

## The Role of Emirate Councils in promoting inter-faith relationship in Northwestern Nigeria

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### Abstract

*Emirate Councils in Northwestern Nigeria constitutes crucial resources that have the potential to promote grassroots governance and ensured socio economic development and religious impact through inter-faith dispute resolution. They are also the unified institutions that bring people of different religious and ethnic background together for peace and security of the region. Yet they were provided with limited powers by the government. Provision of resolution is miracles that exist in Northwestern emirate councils of Nigeria. The effectiveness of inter-faith dispute resolution by the emirates has become engrained in Islamic culture as such Muslim emirates inherited the Islamic legacy of settling disputes among people. This paper examines the socio economic and religious impact of inter-faith dispute resolution by the Emirate council of northwestern Nigeria. which includes; inter-faith consultation and counseling, justice and fairness, peace and unity, free and competitive inter-faith trade and commerce, and inter-faith tolerance etc. The paper reflects on the fact that Islam establishes inter-faith dispute settlement as means of establishing peace and provided the ideological foundation of the emirates in northern Nigeria. The paper point out to a rising appreciation of the impact of the emirate councils in the search for peace and mutual understanding. And their support in the fight against security challenges from grass roots level. This research is qualitative in nature. Both primary and secondary source of data were utilized. The primary data were personal interview. While the secondary data were source from textbooks, journals, internet and articles. This research concluded that effort of emirates on dealing with inter-faith disputes should be appreciated and there is need for the Government to assign formal role and support to the emirates that can facilitate their inter-faith reconciliation role and other social issues that can restore the peaceful co-existence of the country in general.*

**Key words:** Role, Emirate, Council, Inter-faith, Relationship.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
الحمد لله والصلاة والسلام على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم

### Introduction

Northwestern Nigeria has been embedded with inter-faith dispute of varying degrees from grass root such as religious dispute, domestic dispute, Debt dispute, land dispute among others which if allowed would continue to escalate into major conflicts which may aggravate the much needed social cohesion for inter religious co-operation, growth and development. Over the years, the Northern

states of Adamawa, Sokoto, Katsina, Kaduna, Kano etc., have experienced reoccurring violent of inter religious riots leading to death of thousands of people and destruction of property.<sup>1</sup>

This can be attributed to lack of enhancing the role of Emirate in tackling issues of inter-faith dispute resolution as instrument for peace among adherents of religious in the Northwestern region. Northwestern Nigeria is one of the geopolitical zones of Nigeria consistent of seven (7) states of Katsina, Kano, Kaduna, Jigawa, Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara. This paper would limit to three selected emirate Councils of Katsina, Sokoto and Kaduna (Zazzau Emirate). The paper covers discussion on the role of Emirate Council in promoting inter-faith relationship in Northwestern Nigeria.

### Meaning of the Concept

1. Inter-faith dispute resolution is a term that refers to number of processes that can be used to resolve inter-faith dispute or claim.<sup>2</sup> In other word it refers to co-operative and positive interaction between people of different religious faith.<sup>3</sup>
2. Sulh (Negotiation or Mediation): Sulh is an agreement made by two parties on the grounds of specific terms that have been agreed upon during the resolution process. It is the process to stop the disputes.<sup>4</sup>
3. *Tahkim* (Arbitration);The word *Tahkim*<sup>5</sup> means, to entrust a third party neutral to adjudicate the dispute. In other words, *Tahkim* comes to the function when both disputing parties agree to appoint an arbitrator to settle the dispute that may raise or has arisen among them.<sup>6</sup>
4. *Tasaamuh*. is an Arabic word for tolerance. The word tolerance itself also has a lot of understanding. The essence of *Tasaamuh* or tolerance is actually to maintain personal opinions of others whether it's from all aspects of life, religions, culture, social conditions, nationality and society.<sup>7</sup>

