



## Influence of psycho-moral adjustment on victims' in some selected states of North-Eastern, Nigeria

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### Abstract

The study investigated the influence of psycho-moral adjustment of on victims' moral adjustment in some selected states of Northern, Nigeria. The research questions and six null hypotheses guided the study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Population of the study consisted of all 1,770,444 victims from the six States in North – East Nigeria. The sample size of 605 or 10% of the population was selected using stratified proportionate sampling in the area of study. Data was collected using a self – developed questionnaire titled: Communal Conflicts' trauma on Victims' Questionnaire" (CCTVQ). The data collected from the trial study was subjected to statistical analyzing using Cronbach alpha and the result yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.96. while data collected from the sample size was analyzed using the mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. Chi – square was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study showed that influence of psycho-moral has significant effects on victims' peace building and victims' tolerance to other people. Based on the results, recommendations were that trauma counselling centers should be established at the local government area level with trained counselors and psychologists in order to provide trauma counselling services in order to enhance emotional intelligence adjustment of trauma victims of communal conflicts in North-Eastern Nigeria. It was also recommended that counselors and psychologist should help trauma victims via trained programs such as organized teaching to develop adequate resilience skills such as self – esteem and problem-solving skills develop life goals among others.

**Keywords:** communal conflict, trauma, victims, moral adjustment

### Introduction

Communal conflicts of various dimensions and its devastating impact on human beings, most particularly the citizens in North – East Nigeria has become common phenomenon affecting the socio – economic and political stability of many communities in the region. Human life in the affected region is faced with challenges and problems to peaceful co-existence and meaningful socio – economic and political development. Communal conflicts which have become a serious threat to peace and development. Consequently, it prevalence has become a pandemic and engulf almost all the six States in the region.

The North – East region like other parts of Nigeria, political stability and socio – economic development have being characterized by persistence communal conflicts and the devastating traumatic effects on the victims which include men and women, children and youths. According to Idehen, Olasupo and Adebusuyi (2013) and Momoh and Mafuyai (2017) trauma is mental condition caused by severe shock, especially when the harmful effects last for long time and individual experience a body injury, wound or shock and painful emotional instability.

The victim's traumatic life experiences placed youth, children and women at the risk of a variety of adverse psychological moral consequences such as negative thought and behaviors such as loss of sleep, difficulty in concentration aggression, unforgiving heart, hostility, hatred among others. These affect the peaceful living and socio – economic activities of the victims and non-victims of the communities, states and North – East in general.

Available literature by scholars like Oladoyin (2014) and Bhat and Rangaish (2015) attributed the cause of communal

conflicts between communities engaging in disagreement or act of violence over issues of common interest and needs such as claims for land ownership, religious and political differences, leading to loss of lives and destruction of properties.

Furthermore, communal conflicts are motivated by the elites who manipulate politics in order to serve their personal political interest, socio – cultural difference and divergent of interest by the communities. Ubi and Gwamna (2012) attributed the cause of communal conflicts to interest in traditional chieftaincy title, struggle for scarce resources, farmland and boundary disputes, and Fulani and farmers clashes. This has resulted to loss of lives, destruction of properties worth millions of naira and people being displaced and resettled in camps.

In North – East, various communities that have been affected by conflicts in all the States, for examples Tara State: Kuteb/Jukun – Chamba crisis where over 50,000 people were displaced and properties worth millions of naira were destroyed in 2011. Community land dispute between Jukun and Chamba over 1,000 people were displaced. In Adamawa State crisis between Bachama Fulani were 6,000 families were displaced, Sayawa / Hausa – Fulani on original settler in Tafawa Balewa, Bauchi State (for over 50 years) where 10,000 people were displaced. Gombe boundary dispute between Billiri and Kaltungo, clash between Waja and Lunguda communities in Balanga in 2021 where about 1,561 individuals were affected and displaced.

It is estimated by Displacement Tricking Matrix (DTM), National Emergency Management Agency (NAMA), and State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) record

revealed 1,770,600 as victims of communal conflicts. Therefore, the alarming rate justified this research in the region.

It is against this background that the research examined the psycho-moral intervention for traumatized victims in North – East, Nigeria. Previous efforts and policies has been made by the government at all levels and nongovernmental organizations. To address, treat and manage the effects of communal conflicts trauma on victims through humanitarian support services, peace and reconciliation and commission of inquiry among others, yet the North – East region continue experience persistence communal conflicts which has affect meaningful peace and development in the North East Region.

