

## **Christians' Efforts of Interfaith Dialogue Between Christians and Muslims in Enhancing Security and Peaceful Co-Existence in Katsina and Zamfara States, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

*This study examined Christians' efforts of interfaith dialogue between Christians and Muslims in enhancing security and peaceful co-existence in Katsina and Zamfara states, Nigeria. The specific objective was to find out Christians' efforts of interfaith dialogue between Christians and Muslims in enhancing security and peaceful coexistence in Katsina and Zamfara states, Nigeria. A survey research design method was adopted for the study, with a population of 3,506,203 Christians in the states; a sample size of 902 respondents were used. A descriptive data analysis using mean and independent t-test were used. The major findings of the study were: the study revealed that, Christians usually organize sessions where Christians and Muslims can meet to share personal stories, common interests, and perspectives with a mean score of 3.1. The study also discloses that, Christians organized visits between Christian and Muslim families to experience each other's culture and build personal connections with a mean score of 3.1. Christians participate in each other's religious festivals and celebrations, respectfully observing traditions and appreciating cultural similarities and differences. Level of significance 0.001. The following recommendations are made on the findings: that, Pastors should design workshops focused on specific topics like conflict resolution, interfaith marriage, or religious understanding. They should facilitate potlucks, festivals, or community service projects where both communities can share their traditions and customs.*

**Keywords:** *Christians and Muslims, Interfaith, Dialogue, Security, Peaceful Coexistence*

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### **Introduction**

Security and peaceful coexistence are fundamental components of national development, personal growth and survival of any nation (Marjan, 2018). This is because, at the heart of every faith, community, and cultures, lay the need to advance security and peaceful co-existence which are needed to enhance productive, meaningful lives and sustainable development. Peaceful co-existence and security underline quality of life and the fabric of communities. They are equally the weapons for the survival of people on the planet earth.

Religion is a cultural phenomenon, as such; it has played dominant roles in the socio-political organization of man throughout the course of history. As an institution, religion has served

to meet certain needs within the society. It has acted as a tool to restore peaceful co-existence. Without doubt, the greatest threat to peaceful co-existence is the lack of economic and political developments as well as national security and religious conflicts (Richard, 2012).

Nigeria is a country where Christianity and Islam have enjoyed large followership as the adherents of the two faiths have long coexisted peacefully. As such, the country has been divided into two religious camps. It is very important to note that religion supposed to be a tool to unite people. The place and the roles which religion has played in nation building and development cannot be overemphasized. Religion has encouraged various groups to seek for peace in their societies in order to develop technologically, spiritually and economically. Religion can create an enabling environment which is vital to the development of a nation as well as uniting the populace.

It is true that religion has been used as a problem, but it can also be used to ensure peace which will result to security. Security is important to every nation's development; a nation that is not secured cannot develop its infrastructures and education. The state of insecurity in any nation has been a great challenge to development. That's why every government tries her best to ensure security of lives and property and peaceful coexistence of all citizens as well as that of the expatriates (foreigners) (Madugu, 2016). In this regard religion is expected to serve as bond of unity among people by providing a common avenue for reaching God in prayer and worship. Nigeria as a nation has since used religion to foster national unity and peaceful coexistence. This is typified by the provision given in the constitution for all citizens to freely practice his or her own religious faith without any interference from any one. It is sad to see lately that the situation has relatively changed in Nigeria concerning the role of religion as a source of unity. For about three decades now, religion has been used a number of times to sow seeds of discord among Nigerians of diverse religious beliefs, ethnic groups and political affiliations.

At present, Nigeria is estimated to have 200 million people and about half of these figure (100 million) are Muslims while the remaining percentage are either Christians or ATR (Ishaku, 2012). A culture of peaceful co-existence and religious tolerance, fosters values, attitudes, traditions, behaviours and style that rests on principles of human right, tolerance and non-violence tenets of peaceful co-existence which followers of the two major faiths in Nigeria should imbibe at all times.

