Democracy and Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Jos, Plateau State (2007-2012)

Ogbuleke Loveday Enyinnaya

Peace and Conflict Studies Programme, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

Abstract
This study examined democracy and ethno-religious conflicts in Jos, Plateau State in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. The focus of this study is to examine how ethno-religious conflicts affect the nature of democracy with a view to proffering solutions for its sustenance in Nigeria. The study is descriptive and data obtained from secondary and primary sources. Since the emergence of the nascent democracy in 1999, Jos, Plateau State, has become a flashpoint of violent clashes. The State which had been one of the most relatively peaceful in Nigeria has been deeply enmeshed ethno-religious conflicts characterized by genocidal attacks, bombing, maiming and killings of several persons, loss of business investments, and properties worth several billions of Naira. Within the space of eleven years, several violent political, ethno-religious conflicts have been reported in Plateau State. Furthermore, these violent conflicts have compelled several Nigerians to attempt a redefinition of their identity as fallouts of emotive feeling and perceptions. The findings in the study revealed that lack of political representation, discrimination, marginalization, neglect, poverty, unemployment, identity, and elite manipulation were the major causes of the crisis. Ethno-religious conflicts have been reported in Plateau State and all effort to restore peace has not achieved the desired end. It would seem that democracy has increased the culture of impunity in some people while political differences are believed to have fueled some of the violence that has erupted the state. It is as a meant of crisis Plateau State goes down with the unenviable record as the first state in the Fourth Republic where a state of emergency was declared. Federal, State and Local Government should establish a domestic peace-keeping corps to reduce the number of miscreants and 'area boys'. Also, unemployment should be combated with all seriousness and patriotism, in order to reduce the pool of hungry and angry from where destroyers are recruited for political thuggery," terrorism, religious riots and communal clashes. Good governance with the underlying emphasis on the activation of the citizenry to realize the 'common good' to be taken root in the popular consciousness of Nigerians. The constitution of the federal should be pluralistic, representative, and just in their treatment of the Nigerian citizens. It should discourage all forms of discrimination, neglect and marginalization in dealing with development, politics, ethnicity and religious issues.
Keywords: Democracy, Ethno-religious conflicts, Ethnicity, Conflict, and Identity.

Introduction
The world has transformed rapidly in the decade since the end of the Cold War. Presently, world is literally covered with ethnic, religious, territorial, and nationalist conflicts that are as serious, costly, and intense as in the past. An old system is gone and, although it is easy to identify what has changed, it is not yet clear that a new system has taken its place. Old patterns have spread-out, and new patterns are emerging, and yet it is still too soon to define them clearly. Hauss (2001) declares that the list of potentially epoch-making changes is familiar by now; the end of an era of bipolarity, a new wave of democratization, increasing globalization of information and economic power, more frequent efforts at international coordination of security policy, a rash of sometimes violent expressions of claims to rights based on cultural identity, and a redefinition of sovereignty that imposes on states new responsibilities to their citizens and the world community.

However, it is possible to argue that conflict is common to human relationships and societies. As Zartman (1991) has observed, conflict is as a result of interaction among people; "an unavoidable concomitant of choices and decisions and an expression of the basic fact of human interdependence". The Realist School views human interaction as taking place within a power arena, with possession of power, which is a scarce resource, engendering frustration in the one who does not possess or is denied it. In this respect, Coser (1956) has argued that conflict occurs when two or more people engage in a struggle over values and claims to status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals. He further explained that conflict emerges whenever one party perceives that one or more valued goals or means of achieving these valued goals are threatened or hindered by another party or parties or by their activities. These perceived threats occur especially if both parties are seeking to expand into the same physical sphere or field of influence or activity. Consonant with this, Stagner (1995) has observed that the occurrence of aggressive behaviour always suggests the existence of frustration which always leads to some form of conflict. From this viewpoint, it is possible to consider conflict as a social necessity and an inevitable aspect of the healthy functioning of all societies.

Conflicts can be said to be common to Africa and African states even though we do not concur with the view of a wild savage Africa locked in primordial struggle between races, tribes and ethnic groups as the

apologists of colonialism would want us to believe. Ethno-religious conflicts which are common in many parts of Africa have a negative impact on democracy and society as a whole. Their immediate outcome is massive loss of life and property. The long-time effects are equally drastic and negatively affect the democratic process (Owuor, 2002). Africa is a continent of with diverse ethnic backgrounds. In the pre-colonial era, the various African ethnic groups lived distinctively and autonomously under the leadership of their chiefs or kings (Owuor, cited on Du Toit, 1987). The African socio-economic and political structures were well-organised to ensure stability and security at all time.

However, it is important to note that during the period in question, ethnic conflicts were common. It should be noted at this juncture that for the Africans, blood was sacred and hence human life could only be taken when it could not be avoided (Kenyatta, 1971). In cases where death occurred during war, the killer was to go through ritual cleansing as prescribed by different communities. The intention of the group to war with other communities was not purposely to kill but to capture the opponents (Ibid).

Hence, the ethno-religious conflict or clashes being witnessed in African to today are quite different from traditional ones. Innocent lives and property are lost simply to satisfy individual interests. This is a manifestation of selfishness which is contrary to Christian or Muslim teaching. Most of today's clashes result from political differences. The viability of the political system, to a large extent should depend on its ability to ensure that power is satisfactorily distributed among the groups in the country in which democracy had become inevitable in most parts of Africa as a system of government that provides the basics fundamental principles that governed the people.

