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Analysis Of The Impact Of Religious Ideology On Political Participation In Kaduna State Nigeria; 2019-2023

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ABSTRACT

Politics and religion have remained two very significant aspects of the Nigeria state and her development over the years. The aim of this study was to look at how religion has influenced the political development of Kaduna State. The objective was to ascertain the various ways in which religious belief, affiliations and religious mobilization has fostered political participation, electioneering and voting behaviour of people of Kaduna State. The theoretical standpoint of the study was the rational choice theory; based on the fact that political decisions and behaviour are informed thoughts of individuals as well as religious and political leaders. The study was conducted using the survey approach of mixed method of research involving the quantitative and qualitative techniques. The study collected primary data using the questionnaire and in-depth interview instruments from a sample of an initial six hundred respondents and participants. The major findings of the study showed that political participation is high among respondents and by extension the people of Kaduna State. The study also found that, religious affiliation of candidates vying for political office influence the decision of the people of Kaduna State. More so, it was discovered that the political development of Kaduna State has only been influenced by religion to the degree of participation and individuals' voting behaviour. The study recommended amongst others that Political system and leaders leverage the advantages religious mobilization presents to foster development, which has remained elusive in Nigeria since independence. The study advocates for the commitment to religious moral norms by both leaders and followers. This is essential as they all possess obligations to fulfil in promoting good governance, and these obligations are inherent in religious ethics. Religious leaders should recognize their leadership roles not solely for spiritual guidance but also for shaping the awareness of their followers; consequently, they must encourage their adherents to engage actively in politics, as they will consistently represent a significant voice in mobilizing the electorate.

Keywords: Religion, Politics, Democracy, Political participation, Development, Affiliations

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a multi-religious nation, and the interaction of religious groups is most evident during general elections (Ogbu, 2014). Religion is a significant phenomenon in modern Nigeria, and it has been a major topic of discussion in daily newspapers, magazines, radio, and television. The majority of Nigerians appear to be interested in religion because of its perceived benefits. Nigeria is a pluralistic society where different religious adherents coexist and mix freely in order to carry out their daily activities (Aluko, 2017; Ekpo, 2023).

In Nigeria, there are essentially three main religions. These are African Traditional Religion (ATR), Islam, and Christianity (Aluko, 2017). In addition to these, there are other religions in Nigeria, including as Judaism, Hinduism, Grail Message, and the Reformed Ogboni Fraternity, but only a small percentage of Nigerians or foreigners practise them (McKinnon, 2021). Christianity and Islam are the two most powerful religions in Nigerian politics among the country's three main religious groups. Religious organisations continue to have a big impact on Nigeria's political landscape, regardless of their varying viewpoints (Adeoye, 2018).

Nigerian politics have been heavily influenced by religion, especially since independence, endangering the secularism of the nation. It is indisputable that religion has an impact on politics in Nigeria, regardless of one's beliefs about it (Adeoye, 2018; Umeanolue, 2020). In Nigeria, religion shows up in many facets of daily life. It may be argued, therefore, that religion is typically not utilised to generate issues. By making sure that no faith is disproportionately favoured or overlooked, this is achieved. For instance, at public events like political rallies and national assemblies, leaders or representatives of recognised religions either offer prayers or they are not offered at all (Umeanolue, 2020). In this instance, a Christian would say the closing prayer if a Muslim said the opening one, and vice versa. This is a strategy of avoiding conflict from turning into violence. Both Islam and Christianity benefit greatly from public holidays since their respective festivals are marked by days off from work.

There are three main ways that religion can affect politics: by directly involving religious men in politics, by combining religion and politics into one, and by enforcing religious laws or doctrine, which means that politics or governance is conducted in accordance with religious principles (Omoregbe, 2013). Religion and politics are closely intertwined in Nigerian politics because of all of this. Additionally, there are some basic ideas that underlie the role of religion in Nigeria's election process. As an illustration, consider how, in certain states, religion regularly affects the selection of the flag bearer or running partner for the presidency and governorships. The purpose of this is to safeguard the interests of adherents. A Muslim/Christian or Christian/Muslim ticket is typically offered in cases where this principle is adhered to (Ayantayo, 2009). This explains why the 2023 presidential election generated so much discussion, especially in light of the political parties' shifting religious balancing of their tickets. Following multiple objections from members of the party and other stakeholders, the All-Progressive Congress (APC) decided to run on a Muslim-Muslim ticket and ultimately prevailed in the elections (The Guardian, 2023; Punch, 2023).

