

Evaluating Public Policy Implementation on Preachers in Kaduna State

By

Ahmed Usman

Department of Public Administration

Faculty of Management Sciences

College of Mass Communication, Social and Management Sciences

usman@kasu.edu.ng 08032102519

Abstract

The implementation of public policies on preachers in Kaduna State has been a subject of debate, with concerns about freedom of religion, public safety, and social cohesion. This study aims to evaluate the implementation of public policies on preachers in Kaduna State, exploring the experiences, perceptions, and challenges faced by preachers and policymakers. This qualitative study employed in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis to gather data from Preachers (Christian, Muslim, and Traditional Religion) in Kaduna State, Policymakers and government officials responsible for religious affairs, Community leaders, and stakeholders. From the theoretical Framework, the study is grounded in the policy implementation framework, considering the interplay between policy design, implementation processes, and outcomes. Likewise, the researcher intends to find out how preachers perceive and experience public policy implementation in Kaduna State. What challenges do policymakers face in implementing policies on preachers? How effective are current policies in promoting religious harmony and public safety?. The study further aims to identify gaps in policy implementation and areas for improvement, provide insights into the lived experiences of preachers and policymakers, and inform evidence-based policy reforms to promote religious tolerance and social cohesion. The study will contribute significantly to the understanding of public policy implementation among preachers in Kaduna State, offering recommendations for policymakers, preachers, and stakeholders to foster a more inclusive and harmonious society.

Keywords: Public policy, implementation, preachers, religious freedom, social cohesion.

1.1 Background of the Study

Religious preaching occupies a critical space in the cultural and spiritual landscape of Kaduna State, Nigeria. The state is home to a vibrant mix of religious communities, predominantly Christians and Muslims, whose interactions have historically shaped the sociopolitical climate of the region (Paden, 2005). However, Kaduna has also witnessed several instances of religious conflict, often fueled by incendiary preaching, misinformation, or misinterpretation of religious doctrines (Ibrahim, 2010; Kukah, 1993). In response to these tensions, the Kaduna State Government has introduced public policies aimed at regulating the activities of preachers to promote peace, protect public safety, and foster interfaith harmony (Kaduna State Government, 2016).

These policies, however, have not been without controversy. While some stakeholders view them as necessary interventions to curb extremism and hate speech (Salawu, 2010), others see them as violations of religious freedom and constitutional rights (Ostien, 2007). The challenge lies in how these policies are implemented, perceived, and accepted by various stakeholders, especially religious leaders who are at the forefront of spiritual guidance. The public debate surrounding the policies points to

underlying issues of trust, inclusiveness, and communication between policymakers and religious actors (Udoidem, 1997).

It is within this complex and often sensitive context that this study is situated. By evaluating the implementation of public policy on religious preaching in Kaduna State, the research aims to uncover the lived realities of preachers and policymakers, assess the efficacy of these interventions, and identify areas for improvement. Understanding the intricacies of policy implementation in a religiously pluralistic society is essential for fostering an inclusive governance model that respects religious freedoms while safeguarding societal stability (Grim & Finke, 2011).

1.2 Problem Statement

Despite the well-intentioned goals of public policy on religious preaching in Kaduna State, primarily aimed at promoting peaceful coexistence and preventing the misuse of religion to incite violence, the process of implementation has been fraught with numerous challenges. These include legal ambiguities, inconsistent enforcement, and the lack of a unified framework that takes into account the multi-faith and multi-ethnic context of the state (Ostien, 2007; Ibrahim, 2010). Religious leaders, particularly those representing minority groups or dissenting theological views, have voiced deep concerns about what they perceive as discriminatory practices. They cite the absence of inclusive consultation during the policy formulation stage and claim that these regulations disproportionately target specific sects or denominations under the guise of maintaining order (Kukah, 1993; Salawu, 2010). Many religious actors have expressed fears that such state interventions erode their constitutional rights to freedom of religion and expression as enshrined in Section 38 of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution (FRN, 1999).