Nigeria is a key player in African Affairs and an important participant in global matters. The country, which is fondly called "the giant of Africa", is the most populous and potentially one of the well-endowed nations. Based on the 2006 Population and Housing Census report, its population is put at over 134 million (NPC, 2006) while Central Intelligence Agency (CIA world Fact book, 2013) put it at 170 million (July 2012). It is one of the world's most ethnically diverse nations. It comprises multi-ethnic nationalities put between 250 and 450 (Idahosa 1997; Aghemelo and Osumah 2009). Some of the major ethnic groups in Nigeria are larger than many independent states in Africa. At the early 1960s, of the estimated 3,000 ethnic groups in the world about 1000 were represented in Africa and about 445 in Nigeria (Alkali 1997). Of the numerous ethnic groups, there are three dominant ones: these are the Hausa in the Northern region, the Igbo in the Eastern region and the Yoruba in the Western region. Other minority ethnic groups include Kanuri, Tiv, Bini, Isoko, Nupe, Ibibio, Jukun, Gwari and Igbira (ibid). The three dominant ethnic groups have been net beneficiaries of the political power at the national level (Imobighe 2003). The overwhelming majority of the Northern population is Muslim, which is estimated to be over 50 per cent of the total population. Christianity is strong in the Southern region, accounting for perhaps 35 per cent of the total population of the country, while the balance of the population remains animists (Dibie, 2000).

The last two decades have brought about systemic changes in the relations between several communities and groups in Nigeria. These have been due to persistent and recurrent violent conflict each of these conflicts has taken its toll on lives and property of the people, and in the dismemberment of peace, justice, social harmony, socio-economic and political ties and also led to the disruption of family relationships, cultural ethnic and religious affinities (Cornelius, 2002).

The challenge of managing Nigeria's political and ethnic plurality has not been an easy task. The ethnic problem has posed a number of threats to the legitimacy of the national government and its ability to offer leadership appropriate to the demand of nation-building. The mobilization of ethnic sentiments and solidarity seeking to gain or retain relevance has fuelled anxiety, suspicion, fear of domination and outright conflicts (Osumah and Okor 2009). Granted that conflict is an inevitable phenomenon in social and political settings and thus, not peculiar to any part of the world, its nature, dimension, consequences and management vary from one country to another. Nigeria is one of the nations in the world whose political landscape has been inundated, suffused with and deeply enmeshed in spectrum of recurring complex conflicts ranging from resource, communal, to political and ethno-religious conflicts (Jega 2002).

However, since the return to civil democratic rule in 1999, Nigeria has witnessed extensive worse in its internal security. The transition from military to civilian rule in Nigeria was greeted with popular enthusiasm. It was a welcomed development not only because it was seen as the down of a new era of great optimism and the realization of participatory democracy (Mijah, 2007, Elaigwu, 2005).

In the same vein, it is important to note that democratic governance, turn out to be a mixed bad, as old grievances and hated, suppressed during military rules, resurfaced and seek to be resolved. The present dispensation of active and inactive of the state made no avenue for their resolution, and in certain cases even complicated these grievances.

Ethno-religious conflicts are part of the most recurring issues in Nigeria's body politic. The issue which has penetrated deeply into Nigeria landscape could be traced to the colonial period and till present moment. There seem to be no solution within reach to the accompanying of ethno-religious conflict under democratic

governance. The dominating and minority ethnic group treat each other with suspicion and the different religious groups clash at slightest provocation (Ayobami, 2011).

The past decades of violence in Plateau State, from 2007-2012, took place under civilian governments, but this does not mean military administrations were better at controlling religious or ethnic tensions in Nigeria. Military authoritarianism inflamed communal tensions in some areas as the political demands of excluded groups were not met, and in the absence of open politics, religious activism became more pronounced (Olumide and Oyekwere, 2012).

Against this background therefore, the focus of the study is to examine democracy and ethno-religious conflicts in Jos, Plateau state from 2007-2012, seeks to investigate the challenges and proffer solutions.

Apart from the introduction remarks, this paper has four other sections. These are namely, conceptual and definitional issue; the nature and causes of ethno-religious conflicts in Jos; implications of ethno-religious conflicts on democracy and; concluding remarks.

Conceptual and Definitional Issues

When discussing democracy, frequently scholars rely upon definitions that highlight means. Collier and Levitsky (1997) point out that the most widely employed definitions of democracy centre on procedures rather than substantive policies or other outcomes that might be viewed as democratic, is the key term being contextualized in this paper. However, since the concepts of democracy and ethno-religious conflicts in Jos constitute the problematic in the paper, there shall be a need for the analysis of the nexus between them and the concept of democracy.

For the purpose of this paper, we do not want to dwell on the controversy surrounding the meaning or concept of democracy. What we intend to do is to adopt a certain presentation of the meaning of this concept which we consider adequate for our purpose in this paper.

