups live in urban centres also questions whether the much-cited population boom constitutes a strong factor in the conflicts between them and the Fulani.

In general, while some participants aver that they can concede indigeneity status to the Fulani because of the stipulations of the Constitution or the group's "ignorance" of its origin, they insist the Fulani cannot claim autochthonous rights in southern Kaduna. These participants specifically use the autochthony trope to underline their strong connection to the land as "peoples of the soil" or "first comers".

Isa noted that longevity in a place does not bestow indigeneity or autochthony status on an individual. If this were so, he thinks it would also be possible and quite fitting for his own

people to insist on their indigeneity rights in predominantly Muslim or Hausa states in Nigeria. Many of them were born in these states and had resided there in the past. Yet, for him, the discrimination and denial of Indigenous rights to his group in such places is quite telling of the fact that no group can claim indigeneity rights anywhere in Nigeria.

Here is how Lucas, an activist, and a teacher, sees the situation in relation to his own experience in Borno state:

I was born in Maiduguri, in Biu particularly. They gave me a settler certificate there. That I was a settler. Now in southern Kaduna even though we do not have that, but we have what they call settler rights. You have the rights to carry on with your activity or business without fear, without any fear or favor, nobody disturbs you.

But the ancestral land belongs to the southern Kaduna people. Most times when these people come, they beg for a place to settle. Most of them were nomadic. When they go, they bring their brothers, and over time some of them settle. Most of them are claiming that they have indigene certificates and they are claiming Kaduna state, even though we do not discuss that issue.

Lucas' disenchantment stems from his alleged denial of indigeneship rights in a predominantly Muslim state in Nigeria. He feels indignant that the same group that had denied him Indigenous right in his state of birth are posing as indigenes in his own community. He clarifies that even though his community accepts other people as indigenes, it is important to emphasize his groups' position in the area as the ancestral people who own the land and have rights to dictate how it should be used or distributed.

Like Lucas, Isa describes the way members of other ethnic groups are treated in some Hausa and Fulani dominated states in Nigeria. He exclaims to his chagrin that “no Kataf [Atyap] man can go to Hausa land and say land belongs to anybody. You cannot try it. Go to Sokoto, go to Kano, go to Jigawa, and say you are claiming land because it belongs to everybody. But they feel they can come here and claim your land”. Thus, for people like Isa, the Nigerian Constitution may bestow citizenship and indigeneity rights on groups that were in the country prior to independence, and the Constitution may even abolish such concepts; however, it is the people who actually determine who can express and enjoy such rights through their own processes of place- and space-making.

In the context of the crisis of belonging in southern Kaduna, placemaking refers to the actual apportioning of land space for agriculture or other purposes. Space-making is the spiritual understanding of the group’s relationship to each other, as well as their deeper connection to their past and ancestral lineage. It is partly due to this understanding of space that Isa and a few others articulated that true belonging in southern Kaduna is not attained by the accident of birth, residency in an area, and Constitutional stipulations, but through an ancestral connection to the land. In this sense, allocating land to people does not automatically make such people Indigenous to the land unless they share in the deep ancestral connection to the land as “first comers”, as well as relate with the cosmology of the people living in that area.

Moreover, most participants were unanimous in their assertion that the historical amity that had characterized their relationship with the Fulani in the past has been stymied by the bifurcated and partisan nature of ethnonational politics and conflicts in Nigeria. They argue that these events are relics of the jihad, British colonialism, Nigeria’s return to democratic rule, and the attendant moves for the introduction of the Sharia law in some northern states. The impacts

of these events in the socioeconomic and political lives of the people have prompted some to conclude that the Fulani aristocrats in Nigeria are nurturing a grand political scheme to take over the land of the minority groups in order to perpetuate and maintain their stranglehold in the region.

Gado, a social activist, even dispels any notion of a “farmer-herder” crisis occurring as a result of migration or land scarcity. His contention is that Fulani armed men kill innocent people not because herdsmen were grazing or that they were attacked by farmers but because these killings are “part of the Fulani bigger plan to come in and take over the land and establish their camps”. Thus, Lucas argues that the label “farmer-herder” conflicts is a misnomer since the conflicts are necessarily instigated by Fulani vitriolic violence. Lucas noted that the notion of “farmer-herder” crisis as used in scholarly literature and everyday parlance obscures the truth of the reality it purports to represent. As he sees it:

We have herdsmen that most of the time come in the nick of time to slaughter people even if they were sleeping. So, we see it as an attempt to wipe away the entire race of southern Kaduna people. We rather use the word ‘pogrom’. We see it as a genocidal attempt against the southern Kaduna people.

Lucas is one of three participants who directly used the concept of genocide in describing the violence waged by “Fulani assailants” in Kaduna. By employing this terminology, they are internationalizing the horrors and traumas arising from the violence they experience. In so doing, they are appealing to the conscience of the global community to condemn such atrocities or, at the very least, acknowledge their victimhood.

Such claims of genocidal violence continue to gain traction in the context of the groups' consternation about what they think is a lackluster response by the government towards the killings and rampages in their communities. The government's slow or (non) response to the crisis continues to solidify the suspicion of the groups that the Nigerian state is orchestrating the expansionist and genocidal mission of the Fulani.

What then do these competing narratives of belonging teach us about intercommunal conflicts, citizenship, nationhood, and peacebuilding in Kaduna? It is also pertinent to explore whether the Indigenous, autochthonous, and nomadic forms of belonging are relevant for the groups' continued cohabitation and survival in Kaduna and, broadly, in Nigeria.

### **Key Findings**

Adam Kuper (2003) has argued that groups' claims to Indigenous or autochthonous forms of belonging are obsolete anthropological notions with no ethnographic basis. He claims such notions only promote essentialist ideas about culture and identity with dangerous political consequences. Both autochthonous and Indigenous claims to belonging also seem problematic in the African context. They are problematic because the African society is characterized by historical patterns of migration and shifting boundaries, urbanization, resettlements, inclusivity, permeability, religious conversions, intermarriages, assimilation, wars, and conquests (Bøås & Dunn, 2013; Pelican, 2009; Pelican, 2015a).

In addition, claims of Indigenous or autochthonous belonging are more complex in Africa because "societies tend to reproduce themselves at their internal frontiers, thus continuously creating and re-creating a dichotomy between original inhabitants and latecomers along which political prerogatives are negotiated" (Kopytoff, 1987 cited in Pelican, 2015a, p. 139). Pelican

argues that the indigeneity issue applies differently to African groups than those in the Americas and the Pacific. Indigenous identities in the Americas and the Pacific “have a much longer and more tangible history, and indigeneity has also been a source of shared meaning and belonging” (2015a, p. 147). Within the African context, however, there can hardly be any certainty or “dead certainty” (Appadurai, 1998) regarding the identity of those who claim authentic belonging to a place.

Therefore, it seems quite difficult to clearly distinguish between “first comers” and “settlers” in Africa as suggested or implied by the universal understanding of indigeneity (Pelican, 2015a). Does it then mean the notions of Indigenous, nomadic, and autochthonous belonging pale into insignificance in the modern democratic state order and its “liberal nostrums like free trade” (Ferguson, 2006) and multiparty elections in Africa? Can we learn something regarding the nature of intercommunal conflicts and state formation in postcolonial Africa through the prism of the crisis of belonging in Kaduna?

There are some important lessons to glean from the above empirical notes regarding the purposes that the notions of belonging serve for the people of Kaduna. First, the minority ethnic communities consider themselves Indigenous and autochthonous groups of southern Kaduna at the same time. They are Indigenous because they were physically born there, and autochthonous because they imagine the space in which they were born as their ancestral homeland. This spatial imagination denotes their relationship with each other, their forbears, and the land. In other words, they are the “aborigines” or “first comers” in the area. Unlike the Fulani, the ethnic minority groups do not allude to the Constitution in claiming a sense of rootedness in Kaduna.

For most of these minority groups, their indigeneity status in southern Kaduna is an indubitable fact. Although they claim Indigenous rights, they find the indigeneity concept too

broad, empty, and restrictive. Thus, some insist that “autochthony” best explains their rootedness, stability, relationship, and identification to the precincts of southern Kaduna. Thus, by implication and their own reckoning, the identity of the ethnic minority groups can best be couched or described as Indigenous-autochthones. This seeming two-pronged identity suggests a connection to both a physical place and an immaterial space of ancestral lineage. As Indigenous-autochthones, many deem the Fulani group nomadic-settlers, foreigners, or at best, settler-indigenes.

Given the foregoing idealization of belonging, it is fitting to infer that it is not the Nigerian constitution or state authorities that determine the application and relevance of the Indigenous or autochthonous status on people, rather, the people do so themselves. Thus, the abrogation of the indigeneity principle in Kaduna by the governor means very little in the workaday lives of the people. Although the state could allocate and apportion land to any group because of their citizenship status, the true legitimacy of such groups as landowners or as Indigenous and autochthonous peoples subsists in the processes of how they idealize their sense of space in terms of recognizing each other as equal partners and cohabitants of the land.

While some groups in Kaduna included the Fulani in their understanding of place because of their birth and residency in the area, they contend that the Fulani cannot be autochthones even if the Nigerian constitution grants them citizenship and Indigenous rights in the area. Thus, it appears the autochthonous claim for “dead certainty” makes more sense to the ethnic minority communities because it explains their sense of organic rootedness to a land in which, to them, their ancestors bear origin.

Second, the Fulani defines its indigeneity in southern Kaduna in connection to its citizenship rights in Nigeria. The group first appeals to a national form of belonging in that its

citizenship status gives its members rights as Indigenous peoples; and as Indigenous people, they can claim local rights of belonging in any part of Nigeria. Moreover, because the Constitution does not explain how the right of indigeneity can be acquired or conferred on a person, the implicit assumption is that all local communities that were present in Nigeria prior to independence and remain in the country afterwards are all indigenes. The exception, of course, is the white European settlers (Adebanwi, 2009).

Admittedly, some Fulani groups were domiciled in Nigeria prior to independence given the history of conquests, Islamic proselytization, and trade. The Nigerian constitution stipulates that these Fulani people, like other communities in Nigeria, are citizens and indigenes at the same time. More Fulani groups from various parts of West Africa migrated to Nigeria after 1960 and may have taken on Nigerian citizenship by swearing the oath of allegiance to the state.

Conceivably, some of these Fulani groups settled in Nigeria and other countries due to the problematic nature of African borders and the ethnoreligious affiliation they share with members of their group in these countries, as well as their needs for greener pastures and markets to sell their cattle. The citizenship status of these Fulani migrants is often called into question in various parts of West Africa, and they are sometimes forced to present proof of residency or citizenship given the arbitrary way African borders were created and imposed. These borders have separated consanguineous groups in various parts of the continent. The fatal mistake of the postcolonial African state was its failure to decolonize these borders. As a result, the activities of many groups divided by these borders are riddled with territorial anxiety and confusion.

Therefore, it seems appropriate to ask whether the notion of indigeneity and autochthony are relevant for African communities given this problematic of flexible borders, blood relations, history of conquests, and their communitarian proclivity. It is, of course, arguable whether this

communitarianism that is often considered the substratum of African personhood still holds sway in the context of economic degeneration and political grandstanding in contemporary African societies. Therefore, it appears that these exclusionary notions of belonging seem conflictual and problematic for the quest for true citizenship and national consciousness in Nigeria. So conceived, would a cosmopolitan idea of belonging be a more useful philosophy for nation-building in Nigeria?

The third finding partly responds to the above question. Some Fulani groups proffer the notion of nomadic or cosmopolitan indigeneity as a way of challenging the border and citizenship crisis in Nigeria. They are nomadic-indigenes because they idealize land as a free God-given resource to be used by all groups in time and space. This form of belonging is related to what Wale Adebani (2009) regards as “a sense of identification with and a devotion to, concrete and ‘inviolable’ communal spatial boundaries, assumed to have been granted and guaranteed by Providence from time immemorial” (p. 357-8). On this cosmopolitan basis, the Fulani is an indigene in a community in Nigeria as well as a citizen of the world. To accept this nomadic-cosmopolitan form of belonging is to apportion indigeneity rights not just to the so-called *Kachechere* Fulani that lives in southern Kaduna but also to the highly mobile *Bororo* Fulani who most participants regard as the true “foreigner” and “troublemaker”.

By virtue of its resonance with the concept of cosmopolitanism, the idea of nomadic-indigeneity raises serious issues for thinking about belonging for different ethnic groups in a context like southern Kaduna and in pluralistic societies generally. Since the Fulani consider land a free resource for all, which no group can exclusively own or claim, it implies that the group could live and do business wherever they please. This kind of universal and inclusive

idealization of land could form the ideological basis of domination by one group over others. This idealization can also be a subtle ideology undergirding wars of conquests.

Perhaps, it is this cosmopolitan idea of indigeneity that propelled the jihad of Dan Fodio in parts of what is now northern Nigeria. The act of conquering people and enforcing upon them different cultures is one of the net effects of the nomadic-cosmopolitan indigeneity. Besides the injustices it reeks of, the cosmopolitan idea of indigeneity in Nigeria is also loosely based on ethnicity. The idea flies in the face of the “original” understanding of cosmopolitanism as the fusion or coming together of different peoples to form an egalitarian society.

Yet, to several participants, it seems that this cosmopolitan idea of belonging could hold the key for a shared understanding of nationhood and citizenship not only in Nigeria, but in Africa as a whole. Most people think that if they can move around freely without the appendages of indigeneship identities, they may be at liberty to actualize their potentials as individuals and communities with their full rights and autonomy intact. In so doing, their identity as citizens would supersede any claims of indigenous or autochthonous belonging.

However, a fourth finding reveals that for the minority ethnic groups, it makes no sense for groups like the Fulani to claim a divine or cosmopolitan connection to the land. Otherwise, they wonder whether the group could also go anywhere in the world, or even within Nigeria, to lay claims to other people’s land simply because God created land for the benefit of humankind. According to them, saying that land belongs to everyone because God made it so, is already a dangerous ideology which challenges and questions their ancestral and autonomous rights.

Yet even for these ethnic minority groups, their own Indigenous-autochthonous status could be challenged on a broader scale. Perhaps an exploration of their oral tradition including

their myths and legends may gesture at ideas of the groups' mobility and even point to the rationale of their settlement in the area that is today known as southern Kaduna.

Kachi, a participant from one of the ethnic minority groups, admits that even within his own small community there are stiff contestations among the people in determining what family settled in the area first; i.e., who has more landownership rights. He shares the history of his group settlement in the area they now live in, and how a family within the village has arrogated to themselves the "first comer" status. He claims the family has been using this purported status to make land laws and regulations in the community, including selling land to outsiders. Kachi argues that this contestation regarding the identity of the true first comers in his community is absurd due to their ethnoreligious and possibly, ancestral, connections.

The fact that such contestations over land could happen in a context where there are minimal ethnic and religious differences is revealing of intragroup discords in southern Kaduna. The intragroup dynamic of the southern Kaduna conflicts goes to show that even if the common enemy were non-existent and the Fulani were to relocate to Ladduga or to some other parts of the country, it would not resolve the issue of land contestations among the ethnic minority groups. New enemies would sprout in the absence of the Fulani. The same caveat also applies to the Fulani treatment of other ethnic communities.

Therefore, the only way we could make sense of the agitations and contestations of the different groups in Kaduna is by analyzing such issues as responses and reactions to power disparities within a disheveled postcolonial state structure. More than that, the contestations speak to a certain degree of uncertainty and nervousness. As Jackson has observed, the "autochthony discourse is also endemically nervous because many of those deploying it suffer the nagging fear that they could suddenly find themselves its objects" (2006, p. 115).

Thus, the fifth finding of this chapter is that the minority ethnic groups seem nervous afraid of fading into oblivion or obscurity and be reduced or treated as nonentities and second-rate citizens with no autonomous rights in their only jurisdiction. They appear threatened by the nomadic-indigeneity status of the Fulani because it challenges their autonomy and reduces them to what Chigbo Anyaduba (2016) calls “internal diasporas” or “internal foreigners”.

For Anyaduba, internal diasporas are not merely groups that settled among powerful hosts who are constantly fantasizing with the idea of a homeland where they belong and to which they yearn to return. These “internal diasporas” are groups who have lost autonomy of their space and governance due to the invasion of powerful and more dominant groups into their space. In the context of continued domination by the Fulani political class, the conquered groups, particularly the ethnic minority groups of the Middle Belt, yearn to return to their homeland. In this sense, the homeland signifies both a physical place in the strict sense of the term, as well as a mental journey to a period in history in which the groups were autonomous and in charge of governing their local affairs.

To some degree, then, it is arguable that the autochthonous and Indigenous notions of belonging of the ethnic minority groups are reactions to or responses against their treatment as internal diasporas in areas they consider their homelands. In the main, the issues of internal diasporas or internal foreigners are deep reflections of the problem of decolonization in several African states where territories that were imposed by the Europeans and pre-colonial conquerors were not decolonized. These colonially imposed territories have constituted a serious impediment to the development of a sense of national belonging among different communities in Africa’s postcolony.

Sixth, there is also the corresponding nervousness of the Fulani. The group constantly feels the need to reassert its socioeconomic and political relevance by making recourse to its history of dominance in the region. Moses Ochonu (2014) captures this nervousness of the Middle Belt's communities and the Fulani, and argues, with respect to the Fulani, thus:

Hausa-Fulani elites invoke colonial anthropological evidence that dramatizes Middle Belt cultural 'backwardness' and Hausa-Fulani civilizational influence on peoples of the Middle Belt. In the ensuing debate, Hausa-Fulani communities in the Middle Belt posit the dominant political and economic position of caliphate subcolonials in Middle Belt colonial societies as a basis for postcolonial political claims and as an anchor for laying claims to the patrimony of some Middle Belt constituencies (cited in Maiangwa, 2017, pp. 286-287).

This assertion indicates how chosen historical stories of bravery and conquest can serve as bases for understanding contemporary struggles over rights and entitlements in the postcolonial state (see Volkan, 1997). In this case, the Fulani look back on their dominance as proof of their rootedness in and political control of northern Nigeria, and the entire country. Thus, there are serious political undertones to the crisis of belonging in Nigeria, and elsewhere in Africa.

Therefore, the seventh finding of the chapter is that these competing perceptions of belonging are stirred by ethnic or even political entrepreneurs during political violence. They are also stirred in situations where people feel a sense of mistreatment or subversion by more dominant or hostile groups. Those who stir these contestations over rights of belonging do so to achieve some political and economic gains or to defend their groups' honor and pride.

There are also criminal elements and hardliners among communities that enjoy the patronage and support of their elite in carrying out violence against perceived strangers for purposes of defending their homeland, pride, or gaining some decisive advantage over the persecuted groups. Although in some cases, these hardliners also enjoy the sympathy and tacit support of their larger community members. In reference to the role of the elite, one may also point to the relationship between elders versus youth. In some cases, violent conflicts can arise when elders put youth in situations where conflict is predictable.

In general, while it may appear that the indigeneity and autochthony notions are baseless in Africa due to its history of migration and conquests, the discriminatory policies they evoke, and the emptiness of these terminologies, the concepts seem to provide a sense of meaning for the people of Kaduna. This sense of meaning is more prominent in the context of fear and paranoia during horrific crimes and conflicts (Jackson, 2006). The concepts do not provide the kind of meaning that fosters healing, development or social cohesion. Rather, the concepts evoke a sort of “meaning” that helps to cope with danger and difficulties in the short run, and still leave people with deep feelings of emptiness and hopelessness as they contend with longstanding issues of imbalanced state formation and power discrepancies. These competing notions of belonging also facilitate and exacerbate the processes of “ethnic othering” in terms of out-group demonization and condemnation, the dynamics of which is discussed below.

Given their large representation in government and the history of the Fulani jihad in the area, the minority groups of the Middle Belt fear the Fulani as reputedly violent invaders and jihadists. This fear becomes palpable in situations of ethnoreligious conflicts where the Fulani, seen largely to be Muslims and strangers, are thought of as acting with impunity against defenseless civilians of other ethnic and religious extractions.

The “othering” of the Fulani as strangers does not imply that the group is not known or seen before. For as Kwame Gyekye (1997) has observed, the “stranger...is the person who does not belong to your own ethnic group, whether you know him or not” (p. 91). The stranger identity of the Fulani serves the liberation interest of the other ethnic minority groups and possibly explains why the othering of the Fulani occurs in the context of the crisis of belonging in Kaduna. The Fulani are considered outside invaders and feared because their political elite dominate the state in Kaduna and the Federal government.

This invocation of an “othering” discourse and sentiments against the Fulani does not imply that the ethnic minority groups are not justified in pursuing their sociopolitical and economic aspirations. To be sure, these groups have legitimate concerns of historical subjugation under the longstanding Islamic emirate system. They have also struggled over the years to attain a level of independence on an equal parity with the Hausa and Fulani groups. Thus, it is within their rights to express their discontents with what they perceive as continued subjugation of their groups in a new democratic era that has failed to decentralize power and elevate their status and rights as minority groups.

Another issue regarding the othering of the Fulani has do with the progressive and traditionalist distinction of the group which was entrenched by British colonialism. The progressive groups, as imagined during the colonial time, and even in contemporary Nigeria, were the urban Fulani, the jihadist conquerors, and Islamic evangelists. The traditionalists were imagined as the rural Fulani who were ostensibly oblivious to the demands of modern society, choosing a perpetual antiquated nomadic lifestyle.