### ISLAM AND INTER-FATH DISPUTE RESOLUTIONS

Islam is a complete way of life; a religion, an ethic, and a legal system all in one. The rule for dispute resolution in Islam is a combination of both authoritative sets of rules and regulation and general principle. The purpose of this rule is to provide an environment for dispute resolution among people in Northwestern Nigeria. It is believed that, in Islam inter-faith dispute resolution has religious sanctity because its practice is originated from Qur'an and was embraced from the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him)<sup>8</sup>. The idea of inter-faith dispute resolution is allowed in Islam except where it makes a thing unlawful (*haram*) as Lawful (*halal*) and Lawful(*halal*) as unlawful (*haram*).<sup>9</sup> The Prophet (Peace be upon him) acted upon these rules of inter-faith dispute resolutions and set many

<sup>1</sup> Eghosam E. Osaghae, and Robin T. Suberu, (2005) : *A History of Identities, Vileness and Stability in Nigeria*, Crises center for research on in equality, human security and Ethnicity Abuja.

<sup>2</sup> [www.americanbar.org/group/dispute-resolution.com](http://www.americanbar.org/group/dispute-resolution.com). Retrieved on 10<sup>th</sup> August, 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Lieberman, J. et al, (1986): *Lesson from the Alternative Dispute Resolution Movement*, University of Chicago law review 53(2), 424.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. P. 26.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, P.27

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, P. 27.

<sup>7</sup> [www.notesread.com>tasamuh-tolerance-islam...](http://www.notesread.com>tasamuh-tolerance-islam...) retrieved on 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2020.

<sup>8</sup> Johnston, Rizzo, R A(2003) *Return from Tradition to Reform: The Shari'ah Appeal Court Rulings on child custody (1992-2001)*, Fordham International Law journal, P. 517.

<sup>9</sup> Sayed Khalid Rashid, (2008): *Peculiarities Religious underlining of ADR in Islamic Law*, Paper presented in Asia pacific mediation forum, Australia, P.1.

examples and developed devices to resolve disputes by peaceful method.<sup>10</sup> His Companions and their successors, Muslim jurists and administrators have consistently supported peaceful dispute resolution between Muslims and non-Muslims<sup>11</sup>.

Peaceful settlement in inter-faith dispute is encouraged regardless of religion of the parties involved in the dispute. Qur'an says:-

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا

People, we created you all from a single man and a single woman, and made you into races and tribes so that you should yet to know one another,(49:13)

The verse clearly indicates that, Islam call for embracing diversity and understanding each other. Islam has always encouraged inter-faith settlement for the sake of peace. According to the Qur'an:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ

Lo! Allah commanded you that ye restore deposits to their owners and, if ye judge between mankind that ye Judge justly. Qur'an:4:58

The Prophet (peace be upon him) reinforced importance of settlement of dispute in the Hadith Narrated by Umm khulthum bint Uqbah that she heard Allah's Apostle saying: Narrated Umm Kulthum bint Uqbah al-Umawiyah

He who make peace (*sulh*) between the people by inventing good information or saying good thing is not a liar.<sup>12</sup>

Prophet (peace be upon him) advised both Muslims and non-Muslim to refer their dispute to arbitration. One of the first non-Muslim that followed this advice was from the tribe of Bani Kornata<sup>13</sup>. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) acted both as an arbitrator and as a party who accepted the decision of an arbitrator. Another example of the use of inter-faith dispute resolution during the Prophet's time was a clause in the treaty of Madinah, the first treaty entered by the Muslims and non-Muslim Arabs and Jews signed in 672 C.E which called for disputes to be resolved by arbitration.<sup>14</sup>

Different schools of thought offered their opinion on the need of inter-faith dispute resolution in maintaining peace. Hanafi School confirmed that according to the Qur'an, Sunnah, Ijma and Qiyas, arbitration of dispute resolution it serves an important social need and it simplifies disputes. Maliki school emphasized on the need of arbitration resolution it contended that an arbitration decide a dispute based on his conscience, therefore, it allowed one of the disputing parties to be appointed as an arbitrator if he was chosen by the other party. Hanbali School

<sup>10</sup> Monjur, M. *An Analysis of the practices of Muhammad (PBUH) on resolving conflicts*, Journal of the Bangladesh Association of young Researchers, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2011), P.109-125.

<sup>11</sup> Fathi, K. (1996) *The Approach to mediation in the Arab world*, paper presented in the international conference of mediation, Geneva Switzerland, Pp.1-3..

