

## **1804 USMAN DAN FODIO'S JIHAD ON INTER-GROUP RELATIONS IN THE CONTEMPORARY NIGERIAN STATE**

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### **Abstract**

*The history of mankind is replete with the issues of conflicts, wars, crises, intolerance as well as series of moves for peace, tolerance, understanding and mutual cohesion aimed at ensuring common good. Most times these activities hardly live out long lasting objectives. Therefore, this paper seeks to discuss the brief history of Usman dan Fodio and his 1804 jihad, the state of Hausa land before the jihad, some remote and immediate causes of the jihad, the outcomes of the jihad, the amalgamation of Nigeria and its effects on the inter-group relationships in Nigeria.*

### **Introduction**

An unforgettable event occurred across the ancient Hausa land in 1804 when Usman dan Fodio launched a jihad war that overran almost all northern and some parts of Yoruba land. After about one hundred and ten years of that jihad, precisely in 1914, the colonial government unified both the ancient Hausa states and all the parts that were conquered by the jihad with other tribes that never knew about the jihad to produce the present day Nigerian state. About forty six years after that unification, Nigeria secured the so-called

independence from her colonial masters. In spite of its deficiencies, the unilateral amalgamation was sustained by Nigerians with the aim of having a nation state like other progressive nations of the world, where all avenues should be exploited to make her an economically strong and virile nation. A place where like the Independence National Anthem acknowledged and reflected; “though tribe and tongue may differ, in brotherhood we stand”. Many of the citizens yearned for a united country where tribes and tongues may naturally differ, yet live in peace and harmony as one united and indivisible country. A country where people can stand for brotherhood and be proud to serve their sovereign motherland as symbolized in the Green-White- Green of the national flag, that signifies Peace, Justice and Prosperity. Incidentally, this was echoed by the preface of the Nigerian 1999 Constitution as amended in 2011, “we the people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria having firmly and solemnly resolved to live in unity and harmony as one indivisible and indissoluble sovereign nation under God”.

But sectarian killings in the guise of religion and ethnic leaning, crises and instabilities occasioned by religious fundamentalists have repeatedly defied these hopes and wasted the chances of the country in becoming the nation of her dream. One of the issues that come handy is the concepts of jihad and sharia vis-à-vis Usman dan Fodio's 1804 jihad.

### **Clarification of Terms**

**Critical** means making careful judgment about the good and bad qualities of something or somebody. **Analysis** means a

detailed examination of something so as to understand it or what it consists of. **Effects:** simply stands a result of something, *Usman dan Fodio's Jihad* in the view of Kukah (1993) is a war launched by Usman dan Fodio in 1804 with the aim of establishing Islamic state (p.115). **Inter-Group Relationship** means a way or pattern through which different people behave towards each other. **Contemporary** implies a person or thing living or existing at the moment. **Nigeria state** according to Meek (1925), is a name given by Flora Shaw, meaning Niger or river areas (p.59). Nigeria can be briefly defined as the conglomerates of nations that were amalgamated into one country in 1914 but on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 1960, gained political independence from Britain.

In the context of this study, a Critical Analysis of the Effects of the 1804 Usman dan Fodio's Jihad on Inter-Group Relations in Contemporary Nigerian State means an unbiased explanations of how Usman dan Fodio's jihad has been dictating and influencing the behaviours and interactions between the conquered and those who were not part of the war. This study is premised on the fact that the 1804 Usman dan Fodio's jihad ended officially between 1809 and 1810 but its continuity and effects have not ceased.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Interactionist Theory**