Therefore, the study intend to identify the reasons of persistent communal conflicts, emotional intelligence self – forgiveness intervention support for the traumatized victims and non-victims and to adopt a permanent solution to the victims and non-victims in the region.

### Statement of Problem

Communal conflicts and devastating traumatic impact on victims is a major problem affecting peace and development in North – East region and Nigeria general. The prevalence of the conflicts across different communities in North – East Nigeria has lead to thousands of children, youths and adults who experience emotional feeling of rejection, social isolation, depression, helplessness, hopelessness and unforgiveness hearts in living. This indeed is a setback on developmental prospects of the various communities involved in the conflicts.

The victims are often confronted with loss of self-esteem, loneliness, death of loved ones and destruction of properties. They are faced with numerous immoral and unethical traumatic experiences which include breakdown of law and order, frustration, poor attitude, intolerance, jealousy and discrimination among others.

Therefore, there is a need to examine the extend of communal conflicts trauma on the victims' emotional intelligence and self-forgiveness intervention to victims and non-victims for long time sustainability. This could enhance peaceful co – existence, harmonious relationship and development of the communities in North – East geo political region.

### Objectives of the research

The objective of the research is to find out specifically:

1. To determine if self – forgiveness and integration be targeted as intervention support strategies for traumatized victims in North East Nigeria
2. To determine if social integration could be adopted for traumatized victims in North East Nigeria

### Research Questions

The following research questions have been formulated to guide the study

1. Determine the influence of communal conflicts of trauma on victims' emotional intelligence?
2. Find out the influence of communal conflicts trauma on victims' self - forgiveness?

### Statistical Hypothesis

The following null hypotheses were formulated and were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Communal conflicts' trauma has no significant influence on victims' emotional intelligence.

2. Communal conflicts trauma has no significant influence on victims' self-forgiveness.

### Conceptual framework

#### Psychological adjustment

#### Moral adjustment

#### The concept of communal conflicts

Communal, Ethno-Religious conflicts and violence in Nigeria has become a common feature in Nigeria's contemporary society. Persistent communal conflicts and its socio – economic and political effects have continuously attract more attention and threat it poses to peaceful co-existence and stability of most geo – political region and Nigeria as a Nation

Communal conflicts, according to Tor-Anyiin (2013), can be seen as a fight or disagreement over the pursuit of divergent value, goals, interests, needs or aspirations between communities. The author further opines that the disagreement usually starts between two people using primordial sentiments and later embraces families and the entire communities which results to fighting against each other. This implies that communal conflicts are conflicts that occur between two or more communities that are involved in a disagreement on certain issues of both interest and concern. Azuonwe (2002) opines that communal conflicts arise when two distinct groups or tribes in a community disagree over jointly shared resources due to the possibility or factor of inequitable distribution or the problem of domination by a group. The development of this form of conflict in any community can lead to violence or crisis between the two groups.

#### Psychological adjustment

People at different time or period use the concept “adjustment” in describing different situations. When people, therefore, say they are in an “adjustment period or time”, they typically mean they are going through a process of change and are indeed searching and looking for some level of balance or acceptance with the environment, others or themselves. Kinance (2006) asserts adjustment is the process that helps a person to live happy and contended life while maintain his capacity to fulfill them. This impels that adjustment is a harmonious living for the people of controlling life from situations. It is the individual's ability to cope with circumstances. It could be good or bad, love or hostile or meet demands and life expectations. (Landau et. al. 2010).

Human behaviour is broadly seen through the level of relationship building, interaction, unpleasant or pleasant, good or bad feelings and the state of happy or sad mind. All these describe both the physical and inner, or covert and overt behaviours of people. Denga (2002) opines that the individual's psychological adjustment to society is analyzed from a mental health perspective. According to Denga (2006), psychological adjustment provides a general orientation to the normal and abnormal continuum of behaviour, which includes the individual's social and cultural determinants of behaviours.