On the other hand, policymakers and government officials responsible for enforcing these policies also face significant hurdles. The religious sensitivity of the issue, coupled with Nigeria's volatile ethno-religious landscape, makes enforcement both politically risky and operationally complex. Inadequate institutional capacity, limited funding, and the absence of clear inter-agency coordination further hamper effective implementation (Paden, 2005; Udoidem, 1997).

There is a significant gap in empirical research that explores the real-world experiences of those directly affected by these policies both the preachers regulated and the policymakers charged with their enforcement. Most existing literature remains theoretical, normative, or politically polarized, often lacking grounded, qualitative insights into how the policies unfold in practice. This gap limits the capacity of stakeholders to make evidence-based interventions or reforms.

This study is therefore designed to address these shortcomings by critically exploring the perceptions, experiences, and challenges associated with policy implementation from the perspectives of key stakeholders. It also seeks to assess the broader implications of these policies for religious harmony, public safety, and social cohesion in Kaduna State. By doing so, the research aims to generate nuanced insights that will inform more effective, inclusive, and contextually appropriate policy interventions.

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To evaluate the perceptions and experiences of preachers (Christian and Muslim) regarding the implementation of public policies on preaching in Kaduna State.
2. To examine the challenges faced by policymakers and government officials in enforcing these policies.

3. To assess the effectiveness of existing public policies in promoting religious tolerance, public safety, and social cohesion.
4. To identify gaps in the policy implementation process and propose recommendations for policy reform.

2.1 Literature Review

Theoretical Perspectives on Policy Implementation

The process of policy implementation remains a cornerstone of public administration scholarship, as it bridges the gap between policy formulation and tangible outcomes. Over the years, scholars have developed various theoretical models to explain why some policies succeed while others fail, even when initiated with the best intentions. Among the foundational perspectives, Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) argued that successful implementation is contingent upon a clearly defined chain of command, effective coordination across multiple layers of government, and seamless communication among policy actors. They emphasized that each additional decision point or stakeholder increases the probability of failure, particularly in complex governance environments.

In the context of Kaduna State, these theoretical insights hold particular relevance. The implementation of public policy on religious preaching is not a straightforward bureaucratic exercise; it is enmeshed in a socio-religious ecosystem marked by ideological diversity, historical tensions, and the autonomy of religious institutions. Religious leaders, both Christian and Muslim, often operate independently of state authority and command significant loyalty from their followers. This complicates the communication and coordination processes that Pressman and Wildavsky consider essential to successful implementation.

Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) introduced another influential framework, proposing that effective policy implementation depends on three critical conditions: articulated objectives, adequate resources (both human and financial), and a supportive socio-political environment. They further stress the importance of legal clarity, hierarchical integration, and sustained political commitment. When these conditions are met, policies are more likely to achieve their intended outcomes. However, in environments where these preconditions are deficient, as is often the case in pluralistic or conflict-prone societies, the implementation process becomes fragmented, contested, and inconsistent.

Kaduna State exemplifies such a context. While the objectives of regulating religious preaching, such as promoting public safety and interfaith harmony, are ostensibly clear, the mechanisms for achieving these goals are often mired in legal ambiguities, institutional weaknesses, and political sensitivities. The limited capacity of state agencies to enforce compliance uniformly across religious groups creates perceptions of bias and fuels resistance from affected actors. This aligns with the critique by Lipsky (1980), who introduced the concept of “street-level bureaucracy” to explain how frontline officials often exercise discretion in ways that significantly reshape policy outcomes. In Kaduna’s case, local enforcement agencies and religious affairs officials may interpret and apply regulatory frameworks based on subjective considerations, informal pressures, or fear of public backlash.

Moreover, implementation theories emphasize the importance of stakeholder engagement and legitimacy. According to Matland (1995), the success of policy implementation is influenced by the level of ambiguity in policy goals and the degree of political conflict involved. In highly contentious and

ambiguous policy domains, such as religious regulation, symbolic and interpretative factors dominate, making implementation outcomes less predictable and more susceptible to contestation.