Adapting Robert Dahl's classic work on democratic to 'a regime in which the authority to exercise power derives from the will of the people'. In this view, democracy 'maximizes opportunities for both political contestation and political participation'. Dahl's distinction between the real type and real world approximations of democracy is very important, democracy, in ideal sense, is used to refer to a regime that is 'completely responsive to all citizens' (Ferguson, 2004) conceptualized the measure of democracy include a range of democratic institutions and culture that are willing to accept opposition and debate.

Beethan and Boyle (2000), attempts at encapsulating some sets of principle and components of democracy are more instructive in overcoming the various problems in explaining and understanding democracy. Having examined the two varying notions of democracy- 'legal' and 'participatory', David Beethan concludes that two key principles are common to both. These two principles, to him, determine the extent to which a system or 'the decision making process of an association of people' is democratic. He describes democracy as 'not an all or nothing affairs', but a continuum with the possibility of countries falling at relative levels depending on the extent to which they satisfy these principles. There is, therefore, the presumption that democracy is an ideal construct, a goal that no country can claim to have attained or can reach.

As noted in a preceding section, it necessary to established nexus between democracy and ethno-religious conflicts. Those who admit their love for democracy have always been afraid of plurality. This is one of reasons why the ancient Greek 'inventors' of democracy expelled the 'weaker' sex and the 'barbarian' race from political participation. This aversion for plurality was carried over into the 'age of liberty' as evidenced by the delayed extension of suffrage in liberal democracies. J. S. Mills voiced this concern when he argued that democracy would not survive in a plural society (Horowitz 1985). These fears trailed most of the plural African countries at the eve of independence as some countries adopted one-party systems in order to preserve democracy and build the nation. Nigeria happens to be one of the few African countries that retained a multi-party structure even though de facto one party rule persisted in the regions and states. In the wake of 'the resurgence of democracy' from the mid-1980s, several analysts warned that democratization would ignite ethnic conflicts. This warning came at a period when scholars and renascent civil society were advertising democracy as a liberator from dictatorship and violent conflict (Nnoli 1995, Osaghae 1995, Olukoshi and Laasko, 1998). Some analysts referred specifically to the fact that liberal democracy, which privileged individual rights and disregarded group rights was not suitable for the African context where group rights are emphasized (Ake 2000, Jinadu 2004). Thus, some efforts were made to assuage the fears of impending doom. Ake (2000b) was one of the boldest optimists:

> 'Far from being prone to generating ethnic conflict, democratization is actually a solution to those things, which promote ethnic identity and what passes for ethnic conflicts in Africa. What are these causes? The most important is the character of the post-colonial state in Africa, its power over economy and society is enormous, arbitrary and it is largely privatized. For all but a few of its citizens, it is alien and remote, uncaring and oppressive many of them have turned away from the state and given their loyalty to sub-national formations '

Democratization, by definition, entails transfer of power from the state to society. As such it opens a window of opportunity for the expression and mobilization of old and new grievances, among them ethnicity, religion, identity. Democratization and ethnic conflict are in fact empirically correlated phenomena. Periods of democratization are usually accompanied by an increase in the levels of ethnic conflict (Horowitz 1985; Roeder 1991, 1999; Skalnik Leff 1999; Snyder 2000). Managing ethnic conflict is therefore a fundamental aspect of a successful transition to democracy and a subject of heated academic debate.

Democratization and ethnic conflict management are two processes identified as being of vital importance in Africa at the moment. Given that ethnic conflict management and democratization are often cited as two of the most important goals towards which African states should be striving, it is useful to examine the relationship between the two. The coincidence of democratization and ethno-religious conflict in Jos and other parts of Nigeria has led some to wonder whether ethnic conflict is not the inevitable result of the end of authoritarian rule, meaning that it can be expected that democratization will in some way exacerbate ethnic tensions.

Welsh (1993) argue that democracy widens the scope for ethnic politics - democratization provides incentives for ethnic mobilization which can threaten the cohesiveness of the state. The arguments suggest that democratization is likely to ignite ethnic conflicts where ethnic tensions had previously been latent. Other writers acknowledge that this has sometimes been the case, but argue that democratization and ethnic conflict need not go hand in hand. Glickman (1995) opposed that, certain types of democratization allow for the constructive expression and demonstration of ethnic differences, while Smith (2000) concludes after a long empirical study that democratization does not raise or lower ethnic conflict scores. Following this line of thought, it can be argued that democratization and effective ethnic conflict management are not incompatible, but that attention has to be given to the form of democratization if the eruption of violent ethnic conflict is to be prevented. Cohen (1997) posits that democratization should include proportionalism if ethnic conflict is to be prevented, and Glickman (1995b) proposes that democratization in Africa should include some form of federalism if ethnic conflict is to be managed effectively. Glickman, 1995; Smith, 2000 and Cohen, 1995 was in the same school of thought who believes that democracy accommodates ethnic groups and other groups in order to express their views at a particular given time.

Adapting Robert Dahl's classic work on democracy theory, democracy could be described as attributable to 'a regime in which the authority to exercise power derives from the will of the people'. In this view, democracy 'minimizes opportunities for both political contestation and political participation'. Democracy in the deal sense is used to refer to a regime that is 'completely responsible to all citizens from their various identities or ethnicity and religion.

