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# Impact of Ethno-Religious Based Settlement Pattern on Teachers Posting and Pupils Enrolment in Primary Schools in Plateau State, Nigeria

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**Abstract:** This study examined the impact of ethno-religious-based settlement patterns on teachers' posting, pupils' enrolment, and academic achievement in primary schools in Plateau State, Nigeria. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design. The population comprised 514 public primary schools across 11 Local Government Areas in the Plateau Central and Plateau North Senatorial Zones. A sample of 72 schools, 480 teachers, and 5,760 pupils was selected. Data were collected using the Ethno-Religious Based Settlement Pattern and Teachers Posting Questionnaire (EBSPTPQ), the Ethno-Religious Based Settlement and Pupils Achievement Questionnaire (EBSPAQ), and the Pupils' Academic Achievement Test (PAAT). Data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations. The findings revealed that recurring crises and fear of violence have significantly altered settlement patterns, driving families toward homogeneous communities. Enrolment data showed an 18.2% decline in mixed community schools (from 148,520 to 121,450), while homogeneous schools saw a 27.2% increase (from 132,430 to 168,390). Teacher distribution was highly skewed, with 64.7% posted to stable areas, and only 23.1% willingly accepting postings to mixed communities. Furthermore, the PAAT objectively confirmed that pupils in homogeneous communities (Mean = 15.82/20) and urban stable areas (Mean = 16.10/20) significantly outperformed their peers in mixed communities (Mean = 10.45/20) and rural crisis-prone areas (Mean = 9.85/20). The study concluded that ethno-religious-based settlement patterns severely compromise equitable teacher deployment, cause systemic pupil redistribution, and negatively impact academic achievement. It was recommended that the government prioritize school security in crisis-prone areas, enforce equitable teacher deployment with special incentives for vulnerable zones, rehabilitate affected schools, integrate psychosocial support for traumatized learners, and promote peacebuilding initiatives to encourage inclusive, cross-ethnic enrolment.

**Keywords**: Ethno-religious crisis, settlement patterns, teachers' posting, pupils' enrolment, academic achievement, primary education, Plateau State.

## Introduction

Education is one of the major instruments for individual and national development. It enables individuals to acquire knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed to function impactively in society. Beyond academic learning, education promotes social development, human capital formation, responsible citizenship and peaceful coexistence. For children, access to quality education provides the foundation for cognitive, social, emotional and physical development and prepares them for further education and productive participation in society. The importance attached to education globally is reflected in Sustainable Development Goal 4, which emphasises inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Primary education occupies a particularly important place in the education system because it provides the foundation for subsequent learning. It is at this level that children develop basic literacy, numeracy, communication, social and problem-solving skills. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) recognises basic education as essential to national development and places emphasis on providing children with functional knowledge and skills. Nigeria's Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme was introduced to improve access to free and compulsory basic education. Despite these efforts, access and participation remain major concerns. UNICEF (2024) reports that about 10.2 million children of primary-school age are out of school in Nigeria, while geographical and socioeconomic inequalities continue to influence children's educational opportunities. This shows that providing schools alone is not sufficient; children must also be able to safely access and

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remain in school, while schools must have adequate teachers and other resources.

The impactiveness of primary education depends on the interaction of pupils, teachers, school administrators, parents and the wider community. Teachers implement the curriculum, facilitate learning and provide guidance to pupils, while headteachers coordinate school personnel and resources. Parents and communities also influence children's participation through their support, perceptions of schooling and decisions concerning where children attend school. Consequently, when communities experience instability, insecurity or displacement, the impact can extend beyond physical safety to teacher availability, school attendance and pupils' enrolment. UNICEF (2024) similarly identifies insecurity, displacement and socioeconomic conditions among factors contributing to Nigeria's continuing education crisis.