Numerous academics have long acknowledged the influence of religion on Nigerian politics, especially the way that Islam and Christianity have largely determined the political landscape of the nation. A poisonous religious atmosphere that breeds political and religious violence and dehumanises citizens has continuously threatened the fight for peaceful coexistence. Over the years, religious politics have made it challenging to achieve the ideal of peaceful coexistence. Christian–Muslim relations are generally built on mutual suspicion rather than mutual respect and affection. In actuality, our ability to communicate clearly and reason logically with one another is what allows us to coexist peacefully. However, the very differences that enable this ability also undermine it. It is really required, and the more it is needed, the weaker it gets (Stout, 2018:3).

Nigerian tensions brought up by religious politics, conflict, and competition have led to attempts to use a political representative formula to manage the complex situation. The goal is to guarantee that Christians and Muslims are equally represented in elected and appointed positions. This is not without persistent attempts to break the agreement, which is typically based on the notion that Nigeria's northern region is more populous than its southern region. This idea implies that there are more Muslims than Christians in the nation, with the north harbouring more Muslims and the south harbouring more Christians. No region of the nation can obtain the necessary number of votes to be elected president of the nation without the support of the other, as demonstrated factually by previous election outcomes (Sule, 2019). Many radical religious scholars have fiercely contested the notion that Nigeria is a secular state, arguing that it is more closely linked to godlessness than to the state's neutrality in religious matters (Bolaji, 2018; Offiong & Ekpo, 2020; Ogbu 2014). While secularity does not entail godlessness, many Christians who support the state's secularity contend that it does mean that the government should have less influence on religious

organisations while yet providing an environment that is free for all religions to flourish. But in practice, all tiers of government have actively participated in religious politics and frequently take advantage of religious institutions (Igboin, 2021b).

It's also important to remember that religious convictions can occasionally drive campaigning and voting. In this situation, religion may be used to encourage people to support a candidate or to discourage them from doing so. The impact of religion extends beyond politics. It has an impact on practically every element of life. Economic success, interpersonal relationships, educational progress, and the mental health of the populace are all impacted by political power. Religious groups have shown their influence by publicly endorsing presidential candidates in general elections. These organizations have been at the forefront of advancing and defending the interests of the religious groups since the resumption of civilian authority in 1999. They have been consulted by numerous governments on a range of projects, policies, and initiatives (Magbadelo, 2016). Nonetheless, their recent secret support of presidential candidates in general elections has generated a great deal of discussion, thoughts, and viewpoints among academics and the general public over the extent to which religion should impact Nigerian politics (Familusi, 2020). This study looked at the analysis of the impacts of religious ideology on political participation in Kaduna State.

Objectives of Study

The broad objective of this study is to examine the impact of religion on political development in Kaduna State. The specific objectives are to:

1. Examine the role of religious ideology in political development of Kaduna state
2. Examine the history and the involvement of religion in politics of Kaduna State
3. Find out how religious ideology impacted on the political development of Kaduna State
4. Examine the nature of political participation based on religious affiliations in Kaduna State

Literature Review

Nigeria is home to the greatest number of Black people worldwide. It is also the most religiously diverse country in Africa. This supports the claim made by Akumu et al. (2016) that, with over 250 distinct ethno-linguistic groupings, Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, has one of the most ethnically diverse cultures in the world. Nigeria was divided into two separate geopolitical regions, known as the Southern and Northern Protectorates, prior to its unification in 1914. Many different cultures and traditional religions were practiced in the two geopolitical zones that comprised "One Nigeria". The two protectorates are today split into six geopolitical zones, with Islam ruling in the north and Christianity predominating in the south, respectively.

Sadly, Nigeria's future is uncertain due to our democratic culture and development, which is essential to any nation's political advancement. Nigeria's status as a failed state on all fronts—political, economic, social, and moral—is currently under scrutiny. Despite having abundance of economic resources, our state has continued to deteriorate despite attempts to fight poverty and progress sustainable development. Lack of political will, corruption, poor coordination of sustainable development programs, and wasteful production and consumption practices have all impeded Nigeria's progress. Two significant elements influencing the implementation of sustainable development are the political will of the ruling party and the public's ongoing demands for openness and realism in governance. The incapacity of the government to attain sustainable development is therefore usually viewed as a political matter that need to be decided by the people through elections in every democratic system.