It is also observed that with the country's return to democracy in May 29, 1999, the outbreaks of religious conflicts have been on the increase. Not only that, the struggle for power and position in Nigeria has also led to the manipulation of religion and ethnicity by the political elites for selfish reasons. In other words, it will not be incorrect to say there is hardly an appointment that is not tinted with religious inference made to it. This breeds mutual distrust, discrimination and a sense of general insecurity in the society.

### **Statement of the Problem**

There have been series of insecurity issues like kidnapping, rape and banditry in Katsina and Zamfara states. These crises have greatly caused insecurity, lack of peaceful coexistence between Muslims and Christians in Katsina and Zamfara States. These clashes have greatly

severed the cordiality and trust that once existed between Muslims and Christians in the two States. The effects of these insecurity and lack of peaceful coexistence are enormous. It has led to hatred, segregation, suspicion, death of people, loss of property and economic retardation.

Several efforts have been made by civil society organizations, individuals and government to restore peaceful coexistence and security in Katsina and Zamfara states. There are significance efforts made by Government, religious leaders as well as faith based organizations in Christianity and Islam such as the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC), which consists of both Christian and Muslim clerics. The International Peace League (IPL) an organization that encourages pluralism and understanding across religious and ethnic boundaries. These organizations have made tremendous and impressive efforts for security and peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims. It cannot be contended that since the emergence of these religious intolerance between Christians and Muslims in Katsina and Zamfara States, there have been incessant insecurity that have deprived citizens of this country the opportunity of having peace and peaceful co-existence. If these insecurity and lack of cordiality between Christians and Muslims due to the fact that there is mistrust, hate speech, and in some cases religious intolerance continue unabated, it might spell more doom, deaths, and economic downturn. There is need to evaluate how the Christian communities in Katsina and Zamfara states are responding to the call to ensure security and peaceful co-existence. Thus, the problem of the present study is therefore, to evaluate the efforts or measures taken by Christians in enhancing security and peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims in Katsina and Zamfara states.

### **Research Question**

What are the Christians' efforts of interfaith dialogue between Christians and Muslims in enhancing security and peaceful co-existence in Katsina and Zamfara states, Nigeria?

### **Research Hypothesis**

**H<sub>01</sub>** There is no significant difference between the opinions of young and old Christians' efforts of interfaith dialogue between Christians and Muslims in enhancing security and peaceful co-existence in Katsina and Zamfara states, Nigeria.

### **Types of Insecurity**

Insecurity encompasses a broad range of threats that can destabilize a nation and negatively impact its citizens' well-being. Here are some key types of insecurity:

#### **1. Military Insecurity**

A 2021 study by Müller & Müller (2021) explores the evolving nature of military threats, including the rise of cyber warfare and irregular forces, alongside conventional military capabilities. They emphasize the increasing complexity of modern warfare, making clear-cut military victories less common.

## **2. Economic Insecurity**

Momani and Isakow (2022) examine the growing economic insecurity due to globalization and technological advancements. They highlight the challenges of income inequality, resource scarcity, and adapting to a rapidly changing economic landscape.

## **3. Political Insecurity**

Lührmann and Lindberg (2020) analyze the rise of populism and democratic backsliding, contributing to political insecurity. They discuss the erosion of trust in institutions and democratic norms, posing significant challenges to national stability.

## **4. Environmental Insecurity**

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2021) emphasizes the existential threat posed by climate change. The panel highlights the interconnectedness of environmental insecurity with other national security concerns.

## **5. Energy Insecurity**

A 2022 article by Klare and Volman (2022) discusses the geopolitical implications of the energy transition. Thus, with nations seeking to secure access to clean energy sources while managing the decline of fossil fuels.

## **6. Food Insecurity**

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2020) warns of the increasing challenges of food insecurity due to climate change, conflict, and population growth. Food insecurity has dragged so many third world countries like Nigeria into serious security crises. So many people are leaving below a dollar.