Therefore, an evaluation of Kaduna State's policy on preachers must go beyond institutional metrics to consider the socio-cultural, political, and emotional dimensions of implementation. Understanding how preachers, policymakers, and community members interpret and respond to these policies is essential for assessing their effectiveness and sustainability. Applying these theoretical models helps to contextualize the challenges faced and can inform recommendations for more inclusive, adaptive, and context-sensitive policy interventions.

2.2 Theoretical Perspectives on Policy Implementation

The process of policy implementation has been extensively studied within public administration, with various models offering insights into why some policies succeed while others fail. Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) emphasize that successful implementation depends on a clear chain of command, coordinated efforts, and effective communication among all actors involved. In the context of Kaduna State, these factors are further complicated by the diversity of religious beliefs, the autonomy of religious institutions, and the presence of informal networks of influence. Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) propose that policy implementation is most effective when objectives are clear, resources are adequate, and external socio-political conditions are conducive. However, when these elements are lacking—as often occurs in fragile or pluralistic societies—the gap between policy intent and outcome widens significantly. This theory is particularly relevant in evaluating the Kaduna State policies, where religious actors operate with significant independence and emotional investment.

2.2.1 Religious Regulation and State Authority

Regulating religious practice is a contentious issue globally, often requiring a delicate balance between state authority and individual freedoms. Fox (2008) notes that while the state has a legitimate interest in maintaining public order and preventing incitement, such interventions must be carefully calibrated to avoid exacerbating tensions. In Nigeria, where the constitution guarantees freedom of religion, any form of state regulation is often viewed with suspicion, particularly when it appears to favor one group over another.

Kaduna State's approach to enacting laws to license preachers, restrict certain forms of public preaching, and sanction inflammatory messages has drawn both praise and criticism. Proponents argue that such measures are necessary in a society frequently rocked by ethno-religious conflict. Critics, however, claim that these laws are selectively enforced and serve to silence dissenting or minority religious voices.

2.2.2 Religious Freedom vs. Public Safety

The global discourse on religion and governance frequently grapples with the tension between safeguarding public safety and protecting religious liberties. Grim and Finke (2011) argue that excessive governmental restrictions on religion can paradoxically lead to increased social hostilities. They stress the importance of inclusive, transparent, and participatory policymaking processes in mitigating conflict.

In Kaduna State, the government's policies aim to reduce hate speech and prevent violence, yet their implementation must be scrutinized to ensure they do not alienate or marginalize key religious

stakeholders. Policies perceived as unjust or discriminatory risk eroding public trust and fueling the very tensions they are meant to prevent.

2.2.3 Perceptions of Religious Actors

The legitimacy and success of any public policy often hinge on how it is perceived by those most affected. Lipsky's (1980) concept of "street-level bureaucrats," frontline public service workers who interpret and implement policy, can be extended to religious leaders, who act as intermediaries between the state and their congregations. Their acceptance, resistance, or reinterpretation of policy significantly influences implementation outcomes.

Understanding the perceptions and experiences of preachers is thus vital to evaluating policy effectiveness. Do they see the policies as fair and necessary, or as intrusive and discriminatory? Do they feel included in the policymaking process? Their responses will reveal not only the strengths and weaknesses of current approaches but also offer pathways for reform.

3.1 Methodological Perspective

This study adopts a qualitative research design, appropriate for exploring complex social phenomena and capturing the lived experiences and subjective interpretations of diverse actors involved in the implementation of public policy on religious preaching in Kaduna State. The qualitative approach enables a nuanced understanding of the interactions, perceptions, and challenges that cannot be fully captured through quantitative means.

3.2 Data Collection Methods

Participants were purposively sampled to include key stakeholder categories such as:

- a. Religious preachers (from Christian, Muslim, and traditional religious backgrounds),
- b. Policymakers and government officials involved in religious affairs,

This diversity of respondents enhances the study's reliability and depth by capturing different levels of interaction with the policies under investigation.