The urban-rural dichotomy of the Fulani has contributed in some quarters in Nigeria and elsewhere in West Africa to nurturing the belief that the Fulani who live in rural areas are

uncivilized “bush” people. However, because there are more than 18 million Fulani across West and Central Africa who are a very diverse population (Boutrais, 1994), the city-bush dichotomy of the Fulani is an oversimplification and misrepresentation of the group. For example, there are Fulani people who live in cities in parts of northern Nigeria and are not integrated into Hausa culture, despite being fluent in the Hausa language. There are also those who live in rural communities and speak fluent *Fulfude* and Hausa. This group also engages in farming, pastoralism, and a medley of other occupations in the military, institutions of learning, transportation, healthcare, and the civil service.

Further, while most participants maintain the *Kachechere* and *Bororo* distinction of the Fulani in Kaduna, some Fulani participants insist the group could well be of twenty or more categories. There are many internal differences within the pastoralists and between pastoralists and settled *Fulbe*. There are also many clans and sub-clans among the Fulani. For example, one participant notes that there are about 15 different categories of the *Kachechere* Fulani in Kaduna, and then there are Katsinawa, Zamfarawa, and so on.

Nevertheless, others maintain the strict *Kachechere-Bororo* distinction of the Fulani in order to exonerate the former and condemn the latter group. This act of dichotomizing a group on the essentialized basis of “good” and “evil” is symptomatic of the nature of inter- and intra-group “othering” in Nigeria. Although the progressive/backward label is inaccurate in the context of sociocultural evolution occurring among many social groups in Nigeria, some people still draw on this distinction to underscore what they regard as the primitiveness and volatility of “rural and uncivilized Fulani herdsmen”. Thus, Moritz (2006) argues that it would be an oversimplification to draw a clear-cut binary between agriculture and nomadism as two distinct vocations. He states that many Fulani people are farmers, herd owners or hired herders. In the

same vein, some members of other ethnic groups in West Africa practice farming and keep livestock.

Most of these groups also engage in numerous occupations in rural and urban centres. Besides, the groups have had a system of land sharing for many years in accordance with the changing seasons and the expectations surrounding their social relations (Dafinger & Pelican, 2006; Moritz, 2006; Bukari, 2016). This relationship depends on how they can distribute economic resources, integrate into the social life of each other, and whether they have the requisite local frameworks for resolving their differences (Tonah, 2006, Bukari, 2016).

Still, most public and scholarly discourses strictly typecast the Fulani in northern Nigeria as pastoralists, and other ethnic communities as farmers. This trending perception of the Fulani sometimes justifies claims about the group as mobile communities with no land ownership rights, while other ethnic communities are portrayed as settled and *bonafide* people of the soil (Nyamnjoh, 2013). Moreover, the stereotyping of the different groups in Kaduna as either “farmers” or “herders” create the impression that one group is a perpetrator of violence (mobile pastoral group) and the other is constructed as a victim (settled farmers).

The “farmer-herder” binary also obscures some of the dynamics of communal conflicts in southern Kaduna. A personal experience is instructive in this regard. The incident entails an attack on a Fulani family in a community in southern Kaduna while I was in the field during the summer of 2016. According to the testimony of the assailed family and based on my observation, the victims and perpetrators in this incident were all Fulani. In the wake of the incident, the attackers invaded a Fulani household in order to steal from the family and, in the process, killed one of the men in the house. Consequently, most of the victim’s family fled to Ladduga.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Based on his experience of living with Mbororo Fulani in Cameroon, Francis Nyamnjoh argues that the Fulani hardly remain at a place in which they had experienced some form of tragedy, like a family loss. He claims that they

This incident, which could be economically driven or one that occurred as an expression of a seething grudge, reveals the nature of in-group victimization in Kaduna. This kind of intragroup attack, which has criminal undertones, does not fit the dualistic familiar mold of “farmer-herder” conflicts and calls for a more nuanced and objective representation of such conflicts. At best, the incident is illustrative of a “Fulani-Fulani” or “herder-herder” conflicts. However, because the conflicts are not often about cattle, and the groups do not identify strictly as “herders”, the “herder-herder” dichotomy could be misleading as well. Bukari (2016) explains this “herder-herder” conflicts in Kenya among the Maasai, Turkana, and Pokot people.

The Fulani and other ethnic minority groups in Kaduna are not monolithic entities who are ineluctably locked into dysfunctional conflicts with each other. It would also be a grave error to use their cultural or religious identity as a broad stroke in describing the role that certain members of these groups play in conflict with others.

At this point, it bears highlighting Waller’s (2007) contention that the reductionist tendency of seeing all members of a group as exhibiting a singular trait is an act of “out-group homogenization”. Moreover, Siniša Malešević (2010) states that the “strategy of attributing individual character traits to large ethnic and national groups while also psychologizing them in the process is a sign of an extremely feeble analysis” (p. 182). Such an analysis could also be a fundamental attribution error.<sup>16</sup> It is highly unlikely for people within the same community to have similar personality traits (Malešević, 2010).

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do so to avoid any ill omen that such calamity may bring upon them since they hold strongly the idea of “luck” in their cosmology (Nyamnjoh, 2013). This reality was not prominent during my field research with the Fulani in Nigeria. This idea could shed light on the rapid way in which the Fulani migrated to the reserve area in Ladduga after the 2011 crisis in which they lost many of their members to the crisis. Many also migrated to the reserve area out of fear of impending attacks given the role that some of their members played in the crisis. Yet the fact that many of them stayed back may be telling of their cordiality with others or sense of rootedness in southern Kaduna.<sup>16</sup> The concept of “fundamental attribution error” was couched by the social psychologist, Lee Ross, to explain the general tendency of the psychologist to “overestimate the importance of personal or dispositional factors relative to environmental influences” (1977, p. 184). According to Ross (1977), this tendency makes the psychologist jump to

People are not reducible to the mere expressions or traits of their cultures (Pouligny et al., 2007). That is, “to ‘know’ a culture is not to be able to predict each and every act of each and every member of a group” (Avruch & Black, 2001, p. 7). As Edward Said (1994) avers, “no one today is purely one thing: labels like Indian, or woman, or Muslim, or American are not more than starting points, which if followed into actual experience for only a moment are quickly left behind” (p. 336). Thus, “farmer-herder conflicts”, as portrayed in everyday discourses and the media in Nigeria, are not strictly between two different ethnic or religious groups. The conflicts are between different ethnolinguistic and religious communities who are also internally diverse and distinct in terms of their political ideologies, occupations, and lifestyles.

Another point worth investigating is the notion that all Fulani people are Muslims. This notion is widely held in many parts of West Africa due to the Fulani jihadist legacy in parts of the region. The notion that all or most Fulani and Hausa people are Muslims often leads to the fallacious conflation of the two groups as one entity. This conflation has engendered the problematic moniker or appellation of “Hausa-Fulani”. Some Fulani participants dismiss this designation, claiming that the two groups—Hausa and Fulani—are distinct in terms of their ethnicity and lifestyle. Bello weighs in on the issue in the following manner:

The mistake that people make is that because the Fulani is a Muslim and the Hausa man is a Muslim, then they will combine them. What you can tell me that will make me angry is to call me a Hausa-Fulani. I cannot take this.

Unless those that have settled with the Hausa people and have forgotten

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“hasty conclusions upon witnessing the behavior of his peers, overlooking the impact of relevant environmental forces and constraints” (p. 184). The Sage Glossary of the Social and Behavioral Sciences defines fundamental attribution error as “the tendency to overemphasize dispositional, or personality-based, explanations for behaviors observed in others while underemphasizing the role and power of situational influences” (Sullivan, 2009, p. 213). The concept is used in this research to describe the tendency by individuals within an in-group to attribute certain monolithic and stereotypical qualities to members of an out-group based on the latter’s perceived homogeneity.

about the Fulani culture. But we, as long as we are Fulani, cannot take that.

It is intimidation. You are demeaning us.

The Fulani participants argue that those who try to connect them to the Hausas only do so at opportune moments like during elections. In such periods, presenting the Fulani and Hausa people as a single entity is often a ploy used by political entrepreneurs to have a numerical edge over other communities. Still, there are Fulani people who have fully integrated into Hausa land since the jihad, and some have lost their cultural features and sensibilities. There is an additional key assumption that as Muslims, Fulani people are supporters or part of Boko Haram fighters. The facts would appear more that there are Fulani that are members or at least supporters of Boko Haram just as there are Hausa, Kanuri, Egbira, Egon, and so on.

Moreover, it is also important to look at the distribution of intercommunal violence and how it relates to local histories and drivers of conflicts across Nigeria, including southern Kaduna. Like other areas in northern Nigeria, southern Kaduna is beset by a myriad of debilitating socioeconomic, governance, and environmental issues. Some of these issues include the general incompetence and ineffectiveness of the state to rein in excesses of sectarian violence; the parochial interests of the local and political elite; and the decline in customary governance and conflict resolution mechanisms.

Within the foregoing context, political elite across different ethnoreligious divides would mobilize their group members to demonize or attack others through hate speech and inflamed preaching and teachings at places of worship and community gatherings. Besides, management of the conflicts is deeply politicized in a context where politicians are stained by ethnic chauvinism and religious fundamentalism and use the situation to feather their political nests. Given the ethnoreligious dynamism of Kaduna, the mobilization of identities and ethnoreligious

sentiments can easily provoke a backlash of violence and reprisal attacks as the 2011 post-election incident has abundantly and distressingly made clear.

Research participants attest that it was the 2011 event, where about 800 people were killed, that vitiated whatever cordial relationship and trust that had existed over the years between the different groups in Kaduna. Conceivably, Onoma (2017) argues that groups could resort to “othering” processes in very unsettling and dangerous situations in order to fashion out solutions and coping strategies. This “process of othering can jump from defining a migrant community as a threat to a host area that they are a part of, to defining them as not belonging to this place at all” (Onoma, 2017, p. 33). Thus, while the ethnic minority communities have always seen themselves as politically disadvantaged in southern Kaduna, the event of 2011 led many of these groups to reconsider their relationship with their Fulani neighbors in light of their struggles for liberation and autonomy.

Equally important to highlight as part of the othering processes emanating from the crisis of belonging in Kaduna are the derogatory names the Fulani and other ethnic minority groups call each other. Some of the minority groups generally refer to the Fulani as “*Agwoi* (unenlightened person) or *Bako Mara Gari* (stranger without home/town/land)” while some Fulani and other Muslim groups refer to others, particularly the Christians, as *Arna* (atheists) or *Kafirai* (unbelievers) (The Kafanchan Declaration, 2016). This kind of heated and derogatory proclamations or sectarian name-calling is a deep feature and fissure of the nature of intercommunal life in polarized societies like Nigeria. In fact, Nigeria’s ethnic groups often relate to each other in a highly prejudicial sense that ignites strong suspicion and acrimony (Ibrahim & Dabugat, 2015).

If this much makes sense, then to usefully grasp the intricacies of intergroup relations and conflicts in southern Kaduna, we must look beyond the essentialist explanations that proliferate the media, ostensibly scholarly works, and everyday discourses. We must also regard as suspect the views that hardliners spread about their groups. Of consequential note is to problematize the “farmer-herder” binary and conception of these conflicts and understand how people’s agency, as rational human beings with needs and choices, plays out in processes of conflicts as they make sense of their sociopolitical, cultural, and economic realities. Such openness to understand and embrace the “other” as well as to question one’s ingrained stereotypes, as artefacts of socialization can become the antidote to sensationalism and faulty generalizations about the nature of group identities and communal relations in Nigeria.

It is worth tabularizing the groups’ different dispositions of belonging in Kaduna in order to illuminate the core interpretations and analyses of the chapter.

Identity	Idealization of Belonging	Translation	Rationale/Implication
Fulani Communities in Kaduna	Nomadic-Indigenes/Citizens	<p>(1) Land is God-given/Free</p> <p>(2) Belonging is achieved in a local, national, regional, and global context.</p>	<p>(1) Fear of losing dominance and prestige.</p> <p>(2) Response to ethnic othering and demonization.</p> <p>(3) Re-enactment of historical dominance in a threatening liberal democratic context.</p> <p>(4) Fear of becoming Second rate citizens.</p>
Other Ethnic Groups	Indigenous-autochthones	<p>(1) Land is not free/ancestral homeland/organic sense of space and physical ownership of land.</p> <p>(2) To belong is to both be in a physical place of birth and an ancestral homeland of deeper spiritual and ethnic connection.</p> <p>(3) <i>Bonafide</i> descendants of the First comers.</p>	<p>(1) Provides a sense of meaning/security in difficult/hostile situations.</p> <p>(2) Reaction to continued marginalization.</p> <p>(3) Fear of becoming non-entities and second-rate citizens.</p> <p>(4) Fear of becoming internal diaporas. Longing for a return to an autonomous homeland/a new state.</p>

Table 3: The Groups' Dispositions of Belonging in Kaduna

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has examined the crisis of belonging in southern Kaduna and explored how processes and discourses of “ethnic othering” are inextricably weaved into it. The chapter also highlighted the contentious “farmer-herder” descriptions of intercommunal conflicts in the area and argued that such categorization or labeling of the conflicts is a misnomer that is empty and limited in its potential to explicate the true identities and realities of the different groups in Kaduna. The chapter argued that the expressed needs of belonging of these groups are quite different and similar in some sense. Such needs are also reactions against or responses to the people’s exigencies, as well as to their existential and sociopolitical, cultural, and economic circumstances. However, the claims and counterclaims over the issue of belonging hardly serve the overarching need of many Nigerians to forge a sense of nationhood out of the disparate communities in the country.

Perceptions of the Fulani and Hausa hegemony are pervasive in Nigeria. Such perceptions instill fear, bitterness, and animosity within the psychosocial outlook of other ethnic minority groups. In certain situations of difficulty or stress, these minority groups would employ and deploy the politics of belonging to reaffirm and reassert their perceived birthrights as sons and daughters of the soil or as legitimate people with rights and entitlements to the resources and key political positions in Kaduna. They considered themselves both Indigenous (as natives born in the physical territories of southern Kaduna) and autochthonous (as descendants of the first comers having organic rootedness and relationship to the entire space of southern Kaduna).

This perceived organic connection to the soil gives the groups a sense of security and solace in difficult situations and represents a deep yearning to regain their lost autonomy and independence. While some groups conceded Indigenous status to the Fulani—but only according to the provisions of the Constitution and their own sense of accommodation of the group—, they

distinguished themselves from the Fulani group based on their perceived autochthonous status as peoples of the soil.

The Fulani identified more with indigeneity rights than autochthony owing to their claims of birth and residency in the area prior to and after Nigeria's independence. Thus, for the Fulani, their citizenship of Nigeria gives them privy to the privileges accorded to Indigenous peoples in the country. Whereas it mattered for the other groups, even among themselves, that one's ancestors had to be first comers to be considered as *bonafide* people with all the accompanying privileges. While the minority ethnic groups considered their Indigenous-autochthonous status a self-evident truth, Fulani communities have the ambivalent identity of being both indigenes and strangers at the same time, depending on how, where, and who is perceiving or "othering" them.

Moreover, the ethnic minority communities seemed more concerned with their local and ethnic connections to their environment, whereas the Fulani considered their belonging as a national, local, spiritual, and even a universal phenomenon. Their conception of land as a spiritual or cosmopolitan entity is hinged on their understanding that it is a free God-given resource. The idea of cosmopolitan or nomadic indigeneity challenges the understanding of nomadic groups as "wandering people". This idea also poses a threat to the identity claims of the Indigenous-autochthonous groups.

At the very least, employing indigeneity or autochthony tropes to claim rights of belonging can be arbitrary, fluid, and empty. The concepts are fluid and arbitrary because using them does not endow an individual with any certainty of belonging because those who use and defend these notions are often not sure of their own rootedness. They seem to be denying that their settlement in an area is also a result of migration which has been a constant feature of humanity. At best, however, the notions of conflicting belonging in southern Kaduna point to

deeper socioeconomic, cultural, and political injustices that reinforced a need for the reorganization of how state power is practiced not just in Kaduna, but also in Africa as a whole. It also calls for the negotiation of space in terms of expanding worldviews and cultural ideologies and understanding of history and “place” in an inclusive and dignifying manner. Such an inclusive idealization of belonging in a context of the state’s responsiveness to the needs of the different groups in the country could be pivotal in the search for national identity and citizenship in many African societies.

By reason of the fact that the struggle for state recognition, resources, and political imperium is at the core of the struggle for indigeneity, autochthony, and nomadic rights, the resolution of such issues might hinge on finding a workable state system in which all groups with relative perceptions of deprivation and neglect can be included in the polity. This inclusion and reorganization of the postcolonial state order in Africa are necessary if the notions of democratic citizenship, nationhood, and good governance are to become sensible and amenable to the sociocultural realities of Africans.

Tania Li (2002) warns that “if rights are differentially allocated and a person has citizenship only when they happen to live in their ‘native place’ more violence and exclusion lies ahead” (p. 367-8). Classic examples of such violence and discrimination prevail with increasing regularity in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Congo, Burundi, Cameroon, Rwanda, and South Africa. In these countries, groups that are considered different or foreign could easily be subjected to the state policies of expulsion, violence, and discrimination.

The contemporary xenophobic incidents in South Africa demonstrate how this discrimination and violence against “foreigners” are orchestrated by ordinary people. Regardless of the deplorable actions that these so-called foreigners are charged with, xenophobic violence in

places like South Africa mirrors the tragedy of the crisis of belonging in Africa. It shows the barbarity of the internal logic of colonial violence in the continent, and the dysfunctional nature of the postcolonial state structures. As currently constituted, the structures of the postcolonial state in many African societies are geared towards the annihilation of the “other” in a context of outrageous criminality and frightening insecurity.

Poignantly, the so-called “other” may have once being a neighbour, friend, or even a partner to their executors. Such acts of cruelty that accompany the treatments of so-called “strangers”, “foreigners” or “visitors” in many African societies have all the lineaments of the twentieth century wars. These wars were characterized by the treatments of other human beings as “members of an inferior and indeed malignant species—as mere vermin” (Ferguson, 2006, p. 480). In the case of Nigeria, as Laurent Fouchard (2015) has observed, the impacts of the politics of belonging are seen through structural violence—but also direct violence—, manifested in the denial of academic scholarships, lucrative university courses, political participation, and provision of basic services to those imagined as foreigners or non-indigenes (Fouchard, 2015).

Further, contested notions of belonging speak to the conflict of “who is who”, to use Ali Mazrui’s description of the conflict (2008, p. 38). In this case, indigeneity and autochthony tropes, and not citizenship, become the channels for determining who is to be included as legitimate members of the state and who is to be rendered ineffectual or non-existent through violent annihilation or exclusion from power and resource distribution. Such issues represent the true reflection of the fractious nature of the Nigerian state which, like many of its counterparts in Africa, still bears the trappings of its colonial past.

Refreshingly, despite participants’ conflicting stories and narratives, a majority also expressed inclusive ideas of belonging and recounted stories of contact and conviviality with

each other. These stories indicate the complexity of everyday life in Kaduna as being an interesting act of maneuvering, repositioning, and adjusting between conflict and cooperation. These stories are documented and discussed in the next chapter, and they provide renewed optimism for forging stronger bonds and building shared spaces of intergroup dialogue and reconciliation in Kaduna and beyond.

## **Section Two**

This section examines stories of friendship and a willingness demonstrated by some of the groups in Kaduna to reach out to each other in periods of stability and conflicts. Through their stories of conviviality and contact, the people demonstrated resilience and resolve to think and work through their predicaments with passion and hope for a shared future.

The section comprises two chapters. Chapter six presents the positive experiences of friendship, protection, and complementarity among the different communities in Kaduna. It also highlights the implications of these stories for understanding the complex nature of intercommunal life in pluralistic societies. Chapter seven builds on the findings of chapter six to document and analyze people's concrete ethnographies of peacebuilding and suggestions for working through the crisis of belonging and intercommunal violence in Kaduna.

## **Chapter Six**

### **Positive Contact and Complementarity in Southern Kaduna**

#### **Introduction**

The story of the southern Kaduna people does not end in conflict. Quite rightly, there have always been some altercations, bitterness, and ethnoreligious intolerance among these groups. They have often managed these differences through a demonstrable show of fellowship and a desire for a peaceful order. Over the last two decades, however, this strong fellowship has been hamstrung by complex and interdependent factors including rising ethno-political tensions, terrorism, and electoral violence (EWD Thematic Report, 2019).

Still, many participants would—despite the issues pitting them against each other—rather prefer to coexist than sever ties. These participants narrated various tales and allude to their cooperative socioeconomic and political experiences in the past, characterized by the sharing of land, produce, fertilizer, and intermarriages. They bemoan how this relationship has been eclipsed in recent years by the degenerating forces of conflicts. What follows are their narratives of contact and complementary relationships. These narratives are revealing of the nature of intercommunal life in Kaduna as a mixed bag of conflict and cooperation. The narratives challenge how certain scholarships represent intercommunal life in Africa as violent ridden.

#### **Stories of the Ethnic Minority Communities**

Participants recount stories of deep friendship and camaraderie with Fulani communities. Hence, they wonder and question why and how this relationship has deteriorated into chaos in some areas of the state, particularly in the past five decades or so. Garba's story, for instance,

lends weight to this nostalgic past that the ethnic minority communities and the Fulani once shared together.

In the 1950s up to the late 1960s, we had this Fulani family that left our village in search of pasture in another community and disaster struck. After several years, they had to come back, but their houses had collapsed and they had nowhere to stay. My grandfather who had about five or so wives in a very large compound had to ask two of his wives to vacate their accommodations in order to house these Fulanis. Not only did he house them, but he also did so for over five years. About three generations thereafter, each time they come from the city to visit their parents, they must stopover in our house to pay respect to our family because of that kind gesture.