<sup>12</sup> Muslim :: Book 32 : Hadith 6222) ( **Muslim:: Book 32 : Hadith 6303**. The Book of Virtue, Good Manners and Joining of the Ties of Relationship (Kitab Al-Birr was-Salat-I-wa'l-Adab)

<sup>13</sup> Sunan Dawud : Book 41 : Hadith 4902 General Behavior (Kitab Al-Adab).

<sup>14</sup> Sunan Dawud : Book 41 : Hadith 4902 General Behavior (Kitab Al-Adab).

viewed that the decision of the arbitrator has the same binding nature as a Court Judgment. While according to Shafi'I school confirmed the validity of arbitration by giving an example from history that shows Muslims referring dispute to the Caliph Umar bin al-Khattab(R.A) who acted as an arbitrator on many occasions.<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, the strategies adopted by the Prophet (peace be upon him) to settle inter-faith disputes were scientific and effective in nature that they can be used to maintain peace and prepare the country and the world to face the challenges of any inter-faith dispute in the modern world.

#### INTER-FAITH DISPUTE RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES BY THE EMIRATES IN NORTHWESTERN NIGERIA

In northwestern Nigeria, the principal of customary law is prevailing in the predominately Muslim community in Islamic customary law, which is in line with Shariah Law. The system of inter-faith dispute resolution therefore is structured according to Islamic Law<sup>16</sup>. In Northern Nigeria, Emirs head emirates. Each Emir had a court even though do not wield judicial power in most circumstances. Judicial power is usually wielded by the Alkali who administers Shari'ah Law.<sup>17</sup> The practices of inter-faith arbitration under the Maliki school applicable in Northern Nigeria is known as *Tahkim*, which is based on the injunction of the Qur'an encouraging the use of arbitration to settle dispute, this has also find support under the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him).<sup>18</sup>

The Emirates in Northwestern Nigeria utilizes this legality for solving its inter-faith dispute and creating vibrant. This has ensured a continued peaceful co-existence among people as well as the maintenance of social equilibrium of the society as a corporal whole. So is practice of inter-religious dispute resolution in Northern Nigeria.<sup>19</sup>

#### IMPACTS OF INTER-FAITH DISPUTE RESOLUTIONS BY THE EMIRATE COUNCILS IN NORTHWESTERN NIGERIA

The prefix "socio" refers to the study of the behaviors of people, including the ways they interact with one another. While the word 'economic', refers to the economy, such as peoples income and finances. Socio economic links financial and social issues together.<sup>20</sup>

The role of emirates and its manifestations in the control of inter-faith dispute resolutions in Northwestern Nigeria are often over looked and unsupported. Beside they render positive socio-economic impacts towards sustenance of inter-religious peace and unity in the region which foster national unity.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, P.15.

<sup>16</sup>Yusuf, S. (1982) *Nigerian Legal System*, The Shari'ah is the Muslim Legal code. The Primary Sources of Shari'ah are the Qur'an, The Sunnah (Practice of the Prophet (Peace be upon him), the Qiyas (analogical deductions) and Ijma (consensus of Islamic Jurists), National Publishing House, New Delhi Pp. 27,33

<sup>17</sup>.Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>There were instances where the Prophet (peace be upon him) was involved in arbitration. He was said to have appointed an arbitrator, submitted to the decision of an arbitrator and was bound by an arbitral award. And he also recommended the use of arbitration to settle disputes as in Abdulhamid, El-Ahdab, (1999), *Arbitration with Arab Countries*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Kluwer Law International, Hague.

<sup>19</sup> Daibu, A.A. (2012) *An Examination of the Rules of Natural and Equal treatment of parties in arbitration*, LLM thesis, submitted to Faculty of Law, University of Ilorin, P. 103.

<sup>20</sup> Vocabulary.com Dictionary. Retrieved from <https://www.vocabulary.com>. on 23/8/2020.