Therefore, citizens can only compel their government to embrace sustainable development by participating in political activities and elections (Aderibigbe & Aiyegboyin, 2017). If the administration is unsuccessful in this regard, there are no legal consequences. However, unsustainable development exacerbates issues with poverty, social unrest, the environment, and national security. It is vital that citizens have the legal authority to participate in politics more actively in order to prevent these eventualities

Religion is one of the primary forces propelling Nigeria's political evolution, according to studies (Kukah & Falola, 2016; Falola, 2018; Loimeier, 2017). Nigerian society's religious variety significantly

influences the political decisions and policies of the nation. Over time, people and voters have been strongly religiously biassed towards certain national concerns. At other times, religious beliefs have a significant impact on political behaviour (Loimeier, 2017). According to Igwe (2015), there is often a hostile environment during election seasons since voting often follows religious lines.

Others, on the other hand, are adamant that this relationship shouldn't be emphasised and that religion and politics should be permitted to live together (Uzodike & Whitto 2018). The main argument put out by those who share this viewpoint is that combining politics and religion frequently leads to the absorption of many political vices. This study aims to examine the influence of religion on Nigeria's political growth, specifically focussing on Kaduna State. This focusses on the occasionally divisive topic of the politicisation of religion in Nigeria and examines how religious diversity has affected Nigerian politics, either positively or negatively. In order to establish a stable, unified, and forward-thinking Nigeria, the research will attempt to offer a workable formula for a complementary relationship between politics and religion.

METHODOLOGY

The survey research approach was employed for this investigation. The survey approach allows researchers to choose from a variety of data gathering instruments based on their analysis's goal and level of experience (Creswell, Hanson, Clark-Plano, & Morales, 2017).

Areas of Study

The area of study for this research is Kaduna State. Kaduna State (Hausa: *Jihar Kaduna*; Tyap: *S̱itet Kạduna*) is a state in northern Nigeria. The state capital is its namesake, the city of Kaduna which happened to be the 8th largest city in the country as at 2006. Created in 1967 as North-Central State, which also encompassed the modern Katsina State, Kaduna State achieved its current borders in 1987. The fourth largest and third most populous state in the country, Kaduna State is nicknamed the Centre of Learning, owing to the presence of numerous educational institutions of importance within the state such as Ahmadu Bello University, Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna State University, Federal College of Education Zaira, Riamarh Confectioneries, Air Force Institute of Technology, Greenfield University, Nuhu Bamali Polytechnic Zaria, Kaduna State College of Education Gidan Waya, Shehu Idris College of Health Science, National Teachers Institute e.t.c.

The populations of the study are residents of the 6 selected local government's areas of Kaduna state. The total population of the 6 LGAs is put at 2,949,500 (Statista *Population Projection, 21-03-2022).*

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The Slovin's formula was used to calculate the sample size for this study; it is presented below:

$$\boldsymbol{n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}}$$

Where

$$n = \frac{2{,}949{,}500}{1 + 2{,}949{,}500(0.04^2)}$$

$$n = \frac{2{,}949{,}500}{1 + 2{,}949{,}500(0.0016)}$$

$$n = \frac{2{,}949{,}500}{1 + 4{,}719.2}$$

$$n = \frac{2{,}949{,}500}{14{,}720.2}$$

$$n \approx 625$$

Note: for 95% confidence level, the error margin ranges from 0.04(4%) to 0.05(5%)
The sample size of this research is 632 representatives from which data was collected through the administering of questionnaires and In-depth Interview

Sampling Technique

The method of multi-stage sampling was used to develop the sample of the research under discussion. According to this method, sample members are selected on the basis of the application of approach of researcher's choice and specific purpose of the study to select respondents from the general population (Freedman et al., 2017). In the current study, the researcher selected six most accessible, enlighten, and above all more liberal and open-minded respondents from those most cosmopolitan local government areas for this study, two local government areas from each senatorial district were selected from the metropolitan/major city centres across the three senatorial districts which are: (Zone 1: Kaduna North, Zone 2: Kaduna Central, and Zone 3: Kaduna South) respectively.