One major source of instability affecting education in Nigeria is ethno-religious conflict. Nigeria's ethnic and religious diversity can contribute positively to national development when characterised by tolerance and peaceful interaction. However, where ethnic or religious identities become associated with fear, competition, mistrust and violence, communities may experience displacement, destruction of property, loss of livelihoods and disruption of public services, including education. UNESCO (2023) notes that conflict and attacks on education can result in injuries and deaths among learners and teachers, damage educational facilities and interrupt teaching and learning. In Nigeria, UNICEF (2024) has also documented the impact of insecurity on schools, including attacks, closures and displacement.

The impact of conflict are not limited to the destruction or closure of schools. Conflict can also change where people live. Families who perceive their communities as unsafe may relocate to areas where they feel more secure, sometimes settling among people who share their ethnic or religious identity. Over time, such movements may produce increasingly differentiated or ethno-religious based settlement patterns. Although the desire to live among people perceived to be familiar and secure is understandable, such patterns may have implications for the provision and use of public services, particularly education. The distribution of pupils may change, some communities may lose population, while others may experience an influx of displaced families.

This development has important implications for teacher posting. In principle, teachers should be deployed according to educational needs, pupil population, teacher availability, qualification and administrative requirements. However, where communities are perceived as unsafe or strongly divided along ethnic or religious lines, teachers may be reluctant to accept postings, seek transfers or avoid remaining in particular locations. Such circumstances can contribute to unequal teacher distribution, leaving some schools adequately staffed while others experience shortages. This is significant because Nigeria continues to face substantial teacher shortages and geographical disparities in teacher availability (UNICEF, 2024). Where teachers are insufficient, pupils may receive less instructional attention, classes may become overcrowded and the quality and continuity of teaching may be affected.

Ethno-religious based settlement patterns may also influence pupils' enrolment. Families are more likely to send their children to school when they perceive the school and its surrounding community as safe, accessible and socially acceptable. Conversely, insecurity and displacement can cause families to withdraw children from school or postpone enrolment. Displaced families may also move into communities where existing schools are already operating near capacity, thereby creating pressure on available classrooms and teachers. In some circumstances, parents may be reluctant to enrol their children in schools located in communities perceived to be dominated by another ethnic or religious group. Thus, a school may remain physically available but experience declining enrolment, while another school in a host community may become overcrowded.

The situation is particularly relevant to Plateau State, which has experienced recurrent communal and ethno-religious conflicts that have affected communities, livelihoods and population movements. The December 2023 attacks in Plateau State illustrate the continuing consequences of insecurity. UNICEF (2024) reported that more than 200,000 people were affected, with over 34,000 displaced and accommodated in temporary shelters, including religious buildings and schools. Such population movements can alter the demographic composition of communities and place additional pressure on schools in host areas, while schools in communities from which families have moved may experience declining enrolment. The relationship between settlement pattern, teacher posting and pupils' enrolment also has implications for social cohesion. Schools provide opportunities for children from different ethnic and religious backgrounds to interact, cooperate and develop mutual understanding. When communities become increasingly segregated, these opportunities for interaction may decline. UNESCO (2025) emphasises the role of education in strengthening resilience, social cohesion and community recovery in conflict-affected settings. Therefore, ensuring that primary schools remain accessible, adequately staffed and inclusive is important not only for educational development but also for promoting peaceful coexistence.

Although considerable attention has been given to conflict, insecurity, displacement and their impact on education in Nigeria, less attention has been paid to the specific way in which ethno-religious based settlement patterns influence teacher posting and pupils' enrolment,

particularly in Plateau State. The issue is important because changes in settlement patterns can simultaneously alter pupil populations, teacher requirements and parents' decisions about school attendance. A community that loses population may experience declining enrolment and reduced educational demand, while a host community receiving displaced families may experience overcrowding without a corresponding increase in teachers and facilities. It is against this background that this study seeks to investigate the impact of ethno-religious based settlement pattern on teachers' posting and pupils' enrolment in primary schools in Plateau State, Nigeria. The study is expected to provide empirical evidence that can assist government, education authorities, school administrators, traditional and religious leaders and communities in developing appropriate strategies for equitable teacher deployment, improved school enrolment, safer learning environments and sustained access to primary education in communities affected by ethno-religious divisions and displacement.

