

## Colonialism as the Root Cause of the Conflict in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State, Nigeria

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**Article DOI:**

10.48028/iiprds/ijarppsdes.v5.i1.19

**Keywords:**

Colonialism,  
Conflict, Jos North,  
Indigenes, Settlers &  
Mining

Jos North Local Government Area is one of the local government areas in Plateau State that has a long history of conflict. The history of the conflict is traced right from the colonial period. The colonial government adopted a divided and rules policy to rule the area and this has not only laid the seed to the conflict but has deepened mutual distrust between the indigenes and the settler groups. Apart from the prominence the colonialists have given the settlers group over the native whom at the time were referred as the pagan, it fails to introduce spatial plan and policies that would have help to mitigate the contestation over the ownership of the area between the natives and settlers' group. Being non-experimental research, the study used qualitative and historical research design to elicit data for the study. The data of the study were generated from array of documentary facts drawn from both published and unpublished materials (Textbooks, journals, newspapers and documented historical reports from the national archival centre). The study found that colonialism is the root causes of the conflict in Jos North and it is at the heart of the conflict through its policies of divide and rule and its failure to plan and provide spatial policy for both the settler and indigene groups. The study recommends among others the need to revise the 1999 constitution to clearly define who is an indigene and a settler within the country, the adherence to democratic principles and the need for mutual co-existence

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### **Background to the Study**

Plateau State is one of the States that has witnessed a lot of violent conflicts in the past and at the contemporary period (Cinjel & Onah, 2015). The causes of the conflicts are sumptuous and confusing; they are mostly linked to indigene and settler's imbroglio but there is more to this assertion. Before the creation of the state as Plateau and its existence as Benue -Plateau, the seed of the conflicts has long been laid (Cinjel & Onah 2015). Plateau State is one of the states that is rich with mineral resources such as tin and columbite. The present of these resources for long has attracted a lot of groups. History has it that the European mining activities started on the Jos-Plateau in the later part of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Tin mining and exploration took off in commercial quantity in the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and it has a lot of influences on the Jos-Plateau (Sule, 2010).

The Europeans came to Jos-Plateau and were only interested in the tin; they did not look at what will be the aftereffect of their activities in the area. The Europeans came to the area with the assistance of the Hausa chief whom were already practicing the emirate system. They also give more prominence to the Hausa-Fulani ethnic groups over the native whom at the time were tagged as pagans. The superiority definition given to the Hausa-Fulani ethnic groups were due the function of their dominance and their early contact with the white; beside these factors, they were seen as the most sociable group in the northern part of the country (Sule,2010).

This prominence and the mass discovery of the tin led to influx of the Hausa ethnic groups from different part of the country -Kano, Sokoto, Kaduna, Katsina, among many others in to Jos. It was not only the Hausa-Fulani ethnic groups that were at the mine at the time but their numbers were more than other ethnic groups combine (Bello, 2019). This development and the affinity of the Europeans with the Bauchi emirate which later metamorphosed to Bauchi province led to the appointment of ethnic leaders to lead the different groups at the mine. The Bauchi province was given the mandate to appoint the Bunun and *Barde* Bauchi who are directly in charge of the appointment of the *Sarkin Hausawa* while the so-called Pagan Chief Head and control the affair of the natives. The appointment of the Pagan chief and other Chief or head of other ethnic group was the sole responsibility of the colonial government vis-à-vis their representative (Bello, 2019).

The upgrade of the Bauchi emirate to the status of province is another landmark in the historical development of Plateau State. Plateau State was classified as a division under the province of Bauchi and thus reports their activities to the province before it is taken to the colonial government. This development does not only make the Plateau Division to be answerable to the Bauchi province but encourages the influx of the Hausa group and more predominantly the Hausa speaking group from the Bauchi province to the Plateau Division. A lot of them came as miners while few others were into trading and others were artisan. This study looked at the influence of colonialism on the conflicts in the Jos-Plateau. The work was structured into six (6) parts. The first part was the introduction; this provides the general background to the study. The second part was the problem statement which was stated along with the posited research questions, objectives and the hypothesis

of the study. Methodology was captured as the third part while the fourth section focused on review of literatures and the theoretical underpinning of the study. The fifth chapter encapsulates the results and discussions. The last sections were the conclusion drawn and the recommendations that were proffered to help to curb and mitigate the mentioned challenges.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The Europeans came to the Jos-Plateau in the later part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and what motivates their quest was the tin exploration. They came to the area with the help of the Hausa speaking group who were the predominantly and exposed ethnic group at the time. This proximity and their exposure did not only give them age but gave them prominence over the native groups on the Jos Plateau whom were labeled as *Pagans* at the time. The Europeans at the time did not make any attempt to differentiate and as well enlighten the people on what is traditional rulership, what is ethnic leadership and who is a leader at the mines' camp. The Hausa-Fulani speaking group was headed by the *Sarkin Hausawa* and they reported directly to the *Bunun* and *Barde Bauchi*; they have no any obligation and connection to the native Chiefs in those areas where tins were mined. The bestowal of prominence to the Hausa speaking group over the aborigines and the belittlement of the aborigines as Pagan have helped to create class and segregation. The act of defining leadership base on ethnic groupings at the mines' camps was also some of those facets that laid the nucleus of the Jos conflict.

