

ETHNIC DYNAMICS IN NORTHERN SENATORIAL ZONE, TARABA STATE, NIGERIA: AN INTER-GROUP PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract: This paper, titled "Inter-Group Relations and Peace in the Northern Senatorial Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria: A Study of Ethnic Dynamics," explores the relationships among diverse ethnic groups in Taraba State's Northern Senatorial Zone. Utilizing qualitative methods, particularly a narrative research design, the study delves into the dynamics of coexistence and tensions among ethnic groups, with a focus on indigenous communities such as the Fulbe, Hausa, Jenjo, Mumye, Wurkun, and others. Data collection involved interviews, participatory observations, and contextual analysis of documentary sources. The findings underscore the rich cultural diversity of Taraba State, where Traditional religions, Islam, and Christianity coexist within localities, deeply rooted in family identities. Historical connections among ethnic groups, characterized by peaceful coexistence, have been disrupted since the creation of Taraba State, leading to ethno-religious conflicts influenced by factors such as ethnic superiority, religious sentiments, and economic disparities. Challenges identified encompass disunity, power struggles, ethnic identity concerns, and unfavorable government policies, revealing the intricate nature of inter-group relations in the zone. Addressing these challenges necessitates collaborative efforts involving traditional, political, governmental, non-governmental, and religious entities. Recommendations to foster lasting harmony include increasing awareness and education, establishing dialogue platforms, promoting interfaith dialogue, empowering local communities, enhancing security measures, collaborating with NGOs, and conducting media sensitization campaigns to encourage responsible reporting and unity among diverse communities.

Keywords: Culture Diversity, Ethnic Dynamics, Identity, Ethno-Religious, Conflicts, Dialogue, Inter-Group.

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A. INTRODUCTION

Taraba State, known for its diverse array of ethnic groups each with distinct historical roots, cultural practices, and religious affiliations, has been historically shaped by the influences of Traditional religion, Islam, and Christianity. The intricate socio-political dynamics within the state have long been intertwined with religious institutions, emphasizing the pivotal role of religion in shaping socio-political authority and the hierarchical positions held by religious leaders or priests.³ Sulaiman and Wakil note that the religious landscape in Taraba primarily comprises Traditional Religions, Islam, and Christianity, with a historical transition away from traditional beliefs towards Islam or Christianity, although pockets of adherents to traditional religion persist.⁴

Danladi asserts that the religious composition in Jen can be aptly described as a "triple heritage," encompassing Traditional Religion, Christianity, and Islam coexisting side by side. The Jenjo people were initially entirely pagan until the late 18th century when Islam was introduced by Hausa, Kakanda traders, and Fulani Jihadists, attracting a few followers. Christianity made its way to Jen in the early 20th century through the efforts of the Sudan United Mission (America), following an unsuccessful attempt by the Sudan United Mission (Danish).⁵

In the pre-colonial era, Taraba State, like other regions in Nigeria and Africa, experienced harmonious inter-group relations characterized by mutual trust, brotherhood, and peaceful coexistence. This amicable relationship transcended ethno-geopolitical and ethno-religious boundaries, leading to the emergence of empires that encompassed diverse ethno-religious groups. Inter-ethnic or religious conflicts were not prevalent during this period, as a balance of power restoration contributed to restored harmonious relationships and peaceful coexistence.⁶

Despite this historical ethno-religious pluralism, the post-creation era of Taraba State witnessed a shift from peaceful coexistence to hostility, especially in the Northern Senatorial

³ Ali, Bello, "Muslims and *Da'wah* in Taraba State: Prospects and Challenges", Usman Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, (M.A. Islamic Studies), 2014

⁴ Suleiman, Muhammad Dahiru & Wakili, Haruna "Religious and Ethnic Conflicts in Nigeria: Implications for National Development". Report of an NDP-Sponsored Special Project, National Development Project, Abuja, FCT, Nigeria, 2002.

⁵ Danladi Yakubu Balutu, *The New Heritage*, Tony Classical Press, Jalingo, 2019, pp.10-11

⁶ Akombo, Elijah Ityavkase, "The Colonial Factor in the Phenomenon of Inter-Group Conflicts in Nigeria: A Case Study of Tiv-Jukun Relations in Wukari Local Government Area of Taraba State", in *Jalingo Journal of Arts & Social Sciences (J-JASS)*, Vol. 1 No. 1 June, School of Arts and Social sciences, COE, Jalingo, Taraba State, Faith Printers International, Zaria, 2009,

Zone. The once harmonious dynamics gave way to increased tensions and conflicts in this region, marking a significant departure from the historical inter-group relations experienced in the pre-colonial era.⁷

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review provides a nuanced understanding of inter-group dynamics within the Northern Senatorial Zone of Taraba State, Nigeria, with a particular emphasis on Islamic perspectives on inter-group relations and peace. For example, Bello's extensive work (1991-2020) illuminates the challenges faced by Muslims in Taraba State, including issues of disunity and political power struggles. Practical solutions such as efficient *da'wah* and unified leadership are recommended to address these challenges.⁸

Abubakar's research on "Ethno-Religious Crises in Taraba State: Causes, Effects, and Solutions from Islamic Perspective" provides historical perspectives⁹, while another study by Abubakar on "Ethnic Identity and Political Crises on the Mambilla Plateau, Taraba State, 1979 – 2002" (2015) examines ethnic identity issues.¹⁰ Bello's works in 2014, titled "Muslims and *Da'wah* in Taraba State: Prospects and Challenges," offer a thorough overview of the inception and dissemination of Islam in Taraba State's history. This study enriches the examination of inter-group dynamics within the state.¹¹

Additionally, Badamasi's research titled "Ethno-Religious Conflicts and Insecurity in Taraba State, Nigeria: Islamic Perspective a Panacea" underscores the hindrance of ethno-religious conflicts to development in Taraba State. The study suggests Islamic-based conflict management approaches, drawing from the Qur'an, Hadith, and practical steps followed by early Muslims.¹² Sulaiman and Wakili's work on religious and ethnic conflicts in Nigeria's exploration of ethnic tensions contributes valuable insights into conflicts in Taraba State.¹³

⁷ Ali, Bello, "A Study on Challenges Facing Muslims in Taraba State: Trends, Factors and Solutions (1991-2020), Bayero University Kano, (Ph.D. Islamic Studies), 2021.

⁸ Ali, Bello, "A Study on Challenges Facing Muslims in Taraba State..."

⁹ Abubakar, Muhammad, "Ethno-Religious Crises in Taraba State: Causes, Effects and Solutions from Islamic Perspective", Bayero University, Kano, (M.A. Islamic Studies), 2017.

¹⁰ Abubakar, Ahmed Adi, "Ethnic Identity and Political Crises on the Mambilla Plateau, Taraba State, 1979 – 2002", University of Maiduguri, (M. A. Political History), 2015.

¹¹ Ali, Bello, "Muslims and *Da'wah* in Taraba State: Prospects and Challenges", Usman Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, (M.A. Islamic Studies), 2014.

¹² Muhammad, Badamasi Aliyu "Ethno-Religious Conflicts and Insecurity in Taraba State, Nigeria: Islamic Perspective a Panacea", University of Bakht Al-Ruda, (Ph.D. Islamic Studies), 2017.

¹³ Suleiman, Muhammad Dahiru, & Wakili, Haruna "Religious and Ethnic Conflicts in Nigeria: Implications for National Development". Report of an NDP-Sponsored Special Project, National Development Project, Abuja, FCT, Nigeria, 2002.

This literature review, incorporating the works of various researchers, offers a comprehensive understanding of inter-group dynamics, ethno-religious conflicts, and governance challenges in Taraba State. These studies collectively inform the exploration of inter-group relations and peace within the specified region.

C. METHODOLOGY

The research methodology employed is qualitative, aiming to understand a specific research problem from the local population's perspectives. The study focuses on ethnic groups in the Taraba North Senatorial Zone, including Fulbe, Hausa, Jenjo, Karimjo, Mumuye, Wurkun, and Yandang. Data collection methods include interviews, participatory observation, and contextual analysis of documentary sources.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Historical Harmony Among Ethnic Groups in Taraba State's Northern Senatorial Zone

Exploring historical perspectives on peaceful coexistence among various ethnic groups in the Northern senatorial zone of Taraba State unveils a complex and harmonious interplay of relationships. In this region, many ethnic groups, each with unique cultures and religions, coexist amidst occasional tensions but rare actual conflicts. The dynamics between herders and farmers, are often entangled in disputes arising from simple misunderstandings but are typically resolved amicably.¹⁴ Uzajja observes an enduring cordiality among individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds, where religious disparities minimally impact relations. A common commitment to unity prevails, fostering positive inter-tribal and ethnic relationships.¹⁵

Before the creation of Taraba State, communities and ethnic groups in the Northern Senatorial Zone maintained a relatively harmonious coexistence. These groups, resembling the broader Nigerian context, were perceived as a unified community despite diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. Notable instances, such as the Mumuye ethnic group residing in Fulbe and Hausa households, underscore the warmth of these relationships, influencing even religious conversions. Inter-ethnic marriages were prevalent, illustrating the integration of various groups across the zone.¹⁶