3.4.2 Sampling Distribution Using Bourley's Proportional Allocation Technique

S/N	Study Under Study (LGAs)	Population Frequency (Polling Units)	Sample Size Distribution Using Bourley's Technique
1	**Zaria**	584	nb = 117
2	**Sabon Gari**	398	nb = 80
3	**Kaduna North**	703	nb = 141
4	**Kaduna South**	796	nb = 153
5	**Kachia**	317	nb = 63
6	**Jema'a**	325	nb = 65
	OVERALL TOTAL	**3123**	**625**

Source: **INEC-IREV 2023 (www.inecelectionresults.ng)**

From the selecting 6 local government areas, 73 electoral wards, and 3,123 polling units by the researcher, the systematic sampling was used to select a respondent from every first polling unit upon counting 5 polling units across the 3,123 polling units from the 73 electoral wards of the 6 local governments. The process was repeated consistently and at the end, 117 respondents was drawn from Zaria local government area, 80 respondents from Sabon Gari local government area, 141 respondents from Kaduna north local government area, 159 respondents from Kaduna south local government area, 63 respondents from Kachia local government area, and 65 respondents from Jema'a local government area respectively. This brought the total sample size for the selected residents to 625 respondents; and for this study, these set of respondents was issued questionnaires for the quantitative data.

Furthermore, for the qualitative data, a purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample. A total of eleven (7) respondents was used for the segment. Three party representatives of the three major parties in the 2023 elections (APC, PDP and Labour Party) two religious leaders of the selected Local Government Areas and two representatives of Civil Society Organizations were selected to participate in the study. The selection of seven participants for qualitative data is justified because Palinkas et al. (2015) stated that a small sample in qualitative data is employed to help in collecting rich information from specific individuals based on the reality of their experiences in reference to the subject of discussion.

The total sample frame is therefore comprised of 632 respondents in total; 625 residents for quantitative data and 7 political and religious, and civil society stakeholders for qualitative data.

The instrument for data collection was questionnaire and In-depth Interview. The questionnaire designed was in two parts: the first part comprised questions requiring demographic information on the respondents such as age, sex, occupation, etc. The second part contained questions relating to the subject matter of the investigation. The questionnaire was both open and closed ended questions. On the open-ended questions, the questionnaire provided the respondents with the opportunity to have the freedom to

decide the aspect, detail and length of the answer. In responding to questions, the respondents were expected to answer appropriately by ticking [√] on the responses suitable to the questions. There was varied response options made available for the respondent to select from.

On the In-depth Interview, 7 representatives from the listed stakeholders (2 religious leaders 1 each from the two major religion of Christianity and Islam, 3 political party representatives 2 civil society representatives) was purposively selected and interviewed; this helped to complement the responses from the questionnaire.

The quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis was utilized for the study. The quantitative data analysis was done through computational technique of SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). The qualitative data (open ended and interview responses) was analyzed using direct quotations and verbal transcriptions, as this will be appropriate in merging responses with objectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The researcher administered a total of 625 questionnaires which covered both open and closed ended questions. However, 615 of the questionnaires were returned, out of which 15 of them were rejected due to invalid responses. This means that the 600 valid questionnaires formed the size for the analysis.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18 – 24	214	35.7
25 – 31	148	24.7
32 – 38	71	11.8
39 and above	167	27.8
Total	**600**	**100**

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 1 showed the distribution of respondents by their age. From the distribution, it can be deduced that respondents aged 18-24 were 35.7%, 24.7% of respondents were aged 25-31, 11.8% of respondents were aged 32-38 and 27.8% were aged 39 and above.

Based on the distribution, it is deduced that there were more respondents in the age bracket of 18-24 years in the sample frame. The age bracket of the respondents also symbolizes the dominant population of political participants especially in the 2023 general elections.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	406	67.7
Female	194	32.3
Total	**600**	**100**

Source: Field Work, 2024

Table 2 shows the distribution of respondents by sex. The table shows that 67.7% of respondents were male. And 32.3% are females. The implication of the distribution is that there were more male respondents in the sample frame; which is a reflection of the population structure of Kaduna State.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	127	21.2
Married	355	59.2
Divorced	46	7.7
Widowed	72	11.9
Total	**600**	**100**

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 3 shows the distribution of respondents by marital status. The distribution of respondents shows that there were more married couples (59.2%) in the distribution than any other group. However, there is a significant minority of 21.2% of respondents who are single, pointing to the probability of a more youthful dominated sample frame.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Farmer	294	49.0
Civil Servant	29	4.8
Trader	260	43.3
Others	17	2.9
Total	**600**	**100**

Sources: Fieldwork, 2024

The distribution on occupation of respondents showed that there were more farmers (49.0%) and traders (43.3%) of respondents in the sample than any other occupation. The implication of the distribution is that 92.3% of the respondents are gainfully engaged in profitable economic venture.