The relationship was so strong. We give them land; they graze their cattle and livestock. In exchange, their animal dung is used by the farmers as a source of organic manure or fertilizer. We buy their milk; they buy grains from us and we intermarry.

It may seem that these stories of symbiotic relationship and conviviality are only peculiar to older participants; however, young people in their 30s also share stories of strong historical affiliation and relationship with Fulani communities. For example, Kaki, an activist and lecturer, narrates the following story:

I recall with nostalgia how growing up as a boy in the 1980s we went to the same primary school with the children of some Fulani who lived in our communities. It should be stated though that they lived far away from our own homes, precisely in *Rugas* (make-shift thatched homes) that were

usually at the places where we had our farmlands. We had a sincerely symbiotic relationship with the Fulani: before a new cultivation season, their cattle grazed our lands with our agreement and the aim was for the cattle to leave their dungs on the field, which we would use as manure for our crops. In fact, each time we went to our farms to cultivate in the evenings and there was heavy rain for a long time, we slept with our Fulani friends in their make-shift settlements.

While there, we ate their food, especially their *fura* and *nono* (a mixture of milk from a cow and a cakelike product from millet). The memories I have of our friendship with the Fulani in those days make it truly and increasingly difficult to put my arms around why the relationship has soured so much that we literally live in mutual suspicion. It is unimaginable for me to sleep in a *Ruga* anymore – I will be making a suicide attempt. See, if you have been visiting sites of killings of the southern Kaduna people (our people) by alleged Fulani herdsmen, you would be at a loss to describe how within two generations things have gone from mutual friendship and trust to mutual enmity, fear, and suspicion. The killings, the pattern they take, are of a purely genocidal nature.

Like other participants, Kaki seems distraught over how the conflicts in Kaduna have dented his group's relationship with the Fulani. In addition, Kaki noted that the killings often occur in Christian-majority communities. He articulated the following in his story:

Let me provoke your curiosity: for a moment ask yourself why these killings do not happen in Muslim-dominated areas but only in our areas? And, why do we have these

patterns in all the Christian-majority states and not in states where Muslims are a majority? If this does not speak to the issue of genocide and deliberate expansionism, then I do not know what else does. In all these, and despite it all, I look forward to reliving in those good old days of mutual trust and friendship. These killings are but an ill wind that blows no one any good.

Kaki's narrative is quite instructive because he seems convinced that the killings of his people in southern Kaduna are of a genocidal nature; but importantly, he seems poised to work towards a shared future with the Fulani.

Some participants like Isa who had earlier insisted that the Fulani cannot be Indigenous to southern Kaduna communities, also narrates how his community had supported the economy of the Fulani. His story indicates the level of trust and friendship that have characterized the relationship of both communities in the past. He recounts the story in the following way:

There is this thing they call *Roro*—gleaning. Our people harvest their farm and leave some of it for the Fulani to come in and harvest from which they will make their *Fura*. And then they will leave the hay and chaff for the Fulani cattle to feed on. That is why you find Fulani cattle in southern Kaduna in the dry season. Nobody bothers them. Some of them even ask for land to start farming and the community will say, “here it is [the land] you can farm there”.

This socioeconomic symbiosis between the Fulani and other groups in Kaduna is the fulcrum on which their relationship has been pivoting for many decades. It is not surprising, then, that many participants express shock and surprise at the way their relationship with Fulani communities has deteriorated in some quarters over the years. However, the groups do not necessarily rely on each

other for their sustenance. In fact, the Fulani and other ethnic groups in Kaduna all practise some form of agro-pastoralism, and engage in myriads of other occupations in construction, transportation, and marketing. They are highly independent, but also interdependent communities. They are constantly adapting to the socioeconomic changes and demands of the evolving nature of their societies.

Furthermore, Garba and other participants claim that the socioeconomic relationship between the Fulani and other communities has always been cordial and complementary, especially prior to the 2011 crisis. Garba claims his community in Zangon Kataf has been magnanimous, tolerant, and accommodating to Fulani families who settled in their villages. A local chief from a small community in Anghan shares Garba's sentiments in the following way: "between the Fulani and us, even if we are having a feast, we do support and help each other. Whether it is during Christmas or their Eid celebrations, we do help each other. They marry our children. We have so many grandchildren as a result of intermarriages with them". Some were less sanguine about the benefits of intermarriages, and claim it is more of the Fulani and Hausa men marrying wives outside their own faith than the other way around.

They blame the unevenness of the nature of intermarriages among the groups on the religious constrictions of Islam. With regards to the Hausa Muslims, Bilkisu Yusuf (2007) argues that "Islam, their religion, allowed only the men and not women to marry adherents of other religions because a Muslim woman had certain rights granted to her under Islamic law which a non-Muslim husband was not bound to fulfil because Islamic law was not applicable to him" (p. 243). In any case, the minority ethnic groups consider it a grave injustice to be denied the opportunity to marry Muslim women.

Moving further, Casan, an Anghan man, relives the positive encounters that had flourished between his community and the Fulani over the years, noting that “truthfully we lived with the Fulani in peace, and never had serious issues with them. We ate with them, visited them at their houses and they also visited us. They even gave us free milk sometimes”. Casan shares how crises over issues of belonging and widespread criminality have impinged negatively on his community’s relationship with the Fulani. Still, he maintains that his group and the Fulani have been amiable towards each other.

Kajo, who had earlier said that the Fulani came to his community as visitors, was concerned about the migration of some Fulani families to Ladduga due to fear of reprisal attacks against them. He says, “we need the Fulani and they need us. They help us with manure, and in buying our crops. There are things that they do that will help our land in terms of fertilizer and milk. If they are not around, it will not come easy for us”. Kajo, however, adds that there are turbulent areas in southern Kaduna where a separation between the Fulani and other ethnic groups might help to restore stability. Still, he holds strongly to the idea of dialogue and integration as key elements of ensuring their continued survival and coexistence with Fulani communities.

Karfe, a development worker and community leader in Anghan land, shares a story, highlighting his community’s acceptance of Fulani families into Anghan chiefdom saying:

We grew up and met our parents living with the Fulani and in those days, [you know] they would settle their cattle on the farm. They were given our homes where they lived with our parents. The ones that are alive now, they always tell me that if we ever had land disputes with others, they would

come and walk around the territories of our farmlands to protect them, to tell you the extent of their familiarity and relationship with us in those days.

Another thing we grew up and met with the Fulani is this annual celebration that they often organized. They have these drums, if they are beating them in the moonlight they would gather, and their girls would be there. So, after the play, the males would take their girlfriends and some of them would walk to our houses. They will tell us to lend them our rooms so that they could sleep. We would come out of our rooms and give them. I tell you; this had been the nature of our relationship until things became the way they are today.

While Karfe notes the cordial relationship between his community and the Fulani in Anghan land, he is aware of the bitterness that exist among some of them as a result of ongoing conflicts in southern Kaduna. Even so, he and other participants are convinced there are people of goodwill among them who are determined to nurture and sustain the long-time solidarity they have established with the Fulani over the years. Some Fulani participants in Anghan land and neighboring areas confided in me that the main reason they accepted and were excited to participate in this research was because of my relationship with Karfe. They respect him because he initiates and supervises peace and development projects in the Anghan chiefdom.

Further, Karfe's story, concerning how his community had fared with its Fulani neighbors in periods of conflict, is instrumental in understanding how the two groups have demonstrated mutual understanding for many decades. He recounts that issue in the following manner:

The Fulani family that lives in our village has settled here for almost 50 years now since their father first came. Now, when the crisis of Zangon Kataf happened in 1992, the father tried to leave, and we said no that the crisis had not spread to our village. But after subsequent crises in southern Kaduna, he left our community and went to the Saminaka area, and he bought land there. But you can see that his children are still living with us in this village.

And we have resolved in the family that unless they decide on their own that they are leaving this place, nobody should tamper with their land. But they know too that the place is not originally theirs. But if anybody outside our family comes to look for a portion of land to cultivate, they will always come and tell us that somebody is looking for land.

Karfe's understanding is that his community and the Fulani in Anghan land are protective of the land and would do same to each other due to the respect, understanding, and acceptance of their mutual sense of belonging to the land. Isa and a few other participants caution people to be mindful of glossing over some serious issues they have with the Fulani in the spirit of conviviality. He narrates the following experience to make his point:

We were in Sanga; the Sanga people were saying they were living in peace with the Fulanis and vice versa. That was in 2012. I told them publicly that they were telling lies. So, I called the Sanga people aside. I said have you seen the memoranda that the Fulanis of Sanga local government have written to the Kaduna state peace and reconciliation committee, which we read before we came to see you people here? Have you seen what they

wrote to complain about what [they claim] you are doing to them? They said ‘no’. So, we said: why do you imagine you are living in peace with them when they are writing memoranda to a high-powered committee of government like this to say you have taken over their cattle routes, you have taken over their grazing area?

Thus, while Isa agrees that in certain communities, like the Anghan, Fulani and other ethnic groups are living in relatively stable circumstances, he counsels others about the danger of generalizing such positive encounters. He argues that people ought to be aware of the existing tensions between the Fulani and other groups and be cautious about their friendship and activities with each other. On the whole, people want to reconcile and work through their differences. Some, however, are only open to such reconciliation on the condition that perpetrators of violence would be brought to justice by the state authorities.

### **The Stories of Fulani Communities**

Fulani participants also share stories of a long history of complementarity with other ethnic groups. Daro, who had argued about a divine design to situate Fulani people in Ladduga, reminisces on his childhood days when the relationship between the Fulani and other ethnic groups was at an all-time high; then his tone becomes nostalgic as he recounts the past:

I am telling you as a young person when I was growing up, there was no place that I could not enter, whether I was a Fulani, whether I was a Muslim, nobody cared, and it has been like that up till today. I still challenge people that up till today there is peace. The only thing is that there

are people who do not want peace, and such criminals exist in every society.

Do not mistake a criminal for a person who does not want peace.

Daro and other participants were cautious in recounting stories of conviviality with other groups and acknowledge that in so far as positive contacts abound in the area, some of their members are still antagonizing others. Thus, they stress that the criminal elements among them should be identified and prosecuted, and not taken as the prototypes of the larger Fulani group.

Daro issues a rallying cry stating, “let us try and remove all the hate and tell others to refrain from thinking that I am this [or that]. Let us reason that all of us are human beings. We must develop Nigeria whether we like it or not, irrespective of where we come from. So, it means we must see what we can do to develop ourselves and move together”. Daro claims that he has forged intergroup contact in his business organization by employing people from various ethnic groups in Nigeria, but particularly from among the minority groups in Kaduna.

Other Fulani participants also recall past experiences of harmonious and supportive relationships with the minority groups. Numfa narrates a particularly telling story in which his father sponsored the education of his friend from one of these groups, saying:

I am a Fulani man, I agree, and we coexist with the local farmers: the Indigenous farmers. I think we were together in my secondary and primary schools in those good years. We never had any conflict with anybody. We slept together, we ate together, and we wined, dined and did all sort of things. And let me just tell you something, my Dad paid [school fees] for one of our neighbors, the guy is now a Reverend Father [Catholic Priest].

Numfa also recounts how he quit school to fend for his cattle, and was later challenged to return to school by his friend who his father had sponsored in school. He says they have remained close

friends. In a similar vein, Kurum shares his own story of a supportive relationship with other ethnic groups as follows:

I went to school where I met a Koro<sup>17</sup> boy who struggled and does menial jobs to stay in school. We finished in 2009. After a while, there was a time we met in Kafanchan, we spent about six years before we met each other again. It was last year [2016] we met in Kafanchan, and he started crying. I asked about his father, but the father has died. What has joined us together? A sense of togetherness. Everyone is your own, there is no talking about religion or anything.

Kurum narrates similar tales of conviviality with the Fulani in Anghan land, and specifically speaks about Anghan as a peace-loving community. He also commends the Anghan chief for his exemplary leadership and initiative to forge a sense of togetherness among the different communities in the land. He expresses his ideas on this issue in the following way:

You see, Fulani people have lived with the people of Kamantan [Anghan land], Zonkwa, and other people of southern Kaduna for a long time. In fact, there are Fulani people who have paid the fees of other communities through secondary school. These things have often happened. But it is the politics that came in, not politics from the Fulani side, but politics of the Hausa people and the people of southern Kaduna, especially the conflicts of 1992 and 2011.

These conflicts affected the Fulani who live in the “bush” without knowing anything. They are not looking for a leadership position or

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<sup>17</sup> Koro is a southern Kaduna ethnic group in Kagarko LGA.

anything. When it comes to election, they just go and vote Buhari. There was no conflict in southern Kaduna, what happened was that the Fulani people were targeted and beaten. That is why a majority returned to Ladduga, where they feel a sense of belonging because the place belongs to them.

The reason they were chased away from such places is that other people think that the place belongs to them. But in Kamantan they have this togetherness, because of their leadership. Whenever anything happens, the Fulani remain there despite everything. They stay together to make sure nothing happens to the Fulani, and that is why the Fulani are still in Kamantan despite conflicts in other places. Those who are relocating to Ladduga are scared because anything could happen to them. But in Zonkwa, Madakiya, the people there think the place is theirs, and they can chase the Fulani away from there because they do not belong. But even now, some Fulani people are gradually returning to such places. We are beginning to find peace.

Thus, in as much as many Fulani people are fleeing southern Kaduna villages to Ladduga, some are also returning to their former homesteads to continue their businesses and social activities.

Kurum thinks that Anghan land is more advanced and a progressive community that forges inclusivity than Zonkwa, Madakiya, or Kafanchan. He also faults the “rumor mills” for widening the divide between the Fulani and other communities in Kaduna. For example, in explaining why so many Fulani people left southern Kaduna communities for Ladduga, he reported on this issue in the following manner:

They ran because Zonkwa is close to Kamantan and anything can happen to them. You know there are rumors and such rumors cause a lot of fears. For example, you will hear people say that the Kamantan people are joining forces with people of Zonkwa to chase the Fulani or to kill them. Who will stay in such climate? So, they have to run to a place they can call home.

You see, in Ladduga we have a leadership, which ensures that things are controlled, and there has not been any conflict. But you see this chief of Kamantan has really tried, and people are talking about him. But it is all because of the rumors that people leave places like Kamantan to have peace of mind in Ladduga.

Some Fulani communities from Anghan support Kurum's claim that the group has a strong sense of togetherness with the Anghan people. For example, Iliya, an agro pastoralist, shares how the bond his family had developed over the years with the Anghan community has unified them in difficult situations. However, before I began my conversation with Iliya, he summons my research adviser (an Anghan man from his community) to report an issue that had set him (Iliya) against another Anghan man in the village. Iliya points out to my adviser that the Anghan person in question had confiscated his property. As a result, he (Iliya) had wanted compensation, yet the alleged culprit had refused to admit guilt. Thus, he pleads with my adviser to take the matter to the chief of the village to adjudicate on it.

The above incident is illuminating in some ways: first, it seems to support the view shared by some Fulani participants that the group often tries to resolve issues at the level of its local authorities before seeking revenge if no remedial actions are taken. Second, it indicates that while several participants attest to a strong bond with the Anghan community, they, nevertheless,

have had to navigate through everyday spats with other communities over socioeconomic or land issues.

On my return to the field in January 2019, I was informed of Iliya's departure from the village due to some inexplicable reason while his younger brother (Yusuf) chose to stay back in the village. Their father had also fled this village after the 2011 crisis. Iliya's departure from the village represents a pattern of Fulani migration from southern Kaduna villages. It is a pattern that may likely continue in the context of intercommunal disturbances occasioned and sustained by mutual suspicion, acrimony, and fear.

For Yusuf, such potential disturbances could be stymied if the groups tap into the cordiality from which their ancestors developed and benefited in the past. Yusuf, describes the bond his family shares with the Anghan community as an outcome of the strong legacy left by their grandparents, stating, "if you asked our grandparents, they would say we all grew up together. They know Fulani and Christians as people who have lived together. In those days, a Fulani person and a Christian lived side by side. Sometimes a Christian would build a house and invite the Fulani person to come and live together with him. That has been the nature of our relationship". Yusuf's understanding is that their past arrangements over issues of resource distribution or land allocation with the Anghan people was based on their acceptance and accommodation of each other.

Iliya adds that if it were not for his family's long-term friendship with and love for the Anghan people and the land, they would not have been receptive of my research and welcomed me into their homestead. He says if I had come by myself to interview them, they would simply have used *fillanchi* (their own language of *Fulfude*) and left me bewildered. Yet they say the

presence of my research associate, who is a well-known member of their community, facilitated their participation in the research.

Notwithstanding their positive stories and experiences with other groups, Fulani families in Anghan land are under no illusion that their experience in the land is always animated and cheerful. They are aware of certain criminal elements existing among them. There is also a longstanding issue of open grazing that has often pitted them in conflicts with the Anghan people. This issue has climaxed to the point that the community in which Iliya was staying in Anghan has proscribed open grazing, possibly accounting for his departure from this community in late 2018.

### **Key Findings**

The contact narratives of the different ethnic groups in Kaduna corroborate Malešević's (2010) assertion that war and violence are essentially "material event[s] that involve organized physical destruction, killing and dying, rather than being solely, or even primarily, a discourse, a narrative or cultural code" (p. 68). If having different languages, religion, or territories is a recipe for violent confrontations, then intercommunal violence would inevitably be the feature of every society (Malešević, 2010). Warfare is not genetic to cultural groups, and neither is it based on some biological attributes (Byrne & Senehi, 2012; Malešević, 2010). Research participants attest to this understanding of the nature of human relations, which reveals the following findings.

First, they all refer to a "golden age" as a period in time in which their relationship with each other was stable, amiable, and devoid of serious altercations beyond the usual fracas over cattle encroachments on farmlands and the cultivation of cattle routes. Vamik Volkan (1997) uses the concepts of "chosen trauma" and "chosen glories" to describe the selective tendency by

ethnic groups to decide what aspects of their historical memory are worth remembering or forgetting. Annika Björkdahl and Kappler Stefanie (2017) have argued that “the choice of which time periods or eras are relevant and which are not, is a highly political one, [reflecting] the agency of actors to present their perception of important time or historical moments as the one which ends up translating into spatial practice” (p. 23).

In this context, some groups may choose to maintain a siege mentality of themselves or portray a glorious image of their history (Volkan, 2013). Ethnic elite and politicians can reactivate or recreate “the mental representations of chosen glories and heroes associated with them to bolster the shared identity of their followers” (Volkan, 2013, p.231). Sometimes, this “chosen past” may not be as blissful as the people may want to portray it. Yet, however the past may be interpreted, its memory may offer the communities in Kaduna something by way of succour and ideas of dealing with their predicaments.

The conviction with which several participants on both sides spoke about a “golden past” may suggest the deteriorating nature of their relationship with others in recent years, accounting for their nostalgia and yearning for a re-enactment of this past glory to address their conflicting issues. Owing to conflict fatigue and the general goodwill of some people to accommodate, cooperate with, and accept others, the people seem hopeful and willing to reignite and recreate the kind of friendships and restore the trust and respect they once shared profusely.

Second, the fact that some areas in southern Kaduna experienced virulent expressions of crises than others is demonstrative of the complexities of the relationship of the Fulani and other ethnic minority groups in Kaduna: a relationship that seems rooted in conflict and cooperation. Since the 1980s, violent ethnoreligious conflicts have proliferated deeply heterogeneous and polarized areas like Zango, Zonkwa, Kasuwan Magani, Jagindi, and Kafanchan. However, such

conflicts have not been waged with frequent intensity in smaller districts like Anghan and Bakulu lands. The point here is not to suggest that the Anghan and Bakulu chiefdoms do not experience conflicts or that the communities that have been ruined by violence are inherently bellicose or hostile. The onset of violent conflicts arising from issues of belonging is dependent on many factors. These factors may not be evenly distributed in all communities in southern Kaduna.

To begin with, the sparse population of communities like the Anghan may mean they are not often at the forefront of the liberation activism of southern Kaduna people. The more dominant and populous ethnic minority groups in Kachia, Kafanchan, Kagoro, and Zango such as the Atyap, Oegworok, Adara, Ham, and Bajju are mostly at the forefront of this activism. These dominant groups have also occupied some of the prestigious political positions held by members of the minority communities in Kaduna. Hence, it is possible that the animosity between the Fulani and these groups over rights of belonging and other related issues may be more intense among the prominent and populated groups than the Anghan or Bakulu people who are fewer and less represented—in numerical terms—in the liberation politics and struggles of the ethnic minority communities of southern Kaduna.

Third, and related to the second point, some participants in Anghan land think that joining forces with other communities to fight against the Fulani may prove futile, if not outrightly calamitous. In their view, their status as a “minority within a minority” could mean that they can easily be subdued and annihilated if they fought alongside other communities against the Fulani. They are also concerned about reflecting discredit on their communities if they participated in the larger conflicts of belonging between the ethnic minority groups and the Fulani in southern Kaduna.

The Anghan people are supportive of the aspirations of southern Kaduna's ethnic minority groups. Like other groups in Kaduna, they constitute an integral part of the southern Kaduna struggles and are bent on reclaiming their full autonomy from the dominant Hausa and Fulani elite. However, their diminutive population means their contribution to the various aspects of these struggles will be minimal compared to those of the more prominent groups. Such disparity in terms of the kind of contributions the smaller groups make to their various causes in southern Kaduna may largely be a result of their sparse population rather than a lack of effort or ingenuity on their part.