The Europeans and the colonialists precisely didn't just come to Jos without a course; their interest was purely on the exploration of tin. They failed to spatially plan for the area in term of future development and settlement. Who are the owners of the area with the tin and the clear distinction between the leaders of the area with the tin and ethnic leaders at the mining camps were not clearly defined. Thus, those who come to the area purposely to mine as labourers later settle and see the area as a no man's land. The appointment of Gbong Gwom to head the territorial area with mine came when aspersion has already been laid. This was why the Hausa-Fulani speaking group demanded for their ethnic chiefs and sees the other (Gbong Gwom) as the head of the Pagans in 1916.

It is against this backdrop that the following research questions were posited to guide the study:

- a. In what ways do the prominence given to the Hausa Fulani ethnic group over the so-called Pagan group impacted on the Jos-Plateau. Conflict.
- b. How has the poor territorial planning by the Europeans contributed to the conflicts on the Jos-Plateau?
- c. What mediums can be put in place to help to curb the challenges of indigene-settlers divide on the Jos Plateau?

The specific objectives of the study are to

- a. Examine how the accordance of prominence to the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group over the so-called Pagan group impacted on the Jos Plateau conflict.

- b. Assess the effect of poor territorial planning by the Europeans on the Jos-Plateau conflict.
- c. Provides mediums that will help to curb the lingering conflicts on the Jos-Plateau.

### **Hypotheses of the Study**

The study hypothesizes that

- a. The accordance of prominence to the Hausa-Fulani speaking groups over the native that were so-called the Pagans have led to the conflict on the Jos Plateau.
- b. Poor territorial planning with regard to future development by the Europeans significantly contributed to the conflicts on the Jos-Plateau.

### **Concept of Colonialism**

The word colonialism evolved from the old English word *colonialist* and it denotes the practice of acquiring control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically. It is the domination of a people or area by a foreign state or nation. It is the policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country. The country or nation which is under the control of another foreign nation is known as a colony of that dominating country.

According to Dibia (2010), colonialism is an imposition of a more developed culture on a less developed one, backed up by expansionist and economic adventurism. In the same vein, Panpe (2001) sees it as activities of the western countries on developing nations in order to exploit resources for their selfish gain. In a different note, Ahmed (2017) sees it as an interaction between a colonial government and its colonies. From the above definitions, it can be deduced that colonialism is a practice by which a group of people, social construct or a nation state controls, directs and imposes taxes, or tribute on other people. The competition to search for market and sources for raw material in Europe was the primary factor that birthed colonialism. It was this same act that led to the scramble for the partition of Africa during the Berlin conference of 1884. The British government in the later part of 18 century-controlled area that was later called Nigeria and many other states (Ghana, Seira-Leon, Gambia, etc.) in Africa.

### **Concept of Conflict**

Conflict arises from the pursuit of divergent interests, goals and aspirations by individuals or groups in defined social and physical environments. Change in the social environment, such as access to new political position, or perceptions of new resources arising from development in the physical environment, are fertile grounds for conflicts involving individuals and groups who are interested in using these new resources to achieve their goals. By thus, recognizing the inherent nature of conflict in heterogeneous and competitive situations, people, more or less compellingly, sustain their societies as ongoing social system through the resolution, transformation and management of conflicts (Cinjel & Akende, 2015). One of the most quoted traditional definitions of conflict regards it as “a struggle over values claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure, or eliminate their rivals” (Coser, 1999:

10). In the same direction, Park and Burgess (cited in Abdu, 2010) argue that “conflict is designed to resolve divergent dualism and achieve some kind of unity even if it is through the annihilation of one of the conflicting parties” .

Conflict may not be regarded only in a negative light of dysfunctional or disjunctive process and a breakdown of communication as some scholars tend to suggest (Lundberg, 1999; Clark & Dear, 2004). Conflict is a conscious act involving personal or group contact and communication. Together with, though distinct from competition, struggle, and contest, etc. conflict is a normal process of interaction particularly in complex societies in which resources are usually scarce. Although, conflict may generally exist “wherever incompatible activities occur” (Deutsch, 1999:156), and may result in a win-lose situation; the resolution, transformation and management of conflict may produce a “win-win” outcome.

Hence Coser (1999: 10) elaborate definition of conflict becomes a useful clarification:

*Social conflict may be defined as a struggle over values or claims to status, power, and scarce resources, in which the aims of the conflicting parties are not only to gain the desired values but also to neutralize, injure, or eliminate their rival. Such conflict may take place between individuals, between collectivities, or between individuals and collectivities. Inter-group as well as intra-group conflicts are perennial features of social life.*