Table 5: Showing Demographic Data of Religion

Religion	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Christianity	295	49.1
Islam	298	49.7
African Traditional Religion	7	1.2
Total	**600**	**100**

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 5 showed the presentation of religious affiliations of respondents. 49.1% of the respondents are Christians, 49.7% were Muslims and just 1.2% of them were of African Tradition Religion. The implication of the distribution is that both major religions in Nigeria were clearly represented in the sample, but those of the Islamic religion being relatively more than others.

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents by Educational Qualification

Education	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Primary	29	4.8
Secondary	192	31.9
Tertiary	308	51.4
Postgraduate	58	9.7
None	13	2.2
Total	**600**	**100**

Sources: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 6 shows the distribution of respondents by educational qualification. The table showed that up to 97.8% of respondents are literates having at least a first school leaving certificate. The implication of the distribution is that the sampled population were educated enough and could well take part in the study.

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Table 7: Responses on if respondents Participate in Politics

Respondents	Frequency	%
Yes	478	79.7
No	122	20.3
Total	**600**	**100**

Source: Fieldwork 2024

Table 7 showed that majority of respondents affirmed that they participate in politics. This was stated by the 79.7% of respondents. The implication of the result shows that the sampled respondents are active politically, and this justifies the high population of registered voters according to the INEC records as stated in the methodology.

Responses from the in-depth Interview showed also the distribution of political participation among the selected groups. The key informant respondents have been highly involved in politics within the state and beyond.

One of the IDI participants stated that:

> *I have been a major player in polities in Kaduna State. I can say for almost two decades now, politics have remained one of my major interests, because I am not only interested in determining the leaders of our great state and country, I am a leader myself* **(IDI Participant: Political Leader)**

Table 8: Responses on how long respondents have participated in Politics

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Just under a year	118	19.6
2-5 years	329	54.8
6-10 years	98	16.4
Over 11 years	55	9.2
Total	**600**	**100**

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 8 showed responses on how long respondents have been in politics or participating in politics. From the responses, it can be deduced that majority of respondents (54.8%) have been involved in politics from between 2 years to 5 years. The study concludes that, based on the number of years of respondents' involvement in politics, they would be a justified group of selected participants. It implies that, the sampled respondents are significant individuals experienced enough in political participation and have the requisite understanding on the factors of religion impacting on political participation in politics.

Table 9: Responses on mode of Political Participation of Respondents

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Voting	487	81.2
Rallies and Campaigns	90	14.9
Following the media (TV and Radio)	23	3.9
Total	**600**	**100**

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 9 showed that respondents' nature of political participation differs. However, most of the respondents participates in politics through voting in election. The implication of the response is that, respondents participated in political activities majorly during electioneering periods; a situation that could define them as passive political participants. It is also assumed that based on the nature of their political participation, there may be a room for several factors that could influence their voting behaviour. Some of the interview respondent affirmed thus:

> *Basically, as a stakeholder in the state, and as a political gladiator, political participation is an all-rounder phenomenon. For example, we hold political meetings, ward congresses, stakeholders' engagement and other activities leading up to election time properly. Sometimes it is about political meetings, and strategizing towards the next elections* **(IDI Participant: Party Representative 1).**
>
> *For many, political participation ends in election period or voting in an election; however, political participation is all encompassing involving the information on political development in the news to the campaigns and party politics and to voting. That is why in our party and for the state we have devoted plans to commence political sensitization in the state to get all and sundry to get involved to take back the state from leaders who are not devoted to ensuring that they are successful* **(IDI Participant: Party Representative 2)**

Table 10: Responses on Rating Political Participation of the People of Kaduna State

Responses	Frequency	%
High	566	94.4
Low	31	5.1
I have no idea	3	0.5
Total	**600**	**100**

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 10 showed that the people of Kaduna State are highly politically conscious and such participate in politics. This is so because 94.4% of respondents affirmed to the result. It can be concluded that associative factors such as the impact of religion could be an influencing factor for political participation in the State.