Fourth, the symbiotic economic and social relations of the groups give them a sense of hope for a shared, profitable future. For example, most southern Kaduna minority communities benefit greatly from sharing and marketing raw materials, crops, and animal products with the Fulani. They also seem to enjoy the solidarity that these activities engender and nurture between them and their Fulani neighbors. It is partly why some of them fear the prospect of physical separation from the Fulani, arguing that the cost of this separation could be heavy and may lead to a decline in their economic activities and general wellbeing.

Moreover, the Fulani in Anghan land also admit to having a sense of obligation to uphold the legacy of peace and stability they inherited from their forbears. They also call to mind the decisive leadership of the paramount ruler of Anghan, the resolve of the people to work through their differences, and their general acceptance and recognition of each other as rightful and legitimate people of the land, as some of the stabilizing features of the chiefdom.

Furthermore, the relative peace among the Anghan and Fulani people in the Anghan chiefdom should not be taken to mean there are no positive experiences and a long history of conviviality between the Fulani and other southern Kaduna groups. The experience of Anghan

people only serves as an interesting case to explain how the different groups in Kaduna are sustaining their friendship and collaborating to rebuild their communities both in periods of stability and turbulence.

However, despite the resilience and stability of relatively peaceful communities like the Anghan, many still live in fear due to spates of volatile activities in surrounding communities. As well, recurring crises over land rights between the Fulani and other ethnic groups in states like Plateau, Taraba, and Benue have also heightened the insecurity in southern Kaduna. Perhaps, this heightened insecurity explains why some Fulani families have migrated to Ladduga. Some moved to Ladduga without experiencing any major threats to their lives. Some participants from Anghan land recount that they have tried to allay the fears of the Fulani in southern Kaduna to assure them of their safety and protection if they remained in their communities.

Although some of the participants explain the migration of the Fulani to Ladduga as a divine plan and a protective strategy against targeted violence, it has yet to be seen whether their relocation to the reserve area would guarantee them the kind of peace and stability they had anticipated. This pessimism is partly so because other ethnic groups regard the reserve area as a stolen land which the government had seized—without compensation—and handed over to the Fulani to further their expansionist project.

Thus, even though the government may allocate land to some groups, the people from whom the land have been carved and parceled out could still consider the new occupants as illegitimate communities. Unless the people themselves engage in processes of negotiating the terms of their coexistence in their own land and space, the government's policy of creating reserve areas and new settlements for certain groups will continue to pose serious impediments to the achievement of a lasting peace among the southern Kaduna communities.

Fifth, the empirical data also revealed an all-inclusive idea of “home” expressed by many participants. They believe that they share in each other’s cosmology, economy, and social life. This belief underlines the idea that if the physical chasm between the Fulani and the other ethnic groups is widened any further through the imposition of physical barriers, the net effect could be disastrous for the socioeconomic life and sense of security of these groups. In succeeding years, this reality may mean that Ladduga could become a segregated enclave where only Fulani communities live, and other groups are terrified to visit. Given the business, sociocultural, and political involvements of each group with the “other”, any widening gap between them may exacerbate their already existing tension and uncertainty they have about each other. This tension would brew in the context of ongoing conflicts and the perception of government’s non, slow, and selective response to conflicts in Kaduna.

Sixth, although most participants share an inclusive idea of “home” with others, the case of a community like Anghan stands out for its few incidents of conflicts. Stories of participants from Anghan indicate their willingness, leadership, and efforts to manage differences and nurture relationships largely through their acceptance of their common humanity and an understanding of their shared sense of belonging in the land, devoid of physical or cognitive impediments (Björkdahl & Kappler, 2017). There are certainly so many lessons to glean from these positive tendencies at forging friendships and supporting others in difficult situations. These gestures are indications that with deliberate efforts at accepting, accommodating, and a willingness to work through deep socioeconomic and political differences, intergroup coexistence and solidarity could be more appealing to the groups and can help slow down the deepening acrimonious relationship fomenting among some of the disparate groups in the state.

## **Conclusion**

The theme of this chapter partly emerged from the recommendation of some participants who insisted I should document their positive encounters with the so-called opposing groups in order to present a balanced account of intercommunal life in Kaduna. These participants identified areas like Anghan land as a relatively peaceful environment that is awash with examples of positive intergroup encounters among its inhabitants. They were curious and wondered if my research could examine this phenomenon of convivial relationship among the groups to determine why it has been prevalent in some communities yet not in others.

More importantly, participants' narratives inspired the theme of this chapter. In recounting stories of the crisis of belonging, they shared about the history of their friendships with other groups and wondered why and how their relationship has taken a turn for the worse in certain areas in recent years. Even so, the groups appeared resolute to restore the cordiality that was once the trademark of their communities.

Therefore, it is quite fitting to conclude that intercommunal life and relationships between different groups is a mix of diametrically opposed binaries: conflict and cooperation, familiarity and contempt. The conflicting side of this relationship is well documented and portrayed in news media and academic publications. The cooperative nature of the relationship is less theorized and publicized. The manifestations of positive encounters enjoyed by various groups in Kaduna make several participants to wonder why the media and some academics often choose to focus on the negative sides of intercommunal experience and fail to promote existing stories of contact that permeate intergroup relationship at different periods and seasons.

The instances of intergroup contact explored in this chapter underlined the need to promote such positive experiences among the groups in Kaduna not only because such stories have the potential to douse fears and tension among them, but also because they reflect the

reality of intercommunal existence in Africa. Although promoting intergroup contact could be a desideratum for peaceful coexistence, the evidence in several communities in Africa suggests that groups that have had a long history of complementarity and solidarity could still fight each other at critical moments. This reality could mean that promoting intergroup contact alone as a way of reducing conflict or prejudice can be simplistic or even dangerous at best. Reicher (2007) argues that “more could be achieved by addressing the ways the in-group is defined: who is doing it, through which techniques, in whose interests, and with what consequences” (p. 830).

Thus, while positive contact is useful for group solidarity and cohesion, it can also have the destructive effects of enabling and sustaining conditions for the continued oppression of subjugated groups by the more dominant or oppressive groups (Reicher, 2007). On this note, it is worth investigating, as Jim Everett (2013) recommends, what kinds of conditions can lead to a more positive contact between groups and how commonalities between groups could be underscored while addressing unjust group disparities. These pathways of redressing injustices and forging stronger societal bonds are explored in the next chapter.

## **Chapter Seven**

### **People's Ethnographies of Peacebuilding**

#### **Introduction**

The peacebuilding ideas and stories of participants center on how to negotiate and reorganize place, space, resources and state power. They execute these activities through mediums that resonate with their socioeconomic and political realities. By focusing on the groups' dispositions to peace, the chapter underscores the goal of the "local turn" in peacebuilding research in order to examine how agents involved in disputes advance their own approaches to peacebuilding. They do so with or without the intervention of the state or external third parties. Next are the people's ethnographies of peace, which are useful in terms of understanding how contextual ideas, resources, and local practices provide alternatives to violence and contribute to or challenge the prevailing PACS peacebuilding discourse and practice.

#### **The Peacebuilding Ethnographies of the Ethnic Minority Groups**

Most participants began their stories by acknowledging God as the progenitor of their lived experiences. They shared that God has blessed them with a peaceable nature, which is manifested in their dealings with each other. Because of this spirituality, some of them note that the crisis they face is only comprehensible to God. Thus, when alleged Fulani men killed seven people at a funeral in 2016 in Yangal, some people in that village attributed the event to the will of God. However, the paramount chief explains that the incident occurred because some members of that community had killed a Fulani man who, as they claimed, encroached on their

farm. In the aftermath of that violent event, the chief and others share that the chiefdom has been relatively peaceful.

Aside from their acclaimed peaceable and accommodating nature, the chief attributes the flourishing peace in the land to an oath ritual that was initiated by the Fulani people living in the chiefdom. The chief's description of the ritual process is worth quoting at length:

I called a meeting of the Ardos [the Fulani clan heads] and all the Fulani. We were just discussing and finding ways out, then without my prompting, one of them said 'as far as we are concerned, we do not want anything to touch this land, and it will be attributed to Fulani. So, we are going to go on an oath. We will take an oath that will be binding on all of us. Any Fulani man that is found bringing trouble or being part of any trouble, a curse will follow him'. I said okay, and they chose an elderly man who made the proclamations on their behalf. I said well, we may be doing this here as if it is among people but know that God is a witness. Therefore, let us keep it and watch it.

The oath ritual is an ancient practice of the Fulani. According to Umar Pate and Garba Daudu, oath-taking—*hunayeere*—is a conflict resolution mechanism of the Fulani of Adamawa state, Nigeria. The authors argue that the practice of oath-taking among the Adamawa Fulani is based on their belief that defaulters would face divine retribution. The ritual also allows them to surrender inexplicable and difficult issues to the will and judgement of God (Pate & Daudu, 2009). The chief and other participants reported that the oath ritual has been instrumental to the stability in the land because they have not had any serious conflicts since its observance. The chief, a devout Christian, also claims that he made a pact with God, prior to assuming his

chieftaincy position, so that God will prevent the surge of violent conflicts in the land. He says he often reminds God of this covenant each time he prays.

Some of the chief's subjects praised his leadership initiatives. One of these initiatives was the establishment of a peace committee. According to Karfe, the activities of this committee range from holding regular meetings to making suggestions about how to overcome fear and strengthen bonds of friendship between the Fulani and Anghan people. Karfe shares that the committee has been holding meetings to resolve issues pertaining to the incursions of "immigrant Fulani" into their communities.

In the same vein of ensuring peaceful coexistence, Karfe states that they have tasked the Fulani community in Anghan land to inform migrant Fulani about the rules and regulations of the land as a prerequisite for integrating into the chiefdom. He noted that the committee has also stipulated that migrant Fulani groups and others who want to live on the land should report to higher authorities such as the chief or clan heads so that they would not be held accountable for crimes they may not have committed.

In addition to the above initiatives, Karfe and other participants share some practical ideas for resolving intercommunal conflicts based on their past communal traditions of peacemaking. He claims that in the past, the Fulani and other ethnic groups in Kaduna had a good agreement regarding how land and other resources were to be divided up. This agreement entailed the demarcation of certain areas for farming and another accord was created for cattle rearing. Karfe insists that they still adhere to these communal agreements. Therefore, he appeals to members of the ethnic minority groups to stop cultivating crops on designated cattle routes or attacking the Fulani for encroaching on their farmlands without following due process. Regarding the issue of cultivating cattle routes, he says that "we should allow them. We know

that cows do not have wings, they must move on land. And if we block these cattle routes, it will not help”.

Yet, according to some participants, the problem remains the issue of overpopulation and the need for more agricultural and settlement lands. The population of the ethnic minority groups in Kaduna and the Middle Belt region have recently exploded in numbers, and therefore the amount of extra farmland needed has created a serious land shortage. Basically, the old colonially created forest and grazing reserves, and the cattle routes (*labi*), have been drastically impinged upon by farmers. The spaces kept free from farmland were always less fertile. As such, they offered rather poor grazing for cattle. But the traditional symbiosis of pastoralist and peasant farmer survived because farmers needed the cattle manure to sustain the quality of their soils (which modern fertiliser simply cannot do).

Moreover, long-distance transhumance enabled pastoralists to find fertile land when they had to be away from farmers’ fields. Thus, not only is the need to adhere to past agreements on land distribution and usage necessary, there is an even urgent and greater need to revise the terms on which such agreements were made in order to take recent climatic and demographic developments and changes into consideration.<sup>18</sup> Such demographic developments extend beyond population boom to consideration of rural-urban migratory patterns. Although the population of these communities is increasing, their migration from rural to urban centres is also a factor to consider in terms of understanding the reallocation of the land spaces in the rural areas.

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<sup>18</sup>When I returned to the field in January 2019, the people of this area had made a new law, banning open grazing during the rainy season; implying that the Fulani must leave the community if they want to tend to their cattle during this period. In this way, they believe that the issue of cattle encroachments on croplands during the rainy season and incessant conflicts and animosity that often accompany this issue will be resolved. Unfortunately, I was unable to investigate the Fulani’s response to this customary law before I left the field.

Consequently, Karfe and other participants proffer dialogue as a way of resolving land conflicts at the level of their local authorities. Kajo reinforces this idea of holding dialogue among the different groups in Kaduna. He shares that in the past there was a high level of respect and understanding between the Fulani and other ethnic communities, which made it possible for them to resolve conflicts through dialogue without involving the state authorities. He laments that “in those days, when we had issues because we were so close to each other and lived peacefully, we would ask ourselves, ‘we live peacefully with each other and why then take ourselves to the police station’? We resolved our issues at home. If we took these issues to the police station, we would all be at a loss”.

Kajo bemoans how the respect and understanding they once showed towards each other has been eclipsed by a lack of shame in recent years. He decries that “if a Fulani man wrongs you, you can take him anywhere you want. If you also wrong him, he takes you wherever he wants. Due to the unrest between us, we do not resolve our issues at home again. We take them to the police station or take matters into our own hands”. It is because of the aforementioned that he posits the following:

The only thing is that we are supposed to sit down with each other to understand the sources of our problems. If we understand these issues, then we can find ways of getting along with each other so that we can live peacefully for the betterment of our country. I am thinking if it would be possible that the two communities can come and sit down to deliberate and ask ourselves why we are not living peacefully with each other. Why are Fulani people coming into our farmlands to destroy them?

If we can find the real reasons for the lack of peace between us, and them, then we can find the real solutions to these issues. In the future to come we will see that our lives will be much better. If our children and the generation to come see that there is amity between us, they can also continue on that path. However, if they see that we have no amity, it will cause us some problems and our land will be divided into two.

The people's solution lies in finding ways within the parameters of their cultural resources to restore the trust and respect they once shared profusely with the Fulani in the same space where their children could also thrive.

Thus, some youth leaders in southern Kaduna like Kalma and Caleb reinforce the importance of their traditional conflict resolution approaches and virtues of accommodation and forgiveness. They argue that the conflicts they often have with the Fulani over cattle encroachments on farmlands or the cultivation of cattle routes were addressed in the past by their village heads. A variety of options including issuing a warning and paying compensation were used as conciliatory measures. If the alleged culprit accepts culpability, they claim that the victim may have to forgive them. In this sense, the restoration of relationship takes pride of place over retribution. Kalma and Caleb also raise the issue of forgiveness in addressing conflicts over Fulani cattle encroachments on other communities' farmlands. They argue that forgiving such conducts and dialoguing with the Fulani about why some of them encroach on other people's farmlands would prove a better alternative than administering mob justice or reporting culprits to the police.

Several participants frown on the state system of policing and the use of formal courts to adjudicate on their internal conflicts. They condemn the state authorities for alleged complicity

in conflicts. They sense this perceived complicity of the state in relation to the issue of establishing and gazetting grazing reserve areas for Fulani communities in places they consider their homeland. Some also think the Fulani elite are trying to use reserve areas like Ladduga to further their commercial ventures. They argue that the reserve areas are used by the Fulani elite to further their economic activities at the expense of the autochthonous people. Garba jettisons the rationale for creating these reserves, noting the following issues with the plan:

Experience has shown that they [Fulani] do not stay in the reserves, they move out to where the farmers are farming. The government has encouraged conflict in that matter by robbing Peter to pay Paul. And even the Paul that is being paid is not contented with what has been given to him by the government. In fact, if you go to Anchau, the reserve there has been encroached by farmers, city farmers, large scale farmers.

Even Ladduga now is shrinking because the elite Fulanis that are from there have gone into mechanized farming. They are taking hectares of land from that reserve, further compressing and putting pressure on land that was supposedly reserved by the government for the Fulanis. So, the Fulani herders are moving outward and creating conflicts by extending into lands not originally part of the reserve area.

All participants recommended that the Fulani should consider abandoning what they consider to be an antiquated nomadic lifestyle and buy land to establish cattle ranches. This issue of whether Fulani communities should adopt ranching or live in reserve areas constitutes a major impediment in the way of reconciling the contested ideologies of belonging held by the different groups in Kaduna.

Given the perceived state's complicity in the conflicts and the way alleged Fulani gunmen are attacking other communities, some of the participants are convinced of the state's involvement in the crisis. They argue that the Nigerian government under Buhari is providing ammunition to "Fulani attackers". By doing so, they believe the government is condoning the violence of the Fulani and allowing them to operate with impunity. Isa's contention, which is also shared by other members of his group, is that some people in power negotiate with the police or the army not to intervene in their besieged communities so as to allow free passage to the Fulani assailants who are merely fulfilling the aspirations of their powerful politicians.

Some participants gesture at the possibility of acquiring arms to protect themselves in the context of the government's failure to safeguard them. However, whatever the justification for possessing weapons, regardless of who is seen to provide such weapons, the ICG (2017) reports that the availability of ammunition in these crises has heightened the human cost and increased the level of insecurity in the area.

Another relevant issue regarding the state intervention in these crises resulted from conversations with government officials. The state officials reiterate the importance of reducing the cost of governance and operating an inclusive democratic government in the chiefdoms. In this sense, the government had moved to reduce the number of district heads in the various chiefdoms of southern Kaduna. The state has also changed the nomenclature of the titles and names of some of the traditional chiefs and their chiefdoms. By using the Islamic or Hausa nomenclature of these areas rather than the ethnic titles, the government believes it is enacting a policy of inclusion of other ethnic groups in the area like the Hausa, Fulani, Igbos, and so on. Many of these groups live in southern Kaduna but are not part of the predominant minority

groups in the region. It is partly for this reason that the government of Nasiru El-Rufai also abrogated the principle of indigeneity in the state.

The ethnic minority groups vehemently oppose these unilateral decisions regarding the reorganization of their jurisdictions. They believe the government is trying to relinquish their hard-won chiefdoms to the suzerainty of the Hausa and Fulani groups. Whatever the good intentions of the government, it hardly helps matters that the proposals were made by a governor that is a Muslim and is considered of Fulani extraction. Most participants conclude that through such policies and interventions, the government is only aggravating ethnoreligious tensions rather than defusing them.

This situation regarding the role of the state in the conflicts in Kaduna also highlights the difficulty of local intervention in intercommunal conflicts where the state fully maintains a monopoly of power and controls the traditional leadership and local institutional structures. This situation explains why people find themselves in a dilemma regarding the role of the state in the conflicts. On the one hand, the people consider themselves agents of their security and stability. On the other hand, they cannot operate or function properly without the state's approval and resources. Consequently, Lucas expects the government to be genuine about its intervention, stating:

What we want is that the government should address the issue effectively.

That we have a situation we have policemen the military is there, but the slaughtering is still going on. So, we do not really know what is happening.

They should allow the military to go into the forest, comb these places, comb the forest, and send these people away or make an arrest. That is what we want.

But that is not done. You will find out that killings are being done less than 500 meters away from where a military base is with heavily armed military men. But people are still being slaughtered. Soldiers are there, but we do not know what they are doing. So, we are becoming so apprehensive with the presence of the military.

Considering Nigeria's history of military rule, the people dread a purely military approach to conflict management. However, some participants fantasize about this military approach, thinking they were in a much safer place during the military regime. They claim it was during the military era that the state was able to rein in excesses of violent conflicts not just in southern Kaduna, but in other parts of the country. This claim, however, is suspect because ethnoreligious conflicts became chronic during that period. The period was also bedevilled by the government's egregious affront on human rights.<sup>19</sup> Even in the current democratic dispensation, academics, journalists, and activists have been—and are being—arrested, unlawfully detained, and even brutalized for checking the excesses of the state authorities both in Kaduna and at the federal level.

Thus, the participants dread the lopsidedness with which the state often attends to conflicts, depending on the ethnoreligious identities of the politicians in power. Moreover, they also think it is the primary duty of the state to safeguard their lives—despite their misgivings about the state's impartiality in the crisis. They argue that the state is needed to fulfill this sole responsibility in order to pave the way for them to rebuild their shattered communities.

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<sup>19</sup> What comes to mind regarding the military era in Nigeria is the set-up and the eventual execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and his compatriots in 1995 during the despotic regime of the late General Sani Abacha. This execution led to Nigeria's pariah status in the international arena. Saro Wiwa led the agitation for the emancipation of the Niger Delta people of Nigeria on whose oil resources the country thrives.

In addition to the suggestions above, few people raise the issue of reviving their Indigenous languages as a way of forging cohesive communal structures conducive for business and social relations. They claim that knowledge of their local languages can serve as a unifying factor with estranged groups. Along these lines, Isa expresses dissatisfaction with the fact that many southern Kaduna people are not fluent in their local languages. He calls on all the leaders in the region to create forums and avenues through which their local languages could be revived.

Isa gives credence to the Anghan chief as a pioneer of the revival of Indigenous languages in Kaduna. Yet he thinks beginning such a noble initiative from the perspective of Biblical translation, as the chief suggested, would not be far-reaching since most people do not read the Bible on a regular basis. Moreover, southern Kaduna minority groups do not all profess the Christian faith. Isa's idea is for the languages to be learned in schools. This is what he had to say on this issue:

If your children learn the language in school, if they learn to read and write your language in school and take even the primary examination in it, then it is guaranteed that literacy in your language will develop and become sustained. Do you not see me with my daughter? The first language she learned was in school, and that is English.

So, it is only now we are trying to make sure that we take her to the village, we start speaking some words to her, gradually develop her vocabulary then see if she can now start using the language. Because at this stage of life, they can speak it, they can learn many languages.

Therefore, Isa thinks that mastering the southern Kaduna local languages can be a great asset to the people. He believes it can foster their quest for mutual understanding, ethnoreligious cohabitation, and economic exchanges among themselves and with other groups in the state.