## **7. Health Insecurity**

The COVID-19 pandemic 2020 starkly highlighted health insecurity as a major national security concern. Gostin (2020) emphasizes the need for robust public health systems and global cooperation to counter pandemic threats.

## **8. Cyber Insecurity**

Attacks on critical infrastructure, government systems, and private networks that can disrupt essential services and cause widespread damage. A 2021 report by the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR, 2021) analyzes the escalating cyber threats faced by nations, including the increasing sophistication of cyber-attacks and the difficulty of attributing responsibility.

## **9. Social Insecurity**

These are threats that come in form of widespread social unrest, crime, or deep societal divisions that undermine social cohesion and stability. Pew Research Center (2022) explores the rising levels of social and political polarization within many nations, highlighting the potential for social unrest if left unaddressed.

## **10. Resource Insecurity**

Resource insecurity happens when there is limited access to critical resources like water, energy, or minerals, leading to competition and potential conflict between nations. Wolf (2020) discusses the growing competition for water resources in many regions, fueled by climate change and population growth, posing a significant security risk.

### **Factors that Hinder Security and Peaceful Co-existence**

As important as peaceful coexistence is to all human survival, yet a lot of factors have been responsible to that lack of peaceful coexistence between the Muslims and Christians in Nigeria. Some of the factors are discussed in the following paragraphs. The manipulation or corruption of religion and ethnicity by religious and ethnic entrepreneurs is one among the factors that disrupt peaceful co-existence. Gwamna (2014) observes that religious corruption involves deliberate abuse and misuse of religion by religious adherents and leaders. Politicians have been alleged to have contributed in corrupting religious institutions and their leaders in Nigeria through bribery and inducement in order to pray and bless them.

Religious corruption also involves taking undue advantage of religion in order to perpetuate unwholesome practices such as false religious claims, false religious spirituality and cheating in the name of religion. Gwamna further maintains that the manipulation of religion by some political elites and religious leaders in Nigeria have created lack of peace in the country and has been called different names. Some people referred to it as politicization of religion which involves introducing and using politics in virtually every aspects of religious matter while some call it religionization of ethnicity.

Manipulation of religion involves conscious use of religion to achieve personal or corporate interests by all means. In buttressing the part of using religion by political elites, Gwamna further advanced that elites use religion and ethnic rivalries to advance their particular agendas. The manipulation of religion has assumed very high levels in the political and social relationships in Nigeria. Thus, the brazen abuse of religion through its manipulation has created conditions for agitations, allegations of alienation, suspicion, neglect and marginalization.

Also Yahaya (2011) maintains that the various conflicts in the country should be blamed on tribal sentiments and religious bigotry, because people attach a lot of sentiments to their religious beliefs than respect and loyalty to their nation. Yahaya (2011) states that certain factors lead to interreligious conflicts and they include:

1. **Wrong perception of other peoples' religion or faith.** This portrays looking at other people's religious activities with levity which often leads to conflict. This is true particularly when we know that every religion promises its adherents salvation and hope.

2. **Wrong religious orientation:** When wrong methodology is used in indoctrinating adherents of a particular religion, what often follows is religious obsession which invariably leads to conflict.
3. **Literacy level of Religious Adherents:** Every Nigerian belongs to one religion or another, but not too many Nigerians are educated. Since people often believe what their religious leaders say; illiterates are easily manipulated to achieve one selfish aim or another since they are not critical and logical in thinking.
4. **Selfishness on the part of Religious personalities:** Some religious leaders, despite their calling, are given to selfishness. They employ fowl means to perpetrate religious conflicts knowing that they will be invited by the government in power to seek their consent. That way, they get closer to the government for their personal interest.
5. **Too much freedom given to Religious leaders:** It appears that too much freedom is accorded religious leaders in Nigeria. Anybody can carry microphone and say whatever he/she likes in the name of religion. There is no censor for religious preachers.

