

# Ethno-Religious Violence in Jos: Implications for Trading and Marketing Activities

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**Abstract:** The focus of this paper is on the implications of ethno-religious violence in Jos for trading and marketing activities. The paper used a descriptive, cross-sectional survey research design. The Tare Yamane formula selected a sample size of 400 respondents from the total population of 1,260,200. We randomly selected 400 respondents from Jos North, Jos South, and Jos East LGAs and distributed questionnaires to them. We analysed the questionnaire responses using descriptive statistics like frequency counts and percentages. The paper revealed that ethno-religious violence affects trading and marketing activities in Jos Plateau State. Trading and marketing activities in Jos often suffer as a result of ethno-religious violence. The paper recommended that traders and marketers be security conscious and use security gadgets such as CCTV cameras to protect their businesses. This method will aid in exposing hoodlums who consistently incite violence to plunder the properties of traders and marketers.

**Keywords:** ethno-religious, violence, trading, marketing

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## INTRODUCTION

Since time immemorial, violent conflict has been with men. It must happen, no matter how careful or how men avoid it. This, however, suggests that ethno-religious violence is neither peculiar to Nigeria nor a phenomenon that has raised its ugly head in recent times. Nigeria widely experiences violent conflict among ethnic and religious groups. The country continued to face communal clashes, herdsman/farmers conflict, banditry and kidnapping in the northern region, secession in the southwest and southeast, and a host of other forms of violent conflict with ethnic and religious backgrounds (Achumba, Ighomereho, & Akpor-Robaro, 2013).

According to Gwaza, Dakum, and Bogoro (2015), Jos has suffered the siege of insecurity for many years, which has manifested in incessant and recurring ethno-religious violence within the state. The state of insecurity has become worrisome and disturbing, given the high rate of killings resulting from ethno-religious violence and other social vices that have befallen the area in recent times. Ethnic and religious violence has deteriorated to such an extent that Jos experiences a heavy bloodbath every year (Gwaza, Dakum, & Bogoro, 2015). Similarly, Mulunesh

(2019) was of the view that the violent conflicts in Jos have affected social, economic, and political relations between various actors and groups in the city. Some of these changes are evident in Jos' settlement patterns and social group relations. Displacement, polarisation, insecurity, and uncertainty now characterise the conflict-ridden city. The conflict has also resulted in the destruction of property, including some of the city's most viable economic centres, like the Jos Main Market and the Bukuru Market. The people most affected by this are those from the city's less privileged and poorer communities, of all ethnicities and religions. Achumba, Ighomereho, and Akpor-Robaro (2013) believed that ethno-religious violence discourages investment because it makes it unattractive to business people. This is because it increases the cost of doing business, either through direct loss of goods and properties or the cost of taking precautions against business risks and uncertainty. These costs could have a negative impact on business development and progress. The thick arrow connecting the insecure environment and

business investment means that insecurity can be a huge blockade to business investment.

Violent conflict in Nigeria often halted business operations, which also caused the outright closure of many enterprises, especially in areas or zones where incidences of insecurity are rife and are a daily occurrence (Achumba, Ighomereho, & Akpor-Robaro, 2013). In general, the absence of peace and security poses significant challenges for businesses to thrive. Ordinary citizens with small and medium-sized businesses are unable to open shops for business transactions. Traders and marketers want to avoid violence by relocating their businesses elsewhere. In Nigeria, there is also evidence of some businessmen having to relocate, particularly from the North in recent times, to other peaceful parts of the country (Nwagbosa, 2012). Moreover, some firms might relocate their operations to more peaceful countries such as Ghana.

Thus, ethno-religious violence may have left an untold adverse effect on the trading and marketing activities of the people of Jos, Plateau State. Apart from human lives and livestock, residential accommodation has been one of the major casualties of the conflicts in Jos Plateau State (Effiong & Owolabi, 2022). Houses provide shelter to traders and farmers to rest after daily activities, as well as comfort for proper planning on how to carry out the next activities. However, most houses are destroyed during conflicts. Effiong and Owolabi (2022) report that the large-scale destruction of houses, places of worship, and shops forces a large number of farmers into displacement. Due to the displacement, farming and trading activities have been disrupted. Some farmers have relocated to camps, while others have chosen to relocate outside their normal places of abode or even outside the state for their safety. Conflicts affect both traders and farmers psychologically, mentally, emotionally, and physically, impacting adversely on their ability to plan and make appropriate management decisions. Their livelihoods, inextricably linked to agriculture, suffer as a result. The International Crises Group (ICG) (2018) confirms this, reporting an estimated drop in food production from 65% to 33% in Benue, Nasarawa, and Taraba States due to attacks and population displacement.