According to U.S. Department of State, democracy not only promotes fundamental American values as religious freedom and worker rights, but to helps create a more secure, stable, and prosperous global arena in which the United States can advance its national interests. In addition, democracy is the one national interest that helps to secure all the others. Democratically governed nations are more likely to secure the peace, prevent aggression, expand open markets, promote economic development, protect American citizens, combat international terrorism and crime, uphold human and worker rights, avoid humanitarian crises and refugee flows, improve the global environment, and protect human health.

If ethnic conflict management and democratization are two of the most important challenges facing Africa at the moment, it makes sense that their impact on each other should be carefully considered. Since democratization is encouraged in Nigeria, there should be a consciousness of the impact democratization can have on ethnicity in Jos, plateau State and when ethno-religious conflict is managed in Jos, the impact of ethno-religious conflicts on the democratic process should be given consideration.

This paper shall critically examine the implications of ethno-religious conflicts on the nature of democracy in Jos, Plateau state and Nigeria's Fourth Republic, in a subsequent section. However, it is essential to note that Nigeria politics is built on the satisfying of religion. In the next section, the paper analyzes the nature and the causes of ethno-religious conflicts in Jos 2007-2012.

The Nature and Causes of Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Jos, Plateau State (2007-2012)
The 2007 Crisis
The state of emergency left the political conflict in Jos completely unaddressed. The confrontation between the indigenes and the Jasawa continued over the following years. Time and again, Jos residents feared an imminent outbreak of another round of violent clashes. The emergency rule then seemed to have offered a respite, as no major crisis was recorded in 2007 until 2008 when a crisis which trailed the 2008 local government election in Jos North Local Government area claimed property worth billions of naira and scores of people killed. It was the year Governor Jang became the governor of the state and the Fulani's viewed him as opposition with Beron motive. The political tension, expectations from the indigenes the settlelers were very high (Interview: Oche, 2013).

The 2008 crisis
Rioting resumed in November 2008, in connection with local government elections in Jos. This time destruction within the city was massive. At least 700 people died in just two days of violence. Entire neighbourhoods were razed to the ground. The psychological impact of the 2008 riot went deep. It resulted in a breakdown of trust, communication and exchange between the communities that has never been fully restored. Residents referred to the violence as 'a fight to finish'. It was one violence too many and observers say it can never be forgotten in the history of Plateau State. Ostien sums up the situation when he states that when the Plateau State local government elections took place, 'the stage was set as a show- down between Jang and the Jasawa' in Jos North LGA (Ostien, 2009). According to Adebusayo Ojo, who resident in Dogo Nahauwa; the Jasawa elite had been in negotiations about broader political inclusion and offices for their community with Governor Jonah Jang over several years. Jang refused to cooperate with the Jasawa and planned to campaign without Muslim support (Interview: Ojo, 2013). The crisis again was as a result of the age long tussle for the soul of Jos North local government on who controlled the council area between the natives and the Hausa/Fulani settlers (Ibid). The later alleged massive rigging in the election results announced by Plateau State Electoral Commission (PLASIEC) in favour of Timothy Buba, the incumbent chairman of the local government. The protest led to unimaginable carnage that nearly consumed the state capital and the suburbs. Therefore, Jasawa inclusive in the state politics inclined them not to have trust in Jang conflicts resolution and governing.

Jang (2012) said it was mischievous for anybody or group to say he was the cause of the crisis rocking the state, saying that the upheavals predated his administration. According to him, since 1999 there had been grand plots to destabilize Plateau State and the Middle Belt as a whole, antagonists of the zone craftily imposed a state of emergency in the state during former Governor Joshua Dariye's administration to achieve their aim. The governor said his administration started intimating the Federal Government of the presence of terrorists in the state from 2008 adding that some of them were arrested but the government did not believe the state. He stated that:

> "Right from 2008, we started seeing the hand of terrorists in the state, we notified the federal government and arrested some of them but they said we are lying. The events of last week clearly show that we have highly sophisticated terrorist organizations in our midst. The firepower from their riffle is greater than that of our security agencies. Eastern part of Plateau is occupied by terrorists for the past two years, efforts to get the federal government to push them out failed. In as much as every Nigerian has the right to reside anywhere within the country, not every foreigner has the right to occupy any territory within the country. What happened last week was beyond resident Fulani because of the weapon they used," Jang, (2012).

The 2009 Crisis
The year 2009 was one of easy calm like that of year 2007.

The 2010 Crisis
On Sunday 17 January, 2010, a misunderstanding over a deserted building undergoing renovation in a densely populated area of Dutse Uku in Fraka district of Jarawa snowballed into a physical face-off between the natives and the Hausa/Fulani. This soon led to an attack on Christians worshiping at ECWA Church Nasarawa, Jos. To Akanji who resided in Nasarawa Gwong said in an interview that 'Christians mobilized, blowing a whistle and asking people to "come out and fight for Jesus". Ever since; the region has plummeted into a deadly cycle of reprisal and revenge attacks. Numerous small-scale attacks, 'silent killings' of individuals discovered in the 'wrong' neighbourhood, and two major massacres in villages close to the city mark 2010 as the worst for Jos: at least 1,000 people were killed and more than 18,000 displaced (Interview: Akanji, 2013). The series of violent events culminated in the detonation of several bombs on Christmas Eve. Bomb explosions were a novelty to Jos (HRW, 2011). Within the twinkle of an eye, the minor incident had become a big problem which soon engulfed the entire state capital and people took sides along religious lines. Still reeling from this unfortunate incident, the Fulani, alleged to be on revenge mission over their kin killed in another part of the state in March of the same year stormed Dogo Nahauwa and other surrounding villages in Jos South local government area of the state. The Fulani herdsmen, in their hundreds, armed with sophisticated guns and other dangerous weapons descended in the inhabitants, mostly children and women, and snuffed lives out of them.