Conflict can hardly be discussed outside the concept of pluralism. As Smooha (cited in Abdu, 2010) points out, both pluralism and conflict are related in complex ways. Furnivally (1999) subscribed that plural societies are vulnerable to conflicts and this is as a result of divergences in goals. He used the “Medley people”, a society in *Burma* and *Java*, where *Europeans*, *Chinese Indians* and the indigenous groups were perceived to “mix but, do not combine,” to depict a situation of co-existing diverse and cultural arrangements involving dominance and subordination in the same social setting. This idea of pluralism was picked up for systematic and serious analysis by several scholars, for example, Gluckman (cited in Ibrahim, 2007) and various contributors. Recent and current ideas of pluralism regard it as multidisciplinary and multidimensional, and defined it in the context of cultural diversity and social segmentation of an encapsulating society. A plural society is thus, characterized by co-existing but distinct cultural diversities and compulsory social institutions which determine and guide the individual and group behaviour of the incorporated people. As we shall examine later in this study, Nigeria and Plateau State in particular, the setting for this research work is a plural society. Here, there are group intercultural encounters in the process of fostering specific interests and aspirations in view of the limited common resources. In Nigeria, like in other plural societies, it is necessary to direct the analysis of conflicts to involve various cultures and strategic social institutions in the society. In this way, we can more comfortably and assuredly assist parties in conflict to identify and eliminate systemic problems in the course of the resolution, transformation and management of conflicts.

Therefore, conflict can simply be defined as an intrinsic and inevitable part of human existence and often occurred as a result of the pursuit of incompatible interest and goals by different groups. It takes place in the course of interaction between individuals and groups. Conflict mostly takes place because individuals and groups are seeking to achieve goals and objectives, or to fulfill certain desires which may be scarce and which others are also seeking or are reluctant to share with others

### **History of Jos North**

The creation of Jos, with its focus on tin, a valuable resource, would inevitably attract immigrants from all over Nigeria with a broad spectrum of religious persuasions. The growth of the tin mining industry created a further problem:

*The development of mining in the Jos areas brought a large turbulent stranger population whom the native Chiefs could not control. In addition, the mining companies were anxious to control their own mining camps and were not to allow these to be placed under indigenous Chiefs. In consequence the colonial authorities created a system of dual administration in Berom land by which the indigenes came under the direct administration of political officers, while the mining camps and stranger settlements which had grown up were placed under a Native Administration headed by the Bunu, a vassal of the Emir of Bauchi. The Bunu's position was described as being somewhat like that of a District Head, but with scattered units of the mining camps and markets as his "Villages". Some hopes were initially entertained that the Bunu might inspire sufficient confidence amongst the native so as to create a model for indirect rule; but this was never realised. (Nyam & Jacobs 2004: 5)*

The Bunu died in 1917 and the British deposed his successor in 1921 for abuse of his position. An alternative arrangement was not devised until 1927 after the creation of Plateau Province out of Bauchi Province. The stranger settlements were divided into four groups – *Jos, Bukuru, Gurum and Gana Ropp* –each with a Hausa headman and an *Alkali* court. This system survived until the 1940s when the Hausa settlements were absorbed by the Berom Native Authority (Moses, 2014). The British, meanwhile, had considerable difficulty in identifying any kind of centralized authority other than their own to pull the Jos natives together into a single political unit. Jos Division was administered directly by District Officers dealing with each village separately. Indeed, the lack of a coherent administration and administrative policy in Berom land and other non-Muslim areas was a key factor in the decisions that led to the separation of Plateau from Bauchi Province in 1926 (Sani,2014).

Despite a series of investigations and reports, the British authorities did not agree on a system for administering the Jos region until 1935. The decision to revive the institution of Gbong Gwom in 1947 was taken in response to growing agitation by the educated elite of Berom society (Saleh, 2015). After the war, some of them had set up an organization called the Berom Progressive Union (BUP) to fight in particular for land rights, including

increased land compensation and the rehabilitation of ex-mining land. Government taxes and the shortage of agricultural land; leading many communities to become increasingly dependent on mine labour, and the commoditization of land was accompanied by a growth in landlessness (Saleh,2015). At the same time, Christian missions and especially the Sudan United Mission (SUM) were beginning to undermine older beliefs as well as produce an educated class that was prepared to challenge the existing order. Nyam and Jacobs (2004: 19) write “The British who had hitherto been complaining about the conservatism and parochialism of the native chiefs found themselves faced with a 'sudden political awakening' of the native”. They therefore acquiesced to the senior chief's request for a new permanent president of the Tribal Council, preferably an educated man who could represent their interests in the House of Chiefs in Kaduna (Saleh, 2015).

**Table 1:** Evolution of Jos North

Landmark	Year
Bauchi Province	1912
Plateau Province	1929
Jos North Creation	1993
Elevation of Gbong Gwom Jos	1948
First Riot	1994
First Conflict	1997
Appointment of Godongs	2001
First Election in Jos North	2007
1 <sup>st</sup> Elected Hausa Chairmen	2018

**Source:** Researchers' Survey, 2023

Rwang Pam was a school headmaster and *BUP* member who had already been appointed to the Northern House of Assembly to represent non-Muslims in Plateau Province. He was acceptable to all of the major parties involved, including the British, and was duly selected by the Tribal Council to be its president. Unlike his predecessor, the second Gbong Gwom was given real executive powers and an office in Jos with easy access to the District Officer. In the following year, 1948, he also took over the position of *Sarkin Jos* when the last of the line of Hausa headmen died (Moses, 2014). Jos town was given a town council headed by a president (the *Magajin Gari*), while each of the three principal ethnic groups – Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba – was given a *Wakili*. This was the culmination of a long-standing policy of bringing stranger settlements into the Berom Native Authority. This policy and its implementation were also to have long-term significance, and form an important part of the background to the eruption of the Jos crisis in September 2001. In 1949, the Gbong Gwom, Rwang Pam was made a “chief in council” as a third-class chief. In 1952 he was given a six-member Executive Council and the Berom Tribal Council (*Gbong Duk Shot*) was reduced in overall size by cutting down the number of participating chiefs from over 80 to just 17 senior chiefs who represented the constituent districts (Saleh, 2015).