### **The Peacebuilding Ethnographies of The Fulani in Southern Kaduna**

Several participants began their conversations on peacebuilding by noting the importance of reviving their dormant traditional conflict resolution practices. For example, one academic, Nura, argues that in the past, they addressed issues like cattle encroachments through their district heads who worked collaboratively with disputants to resolve such conflicts. The conflicts are resolved through the payment of compensation, issuing a warning to culprits, or both. He argues that such conflicts hardly degenerated into a violent fracas in the manner they do in recent years.

Lederach (1995) has noted a significant perception of cultural change and transition in several African societies where communities are struggling to maintain and retain their traditional practices in the context of modernization. Thus, Bello, the activist, blames the absence of their traditional practices of conflict resolution on socialization and modernization. He argues that the Fulani were not in the habit of paying compensation in the past because they had a good understanding with other communities. He explains the issue as follows:

If that [payment of compensation] happens, then I do not know. It is very rare. It is just now that people are no longer following tradition. If you destroy someone's farm, you can compensate him. But before, you cannot do it. Because they will feel like it is not a big deal. Sometimes, crisis will arise as a result of that compensation. Most times, it is the issue of extortion. My cow ate one stick of your corn. If we sit to quantify the fertilizer and all

your struggle for that stick of corn it may not surpass 1000 Naira [\$3] and then you tell me to pay 50,000 Naira [\$200].

There are those that destroy crops deliberately, and you will find such in Katsina, Zamfara and the rest. But in southern Kaduna, it is hard to find such kind of thing where people deliberately take cows into your farm. It is not like that. Unless he is asleep or something, but that someone will push his cows like that into someone's farm...no.

Bello believes that if people have a good understanding with each other, they would simply have a dialogue and resolve their differences rather than pay compensation.

Furthermore, the Fulani participants express indignation towards the demonization of their group, and in their defence, Bello outlines these four conflict resolution processes of the group as follows:

Number 1, there is avoidance. If you do something to a Fulani person, they will avoid it, no matter what that thing is. After a while, if you continue to harm him, the second thing [Number 2] he will do is to report you. Number 3 is that he may take flight and leave the place, especially if nothing is being or seen to be done to address the conflict. He will gather his things and go.

If he does not do that, then Number 4, he will retaliate.

Bello identifies these four stages of approaching conflicts among the Fulani to defend charges of "Fulani vengefulness". He argues that these stages are proof that the Fulani often give wrongdoers ample time and space to make amends before they retaliate.

Moreover, the Fulani also has an idea of “negative peace” in their peacebuilding ethnography. Johan Galtung (1967) defines negative peace as the absence of open conflicts or war. According to Bello, negative peace in the Fulani tradition is expressed as follows:

There is something that people call negative peace. Maybe you will understand. You will see people telling you why the Fulani person is holding a stick or knife. This tradition has been like that from the beginning of time because of the cows that we have. All the time you are in the bush. You must be able to protect yourself and cattle anywhere.

Secondly, if a Fulani encounters another Fulani who has a weapon like a stick, knife, or a horn and charm, it is not like I have a stick to come and fight you. But to tell you that I am ready. You too, to tell me that you are ready. So that kind of thing, if it happens, we do not fight.

So, it is in peace we are living. I carry my stick not to beat you, but in case anything comes up. We call it negative peace. Why is it negative? You have a weapon, and I have one; that is where the negativity comes in. If you look at me with my weapon, and I see you with yours, we cannot do anything to each other. I am holding my weapon to deter you from maybe thinking of attacking me or something like that. So, when we have a festival, you will see everyone with his stick, and till we dismiss, you will not have any fight.

Consequently, the absence of war is facilitated by the possession of weapons as a protective strategy.

Another peace resource of the Fulani is their age-old notion of Pulaaku. Iliya, the agro-pastoralist from Anghan land, explains what Pulaaku means saying, “if they say to you, Pulaaku, it means that if I offend you today, you will consider the worth of our parents and value the dignity in yourself and others and treat people right”. Iliya’s assumption is that Pulaaku is a philosophy that imbued and guided their parents’ notions and practices of respect, trust, and dignity with others.

Yunusa, the social activist, also weighs in on the notion of Pulaaku, explaining that “if Fulani people have grudges with you and you call them and say let us do Pulaaku, they will drop whatever it is that may be hurting them. If a Fulani person exercises patience with you even after you have cheated him, it means that he/she is doing Pulaaku”. Yunusa also claims that Pulaaku inspires loyalty from Fulani people because, as he sees it, a Fulani person never forsakes a friend in need.

Some Fulani participants also express reservations with the state’s intervention in their internal affairs. They think that the democratic state system in Nigeria has stunted the development and propagation of their traditional conflict resolution practices. This is what Yusuf had to say on the issue:

It is the government that brought democracy, giving everyone the right to do what they want. That is why these things [conflicts] have become prevalent. But in the past when we had the military, you did not have such kind of rights. If it is in those days, these kinds of things will not be happening. If a thief is arrested and he is taken to the police cell or to court, he will be judged. Now if he is arrested and he gives money, he will be released.

Considering these issues with the state policing, some participants also romanticize the idea of military rule as a remedy to violent intercommunal conflicts. Some of the legacies of the military approach to protracted conflicts in Nigeria include the imposition of endless dusk to dawn curfews, and the declaration of a state of emergency in which security forces would patrol and exercise full control and surveillance of a conflict-ridden area.

Various civilian governments in Nigeria have often favored this military approach. One notable achievement of the military era, however, was the swift containment of potentially spiraling violence. In most cases, this containment often comes at a heavy cost, leading to widespread human casualties and destruction of valued goods. Thus, while people consider the state's intervention crucial for their safety, they have little faith in the capacity and willingness of their politicians to exercise this fundamental responsibility. Hence, at a meeting between leaders of Fulani and other ethnic groups, Daro makes a plea for a "return to the local". He admonishes the people in the following way:

Let us keep government and all these elitist approaches [aside]. All of us are indigenes of southern Kaduna. Just get the stakeholders of such areas to let all of them irrespective of who the person is come to a round table. Let us tell each other the truth. Where did you offend me? I was with your grandfather for so many years we did not do this, why are you doing this now to me, then you now look at my face and tell me that this is where I went wrong, and we resolve this matter and we stay together.

Daro's clarion call for a return to community-based peacemaking approaches is largely based on his conviction and disposition that all southern Kaduna groups are Indigenous to the area. As

such, he insists that they have a responsibility to secure, develop, and sustain the land and the resources therein.

Daro also describes an oath ritual that the Fulani in Ladduga initiated alongside the Bakulu people. He describes the process as follows: “we [the Fulani in Ladduga] and the Ikulu people swore that anybody that is going to cause bloodshed between the two communities, there should be repercussion in his family forever. That is why one of the most peaceful areas in the whole of Kaduna state is Ladduga”. The two participants from Ladduga attest that the area is, indeed, peaceful and they admonish others to visit and do business there.

Furthermore, in keeping with the idea of the “local” and the “spiritual” as the first call of order during conflicts, Kurum, a youth leader, describes a violence and crime deterrence process among the Fulani as follows:

There is something else that we do, if thieves are disturbing you where you are living without control. There is something we call *kombol*, which means the whole town will be on a shutdown and everyone will come together including young people and elders, to pray. Anyone that steals will be caught as this prayer is going on and will be killed if they do not stop stealing. It is not that people will kill them physically, but they will not succeed when they go out to steal. In fact, they will be afraid to go and steal because of the belief in the effectiveness of this prayer.

Both the oath ritual and the *Kombol* serve as deterrence to would-be criminals or perpetrators of violence. Another peace process that Kurum describes is *Wogginore*. The process entails the summoning of culprits for public warning/shaming by constituted authorities or elders. While Daro and Kurum claim that Ladduga has become more peaceful as a result of the oath and the

peaceful disposition of its inhabitants, other communities are doubtful of the veracity of this claim. They contend that the reserve area is a hideout for criminals.

Some participants argue against interfering in the internal affairs of others. They enjoin southern Kaduna communities to resolve their issues through community-based conflict resolution approaches. Daro explains it as follows, “if a conflict happens in Lenak, let the Lenak people and Fulani that live with them deal with their issues. It is none of other persons’ business to come and start fueling crisis where it does not affect them”.

Yusuf supports Daro’s idea, describing how the Fulani resolve their issues within their communities. He says that “if something happens between a Fulani and another Fulani, they call themselves together to sit in the house. They will ask for the forgiveness of the one who has been wronged, and they will let the wrongdoer know their offense and the matter will be settled”. In a focus group discussion, four Fulani men in Bakulu land claim they also empathize with victims or console them for certain grievances or losses that might be considered too grievous to warrant compensation.

With regards to settling disputes with other communities, Yusuf states that “a Fulani person prefers to settle such issues at the community level. That is why, for the Fulani person, if they say they are taking things to the law or police, they will be afraid because they are not used to taking their problems to be addressed by the state legal systems”. Bello argues that the Fulani fear public embarrassment and do not like to take their issue to the police or be disgraced in public at the community level. He shares a method of deterrence that the Fulani often employ to curb criminality or violence as follows:

Before someone is publicly shamed, they are first warned. If they repeat the same offense, they will be warned again. However, a punitive measure will

be administered the third time. The Fulani person does not like anything that has to do with embarrassment. It is better for him to die than to make him feel embarrassed.

So, what usually happens is that if you did something and you are warned and you repeated it and you are warned, the next thing, they will call the entire clan and tell them to let no one talk to you or come around you; you will be banned. They will give a duration of time, but you will not be told how long it will take. The people that will pronounce the decree will not tell anybody. They will say from today, nobody should talk or associate with you, and you will be left on your own.

If you come and meet us, all of us will walk out and leave you. When you come back and plead, it means you have accepted your wrongdoing. And let me tell you, this tradition is practised even with other communities. If a Fulani is affected in Kamantan, for example, the Fulani will say, do not buy even water in Kamantan or associate with anybody from there. If you come close to the place, you will take a leaf and put it in your mouth. Nobody will associate with anybody from that place. In this way, there will be a decline in the economy of the Kamantan people. They will not sell or buy from you. They will not even enter the place, and you will understand that something is wrong until you come back to ask for forgiveness.

Not even your wife or mother is expected to talk to you. If they talk to you, the same punishment will befall them. So, you see, these kinds of punishments are enough to discipline us. But now, socialization has brought

about bad eggs. Sometimes pressure brings about these things. The mistake that people do is to allow themselves to get used to violence.

Despite possessing these rich resources for peacebuilding, participants decry how they have been unable to address their issues in their preferred or default community-based peacemaking and conflict deterrence approaches. They blame this erosion of their traditional conflict resolution practices to the intrusion of the state in their internal affairs. Yusuf says that the police tend to exacerbate the situation when they try to intervene in their conflicts because the state's adjudication procedures are set up in a way as to publicly shame culprits; something the Fulani loathe.

If they had to use the police, Pate and Daudu (2009) argue that the Fulani prefer to go through their intermediary, the MACBAN. They mostly rely on MACBAN to discuss their views and grievances with other communities in the state (Pate & Daudu, 2009). In general, however, the Fulani prefer to address their own issues within the parameters of their communities. Thus, Iliya calls on members of other ethnic communities to take whatever issues they may have with the Fulani to the *ArDOS*, rather than deferring to the state authorities or administering mob justice.

Despite the insistence of most participants on community-based peacemaking approaches, Nura believes the issues the Fulani have with other ethnic groups will have to be addressed holistically, including through the intervention of the state and local leaders. However, he and a few participants blame their religious leaders for inflaming hatred among the different groups in the area. They argue that traditional and religious leaders should only be called upon to intervene in conflicts if they have a track record of good leadership.

In a focus group discussion, three women lend their voices to the possibilities of attaining peaceful relations with other ethnic groups. They argue that in their roles as mothers and wives,

they nurture their children and train them in the way of peace. Thus, they consider themselves as the first peacebuilders in the community. An older lady in the group says that “we have trained our children well, not to incite conflict or problems or touch another person’s property, and we see it in our relationship with them”. Another woman notes that “we teach them good manners, to greet anybody they meet on their way”. Nura and some of the women highlight the need to learn the local languages of the people of southern Kaduna as a way of breaking down communication barriers and strengthening ties among the groups.

Next is a discussion of findings, demonstrating how and where some of these peacebuilding ethnographies and suggestions have worked, why they have failed in certain cases, and how they could be made more relevant to the crisis of belonging in southern Kaduna, and on a broader scale in Nigeria.

### **Key Findings**

For the most part, participants’ ethnographies of peacebuilding are hinged on the values of conviviality, forgiveness, respect for human dignity, trust, hospitality, acceptance, patience, and accommodation. These values inform the people’s ideas about peace and their resilience and agency. The research engages these findings in a thematic format, with the caveat that the issues discussed here are neither fully representative nor fixed processes of peacebuilding across the different communities in Kaduna. The features discussed in this chapter are contextual and dependent on the cultural resources and capacities of the people at a given time and space.

**First: spirituality and rituals.**

The invocation of God features prominently in the people's conceptions of conflicts and peace. Participants attribute certain calamities in their communities to God who, in their reckoning, may have willed such events upon them. It appears, however, that God is used as a short-term escapism or to fill a gap left by the state's apathy or negligence. Yet this idea of "God of the gaps" in which God is brought in as a "*Deus ex machina*" to save the day, should not be used to undermine the people's piousness and devoutness as seen through their oath ritual and the *Kombol*.

Both rituals involve saying a prayer and incurring a curse or the wrath of God on anyone who commits a grievous offense like stoking violent conflicts. Invoking God as an arbiter or a witness in these ceremonies legitimizes the ritual as an effective deterrence to violence. The people invoke God in these rituals in cognizance of their belief in God's comeuppance if they failed to uphold it. The rituals mainly involve the agency of elders who make such supplications while committing their cause to God; hardly are women included in these processes.

While both Anghan and Bakulu chiefdoms have been relatively peaceful in the context of violent conflicts in southern Kaduna, this stability cannot be solely attributed to the oath rituals. Participants from the ethnic minority groups in those places consider themselves to be a besieged community. They also allude to their minority status and the fear of being annihilated if they joined forces with surrounding communities to fight against the Fulani. However, the oath rituals somewhat reveal the people's strong connections to and love for their environment and willingness to protect it.

If the people were not attached to the land or do not love the place in which they call home, they would not have taken the oath—cognizance of their belief in the repercussions of

such an oath before God if they breached it. Thus, the rituals testify to their strong sense of belonging whether as indigenous or autochthonous people of the land. Importantly, the rituals also speak to the people's resolve and willingness to see each other, regardless of identity differences, as worthy and equal denizens of southern Kaduna, and Nigeria as a whole.

If, indeed, the people believe in the potency of such rituals, then their religiosity could be a strong deterrent to violence. Other communities could also sign peace agreements by tapping into this kind of spiritual commitment. The danger is that in the context of continued state apathy and strife, the people's spirituality, accommodation, and proclivity to leave things in God's control may eventually give way to a violent disposition. This destructive possibility is not hard to envisage, particularly in a place like Bakulu land, where the people still harbor grievances over the way Ladduga was carved out of their "ancestral homeland" and given to the Fulani without compensation.

Such an allegation that the Bakulu people were robbed of their land should be investigated. If it can be ascertained that Ladduga was established in Bakulu land without compensating the people, the government will have to find appropriate measures to resolve this issue. Considering that identity conflicts related to territorial claims have so often become intractable, the Bakulu people may have to be compensated for the loss of their land or a serious dialogue process would need to be initiated among the relevant stakeholders to deal with the issue. This dialogue could help to expand the possibilities of the kind of compensatory measures that would be appropriate for the Bakulu people. Such compensation could be in monetary terms, infrastructural development in Bakulu land, and the inclusion of their representatives in the state's political affairs. Barring that, the peace that rituals like the oath-taking are seen to establish could be nothing more than a peace leading to the graveyard.

## **Second: the principle of pulaaku.**

As a concept, Pulaaku defies simple definition. Wilson-Fall (2000) argues that it is an element of Fulani education. It has also been described as the practice of discretion, self-control, reserve, perseverance, honor and dignity (Nyamnjoh, 2013; Wilson-Fall, 2000). Wilson-Fall (2000) also claims that Pulaaku finds expression in the following: not looking at elders in the eyes as a sign of respect, not eating in public (mostly applicable to women) and being soft-spoken. For several Fulani participants, Pulaaku also means treating other people with respect and dignity. In its earlier usage, Francis Nyamnjoh argues that Pulaaku was meant to be a distinctive feature or principle between the Fulani and others, or between genuine and honorable Fulani and those who have been castigated for their mendacity (Nyamnjoh, 2013).

In the same light, some Fulani participants idealize Pulaaku as embodying the virtues of respect, forgiveness, trust, patience, loyalty, and dignity. Thus, Fulani participants argue that Pulaaku is a philosophy of peace and that to live in the way of Pulaaku is to be at peace with oneself and others and to sustain the tradition of peace they claim to have inherited from their ancestors. Thus, contravening the virtues of Pulaaku can be considered destructive to the foundation of this ancestral tradition of friendship.

Furthermore, Francis Nyamnjoh (2013) argues, in relation to the Mbororo Fulani of Cameroon, that the ideals of Pulaaku are meant to keep the group grounded to protect them from the excesses of the demands of the modern state, which are often at odds with the way of the Fulani. This understanding of the role of Pulaaku may partly explain why in the Nigerian case, some people argue that the allure of wealth and the pursuit of political power may have led some of their members to become oblivious of their obligations and education under Pulaaku. The net effect, they claim, is the lack of reverence for human life and dignity.

Yet such negative forms of engagements with others could also mean that Pulaaku can be instrumentalized or politicized by politicians, religious people, and elders. For this purpose, there is a need to not only revive the ideals of Pulaaku as some people suggest but to also know what ideals are being revived and encouraged. Are these ideals of progress, peace, and dignity or of division, exploitation, and criminality?

The Fulani community could select people of high moral compass to compile the values embodied in Pulaaku into a booklet. Such a booklet should be included and used as part of the curricula of primary education for Fulani children, especially in the reserve areas where many of them live. It should also be introduced to other people who might be interested in learning about the ethical culture of the Fulani. This approach could be duplicated by other groups to ensure that their young people grow up with the right kind of ethical and cultural values and principles underscoring the dignity and oneness of humanity, as well as the virtues of respect, honor, and care, which, they believe, constitute the core values of their communities. Conceivably, young people growing up with such values will not only be professionals in their various fields, but will be humane, patriotic, and selfless citizens.

**Third: the Fulani's four stages of conflict resolution and the idea of negative peace.**

The idea that the Fulani is a violent person saturates several people's analysis of conflicts in southern Kaduna. However, some Fulani participants clarify that violence is the *ultima ratio* and occupies the last stage in their conflict resolution four-stage process. The first stage is Conflict Avoidance. In this stage, when someone offends them, they try to avoid the culprit and forget the situation altogether. However, if it persists, the situation advances to the second stage of Reporting.

In the second stage, the culprit is reported to an elder or any person they think might be able to reach out to advise them to change. Closely associated to this stage is the practice of *Wogginore*, in which a public forum is organized by elders to warn a culprit. The embarrassment involved in bringing the culprit to the public forum can be a deterrence to future wrongdoings, since the Fulani naturally abhors public shaming. If this procedure is considered as a potent mechanism for addressing conflicts, it would be expected that the Fulani would encourage this practice considering the destructive behaviors of certain members of their community.

A related practice in the Fulani tradition is banishment. Banishment, in the Fulani's understanding, does not necessarily entail the expulsion of a person from a community, but rendering the person incommunicado. When a person is banished, family members are not allowed to talk with them, or they would be condemned to a similar fate. Bello argues that in some cases, the Fulani also use the idea of banishment in their dealings with people from other communities who may have offended them. By not associating with such people, they reckon they would cause a steep decline to their economy. In this way, banishment becomes their informal sanction against wrongdoers within or outside their communities.

The third stage of the Fulani conflict resolution is Flight. At this stage, the Fulani may decide to abandon the territory where they have been wronged or injured in order to start life anew elsewhere. By taking this measure, they believe they could attain peace through separation from their wrongdoers. The final stage is Retaliation. This is the stage where the Fulani may have had enough and retaliate. Some participants argue that the retaliation might even be worse than the offense. Several Fulani participants call on other people to understand that Fulani people do not simply avenge a wrongdoing without initially following procedures such as warning the culprit or reporting the offense for remedial actions to be taken. They claim that the Fulani group

is not unforgiving, but that those who incur the group's vengeance are the people who often wrong them and fail to ask for their forgiveness.

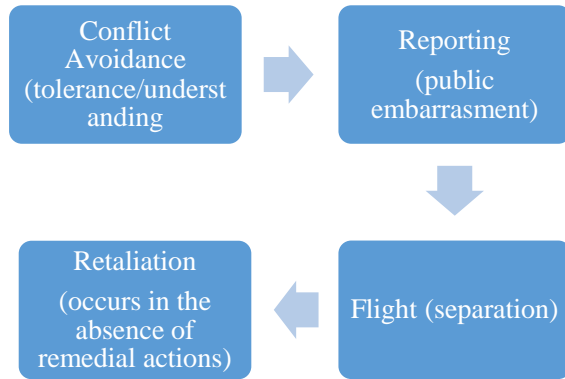


Figure 6: The Four Conflict Resolution stages of the Fulani in Kaduna

Given the evolution of cultural traditions in the current democratic dispensation, with all its constituent state institutions, it is not clear whether many Fulani people in Kaduna still use these four conflict resolution stages to address conflict. What these stages reveal, however, is that the Fulani have a process of addressing wrongdoing, in which retaliation is seen as the last resort or worst-case scenario and not a tactic used to usurp people's land. Yet whether they follow these stages in sequence or not was not gleaned from the empirical data.