Interactionist theory is a veritable social theory which according to Mooney, Knox and Schacht (2007) is largely

influenced by the works of early sociologists and philosophers such as George Simmel, Charles Cooley, George Herbert Mead and Erving Goffman (p.14). Alix (1995) argues that interactionist can be divided into symbolic, exchange and dramaturgical dimensions. Ahametula and Nnajieta (2005) said that the symbolic dimension of the interactionist theory has to do with how people attach values to rituals, language, how people mutually emits and interpret each other's gestures (pp.14-17). Crossman (2016) asserts that this dimension of interactionism is a major framework of sociological theory because people develop and rely upon it in the process of social interactions. Thus, society is thought to be socially constructed through human interpretation. People interpret one another's behaviour and these interpretations often form the social bond (p.13). Interactionism is a theoretical perspective in which a society is thought to be a product of the everyday social interactions among millions of people. Instead of looking at a social system on a larger scale, it focuses on the way that people act, or make conscious choices regarding people's behaviour and that proceed from how these situations are interpreted. In other words, human beings are not only reacting to social stimuli, but also react to individual stimuli. Therefore, it is considered in this study because it connotes social processes such as conflict, cooperation and identity formation arising from human interactions. It is the study of how individuals act within society. It is a social interaction of face-to-face process consisting of actions, reactions, and mutual adaptation between two or more individuals. This is because

according to Ahamefula and Nnajiето (2005), views society as a product of everyday social interactions of individuals (p.19). Usman dan Fodio's jihad took place in an environment hence the need to succinctly discuss the environment.

### **Hausa Land before the Coming of Islam**

Hunwick (1966) said that the Hausa land before the arrival of Islam was largely a pagan oriented society. There were about fourteen independent kingdoms of Hausa states before the arrival of Islam (p.293). Similarly, Abiola (1984) and Kaura (2004) affirm that the pre-Islamic Hausa state was that of religious syncretism, worship of lifeless objects as well as misadministration and misuse of powers. Therefore, the state of Hausa land before the arrival of Islam was purely an environment governed by traditional religion and culture.

### **Brief Stint on the Life and Teachings of Usman Dan Fodio**

According to Crowder and Abdullahi (1979), Milsome (1979) and Fage (1988), Usman dan Fodio, of Fulani origin was born in 1754 in Marata, Gobir, to the Toronkawa tribe. **Sulaiman (1986)** adds that shortly after his birth, his parents and the rest of the family relocated to Degel. It was at Degel that Usman dan Fodio grew up. He received most of his education from his parents and relatives because in Timbukutu tradition parents and relatives were the first teachers for any child. Again, Usman dan Fodio's descent has been traced to one Mura Jakolo, who had migrated to Gobir

from Futa-Toro around the 15th century. His ancestors were also believed to have settled originally in Konni before they eventually migrated to Degel (p.109). Olupona (1991) asserts the Toronkawa claimed descent from Prophet Mohammad and they were the first occupants of Gobir land (p.39). It is not surprising therefore that Usman dan Fodio himself was an erudite scholar who had undertaken a deep study of Islamic law, theology and mysticism. But Milsome (1979) posits that he received his first tutelage under his father, his uncles and later at Agades, north of Marata, at the feet of Jebril (p.19).

Furthermore, Cook (2011) asserts that Usman dan Fodio's life can be divided into two sections which are: his teaching phase and the active phase. During the first phase, he was closely linked with the Hausa rulers especially in a preaching and hortatory capacity, calling for the suppression of innovation. But after twenty years of his preaching ministry, in 1804 he performed hijra to a small town of Gudu (p.5). Isichei (1983) said that he started preaching at the tender age of twenty in the area around Degel (p.202).

### **About the 1804 Usman Dan Fodio's Jihad**

Everything about the 1804 jihad in Hausa land revolves around the life, person and teachings of Usman dan Fodio. Hunwick (1966) said that the mixture of migrated Fulani tribe and the original inhabitants Hausa land produced a high degree of cultural mix among the indigenes and the alien group. The Hausa people were

largely pagan while the Fulani people were predominantly Muslims (p.293). Adeleye (1971) observes that through the obvious ensuing admixture between the Islamic culture and the indigenous Hausa pagan culture, a gradual polarization of society along the lines of two conflicting religio-political ideologies occurred. In order to correct this abnormally, Usman dan Fodio embarked on preaching tours or missionary journeys to Kebbi, Zamfara and Gobir where he adroitly explained the tenets of Islam to the people. He employed the use of poems and pamphlets written in Arabic, Fulfude and Hausa languages in his missionary activities. He was able to spread his teachings to most parts of Northern Nigeria. As a reward for his zeal, he won a great number of admirers and followers across the whole of Hausa land. This was to play a decisive role in the success of the Jihad some years later. The leadership ability soon earned him wider credibility and recognition (p.560).