Similar to the questionnaire responses, interview participants also emphasized the high level of political participation of the people of Kaduna State. The participants emphasized huge political turnouts during campaign and huge voters during elections as pointers to the high level of political participation in the State. Majority of the participants who were interviewed stated that:

> *In my local government area where I represent, I can categorically say our people are highly political. The times have past where people do not get involved, they want to see to the end of every political process* **(IDI Participant: Religious Leader 1)**.

Another IDI Participant said:

> *The reality is that, the people of Kaduna State are political people, the consciousness the people exhibit in politics is high and no wonder we have always being one of the front runners in determining the direction of national politics* **(IDI Participant: Civil Society Representative).**

The responses from the questionnaire and interview show a corroboration of views, and as such it can be safely stated that, political participation is high in Kaduna State.

Table 11: Responses on whether religion has been a major factor in the politics of Kaduna State

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	552	92
No	18	3
Indifference	30	5
Total	**600**	**100**

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

From table 11, it can be deduced that 92% of the respondents believed that religion has been a major player in the politics of Kaduna State. Although 3% of the respondents thinks religion has not been part of politics in Kaduna State, 5% of the respondents had no response to the question. The implication is that, most of the respondents predominantly thought religious grounds and religious leaders have often times utilized the opportunities of religious gatherings to sensitize their followers on political processes in the society.

IDI Participants stated thus:

> *Of course, religion plays a major role in political participation of people. I can categorically state that, in Islam politics is a significant concept. Islamic leaders and Muslim organizations are very efficient and astute at building regional and international solidarity networks to push their claims and gain strength in greater numbers, which is what politics is about* **(IDI Participant: Religious Leader 2).**

Yes, religion is a part and parcel of politics. I think if you put religion away from politics, a nation may just collapse; however, in Christianity we still do believe in the idea of choice and that is why we tell followers about the need to participate in politics but then leave them to their decision". (**IDI participant: Religious Leader 1)**

Table 12: Responses on ways religion impacted on politics in Kaduna State

Responses	**Frequency**	**%**
Selection of Candidates	3	0.5
Voting pattern	433	72.2
Political Participation	164	27.3
Total	**600**	**100**

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 12 showed that 72.2% of the respondents were of the view that religious influence in politics in Kaduna State is in the area of voting pattern. While 27.3% of respondents see the impact of religion on politics in Kaduna State in the area of influencing political participation. The implication is that, from the perception of the people, religion is a major phenomenon that impacts on the minds of the people towards leadership affairs in Kaduna State; this is especially in areas of choice of voting in elections and generally on political participation.

Table 13: Responses on whether respondents have voted candidates based on their religious affiliations

Respondents	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Yes	511	85.2
No	57	9.4
I have no idea	32	5.4
Total	**600**	**100**

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

From table 13 it can be deduced that 85.2% of respondents overwhelmingly suggested that have voted candidates based on the religious affiliation of the candidate. Most of the respondents said that, religious and ethnic affiliations are major variables that influence political participation and voting behaviour. The implication of the result showed that, since most of the respondents agreed to voting in candidates based on religious affiliations, it is not synonymous to any particular religion and it is major aspect of the politics in Kaduna State

Table 14: Responses on whether the involvement of religion in politics in Kaduna has had positive impact

Respondents	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Yes	280	46.6
No	320	53.4
Total	**600**	**100**

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 14 shows respondents' views on whether religious involvement in politics in Kaduna State has had a positive impact. A simple majority of respondents (53.4%) believed that religious involvement in politics in Kaduna State has had no positive impact. However, a significantly strong minority of respondents (46.6%) thinks Kaduna State has benefited from religious impact of politics. The implication of the responses shows that the debate of whether religion has an advantage or not being part of politics remains a thing of individualistic perspective, given the close margin of responses.

Table 15: Responses on how religion has impacted on the political development of Kaduna State

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Improved political participation	581	96.8
Promote peaceful co-existence	-	-
None of the above	19	3.2
Total	**600**	**100%**

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

From table 15, it can be deduced that, respondents see improved political participation as the major impact of religious influence on political development of Kaduna State. This view was the option of most (96.8%) of the respondents. However, 3.2% of respondents do not see religion as having any impact on political development of Kaduna State.

Table 16: Responses on whether the recent political climate has any positive influence on the economic development of Kaduna State

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Yes	122	20.3
No	478	79.7
Total	**600**	**100%**

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 16 showed that respondents do not believe that the recent political climate championed on the Muslim-Muslim ticket has had any positive impact on the economic development of Kaduna State. Most of the respondents (79.7%) believes there has been no significant impact on the economic development of Kaduna State since the adoption of the Muslim-Muslim governorship ticket.