4.1 Findings and Discussion

4.2 Introduction

This section presents the findings related to the perceptions and lived experiences of key religious stakeholders regarding the implementation of Kaduna State's public policy on religious preaching. Drawing from in-depth interviews with Muslim, Christian, and Traditional religious leaders, as well as interfaith facilitators, the analysis explores how the policy is understood, its practical impact on religious activities, and real-life incidents that illustrate its effects. The findings are grouped into six interrelated themes using NVivo-style qualitative coding.

4.2 Perceptions and Experiences of Policy Implementation

Theme 1: Awareness Gap

A recurring challenge across all religious groups is limited awareness of the policy's full content and legal procedures. Respondents reported learning about the policy informally, through hearsay or announcements, rather than through structured communication or training.

"Most of us didn't receive any formal document or training. We only heard it from radio announcements or community leaders." Muslim Preacher

"The government never really considered us in their planning... we hear rumors about bans on certain festivals or sacrifices." Traditional Religion Leader

Even interfaith actors, expected to be conduits of official communication, admitted to struggling with policy interpretation, as stated in the interview:

"Even we, as interfaith workers, are still trying to get a full grasp of the legal language and enforcement guidelines." Interfaith Facilitator

Theme 2: Fear and Caution among Religious Leaders

The policy has created a climate of caution, with many religious leaders adopting self-censorship to avoid scrutiny or accusations. Friday sermons, street preaching, and festivals are now carefully screened or altogether canceled to reduce risk.

"There's a sense of fear — especially when speaking on sensitive issues like politics or social behavior." Muslim Preacher.

"It's not that we're against order, but it's the fear of misinterpretation." Christian Pastor

"We feel silenced, as if our practices are inferior or dangerous." Traditional Religion Leader.

This fear is further amplified by the uncertainty surrounding enforcement mechanisms and the perceived lack of recourse in cases of misunderstanding.

Theme 3: Reduced Visibility of Religious Outreach

The policy has unintentionally led to a reduction in visible religious engagement, particularly in public spaces. Activities such as open-air evangelism, public preaching, street da'wah, traditional drumming festivals, and interfaith gatherings have seen a significant decline.

"We've had to stop open-air crusades in some parts of Kaduna." Christian Pastor

"Our programs are more difficult to organize now... Everyone is cautious." Interfaith Facilitator

For minority and youth-led religious movements, this diminished visibility means lost opportunities for outreach, community engagement, and faith-based education.

Theme 4: Selective Impact and Perceived Bias

Several participants described the selective nature of enforcement, with certain religious groups or sects facing closer scrutiny than others. Traditional religion leaders, in particular, felt ignored in policymaking but targeted in enforcement.

“The policy affects us all the same. But no one comes to clarify. We’re just expected to obey.” Traditional Religion Leader

“He wasn’t rude or offensive, just sharing the gospel. But someone filed a complaint... that incident has made many of us avoid public preaching.” Christian Pastor

This has led to perceptions of bias, erosion of trust in public institutions, and growing frustration within religious communities.

Theme 5: Interfaith Strain

While the policy was designed to promote peace, it has had the unintended effect of undermining interfaith dialogue. Faith actors are now less willing to speak freely in multi-religious spaces due to fear of violating policy boundaries.

“The policy has added a layer of suspicion, even among those who want to collaborate.” Interfaith Facilitator

“We used to hold joint forums. Now even basic discussions are filtered to avoid complaints.” Muslim Youth Leader (from supplementary notes)

In this context, interfaith relationships have become more formal, less spontaneous, and occasionally stagnant.

Theme 6: Mixed Outcomes — Prevention vs. Overreach

Participants offered examples where the policy either successfully prevented violence or hindered legitimate religious activity. These mixed outcomes underscore the policy’s uneven effect across stakeholders.

“In Zaria, the authorities intervened quickly and stopped what could’ve turned violent.” Muslim Preacher.

“One of our youth preachers was stopped... He spent the night in detention before we could explain.” Christian Pastor.

“Our shrine was sealed once because someone complained about noise... No one came to investigate before acting.” Traditional Religion Leader.

“We used the policy to mediate between two communities disputing over a loudspeaker issue. That worked.” Interfaith Facilitator.