Meanwhile, Sulaiman (1986) notes that by 1789, Usman dan Fodio had raised so many followers that Bawa Jan Garzo, King of Gobir, viewed him as a political threat. He feared the *Jamaa* or Muslim community was becoming highly organized and that could make his own leadership without influence and power (p.187). Many scholars like Afigbo (1999) seem to agree that the Usman dan Fodio's Jihad was a holy war declared and prosecuted with a view to establishing a purer form of Islam in a predominantly decadent pagan society. Khalid (2012) maintains that by 1795, the power was eroding the Gobir rulers and they tried to consolidate. This move

was around this period that Usman dan Fodio wrote a poem in praise of Sheikh Abdul Kadir Jilani. In the poem, he urged his *jamaa* to acquire arms to establish Islamic rule in Hausa land. To quell his insecurity, the King promulgated new laws which include: that no one was allowed to preach except Usman dan Fodio, conversions were not allowed and those who were not born Muslims should revert back to their old religion, no man was allowed to wear the turban and no woman a veil. This attempt to control the masses failed and provoked Muslims to become militant and amass arms. The failure of enforcing the policy forced desperate King Nafata to take Usman dan Fodio's family hostage and coerce him to discontinue his activities but this too failed and the king died in 1802. His son, Yunfa took over the throne when Usman dan Fodio wrote on the theme of *Hijra* and Jihad in *Al-Masa'il al-Mu-himma*. Like his father, Yunfa made an attempt on Usman dan Fodio's life but again failed. He performed the *hijra* and the jihad was subsequently launched. Afigbo (1999) agrees that the Jihad was the most successful of all other Jihads carried out in the Western Africa (p.67). There are manures that fertilized the ground for the launching of the jihad and some of them are thus highlighted.

### **Some of the Observable Remote Causes of the Jihad**

#### ***Compromised religion and desire for its purification.***

Milsome (1979) states that Usman dan Fodio's jihad was aimed at reviving Islam in Hausa land towards the orthodox line. The Fulanis accused the Hausa rulers of polytheism and other un-Islamic practices (p.12). As Adeleye (1971) affirms, it was circumstances

like these which Muslims were radically hated that brought about the tension which precipitated the Jihad (p.599).

***Horrible and Unfriendly Environment*** The general state of Hausa land was that of oppression and suppression of the masses. Milsome (1979) notes that Usman dan Fodio alleged that corruption was widespread in the Hausa government with appointments being based on bribes, rather than merit (pp.11-12). Clarke (1982) confirms the fact that Hausa land before the jihad was that of extortion and oppressive taxation (p.99). Nwanaju (2008) affirms that the Pre Jihadist Hausa state was that of an environment where slave trade thrived. They raided their neighbours to the south and west for the acquisition of slaves. From the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, the use of human beings for slavery was very popular in Hausa land (pp.24-25). **Sulaiman (1986) identifies** a ceaseless interplay between the forces of decay and regeneration in Hausa land before the jihad (p.90). Lenshie and Ayokhai (2013) affirm that the repressive nature of Hausa people particularly Gobir rulers, by their actions showed them as wicked in a land considered the land of Islam (p.4).

***The quest for freedom:*** Abiola (1984) said that many factors combined to make the Fulani people take up arms against the Hausa states. Apart from the aim of reforming Islam from its fast fading fame and glory, the political interest of wresting power from the Hausa rulers who they could not imagine lording policies over them (p.12)

***The Thirst for Wealth.*** This is another stronger factor that played

incisive part in launching of the 1804 jihad. Abiola (1984) states that the Fulani group wanted to become economically independent and set also their eyes on the Caravan routes across the Sahara Desert which the Hausa kings controlled as they knew this route would fetch them a lot of money if they take charge (p.109). Arguably, if the common patrimonies are evenly shared, there may not be any need to fight.