**Historical Overview of Conflicts in Plateau State**

Plateau State in recent time has been confronted with a phenomenal scale of ethno-religious conflicts. History has it that the seed of the discords were built right from the

colonial period and later showcased in larger scale in 1991, 1994, 1996, 1996, 1997 and 2001 onward (Cinjel & Akende, 2015). The discovery of tin and tin mining activities in Jos started in the later part of 18<sup>th</sup> century and these was ones of those factors that has ushered the ground for the mass ingress of Hausa/Fulani ethnic groups in Jos. Most of the Hausa /Fulani ethnic groups were from the modern states of Bauchi, Kano, Sokoto, Katsina, Jigawa and other neighbouring states (Cinjel & Akende, 2015). The British placed Jos under the old province of Bauchi and the leadership of the emir of the defunct Bauchi province. The emir appointed a Hausa man to represent him as a head among the Hausa/Fulani ethnic group. The representatives at the time sees themselves as superior to the native chiefs and do not any way account to them (Chentu, 2010).

These events were utterly resented by the indigenous groups and as a result, they campaigned seriously against the development. It was the agitations that made the colonial government to separate Jos from the Bauchi Province in 1926. This gave way to the emanation of Chief Rwang Pam, as the first chief of Jos. This appointment did not gain the support of the Hausa/Fulani who were predominantly Muslims (Chentu, 2010). In 1987, a Muslim politician, Alhaji Saleh Hassan began to campaign to the Hausa/Fulani who reside in Jos ( known as Jasawa ) to advocate for the recovery of the Chieftaincy of Jos as their right, citing the instance of the Bauchi Province as alibi ( Cinjel & Akende, 2015).

The violent conflict of 1994 started on 12<sup>th</sup> of April and this is as a result of the disagreement over the appointment of Alhaji Aminu Mato as the chairman of the caretaker management committee of Jos North Local Government Area during the military regime of Abacha in 1994. Mato was believed to be a Hausa -Fulani from Bauchi State and this thus re-ignited the old antagonism between the Berom, Anaguta, and Afizere on the one hand and the Hausa/Fulani on the other hand. The appointment of Jasawa as the chairman of Jos North Local Government Area by the then muslim military administrator of the state at the time was interpreted by the indigenous groups as attempts to subjugate them under Islamic religion. Hence, they decided to protest against it which led to the suspension of the appointment of Mato. The Jasawa were hurt and decided to take the law into their hands few days later as they went on rampage killing, maiming, burning, looting and causing unquantified havoc (Chentu, 2010).

In the same year, there was inter-ethnic conflict between the Mwaghavul and the Ron people over land ownership in a bordered area called "Mushu". In the violent conflict, a lot of persons lost their lives and houses, and a lot were displaced and agricultural products suffer untold devastation. In 1996, business functions came to an abrupt halt again in Jos on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March following a clash between Muslims and Christians near the central mosque in the Jos city. The confrontation was as a result of the tension that had developed right from the death of *Azi Chai*, a 35-year-old Afizere Christian who was killed by the Hausa /Fulani Muslim during the nation-wide elections. *Azi Chai* met his death on the ground that he challenged some Muslim youths over multiple voting in a locality known as Angwan Rogo, a community dominated by the Hausa /Fulani who are



predominantly Muslims. This scenario contributed in building tense and suspicious relationship between the indigenous ethnic groups who are predominantly Christians and the Hausa /Fulani who are chiefly Muslims (Cinjel & Akende, 2015).

The conflict conflagrated following the attempt by the Christians to bring his corpse by Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN, Jos Chapter) at the COCIN Church, Sarkin Mangu Street. Public roads were closed and barricaded to avoid interruption during Juma'a Prayer and the already infuriated and enraged Christians dismantled the barricades which thus led to a fresh confrontation (Chentu, 2010). In the confrontation, many people were injured and properties estimated at millions of Naira were destroyed in the conflict (Chentu, 2010). Also, in 1996, there was also an inter-ethnic conflict between Pyem and the Mwaghavul people of the same local government area (Mangu). The casus belli of the conflict were land ownership and headship of border communities. In the conflict, a lot of persons and houses were destroyed. A year after, i.e. 10<sup>th</sup> April of 1997, *Gyero*, a community in Jos South experienced another violent conflict. This was between the Berom ethnic group and the Hausa/Fulani. The basis of the conflict was as a result of the pilfering of agricultural products of a Fulani man by two (2) suspected Berom men. In the violent conflict, it was reported that about 16 people were killed and over a hundred people were injured (Human Right Watch, 2010). In addition, 26 houses with their content and 8 vehicles were burnt while 10 other vehicles were damaged (Best, 2010). The creation of Jos South Local Government Area and the edict which conferred on the settlers in the area the status of indigene after they have stayed for 20 years were also one of the major intensifying factors in the conflict

The worse conflict occurred in 2001 and it was two days before the 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2001 incident in the United States of America. In the conflict, several immediate factors led to the eruption of the violence. First, similar to the 1994 case, the appointment of a Muslim, one Alhaji Muhammad *Muktar Usman*, as the coordinator of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), a federal government programme, was vehemently opposed by the indigenous population who demanded that his appointment be reversed on the ground that he was a settler and not an indigene of the State. The inscriptions and handbills pasted by the indigenous youth opposed to his appointment and the subsequent ones pasted by the Muslim youths in response to the appointment further exacerbated the situation (Chentu, 2010).