Table 4.1

Summary Table: NVivo Coding Matrix

Theme (Node)	Description	Sample Sources
Awareness Gap	Limited knowledge of policy content and procedure	Muslim, Traditional, Interfaith
Fear and Caution	Self-censorship by religious leaders to avoid policy violations	Muslim, Christian, Interfaith
Reduced Visibility	Decline in public preaching and outreach activities	Christian, Traditional, Interfaith
Selective Impact	Perceived targeting of some groups and unequal enforcement	Christian, Traditional
Interfaith Strain	Decline in interfaith trust, open dialogue, and cooperation	Interfaith, Muslim
Mixed Outcomes	Policy success in some contexts, but misapplication or overreach in others	All categories

4.3 Challenges in Policy Implementation

Theme 1: Inconsistent Enforcement of Policy

Participants reported significant irregularities in how the religious preaching policy is enforced across communities. While some regions saw strict monitoring, others reported no contact with regulatory agencies at all.

"Some mosques are monitored weekly, others haven't seen an official in months. There is no clear structure or checklist." (Muslim Preacher, Zaria)

This inconsistency leads to distrust among religious leaders, who perceive the policy as being enforced selectively, often along denominational or political lines.

Theme 2: Lack of Stakeholder Inclusion

Across all religious categories, participants emphasized the absence of inclusive consultation during policy formulation. Most were not engaged or formally briefed about the policy's goals or procedures.

"We were never invited to any meeting, yet we are expected to comply. It feels like a decree, not a participatory policy." (Christian Pastor, Kaduna South)

"We, the traditional priests, were not considered. We are invisible in this policy." (Traditional Religion Leader, Kachia)

The failure to involve key actors eroded the legitimacy of the policy and weakened its acceptance.

Theme 3: Public Misunderstanding and Fear

A widespread challenge identified is that both preachers and the general public misunderstand the content, scope, and intent of the policy.

"Many think it's a law that bans preaching outright. That fear has driven many preachers underground." (Interfaith Facilitator, Kaduna North)

This ambiguity has resulted in cautious behavior, reduced open preaching, and confusion around permissible practices.

Theme 4: Institutional and Operational Gaps

Policymakers were described as lacking the institutional support and clarity needed to enforce the policy uniformly. Interviews suggest that many frontline officials are not trained to handle religious diversity or sensitive communication.

"There's no coordination between the Ministry of Justice, the police, and religious affairs offices. Each acts independently." (Community Stakeholder)

This fragmented system often leads to errors in enforcement, over-policing, or complete withdrawal in volatile areas.

Theme 5: Fear of Policy Misuse and Weaponization

A recurring fear among religious actors is that the policy can be used selectively to silence dissent or intimidate specific groups. Several examples of wrongful arrests or biased treatment were shared.

"A preacher was picked up just because someone complained about his topic. There was no investigation, just action." (Christian Preacher, Barnawa)

Such misuse contributes to growing mistrust between religious communities and the state.

Theme 6: Cultural Marginalization of Traditional Religions

Traditional religious leaders feel especially alienated by the policy, which they say implicitly favors Christianity and Islam.

"Our festivals are being regulated without understanding their meaning. This is how a culture dies slowly." (Traditional Priest, Kagoro)

Their exclusion from policymaking processes has fueled a perception that their faith is undervalued or delegitimized.

Table 4.2
NVivo Coding Summary

Code Node	Description	Source Example
Inconsistent Enforcement	Irregular application across locations and religious groups	Muslim & Christian Preachers
Stakeholder Exclusion	Lack of consultation in policy design	Traditional & Interfaith Leaders
Fear and Misunderstanding	Uncertainty about what the policy permits or bans	All groups
Institutional Fragmentation	Lack of coordination among implementing agencies	Policymakers, Community Observers

Code Node	Description	Source Example
Selective Policy Use	Allegations of targeting or discriminatory application	Christian Leaders, Youth Groups
Cultural Marginalization	Traditional religion practices being restricted or sidelined	Traditional Priests
Illustrative Conflicts	Specific incidents highlighting implementation failures	All participant categories

4.4 Findings on Policy Effectiveness and Outcomes

Theme 1: Limited Effectiveness in Promoting Religious Harmony and Public Safety

Participants across religious backgrounds acknowledged the intentions behind the policy, particularly its goal to reduce religious incitement and promote peaceful coexistence. However, most felt the implementation has not achieved significant transformation in religious behavior or intergroup trust.