The unfortunate incident exasperated other natives, thus leading to reprisal attacks and further violence in other parts of the state. The level of callousness exhibited by the marauders, especially the killing of under-aged children who were between the ages of three to 15, was a great shock to people. From the incident alone, no fewer than 150 people were butchered by the Fulani attackers. The Fulani attack on Dogo na Hauwa signaled another episode of violence in the history of the state. Since then, the Fulani and the natives, especially the Berom, have been on each other's throats advancing various spurious reasons to justify such attacks on one

another. Some of such reasons are cattle rustling on both sides and cattle encroachment into farmlands among others. However, from all indications, the dimension the crisis has taken in recent times has shown that the stated reasons are mere excuses for mindless carnage. However, At least 857 people died in the January 2010 Jos riot, the Kuru Karama and Dogo Nahauwa massacres, and the 2010 Christmas bombings. While it is difficult to estimate how many people died in the 'silent killings', the total death toll for 2010 certainly exceeds 1,000 victims. Human Rights Watch also estimates more than 1,000 victims for 2010 (HRW, 2011), while both Muslim and Christian representatives claim higher victim numbers for the January and March 2010 violence. The actual number of victims May there- fore reach well beyond 1,000. Due to the level of conflicts in 2010, the conflictual parties refused to put an end to their grievances rather to escalate the killings in the state.

The 2011 Crisis
The current situation Small-scale violent incidents continued into 2011.Another attack was carry out on 27 Thursday 2011, in Barking Ladi Local Government Area of Plateau State, no fewer than 10 people were killed while 29 attackers, suspected to be Fulani, among whom is a mobile Policeman, Corporal Uba Ahmed, from Abuja Police Command, were arrested. (Shobayo and Michael, 2011). Smaller bomb blasts and a number of attempted bombings followed during the first months of 2011 (Interview: Bola, 2013). However, Nigerian newspapers report cases of public buses being stopped and passengers being selected and killed according to religious identity, simple market transactions sparking violent clashes, and private vehicles being attacked after taking a wrong turn into settlements dominated by the other religious group. The Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria stated that Fulani herders in Plateau State had about 219 members killed and 7,000 cows stolen in January 2011; it should be noted that these numbers appear very high (Weekly Trust, 2011).

The 2012 Crisis
The state has recorded regular deadly hostilities between the Fulani and the natives, especially the Berom. In the northern part of the state, especially Barakin-Ladi and Riyom local government areas have experienced unprecedented attacks from the Fulanis, leading to the death of innocent people and loss of property worth billions of naira destroyed. As result of these attacks, many villages have been deserted while farming which is the basic occupation of the people has been abandoned for fear of attacks. According to Adonmadon Helen, the unfortunate scenario reached its peak recently with the deadly invasion of close to ten villages in both Barakin-Ladi and Riyom local governments by gunmen suspected to be Fulani herdsmen alleged to be mercenaries from neighbouring Chad and Niger Republic on the invitation of the local Fulani on ground. The attacks on the villages of Kakuruk, Kuzen, Ngyo, kogoduk, Ruk, Dogo, Kufang, Kpapkpiduk, and Kai in Gashishi District of Barakin-Ladi Local Government area of the state were so deadly and beyond imagination. The well-coordinated attacks which lasted for several hours simultaneously in all the villages left no fewer than 140 people dead (Interview: Adonmadon, 2013).

As to the crisis in jos, government-induced poverty is a handy explanation, but it is not the most cogent. Nigeria has become a country in which the cutthroat competitive spirit has permeated every aspect of life. Bloodshed like that of jos is rooted in this reality. It manifests in communal relations and politics no less than in family affairs (Ibelema, 2010).

Implications of Ethno-Religious Conflicts on Democracy in Jos, Plateau State
The mere existence of different ethnic groups or diverse political worldview in one society does not automatically produce tension or conflict. People with different ethnic and political leanings can and do coexist, without tension but this may change in times of stress or in situations of mutual distrust. The fear of democracy catalyzing disintegration due to cultural pluralism is rife but according to Claude Ake (1990), 'democracy implies precisely the assumption of differences to be negotiated, to be conciliated, and to be moved into phases of higher syntheses. Obasanjo averred that 'as human beings, we will always have friction when we live together, but it should not lead to violence or the urge to take life' (Obasanjo, 2001). This position was borne out of the idea that this wanton destruction of lives and properties is sponsored by people who want to protect their own interest at the expense of the Nation-State. Formal President posited that 'unhealthy competition and maneuvers for power and control among the elites are the principal cause. (Obasanjo, 2002).