The Christian youths who saw themselves as indigenes wrote and pasted: "If you can't read, at least you know the sign above means: Dangerrrr!", "trace your roots, before it is too late", "the devil has no parking space in Jos North", "I believe you will like to take care of your family, boy! Run for your life. Run! Run!! Run!!!", "you are warned once again not to step in", "Please go and tell them you are not interested anymore because your life is at stake", "this office is not meant for Hausa/Fulani or any non-indigene", "go and teach Islamic Knowledge, it is better", "Muktar Muhammad is a wanderer. If you want to stay alive don't step in", "if you have forgotten about 1997, we have not. Don't let history repeat itself" (Chentu, 2010)

A group that called itself *Hausa/Fulani Youths under 25* also issued provocative pamphlets and handbills, pasted and widely circulated. Some of them read, "Death is the best friend of Hamas. Be rest-assured that we will do it better", "the seat is dearer to us than our lives. In any case, do you have monopoly of violence?", "blood for blood", "yes, the loss of a few families wouldn't bother us. After all, for every single Anaguta's life and their families, there are thousands of other Hausa/Fulani. Let's see who blinks first", "yes, the devil has no parking space in Jos North. Frank Tardy is already doing it for him", "resolved never to be passive again if we are subjected to tyranny and injustice", "Jos North Local Government is not only historically located in the Middle of our community but was actually created absolutely at our request. Ironically, they are now claiming to be the only indigenes vested with rights and privileges at our expense. Is this justified"? etc. Secondly, Christians were said to have burnt a mosque in retaliation for the beating of a Christian woman who protested the blocking of Enugu Road by Muslim worshippers during their Friday Juma'a prayer.<sup>1</sup> Thirdly, the indigenous Christian population became increasingly nervous of losing their heritage when the *Jasawa* began to distribute pamphlets in which they continued to lay claim to Jos as their own (Cinjel & Akende, 2015).

These pamphlets also coincided with the local government elections that were at the corner in which the Hausa-Fulani of the *Jasawa Development Association* were calling on the Muslims including non-Muslims of the Jos North Local Government Area to vote a Muslim as the next Council Chairman. These immediate factors were said to be responsible for throwing Jos into another violent conflict which later spilled over to other parts of the state including even far away Kano and Onitsha. The once acclaimed "home of peace and tourism" suddenly became "home of pieces and terrorism," or "home of battle and bloodshed" as some writers put it (Chentu, 2010).

As indicated, these disputes are not a new phenomenon in Jos-Bukuru, but until 2001, they had not led to large-scale loss of life. The September 7, 2001 clash which left around 1,000 people dead in just six days in Jos and *Bukuru* (Jos South) was followed by other clashes that were not limited to the immediate vicinities where they were triggered: Vwang on New Year day, *Kwall* in *Miango* District of *Bassa* Local Government Area in February, 2002, The Jos Ultra-Modern Market in March, 2002, the PDP ward congress in Jos in May and the Yelwa incident in July which spread to *Shendam*, *Langtang South*, *Langtang North*, *Wase* and *Kanam* Local Government Areas. These clashes left casualty figures in their hundreds. Churches, mosques and residential buildings were reduced to ashes by tongues of fire, not to talk of the displacement of over 100,000 people. All these happened for just one reason: the battle for supremacy between Hausa-Fulani settlers and the indigenes, exploited by religious bigots and political opportunists (Human Right Watch, 2002).

The old wounds between "indigenes" and "settlers" pitted Christians and Muslims against one another as both sides exploited religion as an effective way of mobilizing large-scale support. The violence continued unabated throughout 2002 and 2003 with attacks and counter-attacks. Most of the violence which followed after the initial ones,

from 2002 to 2004, can be seen as directly or indirectly connected to the events in Jos. While Jos became relatively calmer, the violent attacks in *Wase, Langtang North, Langtang South, Shendam, Yelwa, Mikang, Qua'an Pan, Barkin Ladi, and Riyom* intensified. The areas around *Wase, Langtang North and Langtang South* and *Yelwa* were badly affected, and hundreds of people were believed to have been killed in 2002 and 2003. Witnesses interviewed by Human Rights Watch described three major outbreaks of violence in Yelwa town: the first on June 26, 2002, the second on February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2004, and the third on May 2-3, 2004 (Cinjel & Akende, 2015).