Furthermore, Sani (2017) reveals that differences over values such as ideology and religion have also been some of the major causes of lack of peace. Sani further added that a good example of this is the conflict that happened in Kaduna in the year 2000. The conflicts were allegedly sparked off by the protest against the implementation of sharia legal system. This is because Christians saw sharia as an attempt to diminish the strength of Christianity. Over-zealousness of some religious devotees to their respective religious seems to have been making them to act in ways that are both immoral and contrary to the ethics of religion. It has made them kill, maimed and destroyed all in the name of God. Jaafaru (2014) opines that a lot of Christians have misconceptions on a number of things about Islam or Muslims. The same goes with a lot of Muslims about Christianity. Sincerely speaking, these misconceptions are the causes of the absence of responsible peace amongst us. In the same manner, Makarfi (2014) argued that, land, space and resource availability, dispute over jurisdiction between traditional rulers, ethnic and sectional competition over access to scarce political and economic resources, population explosion, pollution of cultural practices, and religious fanaticism may have a hand in lack of peaceful coexistence.

In the same vein, Kukah (2018) remarks that the persistence of lack of peace in Nigeria has very little of anything to do with religious colouration of the leaders. What can be said is that the crisis of legitimacy of leaders themselves has meant that religion has been constantly employed for selfish ends by politicians to make up for the legitimacy. The use of the instrumentalities of religion and ethnicity have succeeded in endangering conflicts in some parts of the nation because the systematic impoverishment of the people in the area has made them too vulnerable to ethnic and religious manipulation. Similarly, Kukah (2018) blames the crisis on sentiments and emotions of worshipers, proliferation of religious sects, fanaticism, too much freedom, given to religious leaders and feelings of marginalization, unpreparedness of some segment of the Nigerian society to respect the constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria, vis-à-vis the provision for religious affairs especially the Islamic legal system.

Okwueze (2011) notes that Muslim leaders in the country have acted and made assertions which lend credence to the fact that Muslims in Nigeria are intolerant toward non-Muslims. This was exemplified by the assertion of Safi Jimba, a Muslim and a prominent lawyer in Ilorin on the controversial sharia issue where he was quoted by Okwueze (2011) to have said it is either we have the sharia or there shall be no constitution or even peace in this country. Also late sheik Abubakar Gumi, a prominent Muslim leader asserted that the progress and unity of human race mean converting Christians and non-Muslims to Islam. These were all volatile statements loaded with intolerance. Okwueze is of the belief that Christians are not totally exempted from the issue of intolerance but they have been in most cases at the receiving end.

Politics is another factor that disrupts peaceful coexistence. Enwerem (2015) contends that some people use conflicts to advance their political interest, so they generate such conflicts either to make their political statements or to use them to mobilize people for their selfish political interest. Similarly, some rich people exploit the issue of poverty affecting the poor citizens by providing them with food and money in order to promote such conflicts for their selfish ends. The Plateau Peace Conference (2014) reveals that bad leadership and bad governance, marginalization and lopsided appointments in the state, political victimization of opponents, and political manipulation disrupt peace. The politics of exclusion, horse trading and high stakes power play often predicated on personal aggrandizement and sacrifice the interest of the people on the altar of political expedience.

According to Akpokpari (2014) the absence of good governance is at the root of the lack of peace in most of the states in Nigeria. Akpokpari maintained good governance as a system of administration that is democratic, efficient and development- oriented has remain elusive in Africa as legitimacy has been determined not by democratic process but largely by astrictive and patron-client relations while corruption has remained pervasive. In the absence of good governance, the ruling elite recourse to ethnic, religious and regional appeal thereby inflaming primordial identities of the masses.

Bolawole (2018) asserts that the lack of peace in most states is certainly a political one as people and groups jostle for power arid control of the region or territory. Because, who-so-ever occupies this office has a say in the affairs of the state. This place is a stage where political parties, ethnic and religious groups try to show their worth sincerely, this role of ethnic and religious mobilization is just a chameleon tactics to ensure that political bigwigs in the state continue to control economic and political power. Makarfi (2014) also blames the disruption of peace on bad leadership at both macro and micro levels especially when adequate mechanisms to reduce conflicts are not employed equally.