The precept of inter-faith dispute resolution by the Emirates is aimed to addresses all inter-faith cases and issues and tries to find amicable solution to them, the aim of which tries to harmonize the adherents of religions in such a way that their common features such compassion, tolerance, religious respect, brotherhood and inter cultural value and peace building among others. The paper analyzes such socio-economic and religious impacts as follows:

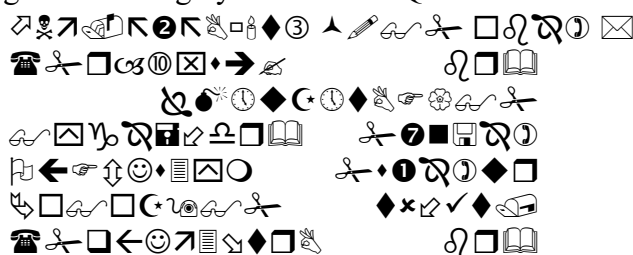
## 1. CONSULTATION AND COUNSELING.

The Emirates in Northwestern Nigeria teaches universal values through consultation and counseling to all religious adherents through inter-faith dispute resolution which are compatible to human nature and which in turn provide them with real happiness and can unify human kind peace.<sup>21</sup> This is the ideal legacy and practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him) when there was an increasing tension between the Muslims, Jews and other minorities which the Prophet (peace be upon him) earned a treaty of medina. This document not only helps to reduce tension but also shows the impact of reconciliation. The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not discriminate or marginalize people from different backgrounds, faith and ethnic groups, rather he embraced them all under the same common fact.<sup>22</sup>

Consultation is extremely important as such the Emirates use to invites religious leaders for consultation and counseling in dealing with inter-faith dispute. This practice gives the adherents of all religions confident to feel a sense of belonging to the Emirates,<sup>23</sup> bearing in mind that the Prophet (peace be upon him) established these principles among his followers by consulting them. He was reported to have said “whoever takes counsel, does not regret at the end”<sup>24</sup> in another occasion, the Jews of Madinah invited Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to dinner or Lunch several times and each time he gladly accepted their invitation.<sup>25</sup>

## 1. ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Justice is one of the most honorable principles urged by Islam. The question of Justice has no religious affiliation, Muslim or non-Muslim.<sup>26</sup> The Emirates exercises adherence to fair and just resolution in dealing with inter-faith cases bearing in mind the saying of the Almighty Allah in the Qur'an:



<sup>21</sup> Igbafe, I.M. (2003). *Traditional rulers as an Authority in local Government in Nigeria*, Ibadan, Spectrum Book Limited, P.21.

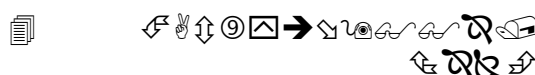
<sup>22</sup> Fethullah M.G. (2006). *Toward Global Civilization of Love and Tolerance*, Ney Jersey, USA, The light Publishing, P. 13.

<sup>23</sup> Interview with Prof. Sani Abubakar Lugga, 68, Wazirin Katsina, Katsina Emirate Council, 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2019, 11:30 am.

<sup>24</sup> Nur-al-Din Ali ibn Abi Baki-al-Haythami, (2001) *al-Majma al-Zawald wa mamba al-fawait*, Beirut, Labanon, Dar-al-Kutub al-Ilmivah. 2/280.

<sup>25</sup> Ahmad bn Hambal, Musnad, Vol. 5, Riyad: Darussalam, 2010

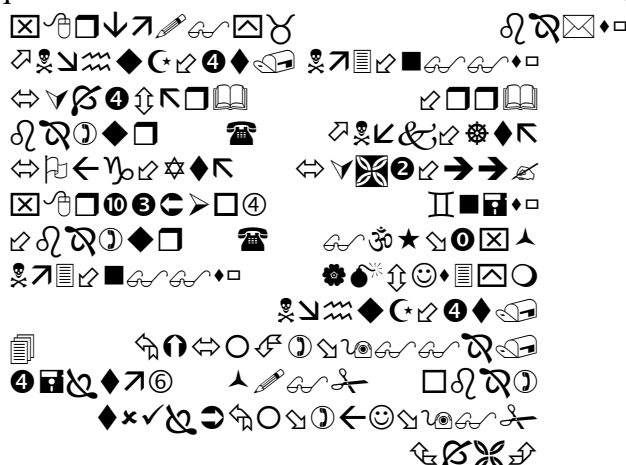
<sup>26</sup> Meftah, J.B.T. et.al. *National Unity and Development from Islamic Point of Views*, Middle East Journal of Scientific Research , Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 2012, Pp. 767-773.