Democracy is about freedom, but it is not freedom to be reckless. It is freedom within certain understandable limits but events in the Nigerian fourth republic has shown that the freedom allowed by democracy is being mis-utilised. Although the constitution guarantees freedom to form and hold an opinion, the Nigerian situation is such that the competitors for power have taken control of an issue that is definitely well beyond their sphere of competence, and they are making personal profits out of it at the expense of the corporate existence, economic revival and integration of the nation-state (Adeyemi, 2006).

Ethnic politics of interest constitute a major setback to democracy and this threatens the Nigerian unity. In the absence of a common cause and collective interests of the people, common concern for the generality of the masses, which is the basis for democratic governance is lacking (Interview: Muhammed, 2013). Democracy ought to aim at addressing common concerns of the citizenry, which should presuppose constitution of the

political society as a nation. This should be opposed to addressing concerns as a group but as a nation with shared interests and common course. In this way, the state should be a public asset for managing affairs of the entire nation. But with the explained ethnic politics being played on the platforms of sentiment and origin, and encouraged by the system, democratic politics seems virtually easier said than done.

Just like the situation in the country generally, the past twelve years of democracy in Plateau State is an admixture of the good and the bad. Whichever way it is viewed, majority of the people feels that the period is better than several years of military rule. However, the unending crisis in the state since 1999 is a major deficiency as all efforts to restore peace have not achieved the desired end. It would seem that democracy has increased the culture of impunity in some people while political differences are believed to have fuelled some of the violence that has erupted. It was crisis that made Plateau State go down with the unenviable record as the first state in the Fourth Republic where a state of emergency was declared. That was in 2004 following violence in Yelwa and Shendam. The failure to find a solution to the violence has also been blamed on the inability of politicians to separate political interest from the corporate interest of the state. Thus we now have a situation where the same politicians that 'ganged up' against the former Governor, Josuah Dariye now find a common enemy in the incumbent Governor, Jonah Jang (Obateru, 2010). Jang, Beron from Du village by ethnicity, and a retired Air Commodore and formal military governor of Benue (1985-86) and Gongola (1986-87) States, has been Governor of Plateau State since 2007. His administration is widely accused of having adopted a Berom ethnic agenda, to the detriment of other groups, and by both Hausa and Fulani, especially, of having strong anti-Muslim bias and this renewed violence in 2008 and 2010 (Olumide and Onyekwere, 2012).

Ethno-religious crises in Jos, Plateau state, have presented many challenges that border on security and the corporate existence of the State. What we are witnessing through these crises is a transfer of aggression from one grievance to innocent Nigerians. For example, in the Jos crises, the Hausa-Fulani have been piqued against Christians instead of confronting Plateau State Government in order to resolve their areas of disagreements. Similarly, in the Boko Haram crisis, fellow Nigerians were killed as a result of grievances arising from government's failure to address poverty, unemployment corruption and bad governance which affects both Christians and Muslims. It is our contention here therefore, that, the settler-indigene question has weakened patriotism, commitment to national ideals and true nationhood, giving rise to parochialism, ethnicity and other cleavages, which ethno-religious jingoists exploit for their interest and advantage. He said "we have, in fact, generated from regionalism to statism, from statism to ethnocentrism and from ethnocentrism to egoism." He further stated that the ethnic card is played in such a way that everyone wants the next President or Governor or even Bishop or Imam to be from his village (Interview: Bala, 2013).

Inflicting pain and hurt on innocent Nigerians has implanted hatred and deepened conflict, thereby widening conflict zones. This has also killed all sense of friendship, solidarity, and good neighborliness among Nigerians. Experiences of outright killing of human lives, the agony, pain, and the gory scenes of carnage, leave lasting memories for many years to come. For example, the holocaust type of experience which produced Ellie Wiesel's *The Night* could as well be in the making, if ethno-religious conflicts are not stemmed now and completely. The *operation vengeance* slogan which became a catchword before the 2010 Jos crisis indicates that memories from such conflicts could create future conflicts.

The *post-traumatic stress disorder* (PTSD) arising from these conflicts is already becoming evident among the survivors of the crises. The continuous stockpiling of dangerous weapons and the new pattern of the use of bombs and explosives is a serious security breach that has dangerous consequences for the Nigerian state.

Government's failure to address serious national issues involving ethno-religious conflicts, portray that government is either partisan in handling such conflicts, or is exhibiting lack of political will, incompetence or bad governance. For instance, Government had been warned many times in Jos of impending crises but failed to stem them before they eventually occurred. Government's failure also to either bring out past reports of panels, inquiries and committees and white papers arising from such crises, confirms our assertion in this regard. Continuous ethno-religious crises have potentials of causing disaffection between security agencies particularly if accusations of extra-judicial killings and partial handling of such crises continue. These led to the reason why Governor Jonah Jang accused the Army of responsibility in the mayhem in 2010, citing example despite alerting the Army commander in the state of possible attack of some villages by Fulani herdsmen, nothing was done. The Army commander Olukolade, not only failed to defend the poor villagers, he and other security agents in conspiracy, switched off their phones during the early morning massacre of innocent villagers, the governor had allege. Olukolade, apart from being rude in his defence, also, "demonstrated an embarrassing naivety" in understanding the need to respect a democratically elected governor of a state. It is obvious that the Army DPR failed to address the issue, but rather chose to insult the governor and the people of Plateau State at large (interview: Braithwaite, 2013).