The participants from other ethnic groups strongly condemn the Fulani's rationale for using retaliation as a conflict resolution mechanism. If, as several Fulani participants claim, the group is God-fearing and often forgives wrongdoing or engages with wrongdoers through its conflict resolution or peacemaking approaches as outlined above, then retaliation seems hardly necessary as a conflict remedial approach. Since the resolution of conflict generally aims at healing relationships and building societal harmony, it seems rather contradictory to include

retaliation into such a pacifist process. Taking lives or killing other people for an offence committed against one's group is never a solution but a statement of war, which further opens a vicious cycle of conflicts.

A Fulani participant also discusses another peacebuilding tactic called "Negative Peace". In PACS, negative peace is used to mean the absence of direct physical violence (Galtung, 1967). This idea is similar in the Fulani tradition, although the delicate balance is that the Fulani comprehend the absence of violence as a direct consequence of the availability of crude weapons to prevent the onset of violence. This practice may explain why some Fulani people carry sticks or knives while grazing cattle. Such a practice, however, can be susceptible to exploitation. There are possibilities that some people might be using such weapons to attack others, especially when those who wield them are deployed as mercenaries by powerful people and groups. Moreover, given the incessant volatile situation in some parts of southern Kaduna, wielding weapons during social events could transmit a very negative message. It can also instill fear in other groups, with all the distraught vigilance that comes with it. Accordingly, what is understood as a source of negative peace, could potentially be a recipe for war.

#### **Fourth: Establishing grazing reserves or cattle ranches: A Hobson Choice?**

The issue of establishing grazing reserves or ranching as a system of animal husbandry is core to the crisis of belonging in Kaduna. Those who opt for ranching as a solution to this crisis contend that the Fulani practice of open grazing is archaic, anachronistic, and destructive to other people's means of livelihood, especially those whose economic mainstay is farming. They reject the recommendation by the Federal government to set up grazing reserve areas or cattle colonies for pastoralists in parts of the country.

Moreover, Azaigba (2018) contends that establishing grazing reserves is not practical in the context of ever shrinking agricultural land due to climate change and overpopulation. It is not surprising then that the Ladduga reserve area has been a source of animosity between the Fulani and other ethnic groups, particularly the Bakulu community. The minority ethnic groups suggest that the ranching system would curtail the persistent protracted conflicts over cattle encroachments on farmlands, reduce their anxiety over the Fulani's purported expansionist aim, and could lead to better meat and dairy yields. They cite the case of other countries—like the United States and Canada where such ranches have been set up to great effects—to underline the potential utility of cattle ranching in Nigeria.

Fulani participants strongly oppose the idea of ranching. They maintain that the government should establish more reserve areas and gazette the established ones as stipulated under the 1965 Grazing Reserve Law. It appears that out of the 17 established reserve areas in the state, only the Gayan and Ladduga reserves in Birnin Gwari and Zangon Kataf LGAs, respectively, have been gazetted (KSPCR, 2015). Given their disposition to land as a free God-given resource, the Fulani oppose the idea of ranching because it would entail buying land—the free “God-given” resource—from other ethnic groups. Buying such lands from the ethnic minority groups to set up ranches would also imply the Fulani's acquiescence to their perceived settler-stranger status.

Establishing more reserve areas may have the potential to resolve conflicts over encroachments or cultivation of cattle routes. Such reserves may also help to prevent conflicts by providing permanent settlements for Fulani to graze their cattle on and engage in their socioeconomic activities without inflicting damages on the economy of other ethnic groups. Few Fulani participants conceive of their migration to Ladduga—in the context of enduring conflicts

in southern Kaduna—as a divine plan to resettle them at a place they can call home. Some regard this migration as a way of shielding themselves from violent attacks by the aggressive “peoples of the soil”. However, it is not clear whether the gazetted reserve areas are being used for the purposes they were created. The reserve areas have also not restricted the movements of cattle into the farmlands of other groups. Some participants express concerns over the way the reserves have been hijacked by Fulani elite. In this context, the ordinary Fulani, lacking land space for grazing and farming, would wander far afield, and potentially encroach on farmlands belonging to other groups and ignite conflict in the process.

Moreover, the relocation of Fulani families to reserve areas like Ladduga might not bring about the peace and stability these communities anticipate. The migrations may further create distance between these groups. Consequently, the existence of segregated quarters would deepen the enmity and widen the chasm between these communities as it has done in many segregated societies like Cyprus and Northern Ireland. More worrisome is the possibility that non-Fulani groups would continue to be aggrieved at the government for giving out their homelands to Fulani communities. This situation can stoke tension that may explode into violent unrests.

On the other hand, efforts at erecting ranches in Nigeria have been met with serious challenges of maintenance, land acquisition, as well as persuading pastoralists to adopt the ranching system. The Kaduna State Peace Committee reports that much of the government established ranches were closed down more than 20 years ago (KSPCR, 2015). Some participants believe that some pastoralists were responsible for shutting down these ranches by intentionally destroying the facilities to express their disapproval of the system. However, these issues hardly explain away the possibility of establishing cattle ranches in Nigeria.

One plausible option might be for the people to find a way of creating temporary ranches for animal owners. When operating these types of ranches, there should be flexibility and allowance for animals to feed off of crop residues during dry seasons while providing organic manure to farmers. In so doing, the mobility of the cattle could address the issue of land degradation that may be caused by restricting the movement of cattle through ranches (Azaigba, 2018). The strategy of erecting temporary ranches could also sustain the mutual codependence of these communities in terms of their social and economic welfare and interactions. Azaigba (2018) contends that the government may be needed to cushion the financial implications of the ranching system to enable pastoralists to provide adequate feed and water to their cattle.

All told, the aspirations of the Fulani to have more reserve areas must also be seriously discussed to understand why the group has held on to this option and what it might need to do to consider alternative practices of negotiating space. Other ethnic groups must also be part of these deliberations and, together with the Fulani, they can negotiate some form of settlements by adopting their techniques of land sharing and accommodation, taking into cognizance shrinking land space, including issues of land inheritance and a growing population. However, to reach this mutual accommodation, all sides of the divides in southern Kaduna may need to expand their ideological dispositions and worldviews on belonging. This engagement and expansion of the groups' ideology could form an integral part of the processes of "space-making" needed to unlock the possibility of a shared future.

#### **Fifth: the role of elders and emerging peace actors.**

Relying on elders or parents to problem solve conflicts is partly based on the assumption that such people are more knowledgeable about their culture and history. The Fulani argue that it

is only when certain issues become too cumbersome to resolve for parents or elders within the household that they defer to their chiefs, and infrequently to local state authorities. The minority ethnic groups also involve their traditional chiefs to resolve conflicts, especially when such conflicts are of high priority. Such issues could range from large-scale violence to potential security crisis resulting from land claims and territorial disputes. In such matters, as Gearoid Millar (2017) has observed in Sierra Leone, “chiefs hold the memory of what family farms what land, how long they have farmed that particular plot, and the details of any land exchanges” (p. 297).

However, there is the customary handwringing about the alleged complicity of chiefs and elders in instigating violence, spreading hate speeches or indoctrinating young people through provocative teachings and sermons. The “local”, as a peacebuilding terrain, is not an untainted jurisdiction because despite the assumption that elders are custodians of culture, their ideas and views about peacemaking may not necessarily reflect the cultural worldviews of their communities. Compounding matters is that most of the elders and chiefs that are involved in peacemaking are often men. This reality indicates that peacebuilding at the local level is infused with patriarchal ideas, devoid of the agency of women and youth as well as other minority groups such as ex-combatants, and people living with disabilities.

Besides, given that wars and conflicts can diminish the potency of traditional or cultural modes of peace, it is possible that what is often labeled as “returns to traditions” in the aftermath of conflict “may, in fact, be inventions, recalled or resurrected ideas layered on and informed by new information” (Culbertson & Pouligny, 2007, p. 274). Thus, there are gaps to be addressed by southern Kaduna chiefs. Some of these gaps include their physical accessibility to ordinary people and working with the people to create programs and projects that will build on the

conviviality existing among the disparate groups in Kaduna. They will also need to give young people and women greater freedom and opportunity to lead some important and innovative initiatives of peace.

The conflicts in southern Kaduna have led to the emergence of other peace actors among young people, women, and children whose efforts have been circumscribed by the government's clampdown on activists. Many of them operate under the auspices of key social organizations like SOKAPU and MACBAN. Some are also actively mobilizing for peace through social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and blogging websites. They use these sites to document the sources of conflicts and prospects for peace in their communities.

In certain instances, these emerging peace actors animate their communities to resist the incursion of the state in their internal affairs. An example is the peaceful protests that many young people staged in Abuja and Kaduna in early 2019 over the unlawful detention by the Kaduna state government of high-profile traditional personalities, elders, and young activists from southern Kaduna. These peace actors are also providing social services like healthcare, farmlands, clean water, business infrastructures, dispute resolution channels, educational scholarships to orphans of the conflicts, and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

Many are also acting as volunteers in IDPs' camps, providing the social and educational needs of the afflicted. Poignantly, the state has been using its security forces, who lack local sensibilities, to brutally attack some of these actors for alleged subversive tendencies and incendiary speeches or write-ups. Others are emotionally blackmailed into silence or retrenched from the civil service. The clampdown on intellectuals and liberation thinkers has been a recurring decimal in several African countries and elsewhere. In the early periods of nationalists' struggles in most African countries, Amina Mama (2007) explains that intellectuals who

displayed some form of integrity and courage to challenge or critique the despotic postcolonial states were intimidated, harassed, and rendered useless.

Indeed, there is a need to pay attention to the ways that certain people at the grassroots might be creating hate speeches, documenting false narratives about others through public and social media platforms or through uncritical advocacy of their predicaments. However, such scrutiny should be carried out with respect for people's freedom of speech and expression; otherwise the state may be sowing seeds of discontent and internal rebellion.

Further, it is not only the creative or so-called progressive people or "non-sectarian voices from below" (Newman, 2009, p. 37) that can engage in peace activism and dialogue. Some notable examples of peace agreements the world over have revealed that without the inclusion of warlords and militias—the so-called peace spoilers—such peace deals are unlikely to yield the desired results.

Thus, both locally-established actors (such as parents, chiefs, and local state authorities) and emerging peace actors (like young people and women) in southern Kaduna must approach their tasks with the realization that there are hardliners in their communities who are also relevant and are integral parts of the peacebuilding processes in the state. Their incendiary remarks or extremist positions can be tapered off by a willingness to give them space to express their grievances and communicate under what conditions they might be willing to give up violence, embrace others, and contribute to the processes of reconciliation in their communities.

#### **Sixth: the role of the state and external actors.**

One of the primary responsibilities of the state is to protect its citizens against mass killings and destruction of their properties. However, the people of southern Kaduna seem averse

to the state involvement in their conflicts. This aversion is because of their perception of the state as corrupt and partial in its dealings with conflicting parties. They argue that the state's intervention in conflicts promotes ignominy that destroys their relationships and societal harmony. However, because of the breakdown of the local and traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, the police, courts, and local political leaders are often relied on to fill this role (EWD Thematic Report, 2019).

According to the ICG (2017), the Fulani community despises corrupt institutions and long court cases. They are also suspicious of state policies that favor sedentary communities. They resent "reported cases of corruption, protracted court processes immobilizing herds, and the perception of partisanship by local political leaders in an environment where farmers are more likely to be registered as voters in the Middle Belt states" (EWD Thematic Report, 2019, p. 5). Similarly, other ethnic minority groups perceive the state's intervention as advancing the Fulani's socioeconomic wellbeing and political aspirations.

In Kaduna state, the administrative expenses of the chiefs and emirs are largely borne by the state. Thus, the state has prodigious power and can make unilateral decisions about how the emirates or the chiefdoms should operate. The state also appoints the chiefs and district heads in these chiefdoms, some of whom may have been nominated by their local councils. In recent years, however, the state has been saddled with high administrative costs of running these chiefdoms, thus justifying its intervention to reduce the administrative heads of the chiefdoms.

However, rather than taking on such measures and risk widening the gap between government authorities and local people, the state could have chosen to allow the people to take on the financial and administrative responsibilities of governing their chiefdoms. If the people's

agitations for self-autonomy and liberation were to be fulfilled, taking charge of the governing affairs of their chiefdoms may be a plausible step forward in that direction.

Alternatively, the people can engage in a form of legitimate resistance to the despotism of the state. Although the state seems a viable actor that can sustain and fulfill the administrative functioning of local governance structures in Nigeria, with adequate investment and change of attitude from preoccupation with material wealth and profligacy, this responsibility need not be too expensive as to be wholly or even dependent on the state.

Given the liberation struggles of the ethnic minority groups in Kaduna and the tyranny they have endured under the state system, the separation of the people's local governance structures from the state may allow them to attain a sense of autonomy, restore their sense of pride, and sustain their historical traditions. As some recounted, this separation could also mean the creation of an independent state for the minority ethnic groups to govern their own affairs.

However, the creation of a state is not a solution to marginalization or oppression. Moreover, if a state is created for these groups, they will have to generate their own revenue from their local resources of agriculture and minerals and not be solely reliant on the federal revenue. They will also have to deal with their own internal differences and rivalry that will likely surface as soon as they gain the independence for which they are agitating.

Their most promising option is to take over the financial and administrative obligations of their chiefdoms. The purpose of this potential decoupling of traditional institutions from the state is neither to idealize nor venerate the "local"; for it is not an untainted and peaceful domain. It does not also mean that we should give up hope on the role of the state to proffer solutions to local problems. The argument for a possible disentangling of traditional institutions from the state is only to offer an alternative and show that as incapacitated and corrupt as the local might

be, its autonomy and liberation might be the key that will release the people's agency and creativity from the exploitations, single-narratives, and incursions of political elite (MacGinty, 2017). This liberation would allow local people to operate a modest, ethical, form of local governance and deliver on local services of local security, entrepreneurship, and conflict resolution.

Although such form of local governance will take time to develop and be responsive to the people's needs, PACS must continue to question the primacy of the postcolonial state, and its attendant liberal practices like elections as the only way of ensuring stability or regime change. The dysfunctional nature of the postcolonial state and its peculiar ethnic character and politics are not amenable to such a system. Research in this discipline must continue to interrogate how people can carve out hidden spaces of nurturing peace to counteract the intrusion, oppression, and fragility of the postcolonial state (Leonardson & Rudd, 2015). If local peacebuilding must align with the state's principles, there is a need to restructure the postcolonial state to become more congruent to local realities.

At the federal level, there have been various attempts by the Buhari administration to carve out areas in the country for Fulani communities to tend their cattle. Whatever the intentions of the government, some people fear such action would constitute a continuation of Fulani "colonialism" or oligarchy. Due to the public outrage against the plan, the government suspended it. Yet the people's confidence in the capacity and willingness of the state to protect them and enact genuine programs of reconciliation has drastically waned or eroded. In such instance where tyranny is seen to epitomize the state's paradigm of peace, Victoria Fontan asks this question: "Why are we even surprised when peace operations turn violent toward populations they are supposed to protect" (2012, p. 69).

Excessive interference by the state in local affairs could either solidify the people's resolve to act decisively in their matters as they lose trust in the capacity of the state to protect them or bring about apathy and disillusionment on the part of those who feel neglected by the state. Some of these groups are considering other outlets of protection and succor and have found such in their ethnoreligious communities. The people's religious or ethnic communities can perform multifaceted functions as sources of social security, moral compass, ideology, identity, and political competition (Ehrhardt & Mustapha, 2018).

In a situation where people pay more respect and aligned with their groups than the state, a downward spiral towards anarchy and chaos may not be a distant reality. Within this context, groups could also look on to the international community for respite. Some participants who reckon that their group interests are not upheld by the state, are appealing and calling on external actors like the UN and leading world countries to halt the violence they face or at the very least to deplore and condemn such atrocities.

Perhaps an instructive question regarding external intervention in intercommunal conflicts is: "what happens when the refugees have returned, the immediate, infrastructural rebuilding has been done, the aid agencies have all gone away, and people are left on their own" (Last, 2000, p. 378). This question may be hypothetical as it is debatable whether aid agencies really do leave conflict contexts when they come in.

To be sure, external support can be crucial in a context where civilians are not protected by their state due to weakening or conflict complicity issues. Aid agencies could also provide much-needed health care services, food, and shelter to people struggling with the devastating impacts of conflicts and diseases. International institutions like the UN may also need to

condemn atrocities against civilians and assist communities to check and balance the aggression or dominance of their state (Richmond, 2018).

Importantly, however, people who understand their issues and the need to liberate themselves from all forms of oppression and violence are those who are responsible for spearheading the major peacebuilding work on the ground. These are the people who remain in the conflict site prior to and long after state authorities or external actors have come and gone.

The southern Kaduna people's knack for survival and mettle are powerful demonstration of their human agency. They have shown strong resilience and willingness to rebuild their trust and restore their sense of community. They need the space to express, demonstrate, and consolidate the qualities of their peacebuilding resources. The creation of such a space for renewal and healing is important because the people's local resources for peacebuilding would require some form of renaissance in the context of enduring conflicts. The state and international community can help to create such safe spaces where people can gradually develop their agency, build confidence and trust in themselves and their local peacebuilding resources, and transform their own communities themselves.

#### **Seventh: the formation of peace committees.**

Most participants were keen on finding out why the Anghan chiefdom has been relatively peaceful when other areas were stricken by conflicts. People from Anghan land point out that the Chief's love for peace and his spiritual leadership have been vital to their stability. They praise him for his strong and decisive leadership skills. They also credit him for being vocal against violence and establishing initiatives for peace including the ritual of the oath and a peace committee. Karfe considers the creation of the peace committee a visionary act that has fostered

cordiality among its members. The committee has given them the platform to work and be seen to work together for a common goal.

Karfe explains that this committee comprises both Fulani and non-Fulani members and that they regularly sit together to discuss various peace initiatives that are congruent to the issues they face in the chieftdom. He discusses some of the modalities used by this community including giving instructions about how to welcome foreigners or visitors into the community and inducting them into the ways of the land to avoid conflicts with settled populations.

Members of the committee are also expected to report any act of misconduct they may observe in the area. By proffering such regulations for foreigners, especially migrant Fulani, Karfe believes the committee can help his community to remain vigilant of foreign incursions and the presence of visitors and ensure that such visitors abide by the laws of the land. In this way, the peace committee also serves as some sort of a security watchdog.

This peace committee has also been established in Sanga LGA. In a village in Sanga, the Fulani set up a committee to monitor the activities of pastoralists and report any misconduct to their relevant authorities (Barkindo et al., 2017). While it is not clear whether other chieftdoms have such kinds of initiatives and to what extent the committees are effective, it would be advantageous if it were replicated in the whole of southern Kaduna communities. The creation of such an entity in the area can form a unifying avenue for the Fulani and non-Fulani groups in such communities to work together for a common purpose. However, regular monitoring and evaluation of the activities of such a committee should also be conducted to assess its successes, limitations, and potentials for growth.

### **Eight: the role of women.**

Men are the default peacebuilding facilitators in southern Kaduna, and women play peripheral roles. Women often perform domestic chores and informal economic activities like selling farm and animal products, and homemade commodities. However, it is at the domestic level that some Fulani women situate their peacebuilding duties. For some of these women, the main task of peace entails the inculcation of the values of discipline, respect, and responsibility in their children. The women accept their responsibilities as mothers, wives, and role models to their children.

While these women express no misgivings about their isolation or exclusion in intergroup dialogues or mediation, they possess invaluable skills on managing diversity in a multicultural society. They can impart such skills on conflicting groups, particularly young people. This insight is apposite because of women's experience as first educators to children. Moreover, as compared to men, women are often renowned for possessing conciliatory qualities of care, generosity, forgiveness, and a sense of community (Sexty, 2017).

Women's low participation in direct violent conflicts also means they may have some insightful alternative approaches to war. As Paul Zeleza (2008) argues, "wars militaries are critical mechanisms for the production and performance of masculinities" (p. 20) and women are often the victims. Their victimhood in conflicts notwithstanding, they are also active agents in some ways. Undoubtedly, women play some role—as supporters, masterminds, or combatants—in waging war. Nonetheless, their combative role is quite marginal in relation to men. The devastating effects of war on women and the marginal role they play in it can be empowering for them, especially where they mobilize as groups to assist victims to recover and rebuild communities (Zeleza, 2008).

There is also a sense to which, despite the patriarchal nature of most communities in southern Kaduna, women do command respect, if not reverence, in their roles as mothers and wives. In several cultures in southern Kaduna, being disrespectful towards a mother is considered ominous and devastating for the person's future actualizations. Thus, if southern Kaduna women engage in peace sensitization and intergroup dialogue with victims and perpetrators of violence, they may have some appreciable impact on these processes. They can persuade hardliners, particularly young people, to renounce violence.

Southern Kaduna women have also cooperated with each other in doing various businesses, despite their competing interests. Hence, they know more about other groups' languages and socioeconomic situations than most men in the area do. In this way, they can come to conflict resolution processes to teach their communities about their experience of intergroup activities at the informal economic and social levels. It is mostly at these levels that they are more conversant with the dynamics of human and business relations.

Such knowledge and their own successes and challenges of living and doing business with people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds can be illuminating for building and sustaining cooperative ventures between conflicting groups. Therefore, more women are needed to be part of the peace processes in southern Kaduna. They must be consciously included in these processes, and they will also have to impress their presence and actions at such forums.

#### **Ninth: knowledge of the indigenous languages/intermarriages.**

Participants from all sides of the conflict argue for the need to learn each other's languages as a potential peacebuilding tool. They reckon that learning each other's languages is an indication of their solidarity, acceptance, and willingness to understand and integrate with

other cultures. Several Fulani participants share about their intermarriages with women from other ethnic groups through mastery of their languages. Such intermarriages, and other personal relationships, are partly revealing of the level of integration and openness among these communities.