Allah commands you to return trusts to their owners and if you were to judge between people judge with fairness. Qur'an 4:58.

This is because through returning the trusts and achieving justice result to security and stability.

In the emirate system of inter-faith dispute resolution non-Muslim seeking redress have an option to be judge with Shari'ah by the Emirates or not unless with their approval or requested for it.<sup>27</sup> This was also made clear in the Qur'an:



If they do come to thee, either judge between them, or decline to interfere. If thou decline, they cannot hurt thee in the least. If that judge, judge in equity between them. For Allah loveth those who judge in equity. Qur'an 5:42

The application of justice is the bedrock upon which the Emirates legacy rested, so every citizen in the Emirate regardless of religion is equitable treated as such trust, confident and tolerance was in build in the mind of the adherent to co-exist peacefully in their commercial, social and religious activities<sup>28</sup>. Emir of Katsina<sup>29</sup> is of the view that, because of the adherence of justice, Katsina emirate council and its community comprising both Muslims and non-Muslims are living harmoniously. The Emirate is not new for non-Muslim they came for their inter-faith dispute with Muslim and even for dispute among non-Muslims themselves, they prefer the Emirates because of the confidence of fair and just resolution of their dispute. For tolerance, love, and solidarity are evidently display in the society. Inter-faith interaction in the Emirate is harmoniously, e.g. Muslim and non-Muslim belonging to the same family, as co-partners in business, co-partners in works, and even some share the same house. There is always sense of mutual trust and respect through exchange of pleasantries and gift during festivities.<sup>30</sup>

## 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF PEACE

<sup>27</sup> Interview with Khadi Sule Sada, 72, Alkalin Garkan Katsina, Katsina Emirate Council, 26<sup>th</sup> August, 2019, 11:30pm

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Alhaji Dr. Abdulmumini Kabir Usman, 67, Emir of Katsina, Emir's Palace, Katsina, 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2019, 7:30pm.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, Emir of Katsina.

Islam teaches peace and harmony and requires all Muslims to seek peace and happiness through submission to the will of Allah.<sup>31</sup> The Islam invites believers to peace by submission to Allah, a way of life for Muslims and peace towards others.<sup>32</sup> The Emirate councils in Northwestern Nigeria reciprocate this gesture through the process of inter-faith dispute resolution.

Jumare is of the view that peace by the Emirates in Northwestern Nigeria is an enterprise of justice, based on the common good of humanity. Peace is never attained once and for all, but must be building up continually. Peace cannot be obtained unless all adherents freely and trustingly share the riches of their inner spirit and their talents with one another with firm determination to respect the dignity of all. These should boost the socio economic aspiration of the people in the region. The Emirates are trying towards boosting all its resources and potentials in ensuring peace through the process of inter-faith dispute resolution.<sup>33</sup>

According to Lugga, Emirates have and will continue to play a vital role of peace making through the process of inter-faith dispute resolution if justice is properly harnessed between adherents of religion in a suit of dispute. This is clearly seen in Katsina Emirate; because issues of violence, aggressive language, and religious intolerance are controlled amicably and this in turn foster inter religious peaceful co-existence. The Emirate use its ample resources to address issues of inter-faith dispute and this create room for religious tolerance.<sup>34</sup>

According to Junaidu,<sup>35</sup> realization the Sokoto Sultanate is committed towards inter-faith peace and its inherently against any form of dispute as such it establishes peace and security through the medium of managing inter-faith dispute resolution with justice, and ideally it pre-empt dispute from the grass root it undermine the peace and security of the Emirates and the country at large. He added that the process of dispute resolution by the Sultanate is a panacea of establishing peace of which the sultanate has achieved its purpose because of its social and economic development. He also noted that there are existing different Churches running their religious services across the Sultanate peacefully. This is rooted on the legacy of the Sultanate that was set up on the principles of justice and rule of Law and tries to achieve unity with diversity and justice for all. Therefore, on question of the impact of inter-faith dispute resolution by the Emirates in Sokoto Sultanate it serves as a mirror for the Emirate to Emirate.