¹⁴ Alhaji Mohammed Hassan Babaji, 74 years, Farmer, Zing, Zing LGA, 16th November, 2022

¹⁵ Rev. Dauda Uzajja Adamu, 54 Years, Civil Servant, Karim Lamido interviewed in Zing, 24th November, 2022

¹⁶ Barrister Jamilu Muhammad Auwal, 41 Years, Legal Practitioner, Jalingo, Jalinog LGA, 24th December, 2022

Muhammad narrates the harmonious coexistence among diverse ethnic groups within the Sunkani community and the broader Muri Division, situated in the present Northern Senatorial Zone of Taraba State, in the pre-Taraba State creation era. The relationships among these groups were marked by peaceful cohabitation, particularly with the Mumuye people finding a warm welcome in Fulbe households. Similar positive interactions extended to other ethnic communities, fostering trust, cooperation, and intermarriages. These amicable relations were exemplified through communal farming practices and the engagement of apprentices from varied ethnic backgrounds by business owners. Two specific instances from Muhammad's recollections underscore the depth of these harmonious relationships. The first involves a Yandang Christian evangelist, a friend of his father—an Islamic scholar. Despite their religious differences, the evangelist's faith was respected, and he was encouraged to pray during an evangelism journey.¹⁷

Muhammad further narrates the second significant incident occurred in 1987 during Muhammad's undergraduate years at Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) in Zaria. Mr. Danladi Yakubu Balutu, later known as Rev. Dr. Danladi Yakubu Balutu, then the principal of Government Day Secondary School in Sunkani, approached him through his father. Balutu sought Muhammad's assistance in caring for his wife, infant, and her sister, who accompanied her to attend school—all belonging to the Jenjo ethnic group. Fate intervened when a severe religious riot erupted in Kafanchan, spreading to Zaria, Kaduna, Kano, and parts of Jos. Amidst the campus turmoil, Muhammad successfully evacuated Balutu's family to the safety of Basawa Military Barracks in Zaria. This compassionate act stands as a testament to the tightly knit and compassionate society that characterized that period.¹⁸ Subsequently, Danladi verified the episode, affirming a longstanding relationship with the family of Engr. Muhammad Yusuf Bose in Sunkani.¹⁹

Kafiyaro corroborates these narratives, emphasizing the trust among ethnic groups. Individuals could live with master's from different ethnic backgrounds without financial support from distant parents. Inter-tribal marriages, shared ceremonies, and mutual support became defining features of these relationships.²⁰

¹⁷ Engr. Muhammad Yusuf Bose, 53 years, Civil Servant, Ardo-Kola, interviewed in Jalingo, 18th September, 2022

¹⁸ Engr. Muhammad Yusuf Bose, 53 years, Civil Servant...

¹⁹ Rev. Danladi Yakubu Balutu, PhD., 69 Years, Politician, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 22/09/2022

²⁰ Rev. Obidah Kafiyaro, 52 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 12th September, 2022

Nyavo's account unveils a high level of trust among ethnic groups in the Yorro Local Government Area, where non-Muslims, particularly the Mumuye, coexisted with the Fulbe. The groups collectively addressed disputes and challenges while respecting each other's norms and values.²¹ Similar sentiments are echoed by Ismaila, emphasizing just and respectful coexistence.²²

Philemon affirms the enduring trust and respect between the Jenjo and Fulbe communities, rooted in historical intermarriages and business relationships. Despite contemporary challenges, crises between these groups are rare, reflecting the enduring tolerance of the Jenjo.²³ Shehu's emphasis on the impact of ethnic diversity on the lives of people in Taraba Northern Senatorial Zone highlights collaboration among different groups for development.²⁴ Inter-ethnic marriages played a crucial role in fostering cordial socio-economic and political relationships, a sentiment echoed by Bulus.²⁵

Wisdom recounts the peaceful relations among Yandang, Kona, Mumuye, Jenjo, and other ethnic groups before Taraba State's creation. Inter-religious and tribal marriages were celebrated, contributing to a sense of identity and peaceful coexistence.²⁶ Aminu underscores the unity among Muslims, Christians, and traditionalists, recounting instances of mutual respect and support across religious boundaries. Intermarriages, shared festivities, and collaborative activities contributed to a sense of brotherhood.²⁷

Sulemuri provides a pivotal perspective on the inter-group relations within the Muri Emirate, encompassing the Taraba Northern Senatorial Zone. He underscores the diversity inherent in the social organization of the Muri Emirate, mirroring the multitude of ethnic groups dwelling within its borders. The cross-pollination of social and cultural ideas across different areas signifies extensive contact among these diverse groups. Notably, the adoption of Hausa and Fulfulde as the dual communication languages reflects the interconnections among the various communities in the Muri Emirate, fostering bilingualism among individuals

²¹ Malam Muhammad Nyavo, 58 Years, Civil Servant, Gada, Yoro, 24th September 2022

²² Alhaji Ismaila M. Damburam, 74 Years, Rtd. Airliner, Jalingo, 1st October 2022

²³ Amb. Philemon Azara Saredau, 68 Years, Community Leader, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 17th August, 2022

²⁴ Alhaji Audu Shehu Lau, 59 Years, Farmer, Lau, interviewed in Jalingo, 14th August 2022

²⁵ Mr. Bulus Gago D., 67 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Lau, interviewed in Jalingo, 21st August, 2022

²⁶ Rev. Dr. Wisdom Danwaja Henry, PhD., 60 Years, Civil Servant, Lau, interviewed in Zing, 7th September, 2022

²⁷ Alhaji Aminu Abdullahi, 52 Years, Civil Servant, Jalingo, 22nd October, 2022

from different ethnic backgrounds. This linguistic interweaving is exemplified by Mumuye individuals proficient in Fulfulde and vice versa.²⁸

Marriage emerges as a significant catalyst in nurturing inter-group relations. The strategic concept of inter-group marriage aims at establishing familial ties across as many groups as possible, a deliberate effort to promote peaceful coexistence. The connectivity forged through marital bonds strengthens relations among distinct families and communities, fostering a sense of unity and understanding. The heterogeneity of the Muri Emirate acts as a facilitator for interaction among its diverse groups. This diversity becomes a cornerstone for harmonious and peaceful coexistence within the various communities that constitute the Muri Emirate. The permissiveness of interaction among these groups contributes to the establishment of a cohesive and integrated social fabric, promoting understanding and unity amidst diversity.²⁹ This equally reflect the finding of Musa that; Muhammad Mafindi, the Emir of Muri (1914-1953 A.D.) also encouraged intermarriages by allowing his sons to marry from the Mumuye and other tribes. It was the intermarriages between the Mumuye and other people that paved way to a strong and cordial relationship among ethnic groups and people of different religions in the area.³⁰

Ali's research findings also highlight the positive and harmonious relationships among various ethnic groups, particularly the Mumuye, Kona, Fulani, and Jenjo. The study emphasizes the amicable coexistence, exemplified by members of different ethnicities residing in Fulani Muslim households to pursue Western education. Importantly, individuals had the freedom to practice their traditional religion or Christianity without facing pressure to embrace Islam. Inter-ethnic marriages, particularly between Fulani and other groups, played a role in the voluntary adoption of Islam by members of non-Muslim communities. Additionally, groups like the Wurkun, Jole, and Bandawa maintained peaceful relations with other ethnicities, including the Fulbe. Notably, the Muri Emirate experienced a lack of serious enmity, conflict, mistrust, or violence between these diverse groups.³¹

²⁸ Suleimuri, Haruna Muhammad and Louis, Ngah N. W. "The Fulbe Ethnic Group in the Muri Emirate and the Mambilla Plateau", (Ed.) Sunday, Talla Ngarka in *History: Tropical Issues in the Study of Early History of Some Ethnic Groups and the Mambillah Plateau in Taraba State of Nigeria 1*, Tedia Ventures, Nigeria, 2016.

²⁹ Suleimuri, Haruna Muhammad and Louis, Ngah N. W. "The Fulbe Ethnic Group in the Muri Emirate..."

³⁰ Musa, Yahaya Kassa, "An Analysis of Islamic Proselytisation Activities among the Mumuye People in Taraba State", Bayero University, Kano, (M. A. Islamic Studies), 2000,

³¹ Ali, Bello, "A Study on Challenges Facing Muslims in Taraba State: Trends, Factors and Solutions (1991-2020)", Bayero University Kano, (Ph.D. Islamic Studies), 2021.

Badamasi also presents in his study that; in Muri Emirate, the cordial relationship among various ethnic groups in the Muri Emirate after the establishment of the Emirate by contending that; the relationship between the Jenjo, the Wurkum Kullum, the Fulani and other natives had been cordial until recent. For instance, the Jenjo being the foot soldiers of the Fulani in the earlier times and when the Fulani established their administration on the natives, even though they were not appointed to senior administrative positions, maintained their cordiality with the Fulani until the recent political awareness when each group wants to be heard and seen.³²

The historical perspectives on peaceful coexistence among ethnic groups in the Northern senatorial zone of Taraba State reveal a quality of harmonious relationships, marked by trust, cooperation, and shared values across diverse cultural and religious backgrounds.