Psychological adjustment by implications, deals with the individual's behavioural issue, the causal factors and how such issues or problems can be overcome and managed. It also deals with understanding, building and sustaining human relationship as it relates to behavioural problems, treatment and management in the family and the life of the

individual. According to Egbule (2009) <sup>[36]</sup>, psychological adjustment is a systematic investigation into the nature of behaviours relating to crisis reaction, adjustment and maladjustment to problems as well as psychological stress and trauma. It is therefore, concerned with the situation in which people go through ups and down in life which are often capable of creating difficult situations.

Psychological adjustment is basically related with the orderly and systematic investigation into behavioural changes that relate to life threatening events or crisis, traumatic challenges, and understanding the nature of problems that are related to human adjustment. Thus, psychological adjustment involves packages and preventive measures towards the attainment of human productive living. All human beings set goals for themselves, and the approach they adopt to pursue such goals depend mainly on the life style of adjustment (Akume, 2010) <sup>[9]</sup>. The author posits that a well-adjusted person must have the interest in what happens to other people within the social set up, and such interest will manifest in their level of friendship, work place, and love for others. The need of the individual influences his or her socio-economic and moral adjustment to other people. The family stability provides a powerful weapon that enhances and gives the individual a better adjustment in the future to live a meaningful and productive life in the society and the home. This is a vital component for a holistic psychological adjustment.

### **Moral adjustment**

In all normal stable human societies or communities exist on the basis of certain accepted moral or ethical values and norms that govern and control the general behaviours of the people. These norms regulate behaviours of the people in order to ensure the survival of the community and the nation. According to Okobiah and Okorodudu (2006), individuals who form the communities vary in behaviours, which could be maladjusted or undesirable. In order to affect good interpersonal relationship, the human behaviour has to be managed and well guided through appropriate moral behaviours suitable to the situations. Haidt (2001) <sup>[45]</sup> contends that morality is social in this sense to a considerable extent and it is largely socially in its origins, sanctions and functions. Thus, morality is an instrument of the society as a whole for the guidance of the individual and the community's survival. This implies that morality or conscience is a means of conformity to a set of conventional rules and norms that determine the individual's social actions which have been internalized. Based on this fact, morality is defined as an instrument of the society as a whole, as the individual, the family and the social class cannot have a morality or moral action guided of its own that is different from that of its society (Narvaez & Lapsley, 2009).

Moral adjustment, according to Morgan and Shitka (2011) fosters or even calls for the use of reasons and for a kind of autonomy on the part of the individual to make his/her own decision, with someone's advice and even stimulating him or her to think out in the principles or goals in the light of which he/she is to make his / her decisions. By implications, moral adjustment involves the individual's ability to strike a balance between what is right or wrong, and what is due for him or her, and what is due to other people.

Moral adjustment fosters good motives and channels the individual's behaviour into more socially acceptable outlets.

Based on ego-moral adjustment principles, it keeps a person working for a living, getting along with people and generally adjusting to the realities of life situations. Morgan, King, Weisz and Schopler (2011) reported that Freud characterized the ego as working in the "service of the reality principle". That is, the ego tries to satisfy the person's id urges or desires for pleasure, but only in the realistic ways that takes into consideration what is possible in the real world.

Furthermore, the ongoing human tensions and conflicts arise in Nigeria today due to unmet needs of various dimensions for satisfaction and pleasure, as well as interests of the individuals or the people and that of the community. These human desires and urge make people and individual restless, aggressive, uncooperative and potentially violent and hostile towards people. These characteristics of human behavior resulting to sentiment and harbor varied forms of conflicts.

Moral adjustment helps people and individuals experiencing the effects of traumatic life challenges to develop more and more sophisticated rational thinking adjustment or life coping skills. Adjustment intervention strategy helps the victims to set a positive life value and moral ideals that they could pursue and believe to be worthy. It is therefore a life coping strategy that assists the victims to plan their lives for useful and goal-oriented living. To stabilize and facilitate moral adjustment of the victims, the traumatic individuals need the reality mind. The family, the parents, the youths and the community leaders need to create a free psychologically and morally permissive and victims-friendly community environment. The community environment should be one that is free from threat, and feelings of hopelessness and frustration operated from zero-level for full participation in the community's socio-economic and political development.

### **Communal conflicts' trauma on victims' emotional intelligence**

Tor-Anyiin (2013) posits that emotional intelligence is the ability of an individual to read meanings in the existing behaviours of others in relation to, not only to assist or sustain a relationship, but also to help the individual to function effectively in the society. Emotional intelligence provides the basis for understanding the thoughts, emotions and actions of others. Moreover, it is an acceptable and effective problem-solving strategy that influences psychological functioning of the victims in a coherent manner. It also assists them to re-orientate and adjust in daily routine activities.