This openness and integration have facilitated the groups' peaceful coexistence in some quarters. Although, the religious conditions and cultural worldviews of Fulani Muslims give them more leverage to marry Christian women from other ethnic minority groups; a Christian man would have to convert to Islam in order to be considered eligible to marry a Muslim Fulani or Hausa woman. Such condition is not applicable to the Fulani or Hausa Muslim man who wishes to marry a Christian woman.

The Kaduna Peace Committee Report argues that despite the potential of intermarriages in strengthening positive contact and bonds among the conflicting groups in Kaduna, these communities must guard against the open and provocative celebrations of such marriages, particularly where it entails the forceful or willing conversion of Christian women into Islam (KSPCR, 2015). Such provocative celebrations can stir serious conflict at the family or community level.

Moreover, since these communities participate in numerous businesses, their knowledge of each other's languages brings about ease of communication on market days and at social events. As already stated, women are more knowledgeable in the languages of other communities. They actively participate in trade, intergroup marriages, and other social activities with other groups at the level of the community. Thus, women can be great language teachers to their children. They can also serve as good examples of why learning other people's languages is important for building harmonious social and business relationships.

In any event, the fact that these communities lay strong emphasis on the use of language as a tool for social and spatial integration means there is a need to forge even stronger avenues to study their languages through cultural exchanges and cross-community programs at schools, homes, community centers, and religious places. Learning one's language and those of other groups may create the basis for positive contact, narrow the spatial gap between the different ethnic groups in the area, and heal deep-seated divisions and mistrust among them. Such an endeavor can also ensure the survival of their local languages in an increasingly threatening globalizing world.

In summary, some of the peace ethnographies of the people of southern Kaduna include: the rituals of oath-taking, which demonstrate the people's love for the land; the renewal of their conflict resolution processes, which restores their confidence in their local peacemaking mechanisms and strengthens the social fabric of their society; the establishment of peace committees to serve as security watchdogs; the inclusion of women brings their nurturing skills and expertise in intercommunal relations into peace processes; the delicate choice of establishing grazing reserves or cattle ranches for pastoralists in view of the people's land sharing and space-making techniques; the Fulani practice of "Negative Peace" as a form of deterrence.

Other processes include the revival of the principle of Pulaaku among young people to accentuate the value and dignity of human life; the advent of emerging peace actors using social media activism to call attention to their plights and reach out to people in need; the role of the state and external communities protecting civilians from atrocities and creating safe spaces for people to recover; and the revival of their indigenous languages as a means of understanding and accommodating each other, and ensuring the sustainability of their Indigenous heritages.

## **Conclusion**

Not infrequently, in the urgency to proffer quick solutions to conflicts, people's agential approaches to peacebuilding and resilience are often overlooked. What this chapter has tried to do is to document and examine people's everyday peacebuilding resources that may be useful for responding to conflicts over the crisis of belonging in Kaduna.

Participants were generally passionate about their involvement in the research as an opportunity to tell their stories and proffer context-relevant conflict resolution and peacemaking strategies. These strategies are hinged on their spirituality, cosmology, sociomoral compass, and economic exchanges. They are also grounded in the people's values of respect, human dignity, trust, acceptance, hospitality, and a general appreciation of their shared humanity. These values, although utilized in varying degrees, are a testament to the fact that people are neither dormant receivers of ideas and support nor lethargic bystanders in their recovery and reconciliation processes.

The agency of the people does not also imply the outright dismissal of the liberal or hybrid peacebuilding models nor does it relegate the state's responsibility to protect them against atrocities. Most participants hoped the state and the international community would be proactive in halting the surge of violent conflicts in their communities. In a situation of stability and non-killing, secured through the state or international intervention, the conflicting groups in Kaduna seemed determined, willing and poised to build the peace they want for their communities as they have often done with or without the state's or external support.

Although several participants initially painted a bleak picture of intercommunal life in Kaduna, they mostly ended their narratives on a positive note. The people's actions and willingness to transform their societies even while living on the margins without much assistance from the state and external actors challenge perceptions in some quarters of seeing conflict-

affected groups as lacking in knowledge and capacity to respond to or cope with violent conflicts (Autesserre, 2017; Nordstrom, 2004).

It is a truism that conflict-stricken populations are often in a survival mode, struggling to meet their basic needs of food, shelter, and safety (Lederach, 1997). Yet, such people have also proven resilient in the face of tyranny (Nordstrom & Robben, 1995). Richmond (2018) contends that “local actors are hard-working, ingenious, networked and resilient, empowered by low-level solidarity, even if they are exposed, isolated, vulnerable and relatively weak” (p. 18). Therefore, there is so much to learn from the expressions of such valor and resilience by conflict-afflicted populations in postcolonial societies.

In many of these societies, the state structures and institutions of law, governance, and order are weak, non-existent or complicit in conflicts. In this context, the people have a sense of moral obligation and responsibility to look after themselves in the most dignifying way. Given appropriate investment in time and resources, people’s resilient efforts at creating community-based conflict transformation strategies that are context-specific and sensitive to local dynamics have the potential to serve as first response (Hayman, 2015) and as sustainable means of managing intercommunal conflicts. If properly nurtured and utilized, people-centred peacebuilding approaches can complement the institutions of the state and potentially inspire liberal peacebuilding techniques (Elfversson, 2011).

## **Chapter Eight**

### **General Conclusion and Recommendations**

#### **Introduction**

This concluding chapter summarizes the research findings and provides some recommendations congruent with the issues that emanated from the people's conflicting and complementary relationships and their peacebuilding ethnographies. The chapter further enumerates the significance of the research for other postcolonial states and for PACS. Some limitations were identified as possible pathways to future research. A section on peacebuilding action strategies precedes the concluding thoughts.

#### **Overall Key Findings**

This research is largely informed by the author's experience of, and research on intercommunal conflicts and peacebuilding in southern Kaduna, Nigeria. It is a response to the prevailing public perceptions and body of scholarly theories about the conflicts. Several scholarships on the nature of conflicts in Kaduna and West Africa are embedded with half-truths, bigotry, and ingrained stereotypes about the Fulani and other ethnic minority communities. The heavy material and the immaterial toll of these conflicts and the way in which the conflicts have smoldered reinforced the need for a substantial representation of the issues through the stories of the communities in Kaduna.

Informed by a multi-method research design including storytelling, auto-ethnography, and critical qualitative methods, the research examined the conceptions and idealizations of the issues that instigate conflicts between the Fulani and other ethnic minority groups in Kaduna. Through the people's stories, the author's experience, and observations, the research argued that

the conflicts are mostly sponsored by how the different communities in Kaduna idealize their relationship—in terms of how they understand and imagine their sense of belonging and perceive their rights and entitlements—in relation to each other and to the land.

Some of the issues embodied in the groups' idealizations of belonging include the encroachments of Fulani cattle on other communities' ancestral land; the cultivation of Fulani cattle routes by minority ethnic groups; the perception of the expansionist and jihadist tendency of the Fulani and their hegemony in Nigeria; the attempts by governments at the state and federal levels to establish and gazette grazing reserve areas and Rural Grazing Areas (RUGAs) for Fulani in territories that other groups consider their ancestral homelands; the destruction or dormancy of the groups' conflict resolution strategies through negligence, conflicts, and state orthodoxy; and other criminal activities such as banditry and kidnapping for ransom.

The main finding of the research is that the nature of the conflicts in Kaduna, occurring because of the foregoing factors, has accreted around controversies over Indigenous, nomadic, and autochthonous claims of belonging. The ethnic minority groups mostly identified as Indigenous-autochthones, when conceived as such, maintained they have organic rights and “dead certainty” (Appadurai, 1998) of their originality and rootedness in the physical and immaterial space of southern Kaduna. Their perceived default status as first comers or people of the soil is seen to accord them full rights and privileges as landowners. The research found that the groups couched their Indigenous-autochthonous notion of belonging as a response or reaction to their perceived or real loss of autonomy to the hegemony of the Fulani in their jurisdictions.

Based on their ideological stance in relation to land, some of the ethnic minority groups considered the Fulani as foreigners and outsiders who nurture the ambition of usurping their resources and birthright. They used the history of the jihad, alongside British colonialism, as

reference points for Fulani's violent and continued dominance of other Nigerian ethnic groups. This reality is why other groups viewed the attempt by the Nigerian federal government, as well as the Kaduna state government, to establish more reserve areas for the Fulani as the continuation of Fulani jihad and oligarchy by other means.

Another related finding is that the so-called Fulani "settlers" and "foreigners" equally imagined themselves as Indigenous-citizens—rousing the question of who has right to occupy their space up north where they also claim kinship? The Fulani defined their indigeneity in terms of their citizenship in Nigeria. According to them, this citizenship status conferred on them indigeneity rights in places of their birth and residence. This disposition is similar to the "civic form of belonging" discussed in the case of Kano by David Ehrhardt (2017). In Kano, different groups consider their sense of belonging in the state based on their civic responsibilities, residency, and shared Nigerian citizenship.

Then there is also the nomadic-cosmopolitan idea of indigeneity to which some Fulani participants subscribed. They comprehended their sense of belonging as a spiritual reality based on the assumption that land is a God-given resource to be used by all peoples in time and space. As nomadic or cosmopolitan indigenes, these participants believed the Fulani have a divine right to move about and use any land they could access. Some also considered themselves unique in the eyes of a God who cares to deliver them from oppression by relocating them to safe places such as the Ladduga reserve area.

However, other ethnic groups found this cosmopolitan idea of belonging displeasing and threatening to their ancestral land claims and status. They considered the Fulani nomadic-cosmopolitan notion of belonging a ploy by the group to exert control in the area and eviscerate them through the exploitation of the name of God. It is worth stating that the crisis of belonging

in Kaduna and intercommunal conflicts in Nigeria generally are not unconnected with the rise of Wahhabis Islam and Christian Pentecostalism. Over the past decades or so, groups belonging to either faith have, at different points in their history, espoused violent ideologies of exclusion, group-pride, and isolationism. Such violent ideologies often represent other groups as subjects of derision, threat, and fear. Extremist Islamic movements and strands of Pentecostal Churches flood the streets of Nigeria. They brainwash people and provide pseudo religious relief for their followers in the light of the country's economic hardships. Some of these pseudo-religious organizations are providing ostensibly miraculous quick fixes to the people's social and physical ills.

Beyond the religious coloration of the conflicts, the research also found that the cosmopolitan idea of belonging that is espoused by the Fulani also evoked an implicit ideology of domination and conquest. This ideology is reminiscent of Dan Fodio's jihad. It is argued that this form of idealization of belonging reduces the status of other ethnic minority groups to "internal diasporas" in places they call their homelands. As internal diasporas, these groups constantly seek a return not only to what they perceive as their geographic homelands but also to the idea of their autonomy and freedom.

Considering the divergent material, psychosocial and political rationale for the violence of belonging, it seems that the struggle between the conflicting groups in Kaduna is partly a struggle for natural resources, power, autonomy, and spiritual connections to a homeland. It is a struggle for social justice and inclusion by the ethnic minority groups in a place they regard as their only home. It is in this homeland that they anticipate a renewed sense of freedom where they can have constant access to their "entitled" and endowed resources of land, vegetation, and other dividends appertaining to the democratic era. The struggle for the Fulani is the same: the

group wants to remain relevant and perpetuate itself as a community with citizenship and Indigenous rights not only in southern Kaduna but in other areas of the federation as well.

Another finding of the research is that the crisis of belonging in southern Kaduna is a symptom of a larger problem within the postcolonial African state. The African state seems to rely almost entirely on the borrowed liberal democratic idea of the Global North without propounding nor operating within a workable philosophy of its own. This postcolonial environment creates nervousness and paranoia among different groups in the continent. This situation is compounded by the fact that the state's structures and institutions are controlled by the favored, powerful, and more dominant groups. Perhaps, in a different sociopolitical and economic climate, the conflicting groups in Kaduna may idealize their relationship to the land and to each other in an inclusive manner than what obtains in the status quo.

Thus, it is important to explain the groups' dissension in southern Kaduna not as something absolute, but as a response to the complexities of their identities and evolution in a dynamic environment of uncertainty and becoming. The continued coexistence of southern Kaduna's conflicting groups will depend on how they manage to negotiate these complex identities and their opposing notions of space, place, and nationhood. On the notion of space, the groups' prospects of peace lie in their ability to expand their ideological views about land in a way that respects and include members of other groups into their cosmological worldview. Such process of space-making can be an antidote to forging an inclusive environment where land sharing and identification are not based on what group is considered the first comer or whose members are people of the soil. Rather, such practices will be based on the dignity of people as legitimate entities in and of themselves.

Compared to other African countries like Rwanda and Congo where the crisis of belonging has birthed virulent conflicts, people do not consciously latch on to autochthony or indigeneity discourses to inflict violence against each other in Kaduna. The conflicts between the Fulani and other ethnic groups often begin due to issues like grazing rights, the persistent encroachments of cattle on farmlands, and the cultivation of designated cattle routes. Within the context of these commotions lies buried the undertones and overtures of the crisis of belonging. In other words, once conflicts over such material issues begin, they become intertwined with and interpreted based on claims and counterclaims of belonging. The invocation of these contested claims of belonging then becomes the very substance that sustains the conflicts.

The foregoing means there are structural factors triggering the crisis of belonging in Kaduna. These factors are highly dependent on people's perceptions of the "other" in relation to tangible and intangible issues of land, resources, and power. The fact that only certain people engage in conflicts over these issues is also telling of the complex nature of intercommunal life in postcolonial societies. There are moderates, hardliners, criminals and emerging peace actors from among the contending groups. The moderates and other peace actors are actively exploring local peaceful remedies to the crisis.

Hardliners and criminals may demonstrate a change of attitude if certain conditions become tenable. Thus, the nature of intercommunal life in southern Kaduna is at once conflictual, as much as it is cooperative and complementary. Therefore, to focus only on the belligerency of southern Kaduna's ethnic groups is to obscure the true reality of intercommunal life in the area. The participants recommended that the views and activities of the criminal elements among them should not be viewed as representing all members of their communities. To dwell solely on the conflictual relationship of the groups will be to lend credence to the

apocalyptic and anarchic theories of intergroup relations in Africa. These theories portray life on the continent as inherently vicious, chaotic, and endemically violent.

Increased intergroup coexistence and solidarity, as well as the people's resilience to build their own peace, could provide an alternative to the crisis of belonging in the postcolonial state. The conflicting groups expressed renewed grit and resilience to tap into their resources, historical modes of cordial relations, and cultures of peace to surmount their predicaments. At the same time, the people's progressive tendency and resources for peace may be inadequate, especially if they continue to internalize deep-seated grievances of injustices and oppression.

The recommendations that follow are aimed at addressing these deep-seated grievances from the agency of the people, but also through the purposeful efforts by the state in Kaduna and Nigeria to reconfigure both its Constitutional and institutional structures to become more accommodating, meaningful, and legitimate to the people.

## **Recommendations**

The findings of the research evince widening gaps in the relationship between the state and the people. This gap must be closed and negotiated through regular dialogues. We have noted that the state government in Kaduna has established chiefdoms for several minority ethnic communities. Since the establishment of these chiefdoms, the groups have had some minimal autonomy of their local affairs. However, they are still encumbered by serious power imbalances and state's importunate intrusion into their local affairs. The ethnic minority groups desire unyielding independence, respect, and sovereignty for their leaders, and the freedom to fully determine their local affairs. However, in more recent years, the Kaduna government has been

interfering with their traditional institutions by dismantling the prevailing traditional governing system and proffering a system in some chiefdoms that is not unlike the Muslim emirate.

The people regard this government's interference as an invasion, violation, and politicization of their autonomous rights within their local jurisdictions. This form of government's interference fuels their suspicion that the Fulani are trying to perpetuate their dynasty in Kaduna through the machination of their elite who control political power in Nigeria. More interferences of this nature could spell disaster for a state that has endured a long history of violent conflicts. The Kaduna government must recognize the ethnoreligious sensibilities of its people and their history of conviviality and conflicts. The state must work with the people to build bridges across the various divides rather than fomenting acrimony between them.

Several participants also expressed concerns of skewed political appointments and concentration of developmental projects in some selected parts of the state. The ethnic minority groups largely expressed these concerns, although some Fulani participants were also indignant and dissatisfied with the Buhari administration. Such concerns must be addressed by taking into consideration the aspirations of minority and excluded groups—regardless of ethnoreligious and sociopolitical affiliations. The state should grant them equal representation in power, allocation of resources, and develop their local constituencies by restructuring the political system to ensure the rotation of power at the helm. This option can go some way to allay fears of the minority and excluded groups who have been in thrall to the hegemony of the Fulani and Hausa groups in Nigeria.

Power must also be appropriately devolved to all the local jurisdictions, free from the imperiousness of the hegemons. No one religion or ethnicity in Kaduna and Nigeria should be the sole proprietor of power or resources in the country. The pre-colonial jihadist system and the

British colonial legacy of indirect rule in Nigeria must be deconstructed. These progressive steps can be achieved through genuine deliberations and dialogue on restructuring power imbalances in Kaduna and Nigeria. This restructuring should be conducted with a view to bringing reprieve to other ethnic groups who have been bound by the yoke of those who wield absolute power using the state apparatuses. Representatives of marginalized groups must rise to resist this contorted and fractured system in some constructive manner, or they will risk disenfranchisement and relegation to the trenches.

Thus, to seriously rethink the nature of group belonging and civic participation in the Nigerian state, as currently constituted, it behoves the federal and state governments to enact serious programs that will respond to the frustrations and relative mistreatments of oppressed and disadvantaged groups in the country. These programs should aim at opening a vista of opportunities and processes for these communities to actualize their full rights as citizens of the state. The enactment of such progressive and positive changes can empower polarized communities in Nigeria to consolidate their local peacebuilding initiatives for the stability and sustainability of their communities. Ultimately, true reconciliation and peace require not just the rebuilding of relationship but also the breakdown of structures of oppression and subjugation.

### **Peacebuilding Action Strategies**

This research is an action project because it embodies and documents different groups' stories of peace and conflicts in Kaduna. However, as one participant questioned, documenting stories is not an effective peacebuilding strategy because:

Not every person reads, and those who read do not understand, and those who understand may not apply it. If we understand what is in the books, we

will not have issues. Look at our Holy Books. Is there any day you will wake up and not read your Holy Book? Does it say you should go and fight other people? No. You read and I read, but we still fight. Why is that? There is no knowledge now. People are just reading. If you are reading, you are reading what you have interest in. You only pick from what you are interested or what fits into your perception.

Thus, the need for action projects arising from the recommendations and implications of the findings of this research seems even more necessary to put into practice some of the peacebuilding approaches of the different communities in Kaduna.

One of the interesting findings that came out strongly from the people's conflicting and complementary relationships is that they all love the land of southern Kaduna. As a result, they want to protect the land and save it for posterity. Many also think they can enjoy the material benefits from the land regardless of their ideological differences. To that effect, there are several actions in which the people can engage. These actions partly result from the people's ethnographies of peace, but they are also my contribution to the research locale.

The first action in this regard is a storytelling festival or project. These initiatives of change will ensure that the people's stories of inclusivity and peace are recorded and made public. It occurred very strongly to me during the research that several people living in the segregated neighborhoods of Kaduna have repeated nostalgia about their previous living experience with members of other ethnic or religious communities. They constantly yearn to return to areas they had cohabited with "others" to relive their past experiences. A storytelling medium through which they can share such stories with each other and publish the stories in a

book (for e.g., a storybook of traditional stories and art for schoolchildren) and online forums could be a way of re-establishing friendships and overcoming physical barriers.

Importantly, a storytelling forum can enable people to share their cultural myths, legends, and folklores with each other. The stories about the Fulani in Nigeria are replete with stereotypes and misinformed facts regarding the group's foolhardiness, illiteracy, and violent disposition. A storytelling forum involving members of all communities telling their own stories to others can help to dispel such kind of destructive stories, demystify the "other", and rehumanize them.

In addition, it seems that the people's resolve for continued coexistence and their stories of contact could be useful for thinking about a shared future in Nigeria. These stories can be documented and reported not only through the news media and government policy papers, but also in everyday conversations. Individuals can also utilize their social media presence to give a balanced account of stories of intercommunal life and avoid spreading rumors and provocative statements about others.

Another related project is creating a documentary to showcase positive contact activities detailing the convivial relationships of people from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. This documentary will mirror the contact activities occurring in segregated environments in Kaduna. Some of these activities include informal businesses, official, and social activities during and after conflicts. Through this medium, we will learn what motivate some people to remain positive towards members of other groups during periods of intense acrimony and tension in the state. These experiences of complementarity are often visible during conflicts when members of the different communities reach out to help the "other" or protect and safeguard them in their properties, usually at some personal cost. Oftentimes, such stories of heroic and selfless acts are not told.

This documentary will serve as a channel for the telling and retelling of such stories. It is hoped that the stories of people engaging in positive contact activities can be instrumental to nurturing the kind of inclusivity that the groups expressed will be pivotal to stabilizing and sustaining the social life and fabric of their communities. Indeed, a positive change of attitude, which can be enhanced by more contact activities and balanced storytelling can address the deep-seated fears and restore hope for group cohesion and national integration among Nigeria's ethnic groups. This project can be accompanied by photography sessions to capture shared moments of cultural and social exchanges. The idea is that documenting such photos can help to underscore a renewed sense of hope for cross-community contact activities among young Nigerians.