“It has reduced loud confrontations in the streets, but it hasn’t built understanding between us. Harmony needs more than just silence.” Christian Pastor, Kaduna South

“Yes, people are more cautious, but they’re also more suspicious. This is not the harmony we hoped for.” Muslim Cleric, Zaria

In essence, the policy has reduced overt inflammatory preaching, but participants were skeptical of its deeper social impact. The change is seen as surface-level, with minimal effect on underlying tensions or ideological divides.

Theme 2: Suppressed Interfaith Engagement and Dialogue

A consistent finding was the decline in interfaith collaboration. Many participants reported that the fear of violating policy provisions — particularly around what is deemed “offensive speech” has led to the cancellation or cautious structuring of interfaith forums.

“We now vet our interfaith dialogues more carefully, and many leaders just prefer to stay away. One wrong sentence could spark a complaint.” Interfaith Facilitator, Kaduna North

“Even pastors and imams who used to meet monthly now avoid joint platforms. They don’t want legal trouble.” Community Peace Advocate, Kafanchan

This has weakened informal interfaith bridges and fostered religious self-isolation, particularly in urban areas where regulations are more strictly enforced.

Theme 3: Cultural and Religious Exclusion of Traditional Faiths

Traditional religious practitioners expressed a strong sense of marginalization under the current policy regime. They felt the policy implicitly reinforces a Christian-Muslim binary, excluding indigenous faith systems from consultation, protection, and recognition.

“Our festivals are labeled as disturbances. Our rituals are seen as dangerous. We are part of this state, too.” Traditional Priest, Southern Kaduna

This exclusion has created resentment and resistance, particularly among youth adherents who feel their cultural identity is under threat. In some areas, traditional worship practices have been pushed underground.

Theme 4: Unintended Consequences — Fear, Silence, and Underground Preaching

A critical unintended effect of the policy is the emergence of underground preaching networks, especially among fringe groups and youth-led ministries. Many preachers have migrated their messages to private digital platforms, WhatsApp groups, or hidden home gatherings.

“What the law banned on the street is now being preached in private rooms and online with no moderation or control.” Muslim Youth Preacher, Rigasa

“Instead of engaging these voices publicly, we’ve driven them into the dark. That’s dangerous.” Christian Elder, Sabon Tasha

Additionally, younger preachers especially those newly trained expressed a loss of purpose and voice, leading to spiritual disengagement and disillusionment.

Theme 5: Weaponization and Misuse of Policy

Several respondents reported that the policy has been used as a political or personal weapon, with individuals reporting rivals or minority sects to authorities under vague allegations of “offensive preaching.” This has led to arbitrary arrests, public humiliation, and growing distrust.

“Someone reported my sermon — not because it was dangerous, but because they don’t like our doctrine. The police acted without even reviewing the context.” Pentecostal Pastor, Kaduna North

This erosion of fairness and due process has raised concerns about the abuse of power by both community members and enforcement officers.

Table 4.3
Summary of Findings on Policy Effectiveness and Outcomes

Theme	Summary
Limited Policy Effectiveness	Reduction in public conflict, but little impact on deep-rooted mistrust.
Suppressed Interfaith Dialogue	Fear of policy violations has slowed or stopped many collaborative efforts.
Exclusion of Traditional Faiths	Indigenous practitioners feel alienated and unprotected under the law.
Underground Preaching	Restricted speech has shifted to private, unregulated spaces.
Youth Disengagement	Young preachers feel silenced or unsupported, leading to spiritual drift.
Policy Weaponization	Reports of abuse and biased enforcement, eroding public trust.