Akinboye (2004) <sup>[7]</sup> identifies personal components of emotional intelligence such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, self-regulation and relationship management as essential for success of the individual in the society's world of work. Emotional intelligence, therefore, has the potential to create warmth, smooth and spontaneous social interaction, preempt conflict and tension in life, organizes social interaction and relationship skills (Agbe, Gbenda, Ortese & Yusuf, 2012) <sup>[6]</sup>. According to Ajayi (2006), individuals who are traumatized exhibit negative behaviour and have been found to possess characteristics of non-emotional intelligent persons such as poor interpersonal relationship, irrational behaviour, illogical thinking, frustration and anger. The desire for urgent psychological adjustment calls for the need in managing negative behavioral manifestations of the victims

due to the traumatic influence in everyday life they encountered.

The person's ability to perceive, identify and manage emotions provides the mental capacity and basis for cordial relationship, peaceful co-existence and emotional competences that are important to success in almost all life engagements. Emotional intelligence can be linked to coping and living meaningful and purposeful life that may be characterized by adapting appropriate adjustment skills. Tor-Anyiin (2013) opines that psychologists believe that all behaviours are learnt as such can be unlearned. According to the author, the unlearning requires emotional training that can be of great assistance towards reducing the effect of communal conflicts' trauma on the victims.

The effects of communal conflicts' trauma on victims can certainly become emotionally disturbed to them. Consequently, it interferes with their ability to adjust or cope. However, with adjustment interventions such as emotional intelligence, they could be able to restore a sense of order and control to their lives challenges. The traumatic experiences will certainly be over for a better and meaningful life in the community. Related literature revealed that people/individuals who are traumatized manifest emotional instability, exhibit negative attitudes and behaviours like poor interpersonal relationship, depression, illogical thinking and difficulty in concentration. This therefore, could be seen as a predictor in trauma victims for their inability to function well in the family and the community. The victims require emotional intelligence in order to develop mental power, control and manage their emotional feeling and those of others in the community.

#### **Communal conflicts' trauma on victims' self-forgiveness**

Communal conflict trauma refers to the type of damage to the mind that occurs as a result of a severely distressing event. Trauma is often the result of an overwhelming amount of stress that exceeds one's ability to cope, or integrate the emotions involved with that experience. A traumatic event involves one's experience, or repeating events of being overwhelmed that can be precipitated in weeks, years or even decades as the person struggles to cope with the immediate circumstances, eventually leading to serious, long-term negative consequences.

The concept "self-forgiveness" is defined by Fisher and Exline (2006) <sup>[40]</sup> as a set of motivational changes whereby the individual becomes decreasingly motivated to retaliate against other people. For instance, self-forgiveness increasingly motivates retaliates against other. For instance, forgiveness increasingly motivates the individual to act benevolently towards the self. Self-forgiveness, is thus, the individual's willingness and the ability that comes from sincere heart to genuinely forgive the offences or the wrong done to him or her, or to his/her family, or to the entire community. Forgiveness entails to forgive the interpersonal offences committed (Otite & Albert, 2001) <sup>[11]</sup>. Self-forgiveness is the tendency for the individual to avoid undue self-blame and guilt, and accept the offence.

In Northern Nigeria as in almost all the geo-political zones, the citizens are confronted with numerous and challenges of communal conflicts' trauma and their devastating effects on them. The victims, therefore, act in different ways that transgress deeply on their moral beliefs, feelings and attitude of un-forgiving heart towards others. Consequently, they continuously experience intense human suffering that

affects and shakes their vision and hope of existence or survival. Some of such people in North- East Nigeria are victims of communal conflicts' trauma due to persistent conflicts/crises. The need for moral adjustment strategies such as self-forgiveness intervention is vital in order to help the victims towards successful integration and genuine relationship in the community for productive living.

The concept 'self-forgiveness' conceptually entails that the individual is acknowledging the event, accepting responsibility for it and experiencing the negative emotions associated with it (Hall & Finchman, 2008). Self-forgiveness is an important step in reclaiming a moral core and developing a sense of personal worth and self-commitment in order to reduce intense psychological and moral injury experiences. Moreover, self-forgiveness refers to the process of making amends. It is a self-sacrifice that involves forgetting and time to heal the moral wounds and restore cordial relationship for peaceful co-existence. This could promote internal dialogue, genuine reconciliation, negotiation and tolerance among other.