The violence reached a peak between February and May, 2004 in the area around the towns of *Yelwa* and *Shendam*. There were many attacks during this period, but two stood out in terms of their scale, the number of victims and the level of preparation and organization. On 24 February, 2004, armed Muslims killed more than seventy-five Christians in *Yelwa*; at least forty-eight of them were killed inside a church compound. Then, on May 2 and 3, large numbers of well-armed Christians surrounded the town of *Yelwa* and killed around seven hundred Muslims and widespread destruction took place in different parts of Yelwa town, including *Angwan Galadima, Angwan Murtala, Motor Park, Angwan Jukun, Angwan Iya, Angwan Galambi*, and the area around the cattle market at *Zango*. Numerous houses, shops, Mosques, and other buildings were burnt throughout the town. Muslims who escaped fled to neighboring Nasarawa and Bauchi States, rather than to other parts of Plateau State. Likewise, those who were injured in the May attack sought treatment in hospitals in those two states, rather than in the Plateau State capital, Jos (Chentu, 2010).

One week later, i.e. on May 11 and 12, Muslims in the northern city of Kano took revenge for the *Yelwa* attack and turned against Christian residents of Kano, leaving between two hundred and fifty people dead. The majority of the dead were Christians killed by armed Muslims seeking revenge for the events in Yelwa. Killings and destruction took place in several parts of the town, starting in *Gyadi-Gyadi, Court Road* and *Hausawa Zoo Road*, then spreading to other areas, including *Sharada* and *Shagari Quarters, Chal1awa, Panshekara, Doreyi, Ja'en, Tukum Kawa, Riyijar Lemo, Kabuga*, and *B.U.K Road* (the road leading to Bayero University Kano) (Human Right Watch, 2008).

During two days of violence in Kano, Christians were hunted down and killed, their houses, churches and other buildings were burnt. A Muslim journalist commented that unlike previous outbreaks of violence in Kano, some of which had been more economically than religiously motivated, this time “they were just out to kill. The primary aim was killing. Looting was incidental.” When the security forces eventually intervened, supposedly to quell the riots, the death toll rose even further, as police and soldiers killed dozens more people, most of them Muslims. The total number of people killed in Plateau State since 2001 has not been confirmed, but on the basis of its own research, Human Rights Watch (2001) believes that between 2,000 and 3,000 people were killed between September 2001 and May 2004. Christians were disappointed when on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2004, two weeks after the *Yelwa massacre*; President Obasanjo declared a state of emergency in

Plateau State. He suspended the State Governor, *Joshua Dariye*, the deputy governor, and the state house of assembly, and appointed an Interim Administrator, retired Major General *Chris Alli*, to run the state for a six-month period.

On June 1, the National Assembly passed eight new regulations, called Emergency Powers Regulations which gave the Administrator and the security forces in Plateau State sweeping new powers, including the power to detain people without a written order, to conduct searches without a warrant, and to ban public processions, demonstrations or public meetings. In his public broadcast on the state of emergency, President Obasanjo described the situation in parts of Plateau State as “near mutual genocide.” He blamed the continuing violence on Governor Dariye, declaring:

*As at today, there is nothing on ground and no evidence whatsoever to show that the State Governor has the interest, desire, commitment, credibility and capacity to promote reconciliation, rehabilitation, forgiveness, peace, harmony and stability. If anything, some of his utterances, his lackadaisical attitude and seeming uneven-handedness over the salient and contending issues present him as not just part of the problem, but also as an instigator and a threat to peace ... His personal conduct and unguarded utterances have inflamed passions.*

Many organizations, including civil society groups and lawyers in Lagos, Abuja, and other cities far from Plateau State, denounced the move as unconstitutional and a violation of democracy. Within Plateau State, reactions quickly became polarized. Christians accused the president of being one-sided, complaining that he had only declared a state of emergency' when Muslims were the victims; some suggested that in order to be evenhanded, the president should also have declared a state of emergency in Kano in response to the May 2004 killings of Christians in the area. Many felt this way because it came to public notice that Muslim leaders in Kano had given the President a seven-day ultimatum to end the killings in Plateau State, warning that if he didn't, he would have himself to blame for the consequences. When the emergency was declared, many Muslims, on the other hand, received the news positively and interpreted it as a sign that the Federal Government was finally taking the situation seriously. Dariye returned back to the post of Governor of Plateau state on November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2004 when the state of emergency was lifted (Human Right Watch, 2004).

Because the real issues were not dealt with, the violence broke out again on the 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2008. This time around, the excuse was an alleged rigged election. What actually happened was that elections for local government chairperson and councilors including that of Jos North Local Government Area were conducted state-wide on the 27th November, 2008. The elections were concluded peacefully, reported afterwards in the evening of the same day by the media outfits that covered the elections as the most peacefully conducted election in the history of the state. Everyone, supposedly, went to sleep not expecting that something would happen. While the results of Jos North Local Government Area were still being collated and counted with no clear winner announced,

some Muslim youths went on a rampage claiming that the elections were rigged. Their excuse was that the election, especially that of the chairman, had been rigged against their preferred choice (Human Right Watch, 2008).