Organizing sport events might be another way of bridging the segregated divides in Kaduna. Many people in Nigeria are football aficionados. Hence, they can use sports as a way of reaching out to others and transcending the barriers imposed by segregated quarters. For example, sport activities could be organized between young Fulani people from Ladduga community and those from neighboring groups like Anghan or Bakulu. Such events could be hosted with very little resources like sport jerseys, food, water, and transportation fares.

Bringing young people through sports can be a critical peacebuilding tool. Such an exercise may have the potential to mirror the goodwill of people in Kaduna and reduce the burgeoning rate of crime and drug abuse among young people in the state. Thus, it would be more effective for the state authorities in Kaduna to work with the people and learn their own methods and processes of accommodating each other into their various spaces and places of belonging. Such respectful and inclusive engagements may eventually render the issues of contested belonging irrelevant as people become more knowledgeable, understanding, and feel a sense of belonging to a state that caters to their needs and wellbeing. It is within such an amiable

atmosphere that human values of respect, dignity, and honour will become rooted in social relationships.

### **The Significance of the Study**

What I have proposed in this research is not just to explore a basic element of conflicts in southern Kaduna but to examine local everyday peacebuilding strategies that may be useful for responding to conflicts arising from contested notions of belonging. In this way, the research has not only advanced research into postcolonial causes of intercommunal conflicts in Africa, but also made suggestions for peaceful actions. These actions emanate from the people's agency and awareness of the sources of their struggles and need for true liberation. Thus, one of the contributions of the research is its overarching epistemological stance that people experiencing conflict, or any particular phenomenon are more knowledgeable and familiar with it than are outsiders. In other words, peacebuilding and conflict analyses, despite general trends, are rooted in the specificity of local realities.

Hence, this research forms the basis of an analytic and systematic view of conflicts, seen through the perspectives of Fulani and other ethnic communities in southern Kaduna. Since people's stories, scholarly and media accounts of intercommunal conflicts are often shaped by insider-outsider ideas, which are sometimes lopsided, the research critically engaged participants' views as artifacts of social processes. It did so by calling attention to patterns of in-group and out-group differentiation. This dichotomy often creates enemy images and perpetuates fear and nervousness that vitiate possibilities of intergroup integration. By subjecting participants' stories to critical analysis, the research embodied the potential to disabuse stereotypes that saturate in-group narratives about outsiders in divided societies.

Participants' stories were also complemented by field observations and primary documents like the Kafanchan Declaration for Peace, the Kaduna State Peace Committee Report, and archival materials on historical encounters among the groups, and various forms of colonialism in Nigeria. Through these observations and explorations of primary reports, the research presented a comprehensive story of peace and conflicts that is inclusive of the narratives of the protagonists. In this way, the research can be a reference document for comparing different viewpoints and stories on intercommunal conflicts verging on the crisis of belonging in Nigeria.

Moreover, the field research experience also revealed that research on peace and conflict issues should be conducted with people rather than for them. Such a research process should also be healing, liberating, and comforting both for the participants and the researcher. In this way, doing research on peacebuilding could itself be a peacebuilding endeavour, and both insider and outsider researchers could be part of this process by being critical advocates of people's stories and suspending their biases. Critical researchers should also be prepared to intervene personally, but cautiously, through the skills or resources they bring to the field.

This research could also aid in the broader understanding of ethnic groups' aspirations and needs in the overall task of restructuring the African state. The people's stories revealed how processes of peace and conflicts are embedded in ideas and processes of place-making and space-making. These processes are significant in that while formal authorities of the state can adjudicate on land sharing matters, the people remain the most powerful agents who decide on the legitimacy and applicability of such adjudications.

The foregoing reality reinforces the need for the state to work with the local populations to devise solutions to address the critical issues of land use for farming, inheritance, settlement,

and animal husbandry. Until the people are willing (through cultural diplomacy and dialogue) to expand their ideological stance on land to become more inclusive, the state's policy of forcing them into submission or taking over land from one group to give to another will continue to pose serious sociological and political crises in Kaduna.

The people's remarkable acts of kindness, willingness to heal, and accommodate others are signposts to the reality of African societies as an inherently open and accommodating spaces. However, maintaining such an accommodating space in Africa is often hamstrung by the imposed physical borders and neo-liberal policies and feudalism of its handlers. An alternative to the postcolonial nation-state that brings people into the governing arrangements and affairs of their societies must be sought as a moral imperative.

Moreover, the research has unraveled patterns of ongoing disenchantments between different peoples and the Nigerian state. It calls for robust engagements with issues of power reorganization at the local, state, and federal levels. Moreover, government bodies, policymakers, and the Kaduna State Peace Commission can have ready access to an academic resource dealing with intercommunal forms of peace and conflict in the country. Using the findings of this research, they can design context-specific interventions to address intercommunal conflicts in northern Nigeria.

Finally, while the focus of the research is limited to Nigeria, the fact that the Fulani and various ethnic communities live alongside each other across a broad swathe of West Africa means the research could aid in understanding the relations between these groups on a broader scale. The research questioned the relevance of tagging African populations as "foreigners" and "strangers". It argued that such patterns of out-group identification serve no meaningful purposes in the attainment of nationhood and peace.

Such exclusionary emblems are also at odds with the accommodating nature in which so many African communities take pride. If Africa is the accommodating and hospitable place and space its people often claim it is, the people should be the primary beneficiaries and enforcers of these openness and camaraderie. Moreover, it is obligatory of the state to institutionalize such values as part of the governance mechanisms to motivate good ethical conducts and conviviality among the people. In this way, the research findings could also be instructive for North America, Australia, and New Zealand, where there are discontents over unresolved structural and cultural issues between the Indigenous communities, newcomers, and the state.

### **Future Research**

There are several limitations of a research of this nature. First, the people's narratives and stories, despite their merits, are neither representative of the views of all the southern Kaduna people nor objective truths on the complexities of intercommunal life in the area. These narratives only serve as pointers and reflect a larger reality of intercommunal relations that exceeds the scope of this research.

In addition, participants were mostly interviewed in the convenience of their ethnic or religious communities. Their narratives and stories were presented in this research in isolation from each other for several reasons: first, to be able to clearly compare stories across the different divides in Kaduna; second, to give each group the convenience of sharing and owning their stories; third, participants live in separate homesteads, and given the context of the instability at the time, could only be approached in their own communities or workplaces. Nonetheless, there were occasions where participants across the divides conversed and shared

food. Future research can attempt at creating opportunities and spaces for conducting cross-community interviews, which can also be a form of reconciliation in troubled societies.

Furthermore, the nature of the conflicts explored in this research extends far beyond Kaduna's geography. The conflicts are prevalent in several communities in Nigeria's Middle Belt. Thus, a longitudinal research could have led to a broader understanding of the nature of this crisis in Nigeria. At the time of conducting this research, the restive security situation played a key factor in restricting the researcher to Kaduna. Future studies could make such comparisons within a more secured climate.

Second, the research could have benefited from the stories of several participants that were actively involved in conflicts as perpetrators and survivors. However, a majority simply identified as witnesses of conflicts or secondary victims; which is to say, they were mostly bystanders and observers of the conflict episodes in the state. Some have had their relations killed or wounded, and their homes destroyed. In some instances, some participants narrated tales of their victimization through direct physical violence or kidnapping.

Considering that the conflicts in Kaduna are an ongoing reality, I was constrained by potential issues of trauma that some communities might be facing. I was also worried about my safety and that of the research participants in such restive circumstances. Hence, I focused more on a few communities in southern Kaduna and conversed with representatives of other violent communities in the city. Future studies should explore possible ways in which researchers could engage and offer support to traumatic participants in the process of conflicts, as well as find support for the researcher's mental and physical recovery at the end of the research process.

Third, because of the patriarchal nature of my research communities in the rural areas—where women's contact with outsiders is often scrutinized—only seven women participated in

the research. I was unable to hold conversations with more women due to ethnoreligious and cultural constrictions, as well as a general understanding in the area that men are better suited to explain the dynamics of conflicts. This understanding is partly because men are often the prime combatants and entrepreneurs of conflicts.

At some point during the research, I had to more actively involve women who were simply onlookers as their male partners engaged in discussions. Most of the women who participated in the research merely reiterated the views or stories of their partners or parents. Documenting more stories of women's notions of conflicts and peace could have provided some important dimensions to understanding a gendered perspective to these issues. Future research could specifically study the contribution of women to peacebuilding in culturally constricted environments in Africa.

Fourth, an ethnographic long stay in the field could have revealed interesting and complex dynamics of the conflicts and yielded even deeper analysis and interpretation of the empirical data. While I think this approach could have been useful to this research, it may not be particularly relevant to researchers who are from the research communities. As an insider in the research locale, I only spent seven months in the research area, spread across three different trips into the field. External researchers may need more time and resources to immerse themselves in the activities of the people. They may also need to learn the people's languages in order to understand cultural nuances, emotional reactions, the use of humour, and words that may not be amenable to simplistic translation and interpretation.

Finally, it is also important to stress that although people have the authenticity to present their stories, the stories and ideas represented in this research are not necessarily the precise representations of the different communities in Kaduna. Thus, even though there are similar

patterns in the participants' stories, care must be taken in generalizing the research findings to other societies where Fulani and other ethnic groups coexist. Caution should also be exercised when using this case study as a blueprint for local peace ownership or leadership in Nigeria. It is conceivable that due to certain socioecological, historical, economic, and political factors, there may be some variations and differences of cultural dispositions to peace and conflict among Fulani and other ethnic groups in Nigeria, and across West Africa.

## **Conclusion**

There is nothing incredulously new about the way intercommunal conflicts unfold, and evolve in Kaduna or in other African societies. Conflicts are the reflection of the contextual material and psychosocial and political issues that groups grapple with as they make sense of their everyday life. The Seville Statement on Violence that was released by a group of behavioral scientists refutes the naturalists' claims that people are violent-prone. The scientists argued at a conference in Seville (1986) that violent behavior is not hardwired in our genes. If this were so, all cultural groups would be engaged in an endless war of attrition (Seville, 1986).

Instead, the scientists concluded that "modern war involves institutional use of personal characteristics such as obedience, suggestibility, and idealism, social skills such as language (which makes possible the coordination of groups), and rational considerations such as cost-calculation, planning, and information processing" (1986, p 2). Such rational decisions and considerations on the part of people to engage in violence reinforce the importance of human agency and responsibility in processes of conflict and peacebuilding.

Thus, there is nothing essentially wrong or problematic about the nature of the groups in conflict with each other in southern Kaduna. As the research findings illustrated, these groups are

responding to issues in their society in ways they can interpret or understand the impacts of such issues on their lives and environments. In the process of these meaning-making endeavors, these groups have shown their capabilities for displaying vitriolic violence against each other and forging peaceful relations.

Although their actions are mostly informed by socio-economic and political conditions, as well as the state interference and alleged complicity in conflicts, the people in Kaduna are also agents of conflict and peacebuilding in their own rights. As agents of their actions, they can create and fashion out different systems and interpretations of their experiences in terms of which they give form, order, meaning, and (mis)direction to their everyday lives (Geertz, 1973).

Simply put, given certain material and immaterial motives and factors, people make a variety of choices—that could either be productive and progressive or degenerative and destructive—as they negotiate the tangible and intangible conditions of their everyday life. Thus, as much as there are people who choose or are forced to fight and kill, there are equally those who embrace and promote peace. However, both perpetrators and victims of conflicts have sometimes joined forces to work through their differences and restore order in their communities. Hardliners can become peacebuilders, and moderates and progressives can become killers or executioners if certain conditions were different or altered.

Therefore, the processes of conflict and peacebuilding must be understood as dynamic and intricate experiences that are dependent on human agency and actions, which are context specific. Such agential and contextual understanding of conflict and peace can help to disabuse any notion of thinking about group identities and relations, especially in Africa, as incurably evil and conflict prone. Moreover, an analysis of intercommunal violence and relations that seeks to

study intergroup contact and intragroup conflict dynamics also challenges the pitfalls of seeing conflicting groups as representing diametrically opposed ethnoreligious identities.

In the final analysis, rethinking belonging in the postcolonial state entails a reconsideration of the structures and institutions of the state, as well as an understanding of the processes in which people negotiate their understanding of space and place. The fact that some groups can employ the state apparatuses of power at will to their advantage at the expense of other groups, and the manner in which the postcolonial state is often used as a center stage for expressions of discontents among different groups and between these groups and their governments, calls for a serious rethink and decolonization of the bifurcated, ethnized, and racialized institutional structures of the African state.

Moreover, the agency of people in terms of how they decide who to include or exclude in their conception of “belonging” calls for a people-centred approach to sharing land and cohabiting spaces rather than the state-imposed policies on these issues. The time for undertaking these tasks is long overdue—more than five decades since many African countries became independent from European colonization but not from its legacies, nor from the impact of neo-colonialism.

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## Appendixes

### Appendix A: Informed Consent



Title: The Crisis of Belonging and Ethnographies of Peacebuilding in Kaduna, Nigeria

Primary researcher: Benjamin Maiangwa, PhD Candidate, Arthur V. Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice, University of Manitoba.

Email: [maiangwb@myumanitoba.ca](mailto:maiangwb@myumanitoba.ca)

Research supervisor: Dr. Sean Byrne, Professor, Peace and Conflict Studies, Arthur V. Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice, St. Paul's College, 70 Dysart Road, University of Manitoba, R3T 2N2.

Email: [Sean.Byrne@umanitoba.ca](mailto:Sean.Byrne@umanitoba.ca)

This consent form, a copy of which I will leave with you for your records, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you a basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you consent to be interviewed, it should take about one hour of your time. If you would like more detail about anything mentioned here, or need information that is not included, feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand that your participation in this study is voluntary.

#### Project Description:

This study will explore the stories and viewpoints of Fulani herders regarding farmer-herder conflicts in Nigeria and their peacebuilding resources. My aim is to document Fulani herders' stories of farmer-herder clashes, as well as to promote herders' peacebuilding strategies and problem-solving skills as important tools in managing farmer-herder conflicts in Nigeria.

About the researcher:

I am a Nigerian citizen from this community (research site) and currently a PhD candidate at the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada. I am also a sessional instructor at the Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology where I teach a course on Conflict Negotiation and Building Facilitation Skills.

Confidentiality:

I will keep any information about your identity gathered in this research strictly confidential. Reference to your stories in my dissertation will be written, with your permission, in such a way as to protect your identity. Moreover, your real name or position would never be used. Your stories and viewpoints will be recorded and analyzed as part of the study. All written and recorded digital files will be kept in a secure location in my home and will later be destroyed within a year from now, but not later than April 2019.

Results of this research:

Within one year of this conversation, I will provide you with a brief on the project (at your request), indicating my general findings. Results from this study will be described in my final written dissertation, and in journal publications, policy briefings, and conferences. At your request, I will also notify you about any publications that arise from this study. My dissertation will eventually appear in MSpace. You will find the link at <https://mspace.lib.umanitoba.ca/>

Participation is voluntary:

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decide to stop at any time, and after the conversation and discussion. If you would like to withdraw from the study, then you must inform me by phone or email on or before October 30, 2018. This is because I intend to submit my thesis to the Faculty of Graduate studies by November 30, 2018.

Consent:

Your signature on this form, or your verbal consent, indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding this study and that you agree to participate. In no way does this waive your legal rights or release the researchers or the University of Manitoba from its legal and professional responsibilities. The University of Manitoba may look at my research records to see that the research is being done in a safe and proper way. If you would like more clarification at any point, or even a verbal report on the status of the project, please feel free to contact me at any time at the previously noted e-mails. You could also contact my academic advisor, Dr. Sean Byrne (as above) or the University of Manitoba Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board at +1(204) 474-7122. This study has been approved by the University of Manitoba Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board. If you have any concerns or complaints about this study you may contact the Human Ethics Coordinator, Pinar Eskicioglu, at +1(204) 474-7122, email; [humanethics@umanitoba.ca](mailto:humanethics@umanitoba.ca)

Please answer the following questions with a check mark in the YES or NO box:

	YES	NO
I have read or had read to me the details of this consent form	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have your questions been addressed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you agree to participate in this study?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you agree to have your stories audio-recorded?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you agree to have the findings (which may include quotations) from this project published or presented in a manner that does not reveal your identity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you agree to be contacted by phone or e-mail if further information is required after the interview?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you wish to receive a summary of the findings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If YES, please provide an e-mail address or instructions on how you would like to receive the summary:

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Do you wish to receive a notification of any publications resulting from this study (my dissertation, journal articles etc)?

If YES, please provide an e-mail address or instructions how you would like to receive the notifications:

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Finally, the researcher may ask you for further references of individuals and/or institutions that might be interested in participating in this research. I will provide you with a copy of this consent form and an introduction script to give to the prospective participants. You are in no obligation to provide such information, but you can let the prospective participants contact me directly through phone or meet with me in the community if they consent to participate in the study.

Participant's name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B: Research introduction/recruitment letter

To whom it may concern,

This letter is intended to ask if you are interested in potentially being part of a conversation with respect to a research study being conducted through the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada. The research project is titled, “Rethinking Indigeneity in postcolonial Africa: Nomadism, Autochthonism and Ethnographies of Peace and Conflict in Northern Nigeria”. I am seeking to gather information that will ultimately include your (Fulani herders) perspective of the farmer-herder conflict and document your peacebuilding strategies, which will form a basis of intervention in the conflict. An abstract that further describes basically what this study is about, is at the end of this document.

The primary researcher, Benjamin Maiangwa, is a PhD candidate in Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Manitoba. Benjamin is also a member of this community (Lenak), and lives in Winnipeg, Canada, where he is pursuing his PhD studies. If you are interested in meeting Benjamin or talking by telephone to discuss the research project, he can be reached at the following contacts:

Email: [maiangwb@myumanitoba.ca](mailto:maiangwb@myumanitoba.ca)

If you are interested in participating in the research, after speaking with Benjamin, the sharing of your stories and other conversations pertaining to the research would take about one hour and would be done at an appropriate time and place that is best for you. The storytelling and conversation are voluntary, and should you choose to participate, you would be able to stop at any time before, during, or after the process. The raw data will be destroyed within a year of conducting this study. If you demonstrate the willingness to participate in the study, you would first go through a detailed informed consent form with Benjamin, outlining all your rights, how anonymity and confidentiality would be protected, and you would be provided with a copy. A few safeguards are in place to protect the identity of all research participants.

#### Confidentiality:

I will keep any information about your identity gathered in this research strictly confidential. Reference to your stories in my dissertation will be written, with your permission, in such a way as to protect your identity and your real name or position in the community using pseudonyms. Your stories and viewpoints will be recorded and analyzed as part of the study. All written and recorded digital files will be kept in a secure location in my home and will later be destroyed within a year from now.

#### Results of this research:

Within one year of this conversation, I will provide you with a brief on the project (at your request), indicating my general findings. Results from this study will be described in my final written dissertation, and in journal publications, policy briefings, and conferences. At your request, I will also notify you about any publications that arise from this study.

#### Contact information:

This research has been approved by the Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board of the University of Manitoba; you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact them through email at Pinar Eskicioglu at [humanethics@umanitoba.ca](mailto:humanethics@umanitoba.ca)

You could also contact my research supervisor: Dr. Sean Byrne, Professor, Peace and Conflict Studies, Arthur V. Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice, St. Paul's College, 70 Dysart Road, University of Manitoba, R3T 2N2. Email: [Sean.Byrne@umanitoba.ca](mailto:Sean.Byrne@umanitoba.ca)

Primary researcher: Benjamin Maiangwa, PhD Candidate, Arthur V. Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice, University of Manitoba.

Email: [maiangwb@myumanitoba.ca](mailto:maiangwb@myumanitoba.ca)

Appendix C: Transcriber confidentiality agreement

Title of Study: Rethinking Indigeneity in Postcolonial Africa: Nomadism, Autochthonism, and Ethnographies of Peace and Conflict in Northern Nigeria

I, \_\_\_\_\_ transcriptionist, agree to maintain full confidentiality in regards to any and all audio files and documentation received from Benjamin Maiangwa related to his research study titled “Rethinking Indigeneity in Postcolonial Africa: Nomadism, Autochthonism, and Ethnographies of Peace and Conflict in Northern Nigeria”

Furthermore, I agree:

1. To hold in strictest confidence the identification of any individual that may be revealed during the transcription of audiotaped interviews, or in any associated documents.
2. To not make copies of any audiotapes or computerized titles of the transcribed interviews texts.
3. To not move the audio-files form the secure server that is set up for the purpose of securing the audio-files in question.

I am aware that I can be held legally responsible for any breach of this confidentiality agreement, and for any harm incurred by individuals if I disclose identifiable information contained in the audiotapes and/or files to which I will have access.

Transcriber’s name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Transcriber's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix D: Research Assistant Confidentiality Agreement

I, \_\_\_\_\_ [name of research assistant], agree to assist  
\_\_\_\_\_ [name of primary investigator], with this study by  
scripting conversations on a laptop and or a field note, and facilitating conversations with  
research participants if and when necessary. I agree that I will:

1. Keep all research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) with anyone other than the primary investigator of this study;
2. Keep all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) secure while it is in my possession. This includes:
  - keeping all transcript documents and digitized interviews on specified lab computers and files;
  - closing any transcription programs and documents when temporarily away from the computer;
  - keeping all printed transcripts in a secure location such as a locked file cabinet; and
  - permanently deleting any e-mail communication containing the data;
3. Give all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) to the primary investigator when I have completed the research tasks;
4. Erase or destroy all research information in any form or format that is not returnable to the primary investigator (e.g., information stored on my computer hard drive) upon completion of the research tasks.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the research assistant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the primary investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date