To overcome the victims' traumatic effects, it is important to realize that others (the enemies) are also human beings with emotions, feelings, wishes, values and interests. The step in stopping the vicious challenges associated with traumatic effect due to communal conflicts is self-forgiveness. This requires the ability and mental power to understand both the personal-self and others in terms of feelings, wishes, motives and needs which foster harmonious living, reconciliation and peace. Sababa and Ali (2013) posit that forgiveness opens prayers and rapport building as an important element of spiritual and moral intervention required in peace-making and peace building. The offenders acknowledge the injury caused and the influence to the victims and apologize in reserve and offer due restitution which the victims grant the offenders unconditional forgiveness. It is the victims' internal decision and function because it reminds the person that he or she needs to do something about their inner conflicts.

According to Halingren (2002) <sup>[46]</sup>, forgiveness operates from an emotional basis and has empathy, altruistic or romantic love and compassion that recue or eliminate an injustice gap, eventually resulting in a reduction of negative emotions with positive emotion. It is a positive oriented emotion against negative forgiveness. Thus self-forgiveness is a person's way to cope with emotional stress that is based on negative emotions which include anger, hostility, bitterness, fear and hatred. Unforgiveness tends to lead the victims to a substantial level of mental and emotional conditions and keep the victims under great stress or traumatically difficult life conditions (Fontana & Rosenheck, 2004) <sup>[41]</sup>.

Forgiveness can work as an antidote, an emotion that is focused or aimed at providing an effective adjustment intervention for traumatized women, youths, children and parents with long lasting negative influence from various traumatic challenges. Leach and Lark (2004) and Strelan (2007) opine that the victims such as women need to deal with post traumatic experiences, where problem-solving focuses coping cannot eliminate the influence of what already has happened. The emotion focused forgiveness coping intervention can lead to a healthy adaption. Furthermore, forgiveness adjustment intervention strategy, according to Tangney, Stuewing and Mashek (2007) can serve as an effective short and long-term treatment for the

victims who have been traumatized due to communal conflicts.

The persistent communal conflicts in the North-East Nigeria and the nation in general have traumatic influence on victims which require moral adjustment. To the researcher's point of view, therefore, self-forgiveness intervention can serve as a vital moral treatment, healthy intervention and even a preventive strategy from the influence of communal conflicts trauma on the victims. Self-forgiveness could be effective intervention for the victims' adjustment and enhancement of overall of individual's mental well-being. Self-forgiveness restores interpersonal relationship between the victims and non-victims and foster peaceful co-existence in the community. Self-forgiveness, as a moral adjustment strategy, if embraced, is a moral skill and a life coping strategy. It demands high level of moral commitment to achieve meaningful moral adjustment of the victims' traumatic life difficulties emerged due to communal conflicts in the North- East, Nigeria.

Self-forgiveness is an adjustment intervention for peace, negotiation and confidence building for harmonious living between the victims and non-victims in the community. It is a powerful moral healing adjustment intervention for the victims and the community from mixed pains, anger and fear as well as hostility and hatred. Self-forgiveness restores trust and bridges the gap between the victims and all others for socio-economic and political development in the community.

The reviews from related study by experts on the influence of communal conflict's trauma on victim self-forgiveness are found to be most relevant to this study.

Literature indicates that trauma victims exhibit negative emotional feelings, attitudes and behaviours such as feelings of unforgiving hearts, anger and hostility, revenge, feelings of frustration and other behaviours to other people or non-victims in the community. It further shows that self-forgiving attitudes are related to quality life, peaceful co-existence and harmony in relationship between the victims and non-victims. Self-forgiveness intervention could provide numerous benefits in reduction of trauma victims' fear, anxiety hatred anger and control serious interpersonal offences between the victims and non-victim. This study therefore sought to ascertain if communal conflicts trauma impact on victims' psycho-moral adjustment in North-East, Nigeria.

Therefore, the researcher observed that self-forgiveness could influence communal conflicts trauma only on the basis that self forgiveness is genuine with practical commitment from both parties involved in the conflicts. Thus, could consequently lead to peaceful co-existence between the victims, non-victims and the entire community.