### 3. FOSTER NATIONAL UNITY

The exercise of inter-faith dispute resolution by the emirates foster national unity through tolerance, just and fair resolution as such these values are successful in the emirates and act as a core for the inter-faith society. Therefore, inter-faith peace is often associated with righteousness, security prosperity, material wellbeing and safety also a complete serenity and order between individuals in a community country and the world at large. This is the precept the emirates ensured it's maintained.

<sup>31</sup> Yazan, C. S. (2007). *Understanding of Islam*, Edinburgh: Dunedin, Academic Press Ltd.

<sup>32</sup> Hassan, R. *What does it mean to be a Muslim today?* Cross current-40, no. 30 February 1990. <http://www.crosscurrent.org/hassan> htm. Retrieved 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2019.

<sup>33</sup> Prof. Bashir Jumare, 62, Dean, Faculty of Administration ABU Zaria, 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, 11:00am.

<sup>34</sup> Prof. Sani Abubakar Lugga, Op-cit

<sup>35</sup> Prof. Sambo Wali Junaidu, 73, Wazirin Sokoto, Sokoto Sultanate Council, 30<sup>th</sup> December, 2019, 2:30pm.

#### 4. ECONOMIC IMPACT

The accommodating nature of the Emirates in dealing with inter-faith dispute makes it possible for the facilitation of the adherents business in trust and tolerance. In Katsina Emirate Prof. Lugga<sup>36</sup> viewed that inter-faith dispute resolution gives room for open interaction with people of other religion, and the religious organisations, this has created understanding and enabling environment for them to establishes their business peacefully because they are sure of the security of their lives and properties as such the Katsina got its title “Home of Hospitality”. Many non-Muslim operate their business with Muslims patronizing them to the extent of even sharing business in partnership or services in trust.<sup>37</sup> This has clearly demonstrated facilitation and development of the economy.

According Mahuta<sup>38</sup>, the dramatic religious and economic shifts with impact our society in decades ahead with the continues support and co-operation of the government and adherents of religion towards dispute resolution by the Emirate, because these resolutions create peaceful environment for both Muslims and non-Muslims to add strength to their impute on business and utilizes their talent on active trade and commerce. This would create a competitive economic environment for sustainable development.

Junaidu<sup>39</sup>, opined that Sokoto Sultanate continue to be an economic success and reaches a level of unprecedented prosperity, they established great tradition of just tolerance. They inspire inter-faith party to a dispute resolution with a spirit of generosity and tolerance and as such they create humane community in which peaceful co-existence exist between inter- religious adherents. This provides a secured business environment for Muslims and non-Muslims to operate. Many non-Muslim operate private schools, Hotels accommodation, and conduct their routine business with Muslims counterpart. He added that, inter-faith dispute resolution by the Sultanate is an instrument for socio economic change in region and the Country in general.

According Dokajin Zazzau<sup>40</sup> portrays the master piece that inter-faith dispute resolution by the emirate is a clear manifestation of peaceful co-existence and economic development which can be seen in presence of non-Muslim citizen in places throughout the emirate. This ranged from the Maguzawa of northern Zaria, to Gwari of Southwestern Zaria and other group to South Eastern Zaria. The Emirate have go along way of formulating a frame work upon which after resolution of inter-faith dispute offered an inter-faith mobilization for peace. This has exhibited a high sense of tolerance and accorded the followers of other faith full religious liberty and right to practice their culture. In view of these trade and commerce were facilitated and trust transaction between Muslim and non-Muslim merchants and traders from distant town and villages found there in the city to buy goods. However, the emirate exhibited a high sense of control toward aiding the government in collection of revenue from both Muslim and non-Muslims as such Zaria emerged as Centre of economic activities<sup>41</sup>.

#### 5. RELIGIOUS IMPACT

<sup>36</sup> Prof. Sani Abubakar Lugga Op-cit.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Interview with Justice Sadiq Abdullahi Mahuta, 72, Galadiman Katsina District Head of Malumfashi, Katsina Emirate, 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 2019, 2:30pm.