### Statement of the Problem

The impact of ethno-religious violence on traders and marketers might extend beyond the forceful shutdown of trading and marketing activities in Jos metropolis, potentially resulting in the loss of lives and livelihoods for traders and marketers in the hinterland. The ethno-religious conflict's forceful shutdown may have limited traders' and marketers' access to loans from commercial and microfinance institutions. In addition, the extensive destruction of their homes, businesses, and farms may have resulted in the forced relocation of traders and marketers. It might also have contributed to their hunger and poverty. However, the impact of ethno-religious

violence on Jos traders and marketers may be multifaceted. Thus, if we fail to adequately handle the issue of ethno-religious violence in Jos, trading and marketing operations may continue to face obstacles. This study is so relevant because it investigates and offers potential solutions to lessen the impact of ethno-religious violence on Jos trading and marketing activity.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Businessmen and women who own houses and assets that could be looted or destroyed during turmoil often flee conflict-prone areas because socio-economic activities thrive best in a calm, conflict-free environment. The afflicted localities' economic transactions frequently suffer as a result of their move to other towns and cities. Not to mention, some of the impacted merchants and marketers have suffered losses that are occasionally so great that they are difficult to recover from. As a result, they find themselves living in poverty (Saidu, 2016).

The migration of business titans from crisis zones, according to Varshney (2007), typically results in significant inflation because the few and small entrepreneurs that remain start to sell at steep prices. Similar to this, avaricious businessmen frequently use the scarcity brought on by the resurgence to take advantage of the populace. Poor displays may force people to purchase inferior and out-of-date goods. Additionally, the local marketplaces that provide the local government with income stop operating, which limits their ability to offer social amenities to the populace. People will sometimes avoid buying or selling from one another due to the mistrust that follows acts of ethno-religious conflict. Adherents of an opposing religion or organization can also stop shopping at their adversaries' establishments. Conflict resolution consumes limited resources that may be used to provide other services, hence negatively impacting both the government's and individuals' revenue bases.

Sa'adu (2016) asserts that several commissions of inquiry, established in response to ethno-religious disruptions, asserted that most detained teenagers confessed to being school dropouts during their interrogations. In light of the aforementioned outcomes, it might not be overly dramatic to claim that ethno-religious violence makes the general populace more impoverished and forces the impacted areas to stay underdeveloped.

Frequent ethno-religious strife has damaged Nigeria's reputation, giving the impression that it cannot maintain religious harmony among its own people. Foreign media report on most communal upheavals, even more so than local media. As a result, the negative perception these reports produce sticks around for a long time, which frequently makes potential foreign investors and tourists hesitate. While those who are already there would, at the very least, reconsider their decision to remain in a nation where avoidable but ongoing insecurity permeates every aspect of life (Agbibo, 2013),

Ethno-religious crises have further undermined the nation's economic development. The statistical breakdown of manpower and material resources spent in Kaduna State alone provides a quick and easy understanding of what Nigeria has lost due to ethno-religious crises. Amadu Bello Way in Kaduna, regarded as one of the most beautiful streets in Northern Nigeria, is home to business stores and political offices. Both auto dealerships and banks compete with one another for space on the road. According to Tell (2007), a nonviolent demonstration by Christians opposing the adoption of Sharia law resulted in the worst violence and bloodshed in the state's and the country's history.

Due to the ethno-religious crises that Kaduna experienced in February of 2000, several foreign investors were unable to make agricultural investments in the state. Instead, security personnel swiftly escorted them out of the state. The same difficulties led to the relocation of the Kaduna Trade Fair a week later. Some overseas attendees who had previously expressed interest in attending the fair hastily cancelled their attendance in spite of the changes. Despite rapidly gaining one, Kaduna State abruptly lost its role as an industrial hub. In light of this, other direct flights to Kaduna State and other northern states were likewise canceled. Because of these challenges, Nigeria has become unattractive to global and local investors as a risky and uncertain place to do business. Crises rooted in ethno-religious beliefs impede industrialization's expansion. Ayinla (2013) argues that without assurance of their money's safety, no businessman or industrialist would want to make an investment.