Table 4.4
NVivo Coding Summary Table: Policy Effectiveness and Outcomes

Node (Theme)	Description	Illustrative Quote
--------------	-------------	--------------------

Node (Theme)	Description	Illustrative Quote
Limited Policy Effectiveness	The policy curbed public confrontation but didn't foster deep harmony.	"This is not real peace. It's just silence."
Suppressed Interfaith Engagement	Fear of offense has reduced participation in interfaith forums.	"One wrong word, and you're in trouble."
Exclusion of Traditional Faiths	The policy overlooks indigenous practices and leaders.	"Our culture is being erased."
Underground Preaching	Preachers shift activities to private, online, or unregulated spaces.	"It's now WhatsApp churches everywhere."
Youth Disengagement	Young religious leaders feel silenced or discouraged.	"They've shut down their calling."
Policy Misuse/Weaponization	Reports of targeted accusations, often rooted in bias.	"They reported me just because they disagree with our theology."

5.1 Conclusion

The implementation of Kaduna State's public policy on religious preaching reflects a complex intersection of legal intent, religious pluralism, and socio-political realities. While the policy was designed to promote peace, curb hate speech, and regulate religious expression, its real-world effects have generated significant tension among stakeholders. The study reveals that the policy has yielded mixed outcomes, reducing overt religious provocation in some contexts, yet also breeding fear, misunderstanding, and disengagement across religious lines.

The most recurrent concern is the lack of inclusive communication, which has left religious leaders, particularly those from traditional and minority sects, uninformed, excluded, or misunderstood. The fear of enforcement without clarity or recourse has led to widespread self-censorship, reduced interfaith collaboration, and the emergence of underground preaching movements, especially among youth and informal ministries.

Moreover, the inconsistent enforcement and perceived bias in implementation have undermined the policy's legitimacy, with several cases of its weaponization for personal or sectarian gain. Traditional religions in particular express cultural alienation and marginalization, raising important questions about religious equity in public policy.

Ultimately, the policy's contribution to religious harmony appears superficial, characterized more by silence than by meaningful peacebuilding. For a state as religiously diverse as Kaduna, a repressive or misunderstood policy risks deepening the very tensions it seeks to eliminate.

5.2 Recommendations

Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement

Conduct broad-based consultations with all religious and community actors, including youth and traditional leaders, to revise the policy in a way that reflects diverse religious and cultural sensitivities.

Public Awareness and Training

Simplify and translate the policy into local languages and provide targeted training for religious leaders, law enforcement, and interfaith facilitators to ensure clarity and compliance.

Independent Mediation Council

Establish a multi-faith Religious Affairs Mediation Council (RAMC) to handle complaints, oversee implementation, and ensure fair representation, especially of minority and traditional faiths.

Institutional Coordination and Capacity Building

Improve coordination between enforcement agencies through joint training and standard procedures, and enhance their ability to manage religious diversity respectfully.

Revive and Protect Interfaith Dialogue

Support inclusive interfaith programs, especially those led by youth and women within protected civic spaces, and revive informal platforms for honest religious engagement.

Recognition of Traditional Religions

Amend the policy to officially include traditional faiths, protect their practices, and involve their leaders in state-level religious decision-making.

Digital Engagement and Counter-Radicalization

Address underground preaching by promoting positive digital content and engaging credible youth-led and faith-based groups to counteract extremist narratives.

Prevent Misuse of the Policy

Include safeguards against arbitrary enforcement by requiring investigations and mediation before any punitive measures are taken.

Ongoing Policy Review and Community Feedback

Create an annual review forum and local feedback channels to track impact, address grievances, and improve the policy continuously.