### **The Divide and Rule Thesis**

The study adopted the divide and rule thesis as the theoretical underpinning of the study. Divide and rule which in Latin is *divide impera* is a policy and a strategy that is attributed to Philip II of Macedon in the 384BC. The practice of the technique was linked to many empires and sovereign; ranging from Louis of France to the House of Habsburg. It was developed by several scholars – Niccolo Machiavelli in his *Art of War* in 1521, Francis Bacon in 1615, Thomas Jefferson 1787, Immanuel Kant 1797 and many others. It has wider application; it can be exploited in foreign policy, politics or governance, psychology, sociology and psychopath of workplace.

The use of this technique is meant to empower the sovereign to control the subjects, populations or faction of different interest who collectively may be able to oppose its rules. It is the perfect theory that leaders exploit in a heterogeneous society and in workplace to win, dominate and control. Divide and rule has never work in a homogenous setting or a group that members have singular goal.

The tenets of the theory are:

- a. Creating and encouraging divisions among the subjects to prevent alliance that could challenge the sovereign and disturbing forces that they may overpower the other.
- b. Aiding and promoting those who are willing to cooperate within the sovereign.
- c. Creating meaningless distraction to gain control and relevance

### **Justification for the Adoption of the Theory**

- i. It is the only theory that provides a sufficient explanation on colonialism and several challenges of development in most societies.
- ii. It is the best theory that linked control, domination and governance
- iii. The theory also provides sufficient explanation on how the differences in heterogeneous societies are exploited by leaders and the colonial master.
- iv. It is the only theory that can be exploited to prevent revolt in a heterogeneous society or workplace.

### **Relevance of the Theory to the Study**

Some of the relevance of the theory to the study is as follows:

- a. The colonial master uses the strategies embodied in the theory to exploit natural resources (tin, coal, columbite, etc.) in Jos. The Hausa-Fulani group was empowered; they were made to believe that they were the superior group. The colonial master through the emir of Bauchi Province appoints leaders in mines; who were later misconstrued as the leader of host community.
- b. The colonial government was after the natural resources on the Jos-Plateau. This

can be seen in how the rail line was laid to Jos and other areas with one resource or the other. The colonial government empowered the Hausa-Fulani group at the mine over the natives. They called the native group the Pagans and did not recognize them at the start, till it has succeeded in achieving its goals. They attempt to correct the mistake by differentiating between leadership of the area from that of the mine is what laid the foundation of the Jos conflict.

- c. The Hausa-Fulani group came on the Jos Plateau to mine. The colonial policy did not provide a spatial policy on resettlement after the mining activities and identity definition of who actually are the native and how the immigrants can co-exist with the native without conflict. After the colonial government has achieved its goal, there was no any plan and policy to resettle the immigrant. The Hausa- Fulani group remained in the area and sees themselves as the aborigine.
- d. The claim on who is an indigene and who is not, kept re-appearing. This gave rise to the issue of exclusion, marginalization and mutual distrust. The administration of Ibrahim Babangida Badamasi in 1993 carved a settlement that is predominantly Hausa group and named it *Jos North*. The local government is characteristically dominated by the Hausa group and it is the hub of the city. The indigenous groups were not happy about the development and it is as a result of this that elections were not held in the local government. The governors prefer to constitute a caretaker committee than to call for an election; the simple reason is that the Hausa group being the settler group and the majority will win. The refusal not to conduct the election is seen as an attempt to stop the Hausa group while the Hausa group sees it as exclusion, marginalization and the denial of their right.

## Results and Discussions

- a. It was in the 19 centuries, the Hausa ethnic group from the present states of *Katsina, Kano, Zaria, Kaduna, Bauchi* and other groups from *Chad, British Cameroon, Niger* came to Jos as labourers in the mining camps. There were other ethnic groups like the Yoruba, Igbo, Ijaw and many others (Cyprian-Ekwensi, 1970). The Hausa ethnic groups were the predominant group and were considered as the most civilized among others. They came and found the native groups- *Buji, Berom, Naraguta* and the *Afizere*. They were called the pagan group by the Hausa and the colonial government. The colonial government gives more prominence to the Hausa ethnic group over the native group. The native where called pagan by the colonialists, a name the heard and learned from the Hausa ethnic group. The indigenous where not pagan as it was said, they have their traditional religion. A *pagan* is some one that has no religion and it is offensive when it is applied on someone who has a religion.
- b. There was no any plan and policy by the colonial government to dispatch or to resettle the mass number of labourers who came to the Jos for mining. Discernment was not made inform of defining who is a settler and an indigene, the vacation of labourers after the mining, and those provisions and conditions that would warrant the immigrant to live together with the indigenes as it is in other

societies. The area was left like a free area; it belonged to no one and anyone can come and stay. The failure to define this policy made the immigrant to assume the status of indigene. This was further complicated by the Nigerian constitution that has also failed to define who is a settler and who is an indigene in an area. The Nigerian constitution for long kept recognizing citizenship over indigene and this kept breeding room for indigene-settlers conflict in the country.