According to Onwumah (2014), Nigeria's ethno-religious strife has disrupted the agricultural industry, particularly the conflicts between farmers and Fulani herders, which have resulted in the destruction of farms valued at billions of naira. Additionally, Sylvia and Helen's study from 2021 reveals that over 1.5 million people, mostly farmers, have left Nigeria due to various ethno-religious conflicts. This will undoubtedly have an impact on food production, leading to shortages. Some consumers may find food unaffordable due to the increased costs resulting from these shortages and subsequent price increases. Furthermore, this suggests that the losses incurred from the destruction of farms or companies push some individuals into poverty.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Frustration-Aggression Theory

John Dollard, Neal Miller, Leonard Doob, O. H. Mowrer, and Robert Sears created the frustration-aggression paradigm in 1939, and Yate (1962) and Berkowitz (1963) expanded and refined it. According to Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer, and Sears (1939), the general tenet of frustration-aggression theory is that all people have basic wants that they strive to fulfill, and that

any attempt by individuals or organizations to obstruct these requirements will result in violent reactions. In other words, frustration naturally leads to aggressiveness. When a society's structure directly or indirectly denies a person's or groups legitimate desires, the resulting frustration can drive these people or groups to express their anger through violent acts against those they believe are to blame for their misfortune (Yate, 1962; Berkowitz, 1963).

People often turn to someone they can blame for not reaching their goals or someone with whom they can vent their emotions when expectations are not met by achievement. Furthermore, when venting aggression towards the true source of frustration is not possible, people can deflect their hostilities and direct them towards other objects, or transfer their aggressiveness to different objects.

As demonstrated by conflicts between Christians and Muslims in the Niger Delta, the Independent People of Biafra (IPOB), the Hutus or Palestinians in Rwanda, etc., frustration is defined as the emotion we experience when we do not achieve what we want or when something stands in the way of achieving a desired goal (William, 2015).

This theory suggests that when another person or group denies someone's wants, it can trigger anger and frustration, leading to the ethnic and religious violence currently plaguing Nigeria. The amount of violence between various ethnic and religious groups in Jos has recently escalated to the point that it should worry the entire country. Banditry has resulted from the abduction of people from all social strata. Not even powerful people and their bodyguards escape abuse, kidnapping, or murder. The global spread of sophisticated weapons as a result of aggression poses a serious threat to the safety of people and property in urban and rural areas (Samuel, 2020).

However, the theory has been criticized for blaming aggression solely on frustration. The theory failed to acknowledge the fact that aggressiveness is not necessarily a product of frustration. Furthermore, the theory fell short of providing an explanation for why certain political leaders, motivated by self-interest, utilise their influence to incite violent conflict between different ethnic and religious groups. According to critics, an individual who is irritated by aggression can be calmed by social norms, law and order, ethics, morality, and values.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used a descriptive, cross-sectional survey research design. The Tare Yamane formula selected a sample size of 400 respondents from the total population of 1,260,200. We randomly selected 400 respondents from Jos North, Jos South, and Jos East LGAs and distributed questionnaires to them. We analysed the questionnaire responses using descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages.

**Table 1** displays the proportionate sample size for each stratum in the study.

LGA	Total population	Proportionate sample
Jos north	642,200	204
Jos south	458,100	145
Jos east	159,900	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,260,200</b>	<b>400</b>

**Source:** field survey 2023

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This part of the study discusses the findings generated by the study using the questionnaire data. The discussion of the findings follows a logical sequence:

**Table 2:** Respondents rating of the effect of ethno-religious violence on trading and marketing activities in Jos Plateau State.

Rating	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD
Strongly agree	255	66.4	4.552	0.7348
Agree	103	26.8		
Undecided	13	3.4		
Disagree	9	2.3		
Strongly disagree	4	1.0		
<b>Total</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>100.0</b>		

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023.