Factors Fostering Unity Among Diverse Ethnic Communities

Examining the dynamics of peaceful coexistence among specific ethnic groups reveals various contributing factors. Interactions between these groups were marked by mutual respect, transcending ethno-religious differences. Key elements such as trust, cooperation, intermarriages, and communal celebrations played integral roles, rooted in a deep understanding of each other's customs, traditions, and ethical values. Economic pursuits and collaborative projects were evident, illustrated by Yandang intermarriages with the Mumuye, guided by customary norms.³³

Yusuf observes a prevailing sense of contentment within the community, with an absence of displays of educational superiority. Ethno-religious distinctions did not impede mutual respect among diverse groups.³⁴ The Jenjo people exemplify this, engaging in trust, cooperation, intermarriage, and communal endeavors with neighboring ethnic groups, fostering unity and joint efforts against criminal activities.³⁵

Both before and after the creation of Taraba State, people demonstrated trust, respect, and consideration for one another. Collaborative projects spanning farming, fishing, crafts, and other economic activities were shared efforts. Crime control was a unanimous

³² Muhammad, Badamasi Aliyu "Ethno-Religious Conflicts and Insecurity in Taraba State, Nigeria: Islamic Perspective a Panacea", University of Bakht Al-Ruda, (Ph.D. Islamic Studies), 2017

³³ Rev. Dr. Wisdom Danwaja Henry, PhD., 60 Years, Civil Servant, Lau, interviewed in Zing, 7th September, 2022

³⁴ Alhaji Yusuf Bako Kunini, 74 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Kunini, Lau, interviewed in Jalingo, 1st September, 2022

³⁵ Mr. Abenitus Isaac Mathew, 58 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 19th August, 2022

undertaking, void of considerations such as clan affiliations. Religious activities revolved around humanity, emphasizing inclusivity.³⁶

Hussaini and Henry underscore the trust that facilitated participation in each other's festivities, naming ceremonies, and marriages across ethnic boundaries. Special occasions like market days and religious festivals served as platforms for communal bonding.³⁷ Kafiyo identifies factors such as minimal involvement in evil practices, low living costs, fear of God, and love among individuals as contributors to peaceful coexistence among the ethnic groups of the Northern Senatorial Zone in Taraba State.³⁸

McDonald emphasizes the cordial relationships between Mumuye, Nyandang, and Fulbe in Zing before the establishment of Taraba State, highlighting trust, honesty, and mutual respect for culture and religion.³⁹ Sunday and Bitrus reinforce this notion, emphasizing the historical cordiality and trust among diverse ethnic groups in Zing and Wurkun areas.⁴⁰

Shehu points to factors such as religious tolerance, constructive engagement of youth, inter-tribal marriages, and family lineage as instrumental in promoting peaceful coexistence.⁴¹ Muhammad adds that minimal materialism and external influences, strong community leadership, and intermarriages played vital roles.⁴² Aminu attributes past success to sincerity, openness, trust, mutual understanding, and assistance among ethnic groups.⁴³

George contends that dialogue, involving traditional and religious leaders, played a pivotal role in diffusing conflicts.⁴⁴ Ali supports this by recalling an era when Muslims and non-Muslims lived as one family, sharing educational spaces, participating in economic activities, and jointly experiencing moments of joy or sorrow. Instances in Yorro, Baissa, Gembu, Zing, Lau, Karim Lamido, Bali, and Gashaka highlight interfaith cooperation, nurturing individuals who now hold influential positions in government.⁴⁵

³⁶ Mr. Bulus Gago D., 67 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Lau, interviewed in Jalingo, 21st August, 2022

³⁷ Mr. Henry Gideon Bakari, 60 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 15th August, 2022 and Alhaji Hussaini Umar Mafindi, 66 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Jalingo, 26th August, 2022

³⁸ Rev. Obidah Kafiyo, 52 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 12th September, 2022

³⁹ Mr. McDonald D. Dogoson, 50 Years, Public Servant, Zing, interviewed in Jalingo, 19th August, 2022

⁴⁰ Dr. Akawu Bitrus Kirim, 63 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 1st August, 2022 and Mr. Sunday I. Hamman, 55 Years, Civil Servant, Zing, interviewed in Jalingo, 19th August, 2022

⁴¹ Alhaji Audu Shehu Lau, 59 Years, Farmer, Lau, interviewed in Jalingo, 14th August 2022

⁴² Alhaji Usman Muhammad, 65 Years, Farmer, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 16th August, 2022

⁴³ Alhaji Aminu Abdullahi, 52 Years, Civil Servant, Jalingo, 22nd October, 2022

⁴⁴ Mr. George Modan, 57 Years, Security Officer, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 29th August, 2022

⁴⁵ Ali, Bello (2021), "A Study on Challenges Facing Muslims in Taraba State: Trends, Factors and Solutions (1991-2020)", Beyero University Kano, (Ph.D. Islamic Studies), 2021.

The varied factors promoting harmonious coexistence among diverse ethnic groups in the Northern Senatorial Zone of Taraba State depict a rich tapestry of trust, mutual respect, and shared values.

Perspectives on Pre-State Creation Conflicts in Taraba State

The perspectives on conflicts before the creation of Taraba State provide valuable insights into the dynamics of inter-ethnic relations and the factors influencing harmony in the region. Omar acknowledges the enduring impact of historical events such as the Chamba and Jukun migrations and the Fulani jihad, which involved invasion and establishment of dominance.⁴⁶ Uzajja, however, presents a contrasting view, highlighting the cordiality among people of various ethnic origins and the mildness of religious differences as crisis factors. This underscores a shared concern for the common realities of oneness, emphasizing efforts to preserve inter-tribal and ethnic relationships.⁴⁷

Rabiu and Shehu support the notion of occasional conflicts but emphasizes that such crises did not lead to group divisions. Herdsmen and farmers, despite engaging in conflicts, endeavored to resolve them amicably, reflecting a practice of tolerance and cooperation before the creation of Taraba State. The minimal destruction of lives and properties during these conflicts suggests a commitment to resolving disputes with a belief in the continuity of life.⁴⁸

Wisdom observes instances of disputes in Lau and other areas, particularly on land boundaries during farming seasons. The involvement of group leaders played a crucial role in calming situations and preventing destructive outcomes.⁴⁹ Yusuf echoes this sentiment, emphasizing the resolution of conflicts through dialogue and reconciliation, particularly in the Lau Local Government Area. The mutual contentment of all tribes with their positions in the community, despite occasional grudges, further promotes a peaceful coexistence.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Omar, Sale (2022). "Good Governance: A Catalyst for Unity, Peaceful Co-Existence, Progress and Development in Muri", Text of a Lecture Delivered on the Today Muri Peace and Unity Summit on the Theme: Unity and Peaceful Co-Existence in Muri: Panacea for Progress and Development, Held at the Rev. Tavoro Jolly Nyame Stadium, Jalingo on the 27th and 28th December, 2022.

⁴⁷ Rev. Dauda Uzajja Adamu, 54 Years, Civil Servant, Karim Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 24th December, 2022

⁴⁸ Alhaji Rabiu Ismaila Agwaru, 53 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 31st July 2022 and Alhaji Audu Shehu Lau, 59 Years, Farmer, Lau, interviewed in Jalingo, 14th August, 2022

⁴⁹ Rev. Dr. Wisdom Danwaja Henry, PhD., 60 Years, Civil Servant, Lau, interviewed in Zing, 7th September, 2022

⁵⁰ Alhaji Yusuf Bako Kunini, 74 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Kunini, Lau, Interviewed in Jalingo, 1st September, 2022

Henry notes disagreements over farmlands, commonly resolved by elders. The respect for traditional institutions, family heads, and each other's beliefs, culture, and religion contributed to maintaining peace in those times.⁵¹ Fidelis emphasizes tolerance, understanding, and respect for norms and values as contributing factors to the peaceful coexistence in the Zing Local Government Area.