The situation in the 2007 to 2012 Jos crises has shown this observation to be pertinent. Security agencies today have developed "fatigue of crises" as they are made to monitor situations that could degenerate to further conflicts. This is in addition to huge financial resources that go as security votes, instead of channeling

such monies towards more purposeful developmental programmes for the people to benefit from the dividend of democracy. The state government continues to vote for more security agencies from federal government in order to keep fragile state. According to Cardinal John, we bemoan heightened insecurity in our country, in recent times; we have seen how the problem of insecurity affects education. The mindless massacre of innocent student's right in their schools in the north Eastern states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe is a very painful case. Despite the efforts of security agencies, life and property in Plateau state are still exposed to people wicked intentions (Interview: Cardinal John, 2014). The continuous road-blocks in Jos have psychological effects which indicate the insecurity of the city itself, just as the unending curfews continues to affect socio-economic like in the city. In fact, the incessant cases of violence in Jos continue to heighten ethnic and religious tension with tendencies of spillover to other parts of the country.

In conduct election in the state, the people are always at the peak suspicious know full well that going to pulling zone they might be attacked by unknown gun men. For instance, during and after state-wide local government council elections in 2008, which were considered by some as "peaceful, free and fair". Security reports and situations before the elections in Jos had advised that the elections be postponed till a more convenient date. Some other had reasoned that their continuous disenfranchisement was only fitting and convenient for the state government who had been accused of biases even before the poll. Other ethnic groups no longer have faith on the government to decide on whom to govern them during elections in the state. Adekunle Adekola buttress more that during general election in Jos, Plateau state, most people vote in line with ethnic or religious affiliation to have representatives who will protect and defend their interest against other groups in the state and has become a fundamental problem to democracy in the state (interview: Adekola, 2013). In view of this, the state is falling apart in line with ethnicity and religious settlement.

Concluding Remarks
Since the return to democratic rule in 1999 after almost three decades of military rule, ethno-religious conflicts have been recurring in Nigeria. Religious strife between Christians and Muslims in northern Nigeria and its ripples in other parts of the country has left thousands dead, wounded, and rendered many homeless over the years. Nigeria's stability, democracy, and national cohesion are threatened by extremism and conflict. There is no doubt about the serious challenges of growing religious fundamentalism, polarization, and ethnic violence in Nigeria's fragile democracy. However, Jos, Plateau is a fragile state and is characterized by violent amongst the various ethnic and religious groups that make up the state and Nigeria in general. Some of the causes mentioned are accusations and allegations of neglect, oppression, domination, victimization, discrimination, marginalization, nepotism and bigotry; the inability of the Nigerian leaders to establish good governance; breakdown of traditional vehicles of social control; the long history of military intervention in politics, which legitimizes the use of force and violence as instruments of social change and attainment of set goals and demand; and historical antecedent. But in spite of the widespread of ethno-religious conflicts in Jos and their long history, the state record in conflict management has been poor. Good governance is therefore recommended as a means to an end. There is need for democratic governance to strive with underlying emphases in the activation of the citizenry to realize the common good to be taken root in the popular consciousness of Nigerians. It is beyond doubt that democracy and good governance is the desire of any country that cherishes fundamental values that deal with freedom, happiness, peace and order in the society. Therefore, there is need for good governance to assure the possibility of good planning both at private and public levels.

References
Adeyemi, L.O. (2012), The Challenges of Democratic Governance in Nigeria. International Journal of Business and Social Science Vol.3 No.5
Ake, C., (1990) "The case for Democracy" in The Carter Center, African Governance in the 1990s: Objectives, Resources and Constraints, Atlanta: The Carter Center of Emory University.
Ake   C   (2000),   "The   Feasibility   of   Democracy   in   Africa http://books.google.com.ng/books/about/The_Feasibility_of_Democracy_in_Africa.html?id=i0h0AAA AMAAJ&redir_esc=y
Alkali, R.A. (1997). The World Bank and Structural Adjustment in Nigeria: Lesson for Vision 2010, Africa Review, vol.1, No.1.
Boyle, K and Beetham, D (2000), "80 Questions and Answers (Democracy and Power)" *Paperback, 134 Pages, Published 2009 by United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cult ISBN-13: 978-92-3-104087-0, ISBN: 92-3-104087-1*
CIA World Factbook (2013): US Bureau of the Census http://www.indexmundi.com/nigeria/population.html
Cohen, F.S. (1997), "Proportional versus Majoritarian Ethnic Conflict Management in Comparative Political Studies, 30(5):607-630.
Collier D and Levitsky S (2007), "Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative

Research". The Johns Hopkins University Press. All rights reserved

Coser, L. (1956), "The Function of Social Conflicts" , New York, Glencoe Hill Press.

Dibie, R. (2000). Understanding Public Policy in Nigeria: A Twenty-First Century Approach, Lagos: Mbeyi & Associates (Nig.) Ltd. Dowse.

Elaigwu, J (2005), "The Nigeria Question: The Way Forward" Daily Trust (Ed) Discharging a Burden: The Nigerian Question Abuja: Daily Trust Publications.

Glickman, H. (1995). Conclusion: managing democratic ethnic competition. In Ethnic Conflict and Democratization in Africa, edited by H. Glickman. Atlanta: The African Studies Association Press.