***Tribalism and Mutual suspicion.*** This another observable reason that caused the rise of the jihads. Abubakar (2003) said that it is evident that divisions on ethnic lines especially between the Fulbe people who were mostly nomadic herdsmen and the ruling agrarian Hausa people persisted. The groups did not only have different dominant occupations but also their societies were differently structured. The population was increasingly growing, making it increasingly difficult for the Fulbe to move their herds. This increased tensions over limited land and the migratory ability of the Fulbe group threatened their neighbours (pp.8-10). This is similar to the deadly Fulani herdsmen attacks today which have turned worse than jihad itself against every state and tribe in Nigeria.

***Religious triumphalism:*** The desire to make Islam suppress every other religion can be seen as another motivating reason for undertaking that jihad. Abiola (1984) collaborates this saying that there was the irrevocable bid to dip the Quran into the Atlantic Ocean in Lagos (p.11). Nigeria is not in short supply of religious triumphalism whose general activities have been inimical to the growth and development of the country.

***Hunger for Political Empowerment:*** The thirst for political enlargement motivated the outbreak of the Jihad has also been emphasized by many authors but Adeleye (1971) said that politically, the Fulani tribe had lived in Hausa land for centuries yet they were no regard for the substantial number of learned men among them and they suffered the disabilities of second-class citizens (p.578). These treatments became the remote causes of the Usman dan Fodio's 1804 Jihad and because the remote causes were not checkmated due to weak and clueless leadership; they gave room for the immediate and full blown outbreak of the war.

***Fidgeted Leadership*** Khalid (2012) stresses that in 1789, Usman dan Fodio was invited by Bawa the king of Gobir to celebrate Id al Kabir at Magami but the plan was to kill him but when he was accompanied by a thousand followers, the king quickly changed his mind and instead tried to win them over by offering them gifts (p.23). Afigbo (1999) argues that the popularity of Usman dan Fodio among the populace was a threat the Kings of Gobir could not manage and attempted to seize Usman dan Fodio to punish him. He asserts that the Hausa states proceeded to attacking every Fulani element within and outside Hausa land. Another factor has to do with how Usman dan Fodio released his kinsmen who were slaves under the Gobir rulership. It was against the king's wish. Thus, the Fulani group rallied round their kinsman who initiated the war (p.10). The poor leadership of Nafata, king of Gobir made him take some questionable and irrational response to the ideology of Usman dan Fodio. He thought that Usman dan Fodio was fighting only

religious, economic and political war. He responded like most of Nigerian rulers. He thought he could manipulate the system to silence him, terrorize, quarantine or secretly waste his life. The late leader of Boko Haram, Mohamed Yusuf was an example of this irrational and fidgeting attitude of Nigerian leaders' response threat. They often think that killing a leader means the dead of his ideology not knowing that ideological war needs to be fought with stronger and superior ideology. Hence, poor and inept leaders fidget or feel threatened because of seeming opposition.

### **Few of the Immediate Causes of Usman Dan Fodio's Jihad**

***Reluctant and Deaf leadership.*** The leadership of the ancient Gobir land was reluctant to face the reality of the masses' suffering. Kaura (2004) notes that there were increased oppression and exploitation of the *talakawa* (commoners) by the *Masu sarauta* (rulers). The oppression and exploitation were perpetuated through the collection of numerous taxes and levies, occasional confiscation of peasant property, forced labour, compulsory military service and enslavement. The *Ulamas* (court judges) made matters worse as they were so pervasive in their delivery of judgments that the commoners could not obtain justice or redress in the court. Usman dan Fodio had repeatedly contacted the king of Gobir, Bawa Jan Gwarzo concerning the evil activities and the social decadence prevalent in the area but the king paid no attention and it made Usman dan Fodio Fodio become more popular (pp.7-9). The reluctance of the leader made him major in minor and instead of attacking issues, he was attacking human.

***Attempt at the lives of Usman Dan Fodio and his allies.*** According to Crowder (1978), the persecution started from Bawa between 1789 and 1790, to Nafata who ruled between 1794 and 1801 and down to Yunfa in 1801. It culminated in the threat to Usman dan Fodio's life by Yunfa and with his attack on Abdulsalam, a reliable disciple of Usman dan Fodio who resided at Gimbassa in 1801, the stage thus became set for an open confrontation between Usman dan Fodio's followers and the king of Gobir (p.73). Kaura, (2004) confirms that the confrontation which ensued as Gobir's army attempted in 1804 at wiping out the Islamic community at Gudu, led to the defeat of Gobir's army by the *mujahhidun* led by Abdullah the brother of Usman dan Fodio who was the *Amir al-Jaish*-commander of the armed forces (p.8). Lenshie and Ayokhai (2013) maintain that the attack and the persecution of Muslims by the Gobir ruler made the war a necessary end (p.4).