Rabiu highlights conflicts caused by boundary issues, fishing rights, and hunting places in Karim Lamido. However, the minimal level of destruction suggests successful resolutions through reconciliatory meetings led by leaders of affected groups.⁵²⁵³ Similar experiences in the Zing Local Government Area, as noted by Umaru, involve limited and rare conflicts between Fulbe and Mumuye (Herders/Farmers), with minimal destruction of properties. Reconciliation mechanisms employed by the leadership of the Fulbe and Mumuye were effective.⁵⁴

Musa points out rare instances of farmland disputes between Fulbe and Mumuye in the present-day Yorro Local Government Area, resolved amicably. However, the post-creation era witnessed a shift to tribalism using religion as cover, particularly in politics. This transition led to conflicts, challenging the mutual understanding, trust, and confidence in social relations that were once enjoyed by all ethnic groups in the zone before the creation of the state.⁵⁵

The passage encapsulates Elijah's assertion that, during the pre-colonial era in Taraba State, Nigeria, and Africa at large, inter-group relations among communities were characterized by a pleasant union, mutual trust, and a spirit of respect for one another. This peaceful and harmonious relationship fostered broader inter-group connections that surpassed ethno-geo-political boundaries and ethno-religious disparities. The emergence of empires and states, incorporating diverse ethno-religious groups without resorting to violence, was a direct result of the peaceful coexistence among numerous ethnic groups in the past. During this era, conflicts never took on inter-ethnic or religious dimensions. Following conflicts, once a balance of power was achieved, harmonious relationships and peaceful coexistence were promptly restored.⁵⁶

⁵¹ Mr. Henry Gideon Bakari, 60 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 15th August, 2022

⁵² Dr. Fidelis Hamman Bonjoru, 63 Years, Civil Servant, Zing, 10th October, 2022

⁵³ Alhaji Rabiu Ismaila Agwaru, 53 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 31st July, 2022

⁵⁴ Alhaji Umaru Yero Boduga, 63 Years, Businessman, Zing, interviewed in Jalingo, 11th August, 2022

⁵⁵ Alhaji Musa N. T. Dasso. 70 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Yorro, interviewed in Jalingo, 22nd, August, 2022

⁵⁶ Akombo, Elijah Ityavkase, "The Colonial Factor in the Phenomenon of Inter-Group Conflicts in Nigeria: a Case Study of Tiv-Jukun Relations in Wukari Local Government Area of Taraba State", in Jalingo Journal of Arts & Social

The pre-state creation conflicts in Taraba State reflect a complex interplay of historical events, cultural dynamics, and political changes. Understanding these perspectives provides a foundation for constructive analyses of the region's socio-political landscape.

Transformations in Inter-Ethnic Relations: Post-Creation Dynamics in Taraba State

The landscape of Taraba State underwent significant changes following its creation in 1991, marking a shift in the dynamics of inter-ethnic relations. Unfortunately, these changes were marked by a series of crises, often politically motivated, leading to discord within and between ethnic groups. This section delves into the multifaceted perspectives on the nature of conflicts after the creation of Taraba State, drawing on insights from various scholars.

One noticeable trend after state creation was the emergence of crises with diverse dimensions, encompassing tribal, religious, and economic perspectives. Uzajja points out conflicts in Karim-Lamido, Munga Dosso, Wurkun, and Mumuye-Kona-Fulani in different years. Lau East has been experiencing incessant conflicts since 2019, impacting numerous ethno-religious groups.⁵⁷ Bulus echoes this sentiment, observing a decline in trust among ethnic groups. Ethnic affiliations shifted, causing divisions among groups that once identified as one.⁵⁸ Shehu emphasizes the prevalence of disrespect, hatred, intolerance, and envy among community members, attributing these negative changes to the influx of individuals with questionable characters.⁵⁹

Rabiu and Hussein add that cooperation dwindled due to the pursuit of self-determination by individual ethnic groups and the fear of domination by major ethnic groups.⁶⁰ Abubakar supports these observations, highlighting the adverse effects of the conflicts on the agrarian-based economy of Taraba State. Recurrent crises disrupted farming and fishing, hampering economic prosperity.⁶¹

Badamsi's work delves into the ethno-religious conflicts in Taraba State, particularly in the Northern Senatorial zone. The study reveals that early ethno-religious relations were

Sciences (J-IASS), Vol. 1 No. 1 June, School of Arts and Social sciences, COE, Jalingo, Taraba State, Faith Printers International, Zaria, 2009,

⁵⁷ Rev. Dauda Uzajja Adamu, 54 Years, Civil Servant, Karim Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 24th December, 2022.

⁵⁸ Mr. Bulus Gago D., 67 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Lau, interviewed in Jalingo, 21st August, 2022

⁵⁹ Alhaji Audu Shehu Lau, 59 Years, Farmer, Lau, interviewed in Jalingo, 14th August 2022

⁶⁰ Alhaji Rabiu Ismaila Agwaru, 53 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 31st July, 2022 and Alhaji Hussaini Umar Mafindi, 66 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Jalingo, 26th August, 2022

⁶¹ Abubakar, Muhammad, "Ethno-Religious Crises in Taraba State: Causes, Effects and Solutions from Islamic Perspective", Bayero University, Kano, (M.A. Islamic Studies), 2017

marked by struggles for identity and domination, later evolving into conflicts over political and religious identity. The colonial legacy of divide-and-rule policies played a significant role in creating an atmosphere conducive to ethno-religious confrontations. Three main categories of conflicts emerged: ethnic, religious, and ethno-religious conflicts.⁶²

Badamasi further categorizes Taraba State as a region bedeviled by religious-motivated conflicts, ethnic violence, and farmer/herdsmen crises. These conflicts often exhibit intertwined dimensions, combining religious, political, and economic factors.⁶³ Ali asserts that the social order and calmness in Taraba State were disrupted post-creation due to tribal, religious, political, and sectional factors. The composition of groups, political influences, and the pursuit of self-actualization among minorities added to the complexities.⁶⁴

The post-creation era in Taraba State witnessed a transformation in inter-ethnic relations, marked by a surge in conflicts with various dimensions. These conflicts have had far-reaching implications for the economic, social, and political fabric of the state, necessitating a comprehensive understanding for effective resolution and future peace-building efforts.

Apparent Causes of Ethno-Religious Conflict in the Northern Senatorial Zone of Taraba State

Ethno-religious conflicts, a pervasive global issue, have left an indelible mark on the Northern Senatorial Zone of Taraba State, Nigeria. This section seeks to elucidate the apparent causes behind these conflicts, shedding light on factors such as ignorance and illiteracy, ethnic superiority, religious sentimentalism, external influence, the quest for political positions, and denied economic opportunities. A thorough understanding of these causes is imperative for the formulation of effective conflict resolution and peace-building strategies.

1. Ignorance and Illiteracy

Ignorance and illiteracy emerge as powerful catalysts for ethno-religious conflict, fueling tension and violence. Limited access to education and information creates an environment where individuals lack the knowledge and awareness necessary for fostering understanding and tolerance among diverse ethnic and religious groups. Muhammad emphasizes the role of

⁶² Muhammad, Badamasi Aliyu "Ethno-Religious Conflicts and Insecurity in Taraba State, Nigeria: Islamic Perspective a Panacea", University of Bakht Al-Ruda, (Ph.D. Islamic Studies), 2017

⁶³ Muhammad, Badamasi Aliyu "Ethno-Religious Conflicts and Insecurity in Taraba State..."

⁶⁴ Ali, Bello, "A Study on Challenges Facing Muslims in Taraba State: Trends, Factors and Solutions (1991-2020), Beyero University Kano, (Ph.D. Islamic Studies), 2021.

ignorance in breeding mistrust, insincerity, political bias, corruption, and biased religious and ethnic attitudes, all contributing to ethno-religious conflicts in the Zone.⁶⁵

Kafiyaro further underscores the impact of ignorance, linking it to a lack of tolerance, provocative actions, land and property confiscation, and a disregard for humanity. This ignorance-driven hostility results in incessant conflicts and destruction of lives and properties among the ethnic groups in the Zone.⁶⁶

The prevalence of illiteracy, especially among the youth, is identified as a significant obstacle to achieving self-reliance and contributes to continuous clashes among previously peace-loving tribes in the Northern Senatorial Zone.⁶⁷ Urgent educational and skill development initiatives are essential to empower individuals, fostering self-sufficiency and contributing positively to peaceful coexistence.

2. Ethnic Superiority

A deeply ingrained belief in the superiority of one's ethnic group stands out as a formidable cause of ethno-religious conflicts. This perception often leads to discrimination and marginalization of other groups, breeding resentment and competition for resources and recognition. Bulus notes the emergence of clan superiority among various ethnic groups, with Kudakos, Kufurus, Yedakos, Nyengadales, and Wakanes asserting superiority over each other.⁶⁸

Philemon recounts a similar scenario where ethnic and inter-group relationships were characterized by cordiality prior to the establishment of Taraba state. In those times, specific groups identified themselves with the Jenjo. However, the landscape shifted with the advent of politics, prompting a desire for distinct group identification. Notably, groups like Bandawa, Gomun, Bambuks, and Jole, who once aligned themselves with the Jenjo, now seek identification as Bikwin or Bakula.⁶⁹ This transformation has given rise to an intense cultural

⁶⁵ Dr. Muhammad Bello, 64 Years, Civil Servant, Jalingo, 19th August, 2022

⁶⁶ Rev. Obidah Kafiyaro, 52 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 12th September, 2022

⁶⁷ Bashir, A. (2022). "The Development of Muri: Contemporary Challenges and Prospects", Paper presented at the Muri Summit organised by Muri Progressive Forum on 27-29 December, 2022 at the Jolly Nyame Stadium, Jalingo

⁶⁸ Mr. Bulus Gago D., 67 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Lau, interviewed in Jalingo, 21st August, 2022

⁶⁹ Amb. Philemon Azara Saredau, 68 Years, Community Leader, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 17th August, 2022

revivalism, disrupting the existing love and harmony among the various ethnic groups and fostering an unfortunate atmosphere of hatred and animosity.⁷⁰

3. Religious Sentimentalism

The catalyst for ethno-religious conflict often lies in religious sentiment, which can be a potent motivator. Individuals with strong religious beliefs may be susceptible to manipulation by extremist leaders or groups, leading to the promotion of intolerance and violence against those with different faiths. This fervor can create a sense of righteousness, justifying hostility towards those who do not share similar beliefs. Religious sentiment, when exploited, becomes a driving force for a cycle of conflict and retaliation. This lack of respect for diverse beliefs poses a significant threat to peaceful coexistence among various ethno-religious groups in the Northern Senatorial Zone of Taraba State.⁷¹