The mean value of 4.552 is above the cutoff point of 3.50, with a standard deviation of 0.7348. This implies that ethno-religious violence affects trading and marketing

activities in Jos. Trading and marketing activities often suffer as a result of ethnic and religious violence in Jos Plateau State.

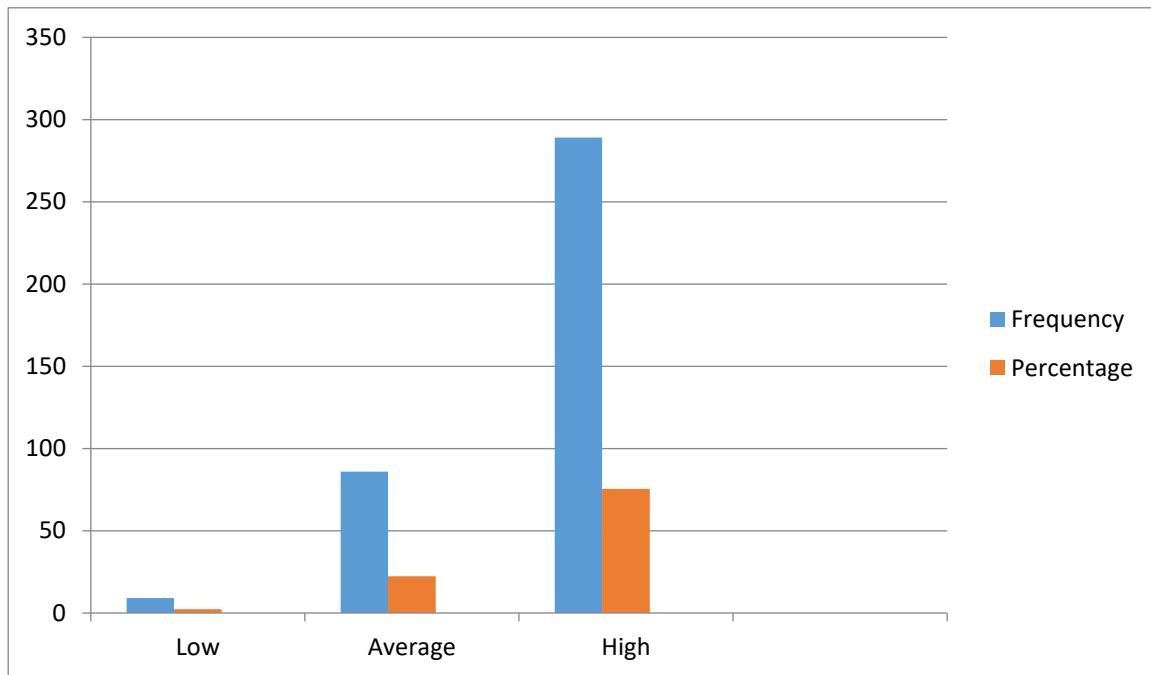
**Table 3:** Respondent rating of the impact of ethno-religious violence on trading and marketing activities in Jos Plateau State

Rating	Responses	
	Frequency	Percentage
Low	11	2.8
Average	98	25.7
High	275	71.5
Total	384	100.0

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023.

From the above table, 2.8% indicated low, 25.7% indicated average, and 71.5% indicated high. However, the majority of respondents indicated that ethno-religious

violence significantly impacts trading and marketing activities in Jos, Plateau State. A simple bar chart presents this information.



**Figure 1:** Rating of the impact of ethno-religious violence on trading and marketing activities in Jos Plateau State

**Table 4:** Distribution of respondents by effect of ethno-religious violence on trading and marketing activities in Jos Plateau State

Effect	Frequency	Percentage
Rapid increase in the price of commodities	91	23.7
Destruction of the market place, shops, and their valuables	128	33.3
Reduction in interstate and intrastate demand and supplies of commodities	78	20.3
Difficulty in trading or marketing perishable goods	83	21.6
Others	4	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023.