***The Hijrah:*** Khalid (2012) said that by 1803, the situation was uncontrollable to the point that Muslims' property was looted. Many Muslims were taken captive; some were killed while villages were destroyed. Thus Usman dan Fodio and his party of *Jamaa* moved from Degel to Gudu marking it as the Hijrah in 1804 (p.11). At this point, the outbreak of the war was inevitable.

### **Some of the Major Outcomes of the Jihad**

Even though the war ended officially between 1809 and 1810, the fighting for the establishment of emirates as part of wider Caliphate continued. However, the war led to the establishment of the Sokoto caliphate under the Caliph, Usman Dan Fodio. The

caliphate comprised two capitals: Sokoto and Gwandu respectively. These capitals were founded over the former Hausa states of Gobir, Zamfara and parts of Kebbi as well as other twenty emirates. The war led to the institutionalization of Fulani emirate where Usman Dan Fodio replaced all the kingdoms with Fulani emirs. Also the war displaced and depopulated some other tribes especially in the Middle belt. Islam became reinforced and sharia introduced into the caliphate. Finally, the war has metamorphosed or inspired many other deadly movements such as Maitatsine and Boko Haram against the Nigerian state.

### **The Effects of The 1804 Usman Dan Fodio's Jihad on Inter-Group Relations in Contemporary Nigerian State**

Aware of the fact that this is a critical and analytical study, efforts shall be made to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the 1804 Usman dan Fodio's jihad.

Positively, the jihad even in the midst of seeming inconsistencies, the 1804 Usman dan Fodio's jihad can be said to have brought about a temporary and relative stability into Hausa land. Adeleye (1971) and Ikime (1985) affirm that the ancient Hausa states repeatedly attempted through inter-tribal wars to impose a regal authority which they believed could ensure political order, stability and unity among the ancient Hausa states yet it did not yield any good fruit. But by the time Islam was enforced through the jihad, it provided the much-needed strong ideology for integration among the Habe states. Abubakar (2003) argues that the jihad brought a new relative peace to the Hausa states because even

though there were revolts within and outside the caliphate, the intermittent and internecine wars among the people were brought under control (pp.304-321). One of the factors that led to the success of the jihad as identified by Adeleye (1971) was “the charisma of Usman dan Fodio” (p.600). Unarguably, the success or otherwise of any society or mission is dependent on its leadership quality. The war has proved that leadership should be held responsible for anything going in Nigeria. The jihad has made marks in Nigeria's history because its outcomes and impacts are still topical in the Nigerian socio-political and economic existence.

However, the jihad has inspired the rising of several religio-militant movements and notable among them are the Maitatsine sect, Izala, Shiites, Sharia warlords, Boko Haram and Herdsmen militia. Omolewa (2008) said that Usman dan Fodio mobilized his followers to use force in possessing lands occupied by those he regarded as infidels. Resorting to the concept of Dar al-Harb, he argues that just as Usman dan Fodio called on his warriors to turn the lands of Hausa states and beyond into the lands of the faithful-Dar al-Islam, that has been the approach undertaken by these religio-militant movements who have terrorized the country (p.116). Right from the launching of that first jihad in Nigeria by Usman dan Fodio, the country had at many times witnessed numerous religious conflicts that had brought her to a state of hopelessness. The disastrous activities of groups such as Maitisine and Boko Haram attest to this.