Uzor (2012) holds that the disruption of peace is centered on the struggle for power. Kukah (2018) concurs with Uzor when he discloses that leaders have realized the difficulty in trying to separate politics from religion, they have continued to manipulate this too for governance. Whether we like it or not, this inseparable nature of religion and politics has also given people the right to be irresponsible, lawless, vengeful and violent towards constituted authority.

Poverty and unemployment are other issues that disrupt peace. The level of poverty in Nigeria today constitutes a great threat to the nation's peace and security, particularly with the condition of living standard declining daily. Yahaya (2011) laments that poverty is one among the major causes of lack of peace, particularly when many people cannot afford needs like shelter, clothing and feeding. Yahaya further maintains that extremely, poor people can do anything to sustain themselves. Thus, the poor youths (Almajiris) particularly in Northern Nigeria are manipulated with small amount of money and food to cause lack of peace. While, Sani (2017) noted that the unemployment of our willing and able youths has security implication for the country. Sani further buttressed that in 2002, when the youths in Kano State degenerated into violent crisis against the United States of America's aggressive policy on Iraq and Afghanistan, the then Deputy Governor Abdullahi Ganduje observed that hundreds of unemployed youths took advantage of the anti-United States protest to unleash havoc and destruction on innocent citizens. A poverty-stricken community is a depot from which to recruit merchants of death who unleash mayhem on the society (Pam. 2004).

Elaigwu (2014) lamented that the conditions of life are currently very hard for the average Nigerian. Eating poses, a real problem, not to mention taking members of our families to the hospitals. Many families can no longer pay school fees. There are no jobs for even those who have graduated from Secondary Schools, Colleges of Education, Polytechnics and Universities. There is a large army of the unemployed ready to be used for odious jobs which bring some income. Breaking and looting of shops during crisis, armed robbery, political thuggery, banditry and other forms of crimes have virtually been legitimized by the logic of imperatives of survival. The level of poverty according to Elaigwu is very alarming where the Nigerian masses have suffered economic deprivations and injustice in the form of exploitation. Government is not making any efforts to alleviate the suffering of the masses.

Similarly, lack of mutual respect by adherents of the different religions and traditions in Nigeria causes lack of peace. For instance, there have been several cases of the burning down of places of worship such as churches and mosques as a mark of intolerance which has also paved way for lack of peace in Nigeria.

Gwamna (2014) equally maintains that current development indices indicate that Nigeria is one of the endemic poverty ridden societies in the world. United Nations Development Project Human Development Index (HDI) of 2013 place Nigeria 153 on the list of poor countries of the world. Gwamna further argues that the manifestation of poverty in Nigeria include; acute lack of food, water, poor housing, education, health and other basic facilities for a decent life.

The argument for this hinges on the fact that poverty creates conditions for desperation, frustration, tension, hopelessness, and the need to seek solace and redemption through religion. Religion has emerged as a panacea that could solve such desperate situation in Nigeria. As a result of such desperate situation in Nigeria, religious manipulators have taken advantage to lead some Nigerians into religious conflicts as they- whip up primordial and sectarian sentiments. They do this by either deliberate indoctrination, incitement or brain washing. When such processes take



place, some vulnerable Nigerians become vehicles of lack of peace as they are promised eschatological reward in the hereafter (Gwamna, 2014).

### Methodology

A survey research design method was used for the study. A structured questionnaire and interview schedule were constructed for the study on the Christians' effort of interfaith dialogue between Christians and Muslims in enhancing security and peaceful co-existence in Katsina and Zamfara states, Nigeria. The respondents comprises 902 young and old Christians in Katsina and Zamara states, Nigeria with a population of 3, 506,203 Christians.