From the above table, 23.7% indicated a rapid increase in the price of commodities, 33.3% indicated the destruction of the market place, shops, and their valuables, 20.3% indicated a reduction in interstate and intrastate demand and supply of commodities, 21.6% indicated difficulty in trading and marketing of perishable goods, and 1.0% identified other major effects such as hoodlums breaking traders or marketers shops and warehouses to loot their properties. However, the majority of respondents indicated that the primary impact of ethno-

religious violence on trading and marketing activities in Jos is the destruction of the market place, shops, and their belongings. Effiong and Owolabi (2022) argue that the large-scale destruction of houses, places of worship, and shops forces a large number of traders and farmers to flee. With the displacement, farming and trading activities are not taking place, as some of the farmers and traders are in camps while many others have opted to relocate outside their normal places of abode or even outside the state for their safety.

**Table 5:** Distribution of respondents by effect of ethno-religious violence on traders and marketers' activities in Jos, Plateau State

Effect	Frequency	Percentage
Traders and marketers lose their lives and sources of livelihood.	219	57.0
Reduction in traders'/marketers' access to loans from commercial and microfinance banks as a result of forceful shutdown	45	11.7
Traders and marketers are forcefully displaced due to large scale destruction of their houses and shops	42	10.5
Ethno-religious violence contributes to poverty and hunger among traders and marketers	72	18.8
Others	6	1.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023.

According to the table above, 57.0% of traders/marketers reported losing their lives and sources of livelihood; 11.7% reported a reduction in their access to loans from commercial and microfinance banks due to a forceful shutdown; 10.5% reported being forcefully displaced due to large-scale destruction of their houses and shops; 18.8% reported that ethno-religious violence contributes to poverty and hunger among traders/marketers; and 1.7% reported other effects such as looting and/or stealing of traders' properties. The aforementioned result indicates that a substantial proportion of the sample respondents reported that the ethno-religious violence in Jos claimed the lives and livelihoods of traders or marketers. This finding is in tandem with Gwaza, Dakum, and Bogoro (2015), who hold that Jos has suffered the siege of insecurity for many years, which has manifested in incessant and recurring ethno-religious violence within the state. Ethnic and religious violence has deteriorated the situation to such an extent that Jos experiences a heavy bloodbath every year.

## CONCLUSION

The paper revealed that ethno-religious violence affects trading and marketing activities in Jos Plateau State. Trading and marketing activities in Jos often suffer as a result of ethno-religious violence. The people who answered thought that violence based on religion or race made it harder to trade and market goods because prices went up quickly, shops and their valuables were destroyed, and there was less demand and supply of goods between and within states. It was also hard to trade and market goods that went bad quickly. Similarly, the paper revealed that ethno-religious violence exacerbates poverty and hunger among traders and marketers, leads to the loss of lives and livelihoods, reduces their access to loans from commercial and microfinance banks due to forceful shutdowns, and forces them to flee their homes and shops. This result is consistent with the findings of Sylvia and Helen (2020), who believed that a large

number of people in Nigeria have left their homes due to various ethno-religious conflicts. These individuals were primarily traders, marketers, and farmers. There will undoubtedly be shortages as a result of this impact on food production will undoubtedly lead to shortages. Food becomes unaffordable for certain individuals due to the escalation in costs caused by these shortages. This suggests that the destruction of their farms or companies forces some individuals to live in poverty.

## Recommendations

Based on the paper's findings, we recommend the following measures to prevent future recurrence and mitigate the impact of ethno-religious violence on trading and marketing activities in Jos, Plateau State.

1. In order to address the issue of ethno-religious violence in Jos, the government ought to move from a conflict resolution model to one that prioritises conflict prevention. In order to successfully navigate this new process, the government must take a more proactive and dedicated approach to ensuring that every local government unit has sufficient and capable security, capable of swiftly responding to any kind of social unrest that has the potential to turn into ethno-religious violence at any time or place.
2. Traders and marketers should be security-conscious and use security gadgets such as CCTV cameras to protect their businesses. This method will aid in exposing hoodlums who consistently incite violence to loot the properties of traders and marketers.
3. In order to create a network for the prevention and management of ethno-religious violence, there should be strong and functional platforms that bring together leaders from the traditional, religious, youth, and female sectors; representatives from civil society and human rights organisations; security personnel; and government officials. In most conflict-ridden communities, traditional and religious leaders seldom get together to talk about what causes ethno-religious violence and how to avoid it in the future, which makes this suggestion

essential. Consequently, instead of being part of the problem or initiating it, leaders often intensify the issues they aim to address.

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