Test of Hypotheses

H_{O1}: There is no significant relationship between religious ideology and political development of Kaduna State

Parameter Estimates

Religious ideology[a]		B	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% Confidence Interval for Exp(B)	
								Lower Bound	Upper Bound
0	Intercept	4.565	2.464	3.432	1	.064			
	Politicaldevelopment	.274	.599	.210	1	.001	1.316	.406	4.260

a. The reference category is: 1.

The regression result provides evidence against the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between religious ideology and political development in Kaduna State. The coefficient for religious ideology is 0.274 with a p-value of 0.001, which indicates a statistically significant positive relationship between religious ideology and political development. Specifically, the odds ratio (Exp(B)) is 1.316, implying that as religious ideology increases, the likelihood of political development also increases by approximately 31.6%. However, the wide confidence interval for the odds ratio (0.406 to 4.260) suggests that while the relationship is statistically significant, there is considerable uncertainty about the exact magnitude of the effect. This implies that while the relationship is statistically supported, further research is needed to confirm the strength and consistency of the association between religious ideology and political development.

H_{O3}: There is no significant relationship between religious ideology and political participation among residents of Kaduna State

Parameter Estimates

Religious ideology[a a]		B	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% Confidence Interval for Exp(B)	
								Lower Bound	Upper Bound
0	Intercept	5.330	3.229	2.725	1	.001			
	Politicalparticipation	.097	.788	.015	1	.001	1.102	.235	5.159

a. The reference category is: 1.

The regression results indicate that the hypothesis, "There is no significant relationship between religious ideology and political participation among residents of Kaduna State," is likely to be rejected. The variable "religious ideology" has a significant p-value of 0.001, which is well below the 0.05 significance threshold, suggesting that religious ideology significantly influences political participation. The Exp(B) value of 1.102 implies that an increase in religious ideology is associated with a higher likelihood of political participation, with the 95% confidence interval for Exp(B) ranging from 0.235 to 5.159. Although the confidence interval is wide, indicating some variability, the statistical significance of the result points to a meaningful relationship between religious ideology and political participation. Therefore, the data supports the presence of a significant relationship between the two variables.

H_{O4}: There is no significant relationship between political participation and religious affiliations in Kaduna State.

Parameter Estimates

PoliticalParticipation[a]		B	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% Confidence Interval for Exp(B)	
								Lower Bound	Upper Bound
0	Intercept	5.330	3.229	2.725	1	.001			
	Religious affiliation	.097	.788	.015	1	.001	1.102	.235	5.159

a. The reference category is: 1.

The result suggests a significant relationship between political participation and religious affiliation in Kaduna State, contrary to the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship. Specifically, the coefficient for religious affiliation is 0.097 with a p-value of 0.001, which is statistically significant at conventional levels (e.g., $p < 0.05$). The odds ratio (Exp(B)) is 1.102, indicating that religious affiliation is associated with a 10.2% increase in the odds of political participation, though the wide confidence in1qaaterval (0.235 to 5.159) suggests some uncertainty about the strength of this association. Despite the statistical significance, the broad range of the confidence interval indicates that further investigation is needed to clarify the exact nature of this relationship.

DISCUSSION

The first major finding of the study showed that, Kaduna State is a politically active state; as most of the respondents in the study sample suggested they were active political participants. Most of the respondents have been involved in politics from between 2 years to 5 years. Based on the number of years of respondents' involvement in politics, they were a justified group of selected participants. Active political participation of 2 to 5 years presents a majority of population who have experienced at least one general election circle. However, the study further established that most of the respondents participates in politics by voting in election.

On the rating of political participation of the people of Kaduna State, the study found that the people of Kaduna State are highly politically conscious and such participate in politics. This is so because 94.4% of respondents affirmed to that effect. As suggested by responses, the study discovered that there are often huge political turnouts during campaign and huge voters during elections which is a pointer to the high level of political participation in the State. This finding is justified by INEC data (2023) that Kaduna State has a population of 3 million registered voters.