- c. Since 1912, the Plateau regions were classified as Bauchi province by the colonial government. Areas in Plateau State pay homage and gives tribute to the emir of Bauchi. The emir of Bauchi has influence over the Plateau areas during the colonial government. The emir of the Bauchi province was allowed to choose the *Sarkin Hausa* in the mining camp and he has his representative in the camps which are called the *Bunu Bauchi* and *Barde Bauchi*. The *Sarkin Hausa* is just a leader of the Hausa in the mining camp. Beside the *Sarkin Hausa*, there were other *Sarkin* such as the *Sarkin Naraguta*, *Sarkin Jos* (Pagan), *Sarkin Bukuru* (Pagan). These were in the circular No 24p/1916 and were gazette in the native Authority ordinance No.44 vol.9 of 17 August 1922. The *Bunu Bauchi* and *Barde Bauchi* were vassals' chiefs who were assigned by the emir of Bauchi to run errands for him in the mining camps. The arrival of *Bunu* and *Barde* at the *Anaguta* settlement of *Naraguta* at the instance of the Emir of Bauchi was for the purpose of administering members of the Hausa community who had come in as tin-mining labourers. The appointment of the two representative and other Hausa headmen was purely an act of administrative convenience to facilitate activities of the Hausa labourers in the mining camps. It was not an endorsement of a full-fledged traditional rulership of settler on the native.
- d. The lack of spatial plan and policy to disperse the immigrants who came as labourers led to the population outburst of the immigrant at some areas that were later carved as Jos North. The creation of Jos North in 1993 and how it was carved out from the main area was also one of the major issues that kept contributing to the conflict in Jos and its environs. The native who are the *Naraguta*, the *Afizere* and the *Birom* were lumped together in what was called Jos south and the Hausa group in their settlement was called Jos North. The Jos North is a local government area with one district and 19 wards i.e. *Abba Na Shehu*, *Garba Daho*, *Gangare*, *Ibrahim Kastina*, *Jenta Apata*, *Jos Jarawa*, *Naraguta A*, *Naraguta B*, *Sarkin Arab*, *Tafawa Balewa*, *Tudunwada*, *Kabong*, *Vandapuye*, *Amanza*, *Regiza*, *Targun*, *Lamingo*, *Anguwan Rogo* and *Anguwan Remi*. The pattern in which the carved local government was designed was primarily to give the Hausa group an enhanced political leverage. The indigene became minority while the settler becomes the majority. It is one of the local governments in Nigeria that the number of the settlers outnumbered the indigene. The indigenous group were not happy about the development. The Hausa group on the other hand saw this rather as an answered prayer for their ambition to hold on the economic and political control of the area. In 1994, col. *Mohammed Mana* appointed *Alhaji Sanusi Mato* as the caretaker chairman of the

local government in 1994 and this was what led to the April 12, 1994 riot of the indigenous group and the Bukuku/Gyero conflict of 1997. In 2001, Dariye did not conduct election in the area and rather appointed *Sam Godongs* as the caretaker committee. This is what led to the conflict of 2001 in Jos and other local government areas in the state. In 2007, Jonah Jang conducted an election and the PLASEC announced Timothy *Gyang Buba* as the elected chairman. The Hausa group sees the development as an insult and unacceptable. They believe that there was no way someone would emerge as a winner in an area that they have the overwhelming population and besides that the said winner was once an elected counselor in a different local government (Jos South)

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The seed of the conflict of Jos North Local Government of Plateau state is dated back to the colonial period. The colonial government came to the area and discovers that the area was rich with tin, coal and columbite. They introduced the exploration and it was what led to the large influx of immigrants from different part of the country and even outside the country. At the time, the Hausa group was the predominant ethnic group in the North and it was given more prominence over the other groups. The colonial government ruled the Plateau area through the Bauchi Province before the Plateau Province was later created in 1929. The colonial government treated the indigenous people as pagans and allowed different group to have their leaders in the mining camp; a move that was later misconstrued as chiefs of the area. The colonial government also failed to provide plan and policy to displace the labourers that came in the mining camp after the period of mining. There was no definition of identity on the basis of who is an indigene and a settler. It was the outburst of the population of the settlers' settlement and the subsequent carving of the area as *Jos North* that deepens the Jos conflict. The indigenous groups were lumped together in a particular area and were made to become minority in Jos North; a treatment they see as unfair and unjust. It was from the creation of the local government and the appointment of *Mato*, the riot of the indigenous group in 1994 and the appointment of *Gordongs* that other conflicts were built. The following recommendations were proffered:

- a. The Nigerian constitution should define in clear and precise term who is an indigene and who is a settler within the shore of the country. This will go a long way to control and reduce indigene-settler divide in the country.
- b. It is only in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State that the settlers group outnumbered the indigenes. Scientifically, mathematically and politically, election is a game of number and there is no way the Hausa group would contest and lose the local government election in Jos North. They have the population and will continue to win if election is to be conducted in a free and fair manner. The Hausa group that have become the majority should accept the fact that they are not the indigenous group and should stop contesting ownership of the area with the natives; this will go a long way to prevent occurrence of conflict.
- c. For peace to reign, democratic practice and principles should be upheld. The constitution of caretaker committee and rigging of election to please a particular group over the other should be discouraged. The creation of areas to promote



gerrymandered practices should be discouraged. Mutuality, balancing and zoning should be practiced

- d. Individuals and groups should respect the customs and traditions of their host communities. In a similar vein, the host communities should accord recognition to the culture, custom and traditions of the settlers' communities. The spirit of mutual co-existence should in a reciprocal manner be demonstrated.

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