Gurr, Ted Robert. (1970). *Why Men Rebel*. Princeton University Press.

Hauss .C (2001), "International conflict resolution". London: New York Continuum.

Horowitz, Donald L. 1985. Ethnic Groups in Conflict. Berkeley: University of California Press.

HRW (Human Rights Watch). (2011), "Jos: A City Torn Apart". Vol. 13, No. 9 (A).December. New York: HRW.

Idahosa, S.A. (1997). "Issues and Problems in Nigerian Politics- Tribes, Ethnicism and Regionalism" in R.F. Ola (ed.) Nigerian Political System, Inputs, Outputs and Environment, Benin City: Imprint Services, pp.208-239.

Imobigbe, T (2003) (Ed) Civil Society and Ethnic Conflict Management in Nigeria Ibadan: Spectrum.

Jang .J (2010), "Still on the Throes of Carnage" The Westerner Publications, March 29,   2010.

Jinadu, A.M (2004), A Youth Empowerment Scheme as a Strategy for Poverty Reduction in Nigeria: Project Impact Assessment and Constraints. *Youth Development Journal, Marshalltown, South Africa. 15ᵗʰ Edition, September 2004;* pages 39 – 51

Mijah, (2007), "The Role Of Christian Education In Sustaining Peace And Democracy In   Nigeria With Adjective" Vol. 0, No. , 2007

Nnoli, O. (1993) *Ethnicity and Democracy in Africa: Intervening Variables*:- Lagos: Malthpuse press limited.

Nnoli, 0. (1995), Ethnicity and Development in Nigeria. UK: Avebury.

Obasanjo, President O (2002), "Address at the National Conference on Conflict Resolution in Some Central States of Nigeria, NIPSS January.

Obateru, T. (2010), "11years of Democracy: How have the states fared"?, The Nations Publications.

Olukoshi, O.A. and Laakso, L. (1996), Challenges to the Nation-states in Africa. Sweden: Motola Grafiska.

Olumide, S and Onyekwere, (2012) "Policy and Politics in Jos"

Osaghae, E (1995), "Structural Adjustment and Ethnicity in Nigeria Upsalls: Nordiska Africaninstitutet.

Ostien, Philip. (2009) 'Jonah Jang and the Jasawa: Ethno-Religious Conflict in Jos, Nigeria.' Muslim–Christian Relations in Africa.August.

Osumah, O. and Okor, P. (2009). Implementation of Millennium Development Goals (MGDs) and National Security: A Strategic Thinking, being a paper presented at the 2nd International Conference on Millennium Development Goals and the Challenges in Africa held at Delta State University, Abraka, June 7-10.

Osumah, O. and Ikelegbe, A. (2009), The Peoples Democratic Party and Governance in Nigeria, 1999-2007. Journal of Social Sciences 19(3)

Roeder, Philip G. (1991), "Soviet Federalism and Ethnic Mobilisation". World Politics 43 (2):   196-232.

Skalnik L (1999), "Democratization and Disintegration in Multinational States: The Breakup of the Communist Federations". DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0043887100008170 (About DOI, Published online: 13 June 2011

Smith, D.J. (2008), "A Culture of Corruption". Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Snyder, Jack. (2000), from Voting to Violence. Democratization and Nationalist Conflict. New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company.

Stagner, R. (1995), "The Psychology of Human Conflict", In Elton, B.M. (ed), The Nature of Human Conflict, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice Hall.

U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, *International Religious Freedom Report for 201,* 2.

Weekly Trust (Abuja). 2011. 'We Lost 7,000 Cows in One Month.' 29 January.

Welsh, D. (1993, "Domestic Politics and Ethnic Conflict". Survival, 35(1):63-80.

Zartman, W.I. (1991), "Conflict Resolution in Africa", Washington DC, The Brookings Institute.

INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEW

Timothy Akanji, Jamiu Adebayo Olasunkanmi, Thomas, Ojo Adebayo, Akanji, Bola, Braithwaite, Adekola, Marie Oche, Adonmadon Helen, Cardinal John Onaiyekan, Bala Mathew, Micheal Ocheibi, Muhammed Layi, Olukunle Awotitu, Israel Enoch, Joseph Ehoi, David, Thompon Okpapi, and Datiri Stphen.

The IISTE is a pioneer in the Open-Access hosting service and academic event management. The aim of the firm is Accelerating Global Knowledge Sharing.

More information about the firm can be found on the homepage:
http://www.iiste.org

CALL FOR JOURNAL PAPERS

There are more than 30 peer-reviewed academic journals hosted under the hosting platform.

Prospective authors of journals can find the submission instruction on the following page: http://www.iiste.org/journals/ All the journals articles are available online to the readers all over the world without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. Paper version of the journals is also available upon request of readers and authors.

MORE RESOURCES

Book publication information: http://www.iiste.org/book/

Academic conference: http://www.iiste.org/conference/upcoming-conferences-call-for-paper/

IISTE Knowledge Sharing Partners

EBSCO, Index Copernicus, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, JournalTOCS, PKP Open Archives Harvester, Bielefeld Academic Search Engine, Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek EZB, Open J-Gate, OCLC WorldCat, Universe Digtial Library , NewJour, Google Scholar