### **Empirical Studies**

In this section, the researcher reviewed some empirical studies which are related to the present study. These are as follows:

Oladimeji, Clement, Oluranti and Ogundiwin (2012) conducted a study on "The Healing Power of Forgiveness in Peace Building: The Case of Sa'are/Tsaragi, Kwara State, Nigeria" One of the purposes of study was to evaluate the willingness of the people of Sa'are/Tsaragi community to forgive. The researchers adopted descriptive survey design for the study. The population of the study was 15,889 adults, 18 years and above, with 3,252 in Tsaragi and 12, 637 in

Sa'are Community respectively. The study treated each of the communities within the study areas as an entity. A sample size of 200 respondents from each community were purposively selected to reflect the characteristics required for the study. Structured questionnaire with fixed alternative and unstructured interview were used for data collection. The analysis of the data was descriptive. The results of the study revealed that 74.5% of the respondents used were willing to forgive one another, while 17.5% disagreed and 8% remained undecided. Furthermore, the analysis of the respondents at the community level indicated that 53.5% from Tsaragi and 73.5% from Sa'are were willing to forgive, while 30% from Tsaragi and 20% from Sa'are were not willing to forgive. The findings of the study considered the healing power of self-forgiveness as a vital element to resolve Tsaragi and Sa'are conflicts. Based on the findings of the study, the two communities though, belong to Nupe and Yoruba ethnic groups are largely adherents to Islamic and Christians faiths. None of the victims favours unforgiveness. Thus, by the findings of the study on forgiveness must be unconditional. The findings of the study emphasized the healing power of forgiveness in promoting peace among the various communities. The case of Sa'are/Tsaragi, Kwara State appeared to be very relevant to the present study. Self-forgiveness adjustment intervention is required to assist traumatic victims of communal conflicts to attain peaceful co-existence and unity with other people living within the community. It is essential to note that the victims and non-victims can benefit from the actions of self-forgiveness adjustment intervention from the traumatic experiences and challenges of anger, hatred, hostility and revenge which the victims bear alone. The results of the study showed that Sa'are and Tsaragi communities demonstrate practical willingness to forgive. The study indicated that self-forgiveness adjustment intervention if used in this study will assist the traumatized victims of communal conflicts to do good, love one another, talk and share, and be emphatic in the process of forgiveness and hopefulness in the communities, North East region and the nation in general.

Hall and Fincham (2008) <sup>[47]</sup> conducted a study on "The Relationship between Forgiveness and Symptoms of Depression and Severity of Trauma". The participants were 60. They were psychologically, physically, morally and sexually abused females, residing in and receiving services from two battered women's shelters, one domestic violence agency, two homeless shelters, and four traditional housing organizations in Wisconsin. All participants completed a one-time basis of demographic information questionnaires, modified forgiveness Inventory, Rosenberg self-esteem scale, and symptoms checklist including depression, anxiety, and anger-hostility. The results of the study revealed that there is significant measures of forgiveness, depression and anxiety between forgiveness and self-esteem which showed that the more forgiveness the abuse survivors have the higher self- esteem they possess. The study also suggested that genuine relationship is enhanced when the victims develop the capacity and willingness of power to do well and to have the heart of forgiveness of post conflicting issues. Furthermore, the results indicated self- forgiveness as a valuable adjustment intervention that will help the victims to develop balanced ways of thinking positively towards other people. The study on the relationship between forgiveness and symptoms of depression, anxiety, anger,

hostility, self-esteem and severity of trauma on victims, is found to be most related to this study on influence of communal conflicts' trauma on victim's self-forgiveness. Self-forgiveness would therefore reduce negative feelings such as anger and hostility; an increase in overall forgiveness disposition related to friendly and warmth relationship with other people, which could tend to reduce the victim psychological trauma. Lack of forgiveness or unforgiven heart will be associated with low self-esteem and depressing anxiety. Self-forgiveness adjustment intervention is an approach that enhances healthy relationship of the victims' traumatic difficulties. The adjustment intervention is needed to provide additional therapeutic approach using self-forgiveness as a coping mechanism towards the psycho-moral adjustment of the victims experiencing traumatic challenges of post conflicts life.