### Results

**Table 1: Opinions of the respondents on Christians' efforts in enhancing of security and peaceful co-existence on interfaith dialogue between Christians and Muslims in Katsina and Zamfara states, Nigeria**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std
1	Christians usually organize sessions where Christians and Muslims can meet in relaxed settings to share personal stories, common interests, and perspectives	369	379	50	104	3.1	0.95
2	At certain level Christians organize interfaith book clubs, discussing texts on peace building, religious diversity, or shared ethical values to spark thought-provoking conversations	253	420	168	61	3.0	0.85
3	Christians organized visits between Christian and Muslim families to experience each other's cultures and build personal connections	324	422	75	81	3.1	0.89
4	Christians participate in each other's religious festivals and celebrations, respectfully observing traditions and appreciating cultural similarities and differences	215	357	213	117	2.7	0.96
5	Christians facilitate workshops on topics like conflict resolution, interfaith communication, and overcoming prejudice, encouraging healthy and respectful dialogue	346	344	105	107	3.0	0.98
6	Christians usually schedule friendly sports tournaments or games where Christians and						

	Muslims participate together, promoting teamwork, collaboration	237	391	165	109	2.8	0.95
7	Christians usually organize panel discussions featuring young people of different faiths sharing their experiences and perspectives on interfaith relations and building peace	366	347	111	78	3.1	0.92
<b>Total</b>						<b>3.0</b>	

Item 1 of table 08 reveals how Christians usually organize sessions where Christians and Muslims can meet in relaxed settings to share personal stories, common interests, and perspectives, three hundred and sixty-nine (40.9%) and three hundred and seventy-nine (42.0%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively in the table. Only fifty (5.5%) and one hundred and four (11.3%) disagreed and strongly disagreed with the item. The mean score of the item is 2.9. Another Christians' effort seen in item 2 of the table where two hundred and fifty-three (28.0 %) and four hundred and twenty (46.6 %) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that at certain level Christians organize interfaith book clubs, discussing texts on peace building, religious diversity, or shared ethical values to spark thought-provoking conversations. The mean score for the item is 3.0 which suggests that most of the respondents were on the same page in their opinions. Only one hundred and sixty-eight (18.6 %) and sixty-one (6.8 %) respondents did not accept the item that At certain level Christians organize interfaith book clubs, discussing texts on peace building, religious diversity, or shared ethical values to spark thought-provoking conversations.

Item 3 of table 08 looked at how Christians organized visits between Christian and Muslim families to experience each other's cultures and build personal connections. Three hundred and twenty four (35.9%) strongly agreed and four hundred and twenty-two (46.8%) agreed with the item, while seventy five (8.3%) disagree and eighty-one (9.0%) strongly disagreed that, Christians organized visits between Christian and Muslim families to experience each other's cultures and build personal connections. The item has a mean score of 3.0

As indicated in items 4 and 5 with mean scores of 2.7 and 3.0, Christians' efforts were accompanied with Christians participate in each other's religious festivals and celebrations, respectfully observing traditions and appreciating cultural similarities and differences. Also, Christians facilitate workshops on topics like conflict resolution, interfaith communication, and overcoming prejudice, encouraging healthy and respectful dialogue. Only two hundred and fifteen (23.8 %), three hundred and fifty-seven (39.6 %) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that, Christians participate in each other's religious festivals and celebrations, respectfully observing traditions and appreciating cultural similarities and differences. While two hundred and thirteen (23.6%) and one hundred and seventeen (13.0%) disagreed and strongly disagreed. The idea of Christians facilitating workshops on topics like conflict resolution, interfaith

communication, and overcoming prejudice, encouraging healthy and respectful dialogue is indicated by three hundred and forty-six (38.4 %) and three hundred and forty-four (38.1 %) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed with the item. But one hundred and five one (11.6 %) and one hundred and seven (11.9) of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed with this positive Christians’ effort.