<sup>39</sup> Prof. Sambo Wali Junaidu. Op-cit.

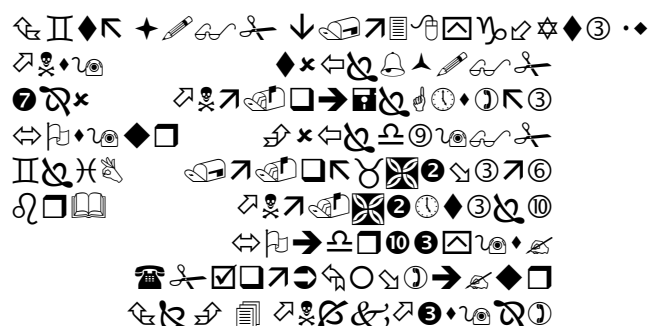
<sup>40</sup> Alhaji Shehu Garba Na' Allah, 73, Dokajin Zazzau, Zazzau Emirate Council, 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2020, 2:30pm

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.



The Northwestern Nigeria Emirate is a multi-religious community upon which there are often disputes happening between people with different religion. In order to retain the society with cohesion and increase the feeling of safety, security and freedom, the Emirates keep an eye on the recognition of inter-faith as recommended by the Shari'ah for creating conducive environment with embedding values religious tolerance through the practice of inter-faith dispute resolution.

In Islam tolerance is viewed a necessary prerequisite for co-existence. It assumes social, cultural, and religious differences that require toleration, Islam seek to establish peace between various religious communities and acknowledge differences of belief and cultures and it place great emphasis in maintaining good relations between adherents of various religions. Islam has emphasized that:



Allah does not forbid you to fought against you on account of religion, nor drove you out of your homes, with equity. Qur'an 60:8

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: Allah the Almighty will not be merciful to those who are not merciful to mankind<sup>42</sup>. The hadith urges adopting mercy for both Muslims and non-Muslims.

According Lugga<sup>43</sup>, adhering to the Islamic precept of toleration and fairness to non-Muslim in dealing with their inter-faith dispute in the Emirate has impacts a spirit of love, kindness, and understanding and this has created peace and unity. Because socio economic and religious activities surrounding the Emirate, you would be convince that there are safety in the places of worship, freedom of practicing worship, good relation, kind treatment, and good treatment were accorded to non-Muslim, and this has boosted the commercial activities and social interaction.

Junaidu<sup>44</sup> opines that exercises of inter-faith dispute resolution by Sokoto Sultanate retain the ideal legacy of Sokoto caliphate which proved itself remarkably towards inculcating a spirit of tolerance for peace and religious harmony. On March, 2008 the Sultan of Sokoto visited the Archbishop of Canterbury in England to discuss issues in international development, peace and Justice and inter-faith dialogue. Lambeth palace describe the Sultan as "highly respected internationally for the insistence that peace and mutual respect must prevail not merely tolerance as a fruit of the faiths of Christianity and Islam"<sup>45</sup>.

<sup>42</sup> Al-Bukhari, Muhammad ibn Isma'eel, 1987, Sahih of al-Bukhari, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Beirut, House of Ibn Kaatheer.

<sup>43</sup> Prof. Sani Abubakar Lugga, Op-cit.

<sup>44</sup> Sambo Wali Junaidu. Op-cit.

<sup>45</sup> Sultan of Sokoto visit to discuss "international Development" March 27<sup>th</sup> 2008 [www.archbishopofcanterbury.org](http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org). retrieved on may, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020.

It is proved that the Sultanate does not compel the non-Muslim to forward their cases of inter-faith dispute, but they do so willingly for sure of guaranteeing their rights and maintaining great deal of cohesion, to the extent of which even cases between non-Muslims themselves were brought to the Sultanate for resolution.<sup>46</sup>

The altitudinal disposition of the dispensation of the role of the Sultanate in inter-faith dispute resolution with tolerance can be seen in the format interactive session of all religious leaders by the Sultanate which they often result to interactive discussion of inter-faith disputes that needs serious attention of the religious leaders. This has in build trust, acceptance, and Liberality<sup>47</sup>.