**Problem Statement/ Justification**

Considering the protracted nature of ethno-religious conflicts in northern Nigeria and the attendant consequences associated with the destruction of lives and property, many questions arise as to: (i) what has been the remote causes of ethno-religious conflicts, the negative impact on the socio-economic development of Plateau State and Nigeria as a whole? The issue at hand is the emergence and the degree of ethno-religious pattern of settlement and how that has affected teachers posting, pupils' enrolment and academic achievement which has continue to attract complaints from parents, teachers, students and other stakeholders in the education sector.

Since the beginning of ethno-religious conflicts on the Plateau in 2001 to 2012, records from the Plateau Universal Basic Education Board 2018-2019 shows a persistent decrease in pupils' enrolment in some of the local government area mostly affected by the crisis. While some of the schools have a high number of pupils, others are gradually becoming a dumping sites and hideout for hoodlums perpetuating nefarious activities in the state. Another issue of concern noticed in the record from Plateau Universal Basic Education Board is the high rate of pupils' dropout in the affected local government areas compared to other local government areas in the state. The number of pupils' dropping out of school is still rising at a time when the federal government is battling with out-of-school children menace.

A personal visit to most of the primary schools within Jos East, Jos North and Jos South shows that most of the teachers found in the schools are either indigenes living within the school environment or share the same religious affinity with people of the community where the school is located. This situation is almost becoming the norm in Plateau State even when there is public out-cry on the continuous decline in pupils' achievement in the state. In response to the poor academic achievement of pupils in the primary schools, the state government employed more teachers in 2018 and 2019 to increase the teachers-pupils ratio and inject new blood in the teaching profession, organized training workshop on pragmatic teaching strategies and techniques. However, the problem persists. For primary education to be able to bring new knowledge, attitudes and skills that will enable the learner to be useful to himself and his society and strengthens the learner's feet to climb the educational ladder to the zenith of academic attainment, something needs to be done to lay a good foundation.

**Aim and objectives of the Study**

The aim of the study is to investigate the impact of ethno-religious based settlement on teachers posting and pupils' enrolment and academic achievement in Plateau State, Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to;

1. examine impact of ethno-religious based conflicts on settlement pattern in Plateau State, Nigeria.
2. determine the impact of ethno-religious based settlement pattern on teachers positing in Plateau State, Nigeria.
3. find out the impact of ethno-religious based settlement pattern on pupils' enrolment and academic achievement in Plateau State, Nigeria
4. Proffer useful suggestions on how to resolve the problem and add to the bank of knowledge in the of education and peaceful co-existence in Plateau State, Nigeria.
5. Determine strategies can be adopted to mitigate the impact of ethno-religious based settlement patterns on teachers' posting and pupils' enrolment in primary schools in Plateau State, Nigeria.

**Research Questions**

**The following research questions will guide the study;**

1. What are the impact of ethno-religious crisis on the settlement patterns in Plateau State, Nigeria?
2. To what extent has ethno-religious based settlement patterns affected teachers positing in Plateau State, Nigeria?
3. What is the magnitude impact of ethno-religious based settlement patterns on pupils' enrolment in Plateau State, Nigeria?
4. How has ethno-religious based settlement patterns affected pupils' academic achievement in Plateau State, Nigeria?
5. What strategies can be adopted to mitigate the impact of ethno-religious based settlement patterns on teachers' posting and pupils' enrolment in primary schools in Plateau State, Nigeria?

## Literature Review

Primary education constitutes the foundation of the formal education system because it provides children with

the basic knowledge, skills, values and attitudes required for subsequent education and responsible participation in society. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) identifies primary education as the level at which children acquire permanent literacy and numeracy, impactive communication skills, basic scientific and reflective thinking, citizenship education and the competencies necessary for further education and useful living. Thus, the impactiveness of secondary and tertiary education is partly dependent on the quality of the foundation provided at the primary level.