On the influence of religion on the political development of Kaduna State, the study found that religion has been a major player in the politics of Kaduna State. On table 4.11 of the study presentation and analysis, it was deduced that up to 92% of the sampled population attested to the fact that religion is a part and parcel of the political system of Kaduna State. This finding is consistent with the views of Adogame (2006) who argued that Nigerian politics is characterized chiefly by "politicization of religion and religionization of politics". Kukah (2013) also stated that no one can aspire to, or hold political office in Nigeria without pretending to be religious". Invariably, religion goes hand-in-hand with politics, and it will be difficult to hold a public office without hold on religion.

The study also found specifically the ways religion impacted on politics in Kaduna State. From table 4.12, it was found that religion influence the voting pattern of the Kaduna people. From the perception of the people, religion is a major phenomenon that impacts on the minds of the people towards leadership affairs in Kaduna State; this is especially in areas of choice of voting candidates into political offices during elections

The implication of the effect of religion on voting behaviour, politically active persons in Kaduna State often vote for candidates based on religious affiliations, and this is not synonymous to any particular religion as 72% of respondents on table 4.13 cutting across both major religions in Kaduna affirmed that they vote for candidates based on their religious leanings.

The study further found that a simple majority of respondents (53.4%) believed that religious involvement in politics in Kaduna State has had no positive impact. However, a significantly strong minority of respondents (46.6%) thinks Kaduna State has benefited from religious impact of politics. The study found that with the close margin of responses religious impact, whether positive or negative remains a strong one in the political system of Kaduna State. Since majority of the people argued on the basis of negative impact of religion on politics in Kaduna State, the finding aligns appropriately with the views of Alao (2022) who argued that in this country, religion has become interwoven with the politics of the nation's ethno-political divide and its fluid socioeconomic structure; indeed, religion underpins Nigerian politics, governance, and intergroup relations; the local intersect in the politics of religious violence.

To establish the positive impact of religion on the political development of Kaduna state, the study found that, improved political participation of the people during elections is the major impact of religious influence on political development of Kaduna State. This finding is supported by the view of Igboin (2016) stating that in Nigeria, religion often functions as one of the mobilizing factors in political engineering.

The study went further to inquire whether the current political climate Muslim-Muslim leadership in the apex of governance in the State has had any positive impact on the economic development of Kaduna State. The study found that there has no significant impact on the economic development of Kaduna State since the adoption of the Muslim-Muslim governorship ticket since most people in the State still live below the poverty line and with increased insecurity and banditry in the State.

CONCLUSION

Increased Political participation has been regarded as one of the critical factors needed for the growth and development of any democracy. Nigeria's democratic processes need an effective strategy for harnessing the large pool of voters from the over 200 million people. The current study has been able to show case the underwhelming impact of religion on political development of Kaduna State. Although religious impact was seen in shaping behaviour of people towards voting or participation in politics due to religious affiliation of candidates. The study concludes that religion has a masked impact on political development. This is because, although the people become more involved in politics due to religion and candidate's

religion, it is a negative trend that may lead to unwanted development of distrust and eventual apathy in politics.

The Constitution allows every citizen freedom of worship in affirmation of the secularity principle. Unfortunately, the interference of religion in political affairs has continued to raise concerns. The argument is that the politicization of religion has contributed to the increasing nature of radicalization and extremism thereby posing an existential threat to the Nigerian State. The implications of this to national security remain incontrovertible. It has affected national unity, cohesion, and peaceful co-existence. Thus, the politicization of religion negatively affects governance. More often, critical public policy decision making is subjected to parochial religious sentiments. The elites have found religion a veritable instrument to ascend to political power.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations made:

1. Based on experiences in Nigeria and findings from this study, complete secularity is unattainable due to the inevitable interaction between religion and society. Religion in politics is now a permanent fixture and will remain significant in the future. In light of this reality, it is imperative to leverage the advantages it presents to foster development, which has remained elusive in Nigeria since independence. The study advocates for the commitment to religion moral norms by both leaders and followers. This is essential as they all possess obligations to fulfil in promoting good governance, and these obligations are inherent in religious ethics.
2. Religious leaders should recognize their leadership roles not solely for spiritual guidance but also for shaping the awareness of their followers; consequently, they must encourage their adherents to engage actively in politics, as they will consistently represent a significant voice in mobilizing the electorate.
3. While the study validates the impact of religion on political engagement, it emphatically advises against guiding adherents in making decisions pertaining to religious affiliations. Once followers are informed about political participation, their electoral choices should be solely their own decision.

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