According to Jumare, Zazzau Emirate hold inter-faith religious values with high esteem, the Emir Alhaji Shehu Idris has spent 45years on the throne and this is a testimony to the peace being enjoyed in the Emirate. The recognition of non-Muslim in the emirate towards entertaining their complain serves as the process sustaining social relations and providing a peaceful and sincere environment in the Emirate.

Therefore, if the emirates emphasized on the principle of inter-faith dispute resolution as a basic ground for tolerance and peaceful co-existence, emphasizes a constructive and effective interfaith dispute resolution as a specific Islamic model.<sup>48</sup>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper recommended the following measures in achieving inter-faith dispute resolution through Emirate system as follows:

That the Government both at Federal and State should use the Emirates institutions in Northern Nigeria for promoting peace among the various communities through its process of inter-faith dispute resolution and should be a model for the other regions of the Country to emulate.

There is need for the government to assign formal role to the Emirates to enhance their constitutional power to determine inter-faith dispute cases and other social issues that can distort the peaceful co-existence in the Northern region and the Country.

There is need for participation of Academician in research related to Emirates and inter-faith dispute resolution for peaceful coexistence because of scarce literatures in the field.

There is need to promote inter-faith education, because lack of true and objective knowledge of other religions create bases for dispute, positive inter-faith education promotes understanding, accommodation and reduce negative statements.

There is need for Local and National media to play a role in sensitization and mobilization of the adherents of religions on the effort of the emirates towards socio economic and religious development through the medium of inter-faith dispute resolution.

The Emirates should embark on acquiring both Islamic and western knowledge of solving dispute.

<sup>46</sup> Sambo Wali Junaidu. Op-cit.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> The Right of non\_muslims in Islam (parts 9,10,11) [www.thedeenshow.com/the-right-of-non-muslim-in-Islam-parts-91011/](http://www.thedeenshow.com/the-right-of-non-muslim-in-Islam-parts-91011/) retrieved on 27<sup>th</sup> August,2020.

## CONCLUSION

This paper concludes that emirates in northwestern Nigeria have been very instrumental in resolving dispute between people of different religion and are the most respected and cherished institution in Nigeria with willingness to accept any inter-faith dispute for fair and just resolution in order to foster socio economic and religious development in the society, they were the active machinery responsible for maintaining peace and unity by mitigating inter-faith dispute from grass root.

The study reveals that interfaith dispute resolution by the emirate in Northwestern Nigeria is not foreign. In fact, as pointed out in literature it goes back to the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Today, however, the inter-faith dispute resolution skills introduced by the Muslim tradition are used by the Emirates owing to the historical legacy of the Jihad of Sheikh Usman ibn Fodio on the implementation of Shari'ah in the flagged emirates.

The research find that the socio economic and religious impact and issues related to inter-faith dispute resolution by the Emirates such as consultation and counseling, assess to justices, establishment and commerce, and inter-religious tolerance among other are rare mentioned in modern academic cycles.

However, lack of constitutional formal role for emirate in Northern Nigeria have in many ways hindered the extent role that the Emirates can offer in matters of inter-faith dispute resolution despite its cheap, quick, and above all provide easy access to justice.

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#### Informants

Alhaji Dr. Abdulmumini Kabir Usman, 67, Emir of Katsina, Emir's Palace, Katsina, 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2019, 7:30pm.

Prof. Bashir Jumary, 62, Dean, Faculty of Administration ABU Zaria, 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, 11:00am.

Justice Sadiq Abdullahi Mahuta, 72, Galadiman Katsina District Head of Malumfashi, Katsina Emirate, 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 2019, 2:30pm.

Prof. Sambo Wali Junaidu, 73, Wazirin Sokoto, Sokoto Sultanate Council, 30<sup>th</sup> December, 2019, 2:30pm.

Prof. Sani Abubakar Lugga, 68, Wazirin Katsina, Katsina Emirate Council, 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2019, 11:30 am..

Khadi Sule Sada, 72, Alkalin Garkan Katsina, Katsina Emirate Council, 26<sup>th</sup> August, 2019, 11:30pm