Bulus further contends that religious denominational differences contribute to division. Before the creation of Taraba State, major Christian denominations were Catholic and Protestant, while others emerged later. These denominational differences pose a threat to the harmonious coexistence of ethno-religious groups in the Zone, sometimes taking on tribal colorations and breeding disunity.⁷² The fear of marginalization by one religious' group against another has been actively perpetuated since 1991, with politicians sentimentalizing religious leaders to achieve political authority and divide people.⁷³

4. Quest for Political Positions

The competition for political power is a prominent cause of ethno-religious conflicts, as different ethnic and religious groups vie for political influence. However, this competition can escalate into violence and manipulation, with politicians exploiting ethnic and religious divisions for personal gain. The use of religion and ethnic sentiments by political stakeholders, along with the zeal for self-determination by ethnic groups, poses a significant threat to

⁷⁰ Alhaji Rabi'u Ismaila Agwaru, 53 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 31st July, 2022, 991-2020), Beyero University Kano, (Ph.D. Islamic Studies), 2021, Dr. Muhammad Bello, 64 Years, Civil Servant, Jalingo, 19th August 2022 and Alhaji Mohammed Hassan Babaji, 74 years, Farmer, Zing, Zing LGA, 16th November, 2022

⁷¹ Mr. Bulus Gago D., 67 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Lau, interviewed in Jalingo, 21st August, 2022, Mr. McDonald D. Dogoson, 50 Years, Public Servant, Zing, interviewed in Jalingo, 19th August, 2022, Dr. Akawu Bitrus Kirim, 63 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 1st August, 2022 and Mr. Sunday I. Hamman, 55 Years, Civil Servant, Zing, interviewed in Jalingo, 19th August, 2022.

⁷² Mr. Bulus Gago D., 67 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Lau, interviewed in Jalingo, 21st August, 2022

⁷³ Alhaji Musa N. T. Dasso. 70 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Yorro, interviewed in Jalingo, 22nd, August, 2022 and Alhaji Hussaini Umar Mafindi, 66 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Jalingo, 26th August, 2022

peaceful coexistence. Politicians contribute to impoverishing opponents and creating hatred among people to attain their political ambitions. This struggle for leadership positions is a major factor responsible for internal and external conflicts among ethnic groups in the Zone, contributing to the current narrative of the region.⁷⁴

5. Denied Economic Opportunities

Economic disparities and limited access to resources can lead to grievances among different ethnic and religious groups, fostering frustration and resentment. These negative emotions can manifest in ethno-religious conflicts as marginalized communities may resort to violence to rectify perceived economic injustices. Common conflicts among ethnic groups, such as farmers and herders, farm-land disputes, and boundary disputes, often stem from denied economic opportunities.⁷⁵

Baba and Umar encapsulate the post-creation conflicts among ethno-religious groups, attributing them to rivalry among the political class, economic inequalities, lack of mutual respect, religious intolerance, fake news, and rumor-mongering, among other factors.⁷⁶ Ethno-religious conflicts in the Northern Senatorial Zone of Taraba State are complex and multifaceted, driven by ignorance, ethnic superiority, religious sentimentalism, external influence, political ambitions, and economic disparities. Addressing these root causes requires comprehensive solutions, including inter-ethnic and inter-religious dialogue, peacebuilding initiatives, and reconciliation efforts among affected communities. Only through such holistic approaches can lasting peace be fostered in the region.⁷⁷

The factors discussed above align closely with the findings of Abubakar, which shed light on the ethno-religious nature of the crises in Taraba State, attributed to the ethnic or religious affiliations of the involved actors. These crises are multifaceted, stemming from religious ignorance, misconceptions, intolerance, mutual suspicion, disputes over land and citizenship, influence of ruling elites, and socio-economic inequalities, among other contributors.⁷⁸ This revelation resonates with the conclusions drawn by Badmasi, who outlines factors responsible

⁷⁴ Alhaji Rabi'u Ismaila Agwaru, 53 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 31st July, 2022,

⁷⁵ Mr. George Modan, 57 Years, Security Officer, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 29th August, 2022

⁷⁶ Dr. Baba Nduna Gurama, 62 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 10th August, 2022 and Alhaji Umaru Yero Boduga, 63 Years, Businessman, Zing, interviewed in Jalingo, 11th August, 2022

⁷⁷ Alhaji Aminu Abdullahi, 52 Years, Civil Servant, Jalingo, 22nd October, 2022 and Prof. Abdullahi Saleh Bashir, 50 Years, Civil Servant, Jalingo, interviewed in Yola, 20th September, 2022.

⁷⁸ Abubakar, Muhammad, "Ethno-Religious Crises in Taraba State: Causes, Effects and Solutions from Islamic Perspective", Bayero University, Kano, (M.A. Islamic Studies), 2017

for ethno-religious conflicts and insecurity in Taraba State, including ethnicity and ethnic identity, religious intolerance, fear of political or religious domination, government policies, ignorance, poverty, unemployment, and the production of inflammatory press reports.⁷⁹

Moreover, the similarities in these factors suggest a broader pattern influencing ethno-religious conflicts across various regions in Taraba State. For instance, Abubakar's study specifically explores the primary contributors to ongoing ethnic conflicts on the Mambilla Plateau, involving the Mambilla tribe and the Kambu, Panso, Kaka, and Fulbe communities. The Mambilla tribe's pursuit of political and economic dominance contrasts with the latter group's quest for legitimacy against the "Foreigner" label imposed by the former. Violations of established land tenure rules, particularly between grazers and farmers, further exacerbate tensions. The government's failure to penalize those accountable for the conflicts stands out as a significant contributing factor.⁸⁰

In addition, the study uncovers that the State Government's commission of inquiry, initiated after the 2002 report, failed to materialize due to the absence of a white paper. The Fulbe's attempt to contest the chairman's office stirred mixed reactions in the Local Government, perceived as a threat by the Mambilla, ultimately leading to the 2002 crisis.⁸¹ These intricate dynamics and the recurrence of similar factors underscore the need for comprehensive and specific approaches to address the root causes of ethno-religious conflicts and promote lasting peace across Taraba State.

The Roles of Key Stakeholders in Promoting Peace among Ethnic Groups in Taraba North Senatorial Zone, Taraba State

The pursuit of peace and harmony among diverse ethnic groups in Taraba North Senatorial Zone, Taraba State, is a noble and essential endeavor. In a zone characterized by a rich tapestry of cultures, traditions, and histories, the need for coexistence and cooperation is paramount. This section of the paper explores the roles of key stakeholders in promoting peace and mitigating inter-ethnic conflicts in this area. The stakeholders include traditional institutions, the political class and institutions, organs of government, non-governmental

⁷⁹ Muhammad, Badamasi Aliyu "Ethno-Religious Conflicts and Insecurity in Taraba State, Nigeria: Islamic Perspective a Panacea", University of Bakht Al-Ruda, (Ph.D. Islamic Studies), 2017

⁸⁰ Abubakar, Ahmed Adi, "Ethnic Identity and Political Crises on the Mambilla Plateau, Taraba State, 1979 – 2002", University of Maiduguri, (M. A. Political History), 2015

⁸¹ Abubakar, Ahmed Adi, "Ethnic Identity and Political Crises on the Mambilla Plateau..."

organizations (NGOs), and religious institutions. Their collective efforts are pivotal in fostering lasting peace and unity.

1. Religious Institutions

Religious leaders and institutions hold significant moral authority in Taraba State. Their roles in peace promotion are rooted in the promotion of ethical values and interfaith dialogue. Religious leaders use their moral authority to encourage values like forgiveness, compassion, and tolerance. By emphasizing the common humanity shared by all ethnic groups, they foster a sense of unity and harmony. Abenitus observes that; religious institutions have tried to some degree but some of the religious leaders are always tools in the hands of the politicians because of material gain. Thus, there is a need for enormous effort for the religious leaders to contribute to the attainment of peaceful co-existence in the Zone.⁸²

In line with the position of Abenitus, Bulus affirmed that; religious bodies no longer put in practice what they preach during Sunday and Jumma'at sermons as observed before. They have itching palms and compromise on way various issues affect the general well-being of society.⁸³ In this regard, Shehu and Abdullahi advocate for religious bodies to educate their members and practically also, demonstrate respect to other people's religious views and ensure that their members, particularly Muslims and Christians live in and preach peace and love to all humanity. They should emphasize instilling the fear of Allah amongst their followers.⁸⁴

According to Hussaini and Ismaila, religious bodies must be tamed to ensure that they preach the slogan of Peace and tranquility. They should avoid any frivolous utterances that will further aggregate tensions and unhealthy division of people along their sectarian interests. Interfaith dialogue is another powerful tool in the arsenal of religious institutions. They facilitate dialogue and cooperation among different religious communities, often transcending ethnic boundaries. This not only promotes understanding but also strengthens social bonds.⁸⁵ In corroboration to this, Akawu and Abenitus argue that; religious leaders should stick to their calling, which is to preach peace and love with the aim to make heaven,

⁸² Mr. Abenitus Isaac Mathew, 58 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 19th August, 2022

⁸³ Mr. Bulus Gago D., 67 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Lau, interviewed in Jalingo, 21st August, 2022

⁸⁴ Alhaji Audu Shehu Lau, 59 Years, Farmer, Lau, interviewed in Jalingo, 14th August 2022 and Prof. Abdullahi Saleh Bashir, 50 Years, Civil Servant, Jalingo, interviewed in Yola, 20th September, 2022

⁸⁵ Alhaji Hussaini Umar Mafindi, 66 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Jalingo, 26th August, 2022 and Alhaji Ismaila M. Damburam, 74 Years, Rtd. Airliner, Jalingo, 1st October, 2022

rather than promoting crisis between different faiths or siding with politicians because of worldly things. The grave of the problems is centered on religious leaders who have let loose the tenets of their faiths because followers tend to listen to religious leaders more than anyone, so they are to help bring peaceful coexistence between each other.⁸⁶

Religious leaders should directly intervene in conflicts, leveraging their influence to mediate disputes and promote reconciliation. Their involvement can be a catalyst for peace and conflict resolution.

2. Traditional Institutions

Traditional leaders hold a unique position of influence in the Taraba North Senatorial Zone. They serve as the custodians of indigenous knowledge, customs, and values. Their roles in peace promotion are multifaceted. First and foremost, they are adept conflict mediators. Through their deep understanding of local customs, traditions, and historical contexts, traditional leaders can mediate disputes between different ethnic groups. They provide a neutral platform where parties can come together to seek solutions and reconcile their differences. They should advocate for peaceful co-existence among their subjects by way of meeting with District, Village and Ward Heads as well as with the opinion leaders within their respective domains. They should not hesitate to report to concern authorities or government agencies on anything that threatens peace.⁸⁷ The traditional rulers should hold fast to their roles as fathers and leaders. They should not allow themselves to be used by anybody in society no matter how highly placed the person is.⁸⁸

Furthermore, traditional institutions play a vital role in preserving and promoting cultural heritage. By emphasizing the importance of cultural diversity and shared values, they foster a sense of identity that transcends ethnic boundaries. This, in turn, promotes a sense of belonging and unity among the various ethnic groups. But the problem now, as observed by Uzajja, is associated with the fact that the economic resources that used to be under their control in the past have now been taken away by political institutions. This makes it necessary for most of them to compromise their position and subscribe to actions and decisions that are against their will and the will of their people, thereby resulting in communal disharmony. In

⁸⁶ Dr. Akawu Bitrus Kirim, 63 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 1st August, 2022 and Mr. Abenitus Isaac Mathew, 58 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 19th August, 2022

⁸⁷ Engr. Muhammad Yusuf Bose, 53 years, Civil Servant, Ardo-Kola, interviewed in Jalingo, 18th September, 2022 and Malam Muhammad Nyavo, 58 Years, Civil Servant, Gada, Yoro, 24th September, 2022

⁸⁸ Mr. Abenitus Isaac Mathew, 58 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 19th August, 2022

short, some of them are dancing to the tune of the politicians. Moreover, the traditional entitlements have been taken over by the government under the watch of politicians. The procedures for the appointment of traditional rulers have been violated now.⁸⁹

The traditional leaders are instrumental in conflict prevention. By addressing issues related to land disputes, resource allocation, and historical grievances, they work proactively to prevent conflicts from escalating. Their authority and close ties to the community make them effective agents in preventing tension and violence. Nevertheless, Bulus observed that traditional rulers are no longer the kind of traditional rulers of the past. Confiscation of subjects' land and property, in some instances, is the order of the day.⁹⁰ Rabiū also succumbed to the opinion that most of the traditional rulers at present are weak and subservient to politicians who are, in most cases, partisan and self-centered.⁹¹

Hussaini and Ismaila assert that the traditional rulers are technically silenced by excluding them in the act of governance except in situations of unmanageable crises. Indeed, they are handicapped and helpless. This necessitates the need for the constitution of Nigeria to provide the roles for traditional rulers in supplementing the efforts of the government in the maintenance of law and order. They should be legally entrenched in the full act of governance under strict supervision and guidance of relevant government agencies.⁹²

Despite these challenges, traditional institutions remain crucial in preserving and promoting cultural heritage, emphasizing cultural diversity, and fostering a sense of identity that transcends ethnic boundaries. Similarly, traditional leaders contribute to conflict prevention by proactively addressing issues related to land disputes, resource allocation, and historical grievances, working to prevent conflicts from escalating.⁹³

The effectiveness of traditional rulers, even so, is impeded by their perceived weakness and subservience to partisan and self-centered politicians. They are excluded from governance activities, making them helpless in managing crises. To enhance their effectiveness, there is a need for legal entrenchment in the governance structure, with appointments based on historical antecedents and merit.⁹⁴

⁸⁹ Rev. Dauda Uzajja Adamu, 54 Years, Civil Servant, Karim Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 24th December, 2022.

⁹⁰ Mr. Bulus Gago D., 67 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Lau, interviewed in Jalingo, 21st August, 2022

⁹¹ Alhaji Rabiū Ismaila Agwaru, 53 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 31st July, 2022,

⁹² Alhaji Hussaini Umar Mafindi, 66 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Jalingo, 26th August, 2022 and Alhaji Ismaila M. Damburam, 74 Years, Rtd. Airliner, Jalingo, 1st October, 2022

⁹³ Alhaji Musa N. T. Dasso. 70 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Yorro, interviewed in Jalingo, 22nd, August, 2022

⁹⁴ Alhaji Hassan Ishiyaku, 70 Years, Community Leader, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 17th August, 2022

The collaboration of religious and traditional institutions with other key stakeholders is essential to create a holistic approach to peacebuilding. This comprehensive strategy should address the multifarious challenges posed by political manipulation, economic changes, and the evolving roles of traditional leaders. It is through such concerted efforts can lasting peace be established in the Taraba North Senatorial Zone

3. Political Class and Institutions

Political leaders and institutions wield significant power in shaping the social and political landscape of Taraba State. Their roles in peace promotion are pivotal to maintaining stability and inclusiveness to all. First, they can formulate policies and legislation that address the specific needs and concerns of various ethnic groups. By ensuring that resources are distributed fairly, and opportunities are accessible to all, political leaders can mitigate the root causes of conflict. The politicians must be trustworthy politically and accountable to their people. They must provide dividends of democracy to their people and above all, they must be honest and God-fearing.⁹⁵ Uzajja opined that the actions of the politicians cause serious and expensive destruction to what they have labored and built. In fact, more is expected of politicians in the Northern Senatorial Zone of Taraba state in building the state and fostering peaceful co-existence devoid of religious and tribal/ethnic differences.⁹⁶

Inclusiveness and representation are essential components of peace promotion. Advocating for diversity in governance and decision-making bodies, political leaders ensure that different ethnic groups have a voice in the processes that affect their lives. This fosters a sense of ownership and participation in the broader society. Politics should be insulated and blocked from sentiments, tendencies of divide and rule through appropriate and stringent laws that will effectively sanitize the entire system and its practice towards public harmony.⁹⁷

The political leaders can play a significant role in discouraging ethnocentrism, hate speech, and the politicization of ethnic differences. By using their platforms to encourage a sense of national identity that transcends ethnic boundaries, they contribute to social cohesion and unity. They should also avoid ethnicity dominance in appointments, respecting the representation of religions in appointments even if it means political positions.⁹⁸ Abenitus

⁹⁵ Alhaji Audu Shehu Lau, 59 Years, Farmer, Lau, interviewed in Jalingo, 14th August 2022 and Prof. Abdullahi Saleh Bashir, 50 Years, Civil Servant, Jalingo, interviewed in Yola, 20th September 2022

⁹⁶ Rev. Dauda Uzajja Adamu, 54 Years, Civil Servant, Karim Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 24th December, 2022.

⁹⁷ Alhaji Hussaini Umar Mafindi, 66 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Jalingo, 26th August, 2022

⁹⁸ Alhaji Mohammed Hassan Babaji, 74 years, Farmer, Zing, Zing LGA, 16th November, 2022

observed that the politician has succeeded in dividing people on the ground of either tribal or religious sentiment to be relevant. They should restrict themselves to what they can do for the masses to gain their sympathy and foster peaceful co-existence among the people of the Zone.⁹⁹

This, in turn, will help in the restoration of peaceful coexistence and harmony not only among ethnic groups in the Northern Senatorial Zone of Taraba state but the entire State and Nigeria in general.

4. Organs of Government

Government agencies, including law enforcement and the judiciary, are the guardians of the rule of law in Taraba State. Their roles in peace promotion are essential for maintaining order and justice. They ensure that individuals are protected and that peace and order are maintained. They are responsible for upholding the rule of law and ensuring that individuals are protected. Administrators must adhere to an ethical approach in carrying out their assigned responsibilities. In addition, they must be sincere, honest, fair, and just to all manner of people they are dealing with. Above all, they should shun corruption in all its ramifications.¹⁰⁰

Resource allocation is another critical aspect of government responsibility. Government agencies can oversee the equitable allocation of resources and infrastructure development in areas inhabited by different ethnic groups. It is imperative to note that, addressing disparities and inequalities mitigates potential sources of conflict. Nevertheless, Bulus contends that government agencies no longer consider files in appointments and promotions to sensitive offices nowadays. The administrations in such agencies look at people's faces or names on the file that match with ethnic or religious inclinations. They are highly corrupt and more inclined to amass worldly materials than ensure equitable allocation of resources and infrastructural development in the Zone.¹⁰¹ In this regard, Abenitus suggests that the government should consider merit in whatever they do or in terms of employment, rather than placing a premium on only those who have someone to the detriment of the children of the masses. Even if they have all the required requirements.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Mr. Abenitus Isaac Mathew, 58 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 19th August, 2022

¹⁰⁰ Alhaji Audu Shehu Lau, 59 Years, Farmer, Lau, interviewed in Jalingo, 14th August, 2022

¹⁰¹ Mr. Bulus Gago D., 67 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Lau, interviewed in Jalingo, 21st August, 2022

¹⁰² Mr. Abenitus Isaac Mathew, 58 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 19th August, 2022

Furthermore, government agencies can establish and support mechanisms for dispute resolution and reconciliation. These mechanisms provide avenues for resolving inter-ethnic conflicts through legal means, further contributing to peace and social harmony. Government officials should operate purely within the contest of the law and should listen to the community request without fear or favor. This includes considering essential development like motorable roads, water, education, especially primary level, improved commercial activities, respecting traditional institutions and guiding them without unnecessary interference, and the improvement of the health sector.¹⁰³

5. Security Agencies

Security plays a crucial role in promoting peaceful coexistence among ethnic groups by ensuring a safe environment, preventing conflicts, and fostering trust through the fair enforcement of laws and protection of individual rights. The security agencies in Taraba State are trying their best but need support physically and intellectually.¹⁰⁴ According to George, the security agents work tirelessly and do not relent in their effort to maintain law and order, protection of lives and properties, apprehension, and prosecution of offenders in the Zone. They also work in synergy with religious leaders, traditional rulers, and administrations to ensure peaceful coexistence among the ethnic groups in the Northern Senatorial Zone, Taraba State.¹⁰⁵

Nonetheless, in some situations, they are normally accused of taking sides and no longer remain neutral and have not done well as expected in the Zone. There is a need for the security agents to be non-partisan for effective and efficient enforcement of law and order in the area.¹⁰⁶ Kawu seems to share the same view by accusing some of the security agents of operating under the directive of the politicians, so people are left to the mercy of God.¹⁰⁷ According to Sunday “they compromise issues and they collude,” a position McDonald

¹⁰³ Alhaji Hassan Ishiyaku, 70 Years, Community Leader, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 17th August, 2022

¹⁰⁴ Rev. Danladi Yakubu Balutu, PhD., 69 Years, Politician, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 22nd September, 2022

¹⁰⁵ Mr. George Modan, 57 Years, Security Officer, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 29th August, 2022

¹⁰⁶ Mr. Henry Gideon Bakari, 60 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 15th August, 2022 and Dr. Muhammad Bello, 64 Years, Civil Servant, Jalingo, 19th August, 2022

¹⁰⁷ Dr. Akawu Bitrus Kirim, 63 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 1st August, 2022

assented to suggesting the extent to which some of the security compromised Oath of allegiance/duty.¹⁰⁸

In a similar disposition, Hassan and Musa lament that security agents are being dictated in most affairs by the ruling political administrations because in most cases, they are in the service of the government. This greatly affects their effectiveness and efficiency in terms of restoring peace and order among warring ethnic groups.¹⁰⁹

Kafiyaro, on the other hand, suggests that the security outfits in the zone need to be alert and vibrant to maintain peace in society.¹¹⁰ In order to attain maximum effectiveness in the activities of the security agents, Philemon advises that there is a need for overhauling and improvement in their mode of operation.¹¹¹ Abenitus and Hussein added that the security agents should ensure proper securing of the life of the citizenry. They should desist from being cajoled to take sides in their duty.¹¹²

6. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are seasoned in conflict resolution and peace building, playing pivotal roles as stakeholders in peace promotion. They can act as neutral mediators, facilitating dialogues and negotiations between ethnic groups, thus providing a safe space for parties to express concerns and collaborate on mutually acceptable solutions.¹¹³ Despite the apparent limitations in the activities of NGOs in promoting peaceful coexistence among ethnic groups, their initiatives often center on dialogue, education, and community engagement, fostering understanding and cooperation.¹¹⁴

These NGOs contribute significantly by providing vital humanitarian assistance during conflicts, addressing immediate needs such as food, shelter, and medical support. Such assistance not only alleviates suffering but also builds goodwill among communities, fostering a spirit of cooperation and solidarity. NGOs may further promote peaceful coexistence

¹⁰⁸ Mr. Sunday I. Hamman, 55 Years, Civil Servant, Zing, interviewed in Jalingo, 19th August, 2022 and Mr. McDonald D. Dogoson, 50 Years, Public Servant, Zing, interviewed in Jalingo, 19th August, 2022

¹⁰⁹ Alhaji Hassan Ishiyaku, 70 Years, Community Leader, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 17th August, 2022 and Alhaji Musa N. T. Dasso, 70 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Yorro, interviewed in Jalingo, 22nd, August, 2022

¹¹⁰ Rev. Obidah Kafiyaro, 52 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 12th September, 2022

¹¹¹ Amb. Philemon Azara Saredau, 68 Years, Community Leader, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 17th August, 2022

¹¹² Mr. Abenitus Isaac Mathew, 58 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 19th August, 2022 and Alhaji Hussaini Umar Mafindi, 66 Years, Rtd. Civil Servant, Jalingo, 26th August, 2022

¹¹³ Alhaji Rabi'u Ismaila Agwaru, 53 Years, Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 31st July, 2022

¹¹⁴ Alhaji Aminu Abdullahi, 52 Years, Civil Servant, Jalingo, 22nd October, 2022

through initiatives focusing on intercultural communication, conflict resolution workshops, and projects addressing shared challenges.¹¹⁵ In addition, they work towards empowering marginalized communities, advocating for inclusiveness and equality to reduce tensions and build sustainable peace. The capacity-building efforts of NGOs and international bodies extend to local communities, providing training, resources, and support to address root causes of conflict like poverty, lack of education, and limited access to healthcare.¹¹⁶

The roles of NGOs in promoting peace among ethnic groups in Taraba North Senatorial Zone align with broader recommendations and strategies suggested by local studies, emphasizing the interconnected efforts required from various stakeholders for lasting peace and conflict resolution in the region.

These findings are consistent with the suggestions made by Badamasi, emphasizing the integration of Qur'anic teachings and practices of Prophet Muhammad into sermons by Muslim scholars and Imams. The importance of avoiding inflammatory statements by religious leaders and public officials is stressed, with an emphasis on education about different religions through various platforms.¹¹⁷

Abubakar emphasizes the shared responsibility for upholding principles that promote peaceful conflict prevention in Taraba State. Diverse stakeholders, such as governing elites, young people, religious and traditional leaders, government entities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community groups, and security forces, are acknowledged for their distinct roles in preserving peace. He also suggests recommendations that encompass reflecting on compassionate teachings, fostering reconciliation across all levels, implementing youth reorientation programs, establishing a peace and conflict resolution committee through the State Assembly, improving security measures, ensuring responsible media reporting, engaging communities, integrating peace studies into education, and economically and educationally empowering youths to diminish susceptibility to violence.¹¹⁸

Contemporary Challenges Facing Ethnic Groups in Northern Senatorial Zone, Taraba State

¹¹⁵ Engr. Muhammad Yusuf Bose, 53 years, Civil Servant, Ardo-Kola, interviewed in Jalingo, 18th September, 2022.

¹¹⁶ Amb. Philemon Azara Saredau, 68 Years, Community Leader, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 17th August, 2022.

¹¹⁷ Muhammad, Badamasi Aliyu "Ethno-Religious Conflicts and Insecurity in Taraba State, Nigeria: Islamic Perspective a Panacea", University of Bakht Al-Ruda, (Ph.D. Islamic Studies), 2017.

¹¹⁸ Abubakar, Muhammad, "Ethno-Religious Crises in Taraba State: Causes, Effects and Solutions from Islamic Perspective", Bayero University, Kano, (M.A. Islamic Studies), 2017.

The Taraba State, particularly in Muri, is characterized by abundant natural and human resources, the realization of its potential hinges on the implementation of effective policies and leadership initiatives. The presence of expansive arable land, highly productive flood plains, and unexplored mineral deposits offers transformation possibilities, awaiting the right guidance and actions.¹¹⁹ Despite these promising opportunities, the area grapples with contemporary challenges delineated by Abbas.

1. **Disunity among Traditional and Religious Leaders:** The lack of collaboration between traditional and religious leaders, coupled with animosity and mutual dislike, poses a significant obstacle to sustainable development.
2. **Youth-Related Issues:** The prevalence of drug abuse and violent criminality among the youth, especially in the state capital, requires attention to address the rising tide of criminal behavior and incompetence among young individuals.
3. **Communal Conflicts:** Draconian and unenforceable resource management laws deliberately heighten communal conflicts, deviating from the historically peaceful coexistence and progress in the region.
4. **Politicization of Ethnicity and Religion:** The introduction of divisive politics based on ethnicity and religion contradicts the harmonious relationships among the people of Muri, as envisioned by the emirate's founders.
5. **Undermining Traditional Institutions:** The intentional weakening of traditional institutions disrupts their role as unifying forces in the state particularly in Muri.
6. **Educational Challenges:** Poor educational infrastructure and inadequate resources, including underfunded and over-subscribed universities, colleges, and schools, hinder human development.
7. **Inappropriate Natural Resource Policies:** Deficient government policies, especially in natural resource development, contribute to communal crises in the area.
8. **Marginalization of Muri People:** Systematic marginalization and alienation of Muri people in various aspects of governance, coupled with a divide-and-rule political

¹¹⁹ Bashir, Abbas "The Development of Muri: Contemporary Challenges and Prospects", Paper presented at the Muri Summit organised by Muri Progressive Forum on 27-29 December, at the Jolly Nyame Stadium, Jalingo, 2022.

strategy, resulting in a poor governance system and the absence of effective leadership, impeding the region's development.¹²⁰

The challenges are interconnected with contemporary issues facing ethnic groups in the Zone. Ali's findings resonate with the issues raised by Abbas, encompassing disunity, lack of control over State political power, selfishness, resentment, and moral degeneration. Abbas' contemporary challenges, such as ethnic identity, indigene and minority issues, and unfavorable government policies, align with Ali's identified challenges.¹²¹

Moreover, the research conducted by Abubakar sheds light on the daring challenges motivating people to incite and promote crises in Taraba State. These challenges include impiety, settler/indigene dichotomy, tribal feuds, land disputes, religious ignorance and intolerance, manipulation of religion by politicians, and the frailty of the judiciary to prosecute offenders. Abubakar's findings further strengthen the link between the earlier-discussed challenges and the contemporary issues faced by ethnic groups in the Zone.¹²²

In essence, these studies collectively highlight a complex web of challenges that span historical, socio-political, and religious dimensions. The issues identified by Ali, Abbas, and Abubakar converge to underscore the urgent need for comprehensive and coordinated efforts to address the many-sided challenges facing ethnic groups in the Zone, emphasizing the interconnected nature of these challenges and the necessity for integrated solutions.

CONCLUSION

The paper underscores the diverse cultural identities of Taraba State, characterized by a multitude of ethnic groups with distinct histories, cultures, and religious affiliations. Traditional religions, Islam and Christianity coexist harmoniously across all sixteen Local Government Areas, deeply embedded within familial identities. Notwithstanding, the formation of Taraba State has disrupted this peaceful coexistence, leading to ethno-religious conflicts that pose significant challenges within the state and Nigeria as a whole. The study, focusing on inter-group relations and peace issues within the Northern Senatorial Zone, utilized various data collection methods including structured interviews, participatory

¹²⁰ Bashir, Abbas "The Development of Muri: Contemporary Challenges and Prospects...

¹²¹ Ali, Bello, "A Study on Challenges Facing Muslims in Taraba State: Trends, Factors and Solutions (1991-2020), Bayero University Kano, (Ph.D. Islamic Studies), 2021.

¹²² Abubakar, Muhammad, "Ethno-Religious Crises in Taraba State: Causes, Effects and Solutions from Islamic Perspective", Bayero University, Kano, (M.A. Islamic Studies), 2017.

observations, and documentary analyses. Before the formation of Taraba State, the area flourish on mutual respect and understanding among its diverse communities.

However, subsequent factors such as ethnic superiority, religious tensions, political power struggles, and economic disparities have fueled conflicts, fundamentally altering the zone's peaceful dynamics. Solving the underlying causes of these conflicts requires collaboration among religious, traditional, political, governmental, and non-governmental entities. The contemporary challenges identified include disunity, power struggles, ethnic identity issues, and unfavorable government policies, underlining the complexity of issues faced by ethnic groups in the zone. Achieving lasting peace necessitates collective efforts from all stakeholders, envisioning a future marked by peaceful coexistence and shared prosperity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Following a comprehensive study on inter-group relations and peaceful coexistence within Taraba State's Northern Senatorial Zone, the following recommendations emerge to address the identified challenges and promote lasting harmony.

1. Initiate programs aimed at boosting awareness and education, fostering tolerance, cultural understanding, and appreciation of diversity in schools and communities.
2. Strengthen community-based conflict resolution by engaging traditional leaders and local institutions in mediating disputes.
3. Establish platforms for dialogue where representatives from various ethnic and religious backgrounds can address shared concerns and seek collaborative solutions.
4. Advocate for government policies that promote inclusiveness and address ethnic and religious disparities.
5. Encourage interfaith dialogue to foster mutual understanding and cooperation among religious communities.
6. Urge religious leaders to engage in initiatives highlighting shared values, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence.
7. Empower local communities through civic engagement programs, promoting active involvement in decision-making processes.
8. Support initiatives that enhance economic empowerment, particularly among marginalized groups, to mitigate feelings of resentment and inequality.

9. Enhance security measures to safeguard the well-being of all citizens, irrespective of their ethnic or religious affiliations.
10. Collaborate with NGOs and international organizations to implement conflict resolution initiatives and provide humanitarian aid.
11. Conduct media awareness campaigns to encourage responsible reporting and reduce the dissemination of divisive information that fuels conflicts.

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- Alhaji Yusuf Bako Kunini, (74 Years), Retired Civil Servant, Kunini, Lau, Interviewed in Jalingo, 1st September, 2022.
- Alhaji Aminu Abdullahi, (52 Years), Civil Servant, Jalingo, 22nd October, 2022.
- Alhaji Audu Shehu Lau, (59 Years), Farmer, Lau, interviewed in Jalingo, 14th August 2022.
- Alhaji Hassan Ishiyaku, (70 Years), Community Leader, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 17th August, 2022.
- Alhaji Hussaini Umar Mafindi, (66 Years), Retired. Civil Servant, Jalingo, 26th August, 2022.
- Alhaji Ismaila M. Damburam, (74 Years), Retired Airliner, Jalingo, 1st October 2022.
- Alhaji Mohammed Hassan Babaji, (74 years), Farmer, Zing, Zing LGA, 16th November, 2022
- Alhaji Musa N. T. Dasso. (70 Years), Retired Civil Servant, Yorro, interviewed in Jalingo, 22nd, August, 2022.
- Alhaji Rabiou Ismaila Agwaru, (53 Years), Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 31st July 2022.

Alhaji Umaru Yero Boduga, (63 Years), Businessman, Zing, interviewed in Jalingo, 11th August, 2022.

Alhaji Usman Muhammad, (65 Years), Farmer, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 16th August, 2022.

Alhaji Yusuf Bako Kunini, (74 Years), Rtd. Civil Servant, Kunini, Lau, Interviewed in Jalingo, 1st September, 2022.

Amb. Philemon Azara Saredau, (68 Years), Community Leader, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 17th August, 2022.

Barrister Jamilu Muhammad Auwal, (41 Years), Legal Practitioner, Jalingo, Jalinog LGA, 24th December, 2022.

Dr. Akawu Bitrus Kirim, (63 Years), Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 1st August, 2022.

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Dr. Fidelis Hamman Bonjoru, (63 Years), Civil Servant, Zing, 10th October, 2022.

Dr. Muhammad Bello, (64 Years), Civil Servant, Jalingo, 19th August, 2022.

Engr. Muhammad Yusuf Bose, (53 years), Civil Servant, Ardo-Kola, interviewed in Jalingo, 18th September, 2022.

Malam Muhammad Nyavo, (58 Years), Civil Servant, Gada, Yoro, 24th September 2022.

Mr. Abenitus Isaac Mathew, (58 Years), Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 19th August, 2022.

Mr. Bulus Gago D., (67 Years), Retired Civil Servant, Lau, interviewed in Jalingo, 21st August, 2022.

Mr. George Modan, (57 Years), Security Officer, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 29th August 2022.

Mr. Henry Gideon Bakari, (60 Years), Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 15th August, 2022.

Mr. McDonald D. Dogoson, (50 Years), Public Servant, Zing, interviewed in Jalingo, 19th August, 2022.

Mr. Sunday I. Hamman, (55 Years), Civil Servant, Zing, interviewed in Jalingo, 19th August, 2022.

Prof. Abdullahi Saleh Bashir, (50 Years), Civil Servant, Jalingo, interviewed in Yola, 20th September, 2022.

Rev. Danladi Yakubu Balutu, PhD., (69 Years), Politician, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Jalingo, 22nd September 2022.

Rev. Dauda Uzajja Adamu, (54 Years), Civil Servant, Karim Lamido interviewed in Zing, 24th November, 2022.

Rev. Dr. Wisdom Danwaja Henry, PhD., (60 Years), Civil Servant, Lau, interviewed in Zing, 7th September 2022.

Rev. Obidah Kafiyaro, (52 Years), Civil Servant, Karim-Lamido, interviewed in Zing, 12th September 2022.