Item 6 of table 08 is on how Christians usually schedule friendly sports tournaments or games where Christians and Muslims participate together, promoting teamwork, collaboration among other things to foster security and peaceful co-existence. The respondents two hundred and thirty seven (26.3%) and three hundred and ninety-one (43.3%) strongly agreed and agreed with the item. However, one hundred and sixty-five (18.3%) and one hundred and nine (12.1%) disagreed and strongly disagreed. The item has a mean score of 2.8.

Item 7 is hinged on how Christians usually organize panel discussions featuring young people of different faiths sharing their experiences and perspectives on interfaith relations and building peace. The respondents, three hundred and sixty-six (40.6%) and three hundred and forty-seven (38.5%) strongly agreed and agreed with the item, while one hundred and eleven (12.3%) and seventy-eight (8.6%) disagreed and strongly disagree, having a mean score of 3.1.

The general interpretation is that, there is a consensus agreement on Christians’ effort in enhancing the security and peaceful co-existence of Christians and Muslims in Katsina and Zamfara states and this is because the cumulative mean of 3.0 (Std. 0.92) is higher than the fixed decision mean of 2.5 which indicates collective agreement using interfaith dialogue to foster peace.

**Table 2: Two Sample t-test Procedure on the opinions of young and old Christians in enhancing of security and peaceful co-existence of interfaith dialogue between Christians and Muslims in Katsina and Zamfara states, Nigeria**

Age	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	Std.error	t-value	DF	t-crit	P-value	Remark
15-30	425	96.95	11.718	0.568	0.691	900	1.96	0.001	Rejected
31Above	477	97.45	9.708	0.444					

The result reveals that the two groups (young and old) were significantly different in their opinions of interfaith dialogue between Christians and Muslims in Katsina and Zamfara states, Nigeria. In the table, the observed t-value (0.691) for the test is lower than the critical value of 1.96 at 900 degrees of freedom. The observed level of significance (0.001) for the test is lower than the fixed level of 0.05 ( $P < 0.05$ ). With this observation, there is sufficient evidence for the rejection of the null hypothesis. The null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the opinions of young and old Christians’ efforts on inter faith dialogue in enhancing security and peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims in Katsina and Zamfara states, Nigeria. The hypothesis is hereby, rejected.

## Discussion

The findings from the hypotheses revealed that respondents were generally of the opinion that, Christians usually organize sessions where Christians and Muslims can meet in relaxed settings to share personal stories, common interests, and perspective. The study also discloses that, Christians organized visits between Christian and Muslim families to experience each other's culture and build personal connections. This is not in agreement with the report of Bolawole (2018) who asserts that lack of peace in most states is certainly a political one as people and groups jostle for power and control of the region or territory. Because, who-so-ever occupies this office has a say in the affairs of the state. This place is a stage where political parties, ethnic and religious groups try to show their worth sincerely, this role of ethnic and religious mobilization is just a chameleon tactics to ensure that political bigwigs in the state continue to control economic and political power. The finding from the hypothesis also reveals that Christians participate in each other's religious festivals and celebrations, respectfully observing traditions and appreciating cultural similarities and differences. Interviewee 1 was interviewed on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023, that Christians have emphasized good human relation on the concept of universal brotherhood regardless of geographical affinity or religions. Interviewee 2 on the 12<sup>th</sup> October contends that the interaction between the Muslims and Christians at interpersonal level in Batagarawa is harmonious and pleasant. For instance, Muslim and Christians belonging to the same political party with common aspiration to win election. Interviewee on the 20<sup>th</sup> Of November 2023 disclosed that Christians in Gummi organize inter-faith meetings to enhance religious tolerance.

## Conclusion/Recommendation

It is concluded that, Christians' initiatives promoting shared experiences, personal connections, and cultural understanding between Christians and Muslims have shown strong positive results. Thus, it is recommended that Pastors should design workshops focused on specific topics like conflict resolution, interfaith marriage, or religious understanding. They should facilitate potlucks, festivals, or community service projects where both communities can share their traditions and customs.

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