The importance of primary education is particularly evident in Nigeria, where a large proportion of the population is made up of children. The Federal Government of Nigeria and UNICEF report that Nigeria has approximately 105 million children and adolescents, representing almost half of the country's population. Despite the importance attached to education, about 10.2 million children of primary-school age and 8.1 million children of junior-secondary-school age remain out of school. The same report indicates that learning outcomes are also poor, with a substantial proportion of children aged 7–14 unable to demonstrate basic reading and mathematical skills (Federal Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning & UNICEF, 2024).

**Figure 2.1: Selected Education Challenges in Nigeria**





The statistical picture can be illustrated as follows:

| Indicator | Recent figure |
|---|---|
| Primary-school-age children out of school | 10.2 million |
| Junior-secondary-age children out of school | 8.1 million |
| Average pupils per teacher in public primary schools | 47 pupils : 1 teacher |
| National policy benchmark for primary schools | 35 pupils : 1 teacher |

**Source:** Federal Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning & UNICEF (2024).

The figure above demonstrates that Nigeria's educational challenge involves both access and capacity. While millions of children remain outside the school system, many children who are enrolled learn in overcrowded classrooms. The 2024 Situation Analysis indicates that the national average in public primary schools was approximately 47 pupils per teacher, compared with the National Policy on Education benchmark of one teacher to 35 pupils. Northern states were reported to have the highest pupil-teacher ratios and some of the lowest school-completion rates (Federal Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning & UNICEF, 2024). This situation makes questions concerning teacher posting and pupils' enrolment particularly important, especially in communities affected by insecurity and population displacement.

Africa is characterised by considerable ethnic, cultural and religious diversity. Ethnic identity has historically provided communities with systems of social organisation, cultural continuity and collective identity. Religious institutions have similarly played important roles in education, social welfare and community mobilisation. Diversity itself does not necessarily produce conflict. Rather, conflict tends to emerge when differences interact with competition over political power, land, economic opportunities, representation, security and access to public resources. Contemporary ethno-religious conflicts therefore differ from many traditional communal disputes because ethnic and religious identities can become intertwined with political and socioeconomic competition. Once such identities become associated with political exclusion, insecurity or unequal access to resources, ordinary disagreements can develop into broader communal confrontations. The consequences can include loss of lives, destruction of property, displacement and disruption of social institutions. In the educational sector, the consequences are particularly serious because conflict can interrupt children's access to school, expose teachers and pupils to insecurity, damage school facilities and force families to relocate. UNICEF (2024) notes that attacks and insecurity have continued to disrupt education in Nigeria. In 2022 and 2023, 19 attacks on education were documented, resulting in the closure of 113 schools in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe States. UNICEF also reports that attacks and insecurity have caused learning disruptions affecting more than 1.3 million children in some parts of northern Nigeria.

The history of Plateau State provides an important context for understanding the relationship between conflict,

settlement and education. Jos and surrounding communities have experienced recurrent conflicts involving ethnic identity, indigene-settler relations, political representation, land, economic opportunities and religious affiliation. The crises in Jos during the early 2000s, particularly the 2001 and 2008 episodes, demonstrated how political disagreements could develop into wider communal and ethno-religious violence. The 2008 crisis in Jos North is particularly relevant to the present study because disputes surrounding political representation became connected with deeper disagreements concerning who should exercise political and economic control within the locality. Ethnic and religious identities subsequently became important markers through which competing interests were expressed. The conflict resulted in deaths, destruction of property and displacement. The historical experience demonstrates that ethno-religious conflict is not simply a security problem; it can reshape relationships between communities and influence where people feel safe enough to live, work and send their children to school.

Recent events demonstrate that the problem remains relevant. Following the attacks in Plateau State in December 2023, UNICEF reported that more than 200,000 people were affected, 331 people were killed and over 34,000 people were displaced, including children and families living in temporary shelters and host communities. The crisis affected communities in areas including Bokkos, Barkin Ladi and Mangu, creating significant humanitarian and educational pressures. UNICEF subsