



## Impact of Ethno Religious Crisis on Library and Information Science Undergraduate Students of the University of Jos, Nigeria

LILY OLUEBUBE EZEALA, SHITTU LUKMAN OLAYINKA  
University of Jos, Nigeria

**Abstract.** This study examined the impact of crisis on Library and Information Science undergraduate students in University of Jos, Nigeria. Crisis has become prevalent in many parts of the country and this is becoming wanton across Nigeria, however this study was limited to Jos North LGA because this area has been a flash point as regards issue of crisis. The objectives of the study includes; to examine the extent to which ethno religious affects students socialization process in the University of Jos, and to suggest ways of reducing the effects of ethno religious crisis on students among others. 3 research questions were formulated to guide the study inline with the objectives of teh study. A thorough literature review was carried out on ethno-religious crisis in various part of Nigeria. The study adopted a cross sectional survey research design and the population consisted Library and Information science undergraduate students in the University of Jos which were 376 for the academic session 2018/2019 and a sample size of 100 was randomly selected using stratified random sampling to ensure that each level provide equal ratio to the sample size. The analysis revealed that, ethno religious crisis affects students in so many ways, it affects their academic achievement, it also affects their socialization process as well as their pattern of settlement among many other effects. Another key factor causing ethno religious crisis is religion and ethnicity. The study made certain recommendations that, tolerance should be encouraged, inter faith competition should be

established, religious institutions should also promote interfaith relationship among others.

**Keywords:** Ethno Religious Crisis, Library and Information Science

### 1. Introduction

Plateau is the twelfth largest State in Nigeria, and is located approximately in the centre of the country. It has a population of about 3.5 million people. Plateau State is subdivided into seventeen local government areas. The state has over forty ethno-linguistic groups. Some of the indigenous tribes in the state are the Berom, Afizere, Amo, Anaguta, Aten, Bogghom, Buji, Chip, Fier, Gashish, Goemai, Irigwe, Jarawa, Jukun, Kofyar (comprising Doemak, Kwalla, and Mernyang), Montol, Mushere, Mupun, Mwaghavul, Ngas, Piapung, Pyem, Ron-Kulere, Bache, Talet, Tarok, and Youm. These ethnic groups are predominantly farmers and have similar cultural and traditional ways of life. People from other parts of the country have come to settle in Plateau State; these include the Hausa, Fulani/Kanuri, Igbo, Yoruba, Ibibio, Annang, Efik, Ijaw, and Bini. Each ethnic group has its own distinct language, but as with the rest of the country, English is the official language in Plateau State. Hausa is also a common universal medium of communication and commerce as is the case in most parts of the North and Middle Belt of Nigeria. Plateau State is celebrated as "The Home of Peace and Tourism", an image

that has been fractured in recent years by ethnic and religious clashes in the state.

Jos is the capital of Plateau State, and it is one of the seventeen local government areas in the state. Jos is further divided into Jos North, Jos East and Jos South local government areas. University of Jos is located in Jos North. University of Jos was established in 1972, and it is recognized by the National Universities Commission (NUC), Nigeria. There are about eighty high quality courses and programmes offered at the university. Library and Information Science is one of them. Library and information science is an academic field, offered as a course of study amid others in University of Jos. It is a meta-discipline, traversing what are considered traditional academic research disciplines (e.g., economics, biology, history, etc.). It can be approached as a vocation, discipline and a profession. The theories and practices in library and information science are applied across disciplines. They are varied and many. Some of the duties performed by information professionals include, but are in no way limited to, the following: Current collections for groups, whether local public populations, engineers building cars, or scholars in universities, Educate people on the availability and applicability of information resources, Organize information for more effective and efficient access and discovery, Preserve our cultural heritage, Present and make accessible the various collections of information, Build and manage information retrieval systems using user-centered design principles, Prepare our youth to become better scholars and citizens, and help them develop a long-standing productive relationship with information and knowledge, Study information needs and seeking behavior to develop better services for various groups, Consider the ethical and philosophical issues related to information, such as access and privacy, Manage and improve information environments, Facilitate the creation and sharing of information and knowledge with people and communities. Job titles for library and information science professionals can vary widely, depending on competencies required, type or size of organization, geographic location, and so on. Library and Information Science unit

is used as a case study, because of the broad nature. It is believed that it will give a good representation in this study.

Crisis is generally seen as the situation of a "complex system" (family, economy, society.) It is often linked to the concept of psychological stress and used to suggest a frightening or fraught experience. A simple misunderstanding between two or more individuals can turn into crisis if it is poorly managed. An unhealthy ethnic-based divergent interests, desires, and aspirations in the crude competition for scarce resources to meet the conflicting demands of human relations in a defined society can also result to crisis. Most of these crises are fueled by economic and political interest (Dalenty, 2000). Many communities have been destroyed, cases of colossal loss of lives and properties has been recorded. Millions of people has been displaced and left to hunger, infections, epidemics, abuse and other related consequences. Women and children are mostly affected during crisis situation. Conflict is a reality of social relations at the individual, group, organizational, community and societal levels. In human history, issues bordering on communal conflicts, interethnic crisis are common phenomena. During colonial era, many African ancient kingdoms experienced inter-kingdom dynastic feuds or inter-community conflicts within kingdoms. In modern society too, the same problema is obtainable.

Most of the students residing in trouble prone areas are with others without necessary knowledge, attitude and skills needed to make reflective decisions and to take actions to make their nation-state more democratic, just and love of others (Banks, 1997; Banks, 2006). This situation is not different from what is happening in Nigeria and beyond today. In this study, crisis in Jos and its environ as it affects the Library and Information Science students and University of Jos community will be looked into.

## 2. Statement of Problem

University of Jos students enrolment has witnessed some degree of reduction of candidates from other states across the

country. This is not a healthy situation for teaching and learning process. People are supposed to be free to go to school anywhere to learn. Another thing of concern as regards to Jos crisis is the fact that, freedom of movement and association of students are restricted and in such situation students will not be able to associate and possibly reside where they want to reside due to the threat of incessant crisis in the state.

Again, the movement restriction has the capacity of affecting the potential and education of the Library and information Science students in university of Jos. This is because students and the university community who may need to move to different places and campuses for vocational skill, Industrial attachment programme, teaching practice, lectures, seminars, meetings and what have you ought to enjoy freedom of movement across the town and campuses to satisfy their information needs. From this end, to what extent does ethno religious crisis affects Libray and Information Science students in University of Jos?

### 3. Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to find out the impact of ethno-religious crisis on Library and Information Science students in University of Jos. Specifically, the objectives of the study is to:

- examine the extent to which ethno religious crisis affects Library and Information Science students' socialization process in University of Jos
- ascertain the extent to which ethno religious crisis affects students' academic achievement
- suggest ways of reducing the effects of ethno religious crisis on students

### 4. Research Questions

The following research questions were postulated to guide the study:

- To what extent does ethno religious crisis affects Library and Information Science students' socialization process in University of Jos?

- To what extent does ethno religious crisis affects students' academic achievement in University of Jos?
- What are the ways of reducing the effects of ethno religious crisis on students?

### 5. Literature Review

Nigeria is characterized as a deeply divided state in which major political issues are vigorously and or violently contested along the lines of the complex ethnic, religious, and regional divisions in the country (Smyth and Robinson, 2001). By virtue of its complex web of politically salient identities and history of chronic and seemingly intractable conflicts and instability, Nigeria can be rightly described as one of the most deeply divided states in Africa (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005). From its inception as a colonial state, Nigeria has faced a perennial crisis of territorial or state legitimacy, which has often challenged its efforts at national cohesion, democratization, stability and economic transformation (Maier, 2000). The high point of the crisis seems to have been the civil war in the late 1960s, which ensued shortly after independence in 1960. Since Nigeria's transition to civilian rule in 1999 there has been a rapid increase of conflicts in the country.

Following these development, members of different ethnic nationalities have become aware of their separate identities because of the sporadic occurrence of episodic social interpretation of intergroup relations (Sanda, 1999). Ethno-religious crisis is a common phenomenon in the world history and there is hardly any race that has not at a particular point of time experience it. The world religious holy books, the Quran and the Bible, recorded how our fore-fathers in the past went through either ethnic crisis, religions crisis or ethno-religious crises at various point in recent time. This is to tell us that ethno religious crisis is neither peculiar to Nigeria nor a phenomenon of recent origin (Omoregbe, 2002).

Ethnic and religion sensitivity, since the Nigeria independence, have continue to threaten the development, continue co-existence, peace and

unity of Nigeria as members of one sovereign democratic state. In recent history, there are only few states in Nigeria that have not in one way or another witnessed one form of ethnic or religion crises. If a state is crisis free, then such state will experience a development. Ethnicity has to do with group differentiated from the main population of a community by racial origin or cultural background.

Gould and Kilb, (1956) and Nnoli, (1978) refer to ethnicity as a social formation distinguished by communal traits of their boundaries. The relevant communal factors may be language, culture or both culture and language. This means that an ethnic group will have a specific territory within a policy, demarcating it from other groups. Using Nigeria as an example, one can point to the Yoruba in the western Nigeria, the Hausa in the northern Nigeria, Igbo in the eastern Nigeria.

In Plateau state, the ethnicity is amongst different tribes with different languages. Taking a historical view of the concept of ethnicity, Joireman, (2003) holds that: ethnicity did not come into common usage until the latter part of the twentieth century it is a term that is strongly contested in academic literature. Relating the term to nationalism, Joireman insists that: ethnicity is a beginning manifestation of identity.

A religion is the belief in the existence of a god or gods, and the activities that are connected with the worship of them. It is also one of the systems of faith that are based on the belief in the existence of a particular god or gods: the Jewish religion, the Christian religion, the Islamic religion and a host of other world religions. Almost every human being believes in a Supreme Being (with different local names), who controls the universe – the seen and the unseen worlds. He sets a moral standard to be attained by man and capable of punishing man here and hereafter et cetera. The endeavour of man to please the Supreme Being, especially to secure a favourable place for himself hereafter is known as religion. It emanates from innate tendency and hence personal because one is free to believe or to disbelieve (Olayiwola, 2011). Conflict (crisis) can be described as a

situation or condition of disharmony in an interactional process. Crisis is when two or more values, perspectives and opinions are contradictory in nature and have not been aligned or agreed upon yet (Bagaji, 2012).

Nigeria as a nation has a long history of ethno-religious crisis. (Oji and Anugwom, 2004) observed that, ethnic and religious conflicts and divisions arising from them are intertwined phenomenal in contemporary Nigeria. It has been observed that it is very hard in Nigeria to have an ethnic crisis which will not end up as religious crisis. The fact that Nigeria is a plural polity has long been acknowledged. Studies have shown that it has a composition of not less than three hundred and seventy five ethnic nationalities with diverse socio-cultural and political backgrounds, all of which were wielded together to form modern Nigeria by the British colonialist. The right to practice community cultures and religious, the right to land claims that resulted from broken treaties and right to use community languages (Banks, 2006 & Kymlicka, 1995)

In the case of Plateau state Nigeria with reference to Jos North which is a flash point of the state where settlers/indigene and ethnic/religious crisis as well as glaring sentiment was largely recorded and widespread. *Hausa/Fulani and Berom/Anaguta/Afizere Crisis in Jos* The Berom people are the indigenous ethnic group of Jos who are predominantly Christians in Plateau State Nigeria. Within the State, they concentrated mostly in the Local Government Areas of Jos South, Jos North, Barkin Ladi (Gwol), and Riyom. Berom with approximate population of 1,083,000 out of which 96% are Christians, according to 2006 census. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Berom\\_people](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Berom_people)).