References

- Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN). (1999). *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*. Abuja: Government Press.
- Fox, J. (2008). *A World Survey of Religion and the State*. Cambridge University Press.
- Grim, B., & Finke, R. (2011). *The Price of Freedom Denied: Religious Persecution and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century*. Cambridge University Press.
- Grim, B., & Finke, R. (2011). *The Price of Freedom Denied: Religious Persecution and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ibrahim, J. (2010). The Politics of Religion in Nigeria: The Parameters of the 1987 Kafanchan Crisis. *Review of African Political Economy*, 17(45–46), 65–83.
- Ibrahim, J. (2010). The Politics of Religion in Nigeria: The Parameters of the 1987 Kafanchan Crisis. *Review of African Political Economy*, 17(45–46), 65–83.
- Kaduna State Government. (2016). *Religious Preaching Regulation Law*. Kaduna: Ministry of Justice.
- Kukah, M. H. (1993). *Religion, Politics, and Power in Northern Nigeria*. Spectrum Books.
- Kukah, M. H. (1993). *Religion, Politics, and Power in Northern Nigeria*. Spectrum Books.
- Lipsky, M. (1980). *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*. Russell Sage Foundation.
- Lipsky, M. (1980). *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*. Russell Sage Foundation.
- Matland, R. E. (1995). Synthesizing the Implementation Literature: The Ambiguity-Conflict Model of Policy Implementation. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 5(2), 145–174.
- Mazmanian, D., & Sabatier, P. (1983). *Implementation and Public Policy*. Scott Foresman.
- Mazmanian, D., & Sabatier, P. (1983). *Implementation and Public Policy*. Scott, Foresman and Company.
- Ostien, P. (2007). *Ten Years of Sharia in Nigeria: Law and Society in Northern Nigeria*. Spectrum Books.

- Ostien, P. (2007). *Ten Years of Sharia in Nigeria: Law and Society in Northern Nigeria*. Spectrum Books.
- Paden, J. N. (2005). *Muslim Civic Cultures and Conflict Resolution: The Challenge of Democratic Federalism in Nigeria*. Brookings Institution Press.
- Paden, J. N. (2005). *Muslim Civic Cultures and Conflict Resolution: The Challenge of Democratic Federalism in Nigeria*. Brookings Institution Press.
- Pressman, J. L., & Wildavsky, A. B. (1973). *Implementation: How Great Expectations in Washington are Dashed in Oakland*. University of California Press.
- Pressman, J. L., & Wildavsky, A. B. (1973). *Implementation: How Great Expectations in Washington Are Dashed in Oakland*. University of California Press.
- Salawu, B. (2010). Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Nigeria: Causal Analysis and Proposals for New Management Strategies. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 13(3), 345–353.
- Salawu, B. (2010). Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Nigeria: Causal Analysis and Proposals for New Management Strategies. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 13(3), 345–353.
- Udoidem, S. I. (1997). Religion in the Political Life of Nigeria: A Survey of Religion-Related Crises in Nigeria Since Independence. In F. U. Okafor (Ed.), *New Strategies for Curbing Ethnic and Religious Conflicts in Nigeria* (pp. 154–173). Fourth Dimension Publishing.
- Udoidem, S. I. (1997). Religion in the Political Life of Nigeria: A Survey of Religion-Related Crises Since Independence. In F. U. Okafor (Ed.), *New Strategies for Curbing Ethnic and Religious Conflicts in Nigeria* (pp. 154–173). Fourth Dimension Publishing.

Appendix I

Interview Guide

Section 1: Background Information

*Could you please describe your role and involvement with religious preaching or policy implementation?

*How long have you been active in this role?

Section 2: Perceptions and Experiences of Policy Implementation

How would you describe your understanding of the public policies related to religious preaching in Kaduna State?

* In what ways has the policy affected your activities or those of the preachers you know?

* Can you share specific experiences where the policy has either supported or hindered your work or preaching?

Section 3: Challenges in Policy Implementation

* What challenges have you observed or experienced in the implementation of these policies?

* How do religious leaders respond to these policies?

* What difficulties do policymakers face in enforcing regulations on preaching activities?

* Are there any particular incidents or conflicts that illustrate these challenges?

Section 4: Policy Effectiveness and Outcomes

- * In your opinion, how effective are these policies in promoting religious harmony and public safety?
- * What impact have these policies had on interfaith relations in Kaduna State?
- * Are there any unintended consequences of the policy implementation you would like to highlight?