Meanwhile, Abubakar (1999) notes that Usman dan Fodio

instituted tributary schemes over the vassal emirates he had established. For instance, the emir of Kano was made to send to the Caliph about five million cowries annually, while the emir of Katsina sent to him close to three million cowries annually. These were not part of the gifts-*kyauta* and other obligatory booty obtained from jihad as well as *irith* derived from the property of deceased officials (pp.301-326). The question to be asked here is, why would a man who initiated a war that claimed to free people from taxation and corruption institute tributary systems which were arguably worse than the previous slavery. In a saner clime, this is capable of causing unimaginable uprising and this seems to have irked Abiola (1984) when he submits thus:

So far all things being said in favour of the jihad,... one of these was its complete failure to improve the social conditions of the oppressed ones in the Hausa states. One may remember that the Jihad was declared for this objective...but it was unfortunate that the conditions of these unfortunate people (women and children) were in no way better than they were under the Hausa regime. In fact they seemed to be worse...for under the Fulani rule the practice of making women “purdah” still continued unabated,...this unfortunate laxity in the Fulani regime which continues even up till today to make the present-day northern Nigeria look as backward area despite all efforts to change this situation. Another effect was the fall of Oyo Empire... .they did not even consider the fact that they

were aiding a pagan rebel against the government of Oyo Empire. Sincere and true Jihadists who were not after political empire would not have committed this unpardonable religious blunder. From all indications it could be seen that far from being purely a religious war, the Sokoto jihad was fought on other reasons. In short, it was a war based on religious fanaticism, political adventurism, economic opportunism and of course, tribal parochialism. (pp.109-111).

Similarly, Tanko (2003) argues that the jihad created negative class system in the northern Nigeria. He identified two types of northern Nigeria created by the jihad as the Far North or Upper North and Another Class of North. The Upper North are very comfortable and being a Muslim improves one's position as an Upper Northerner while the others are regarded as second class northern by virtue of hailing from the Middle Belt areas and being a Christian or traditionalist (p.6). This type of social stratification can be ascribed to be the brain behind the current violent and killings going on in the Middle Belt areas especially in Plateau and Benue states where some people believed they are born to rule or live while others are meant to suffer in penury and die. Nwanaju (2008) describes both the northern hegemony and Kaduna Mafia as the political heirs of Ahmadu Bello (p.234). This mentality has created distrust among south and north and by extension, Christians and Muslims in Nigeria. Aremu (2011) argues that the jihad contributed to laying the foundation of the infamous north-south dichotomy.

This dichotomy is impeding the national cohesion, unity and stability of the Nigerian polity. Iwuchukwu (2010) argues that just like the 1804 jihad had toppled political leadership of cities beyond Hausa land and installed Fulani as emirs, that is how other succeeding groups especially Boko Haram have sought to dethrone every leadership not instituted by them (p.50). The success of the war made religion turned religion as manipulation tool for vested material interest individuals. Religion became the easiest instrument of engaging in socio-political and economic grudges.

Ikime (1985) submits that the middle belt region suffered a great deal of depopulation occasioned by incessant slave raids by the emirates of Sokoto caliphate. Tributaries in form of slaves were part of the obligations of the emirs to the caliph hence the non-Muslims in the middle-belt were in essence under constant attack as enslavement of fellow Muslims was forbidden. In this way, depopulation and displacement of minority groups became the lots of these peoples. This is said to be responsible for the conflicts that reigns between the North and Middle Belt regions of Nigeria today (pp.19-27). Aremu (2011) posits that Ilorin, a one-time province of the Old Oyo Empire became part of the Sokoto caliphate through the jihad and this has been creating tension in Ilorin with respect to political classification. The quagmire has been, is Ilorin part of the South Western states or a part of the North? The writer came across this quote with bated breath according to Oyeyemi (2105) Ahmadu Bello on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 1966 said thus, "The new nation called Nigeria should be an estate of our great grandfather, Uthman

Danfodio. We must ruthlessly prevent a change of power. We must use the minorities in the North as willing tools and the South as conquered territories and never allow them to rule over us or have control over their future.” (p.3). In fact, this statement is not only terrifying but also combustible and incendiary.