It is important in this study using self-forgiveness in building, strengthening and restoring the needed interpersonal relationships and peaceful co-existence in the community. The act of self-forgiveness is not something to be contested for. Rather, the goal is to help the victims to begin to reconnect their values as well as allow them to feel confident about themselves. Self-forgiveness is a spiritual and moral value which is potentially instrumental in alleviating guilt, shame and the individual to be free from traumatic threat and high fear events challenge. Unforgiveness, therefore can lead the victims to develop the feelings of frustration, social isolation, anger, hatred, and depression. Victims acknowledge to accept the moral responsibility for the past events; activate response of forgiveness and moves forward into problem-solving for a better future. Apology and forgiveness are two sides of the same emotional coin. Two concepts that affect the interpersonal relationship. Apology can help bridge the victims' need for acknowledgement and the perpetrator's desire to reclaim humanity. The same function can be said of forgiveness which is an act of obligation toward the victims to repent and accept the offense committed. Forgiveness, therefore, is important as apologizing in any community which wishes to put its needs and struggles behind it and create a more peaceful and cooperative future, and also the victims' voluntary forgiveness of the past injuries and damage. Furthermore, apologies and forgiveness are considered as crucial and vital because conflicts generate deep and searing emotions. Even though, after the end of the fight, people still feel the pain, hurt, anger and hatred that produce the conflicts and its traumatic influences. Moreso, without apology and forgiveness, the victims or people remain locked in the same value systems that produced the conflicts.

## **Research methodology**

### **Research design**

The study used ex-post-facto research design. Toluhi (2001) posits that ex-post-facto design is undertaken after the events have taken place and the data are already in existence. This is a research design used to collect data on the existing events on life experiences, challenges and phenomenon without experimental manipulation or control. Shehu (2006) posits that ex-post-facto design examines the degree of relationship between two variables, but not necessarily their causal relationships, rather the influence that they have been imposed on life experiences. Based on the above explanations, ex-post-factor research design fits

this research. This design is relevant because it conforms to the study which is to identify and describe existing influence of communal conflicts' trauma on victims' psycho-moral adjustment in North-East Nigeria.

### **Population**

The population of this study is 1,770,444 victims in the six states (Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe) consist of all the victims of ethnic communal conflicts that are resettled in several areas in the North-Eastern Nigeria. The Displacement Tracking Matix – Round XIII (2016) reported that Adamawa State had a total number of 152,618 victims of communal conflicts that are victims, Bauchi State had 57,114, Borno State had a total 1,370,880, Gombe State had 28,980, Taraba State had 48,583 while Yobe had 112,269 victims of communal conflicts that are re-settled in different Local Government Area (LGAs) in the States. Cumulatively, the figures drawn from the various states in the North East translated to 1,770,444.

### **Expected Output**

It is expected that the results of this research will restore peace and peaceful co – existence with harmonized relationships that will enhance socio – economic and political development in the region. It is also expected that through teaching activities on emotional intelligence, residences, self-forgiveness and tolerance to others will asset community leaders, religious leaders and political elites and youths well as women association to attain unity for peace and development.

### **Sample and Sampling**

The sample size of the study comprised 605 respondents. In order to determine the minimum sample size for the study, an internet-based sample size calculator was used (Creative Research Systems, 2014). A total population of 1,770,444 victims in the six states (Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe) of the North-East Nigeria. Inputting all the population in the sample size calculator generated the result of 384 (See Appendix H, page, 165). This is usually considered as the minimum and the researcher is at the liberty to exceed. Therefore, because of the availability and enthusiasm of the participants to respond to the research instrument, the researcher exceeded the minimum sample size of 384 by collecting data from 605 victims in the local governments.

In sampling the states, local governments and the participants for the study, the researcher employed a purposive and sampling procedure. First and foremost, three states (Adamawa, Bauchi, and Taraba) were purposively sampled from the six states in North- Eastern Nigeria to participate in the study. The three states were selected based on the fact that they were the states experiencing relative peace compared to the others in North-East, Nigeria as at the time of data collection such that one could to go in and administer questionnaires for a study.

Secondly, three local governments were selected from each of the states selected for the study. The local governments selected in Adamawa state include Lamurde, Yola and Demsa. The ones selected in Bauchi were Bauchi, Tafawa Balewa and Toro while Bali, Jalingo and Wukari were selected from Taraba State. All the local government areas were selected based on the reason that they were the most affected in those states.

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