Ironically, the Jos crisis is multicultural, multifarious, and multilateral in nature and scope. It has many ethnic group contenders for ownership/Indigeneship of the land “Jos”, particularly the Jos North Local Government Area. Jarawa and Anaguta tribe are among the contenders, who claimed that Jos is their ancestral inheritance. They claim that Jarawa settled and secured Jos along with Anaguta

people prior to the advent of the colonialists who made Jos the administrative centre of their government by conquest. According to them, Hausa/Fulani people were brought into Jos by British colonial masters as cheap labour in the Tin mining activities, which was the main commercial activity in the area then. (Sampson, 2004). The Afizere, people in Jos, corroborates with Jarawa and Anaguta ethnic groups that Hausa/Fulani groups are settlers in the land. Therefore, they have no portion in Jos to claim as theirs. Anaguta community agreed that the Hausa/Fulani people have been instrumental to the development of Jos, but this does not translate to a right of ownership of Jos. They consider themselves as the true indigenes of Jos not other claimers. Anaguta claims that its tribe was the first to arrive the place called "Jos".

This ethnic group dismissed the idea of Hausa chiefs being rulers of the area, and considered their claim of having ruled Jos from time immemorial as baseless assertion because the immigrants migrated to Jos not by conquest before, during, or after colonialism (Sampson, 2004). The Afizere, claim that Hausa/Fulani people in Jos are settlers and non-indigenes of Jos, who do not appreciate and reciprocate the hospitality showered on them by their host communities. Afizere claims that Jos belongs to them and there is ample evidence to prove their stance. According to Afizere, the boundary between them and Berom was located at the Bukuru Low Cost Bridge; but Colonial administrators joined Afizere land to Bauchi Province and Berom acquired most parts of Jos without resistance

Hausa/Fulani groups predominantly Muslims claim that they established Jos from nothing and nurtured it into what it is today without the help of the so-called indigenous ethnic groups. The central issue of their argument is that Jos was established around the Nineteenth century out of a virgin land with none of the indigenous groups near the vicinity they now claim to be theirs respectively. Turakin Jos, Alhaji Inuwa Ali, a paramount Hausa/Fulani leader in Jos, reaffirmed in 2002, in a speech he delivered at the Presidential Retreat on Peace and Conflict Resolution at the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru, Jos, 23–26 January,

that Jos is a Hausa settlement and this had been confirmed by Mr Ames, a colonial administrator, who gave the population of Jos town in 1950 as 10,207, out of which 10,000 people were Hausa/Fulani

Plateau state known as home of peace and tourism where people are rushing to settle lost that glory in the year 2001 when the capital of plateau experience her first crisis, that day was truly a black Friday as the crisis broke the peace and unity enjoined by residence both indigenes and settlers of the city and was characterized as pure ethno religious crisis. The crisis being the first of its' kind led to colossal loss of properties and lives which were not replaceable and after the the state did not remain the same again. The crisis was stem by the government after much effort which led to declaration of state of emergency by the then former president Olusegun Obasanjo, to ensure the state return to status quo and investigated the circumstances surrounding the causes of such crisis at a time like that. Many committees were set up and they submitted their reports. The crisis gave Jos and Plateau a new look and shape. Peace was eventually restored but the ugly situation resurfaced in the year 2008 after which the crisis took another shape of clear religious and ethnic ground. This time the crisis was more frequent as another one occurred in the years 2010, 2014, 2018, and 2019. If this situation is not addressed immediately, recurrent violence in Jos North will continue to fuel ethno-religious crisis and tensions across the state and the country in genera.

## 6. Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study consisted of all the undergraduate Library and Information Science students in University of Jos which are 367 in number. The sample consists of 100 respondents selected via stratified random sampling from 100 to 400 levels from Library and Information Science Unit to make up 100 % sample size. The instrument used for collection of data was questionnaire structured by the researcher and titled Questionnaire on impact of Ethno Religious crisis on Library and Information

Science Students in University of Jos. The instrument was structured on a 4 point scale to allow respondents express their opinion by indicating a tick against the most appropriate option while on the other section the respondents were expected to express their opinion freely on

how to resolve issues of ethno religious crisis. The method adopted for data collection was use of questionnaire which was distributed face to face to the respondents and retrieved back by the researcher after responding. Data analysis used was Simple Percentage method.

**7. Results**

**Table1:** To what extent does ethno religious crisis affects Library and Information Science students’ socialization in University of Jos?