Arguably, in view of these utterances, the unilateral and forceful inclusion of Nigeria as a member of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) in 1986, the introduction of the Sharia by twelve northern states between 1999 and 2001, the registration of Nigeria as a beneficiary of the Islamic Development Bank amidst heavy protestation in 2005, the unguarded utterances of many Islamic clerics like Late Sheik Abubakar Gumi, who at a point said that Christians should never be voted into power, together with the impacts of many riots championed by Muslim extremists in northern Nigeria are some of the reasons other tribe and religion often point out as the Muslims strategy of Islamizing Nigeria to achieve the unfinished jihad of Usman dan Fodio. The outcomes of these have more often tilted towards the dimension of crises instead of the peace which the 1804 Usman dan Fodio's jihad claimed to achieve.

Scholars and experts have classified jihad into various categories, types and kinds but they agree with this basic or popular four kinds of jihad and they are “Jihad by the heart; Jihad by the tongue; Jihad by the hand and Jihad by the sword. The “jihad of the heart” denotes struggle against one's own sinful inclinations. The “jihad of the tongue” requires speaking on behalf of what is good

and forbidding what is evil. The “jihad of the sword” (al-saif) -known as “the struggle of the sword” and it is often referred to simply as Jihad. It is the later that disquieted the existence of other tribe and religion in Nigeria. Therefore, it is logical to note that the effects of the jihad on inter-group relations have been largely negative. It has created needless mutual suspicion to point that every action of the northern Nigerian politicians and religious leaders is interpreted as the extension of the Usman dan Fodio's jihad. For example, Tamionu (2016) maintains that judging from the antecedent of the jihad mover, the trails of bloody grazing by the Fulani herdsmen in the southern part of Nigeria is a part of the long time grand design to complete the jihad of Usman dan Fodio whose major objective was to rule the south from the north-a project that the Fulani group through their herdsmen desire to accomplish (p.9). Tamionu is not alone in this kind of mentality rather many if not all the non Muslims and Fulanis have nursed this kind of ill feeling even when it cannot be experimentally proved. Living in a multi religious and cultural setting like Nigeria demands mutual trust which breeds understanding and tolerance. All these virtues ensure progressive and purposeful cohesion. But where the reverse is the case, chaos, conflicts, wars, killings and destruction of property reign unabated as Nigeria is currently experiencing and in view of this, the study makes the following recommendations:

## **Suggestions**

- i. The idea of employing violence, conflicts and war to settle differences should be discouraged and disabused from the mindset of the people because an for an eye will make the whole world go blind.
- ii. Concerted efforts should be made to ensure that the doctrine of fair play, equity, fairness, tolerance and justice are enthroned because injustice for one is an injustice for all.
- iii. The masses should strive to refrain from seeing issues and actions of others from the lens of suspicion because not all Muslims that have the thirst for sword jihad.
- iv. Leaders should be proactive in discharging their obligations to the people so as to lessen threats to their offices instead of being unnecessarily reactive to threats.
- v. People should not criticize what they are not ready or capable of changing. For Usman dan Fodio to introduce tributaries and taxations to the people he conquered and aided other opposing factions in dethroning kings of Yoruba kingdom betrayed the genuiness of the jihad. Nigerian politicians have been champions at criticizing those in power but when they are finally allowed to rule, they became worse than those they have criticized.

## **Conclusion**

No doubt the historicity and general idea about the 1804 war have elicited arguments and counterarguments across divides prompting some to nickname it “Fulani or Islamic war”. Hence the

historical hangover of mutual suspicion because of long years of mutual hostility, political victimization and marginalization, the real and imagined infringements on each other's rights and agitation for freedom have caused heinous crimes against humanity in Nigeria. Amidst this dangerous situation many people believe that religion will kill Nigeria. The effect of the 1804 Usman Dan Fodio's jihad on the intergroup relations in Nigeria has not only been controversial but also suspicious. The 1804 jihad was very successful and the observable factors that led to its success have widely analyzed somewhere but the strong leadership of Usman Dan Fodio stood out. Arguably, if the Nigerian leaders would muster the level leadership quality exhibited by Usman Dan Fodio in launching and spearheading the jihad, corruption will be brought to a standstill, nepotism will be exchanged with fairness and equity, selfish, parochialism and *cohortism* will be defined by unquenched and unreserved desire for selfless service and promotion of common good. Then, the effect of the war could have been beneficial instead of serving as triggers of violence, killings, destruction of property, enmity and general instability as it has been the lot of Nigerian in the past three decades.

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