SN	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	Total
	Ethno religious crisis limit students socialization	35	39	16	10	100
	Crisis does not affects students socialization	21	11	42	26	100
	Ethno religious crisis aid students socialization	12	14	39	35	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>300</b>
	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>22.7</b>	<b>21.3</b>	<b>32.3</b>	<b>23.7</b>	<b>100</b>

Details of respondents as regards the effects of ethno-religious crisis on students’ socialization. reveals that, 22.7% of the respondents agreed that, ethno religious crisis limit students’ socialization, does not affects their socialization and aid their socialization. 21.3% also agreed while 32.3% disagreed and 23.7% strongly disagreed as well which mean that, ethno religious crisis limits students’ socialization, affects their socialization process and also does not aid their socialization in any way. Thus, it obvious that, ethno religious crisis affects students in all sphere of social life.

**Table2:** To what extent does ethno religious crisis affects Library and Information Science students’ academic achievement in University of Jos?

SN	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	Total
	Ethno religious crisis reduces students Performance	42	39	11	8	100
	Crisis affects students’ concentration in their academic activities	44	41	6	9	100
	Ethno religious crisis distorts students Learning process	37	46	12	5	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>300</b>
	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 shows that 41%, strongly agreed that, ethno religious crisis reduce students’ performance; and equally distort students learning process.42% of the respondents equally agreed while 9.7% disagreed and 7.3% strongly disagreed to the items. It can be deduced that, ethno religious crisis affects Library and Information Science students academic activities and achievement as revealed by the study.

The responses shows suggestions on ways of reducing effects of ethno religious crisis on Library and Information Science students. 81% of the respondents recommended that, there should be inter-faith competition, religious education and religious tolerance. 19%. on the contrary did not make any meaningful suggestion. This shows that, sensitization, encouraging religious tolerance, and inter faith competitions will likely reduce the effects of ethno religious crisis on Library and Information Science students in University of Jos.

**Research Question Three:** What are the ways of reducing the effects of ethno religious crisis on Library and Information Science students?

**8. Conclusion**

Based on the findings it could be concluded that ethno-religious crisis has negative impact on Library and information Science students in the university of Jos. Having examined the existence of ethno-religious crisis; review of such crisis and as well as the effects and implications of such crisis on students of university of Jos, it will be pertinent to see ethnicity and religion as instruments of peace, harmony, human justice, equality, respect of human integrity, right of individuals and social integration, rather than instruments of disunity, conflicts and rivalry with the society.

### 9. Recommendations

This study reveals that Jos Plateau State has a long history of ethno-religious crisis. The conditions created by these reoccurring crises has a lot of negative impact on students. Hence, the following recommendations are made:

- All religions in the country should exhibit the attitude of religious tolerance in dealing with people of other religion. This is very necessary for achieving religious peace and harmony university community and the state at large.
- The government should involve necessary legal and constitutional provisions to ensure social security and stability reign supreme in the state.
- The university management should ensure safety of students within and outside the school campuses as well as encourage interfaith activities.
- The government should alleviate poverty from Nigerian populace that is very necessary to reduce tension and ensure violence free behavior among the citizens.
- Stakeholders in the business of education should create employment opportunity for the teeming number of school leavers and graduates of tertiary institutions. This will go long way in reducing frustration and disillusionment which tend to breed tension and social instability among the citizens in the country.
- Barriers of all forms, suspicion, misunderstanding or wilful misinterpretations of others intention

must give way for trust, frankness and fidelity in expressing the truth we know about our own religions belief.

- The working people and youth should not allow religion and ethnicity to be used to divide their ranks by deceitful and self-seeking members of the capitalist elites who are masquerading as religious puritans or political liberations or both.
- The state government must carefully monitor events and situations to avert situations that could lead to conflict through dialogue.
- Employment should be given to citizens on the platform of meritocracy thereby crippling all forms of god-fatherism that may lead to conflict.
- Getting power in to political offices should be on worth not ethnicity or religion.
- Education as often said is the right of every child therefore; it should gain high priority in terms of recruitment of qualitative staff, so as to eliminate the rate of illiteracy that may lead to destructive crisis.
- Religious leaders and tribal leaders must be encouraged to always preach dialogue and negotiation as ways of resolving conflicts
- There should be a reform of the current curriculum on religious study in Nigeria that would generate a cultural and orientation of multi-religiosity in our children.

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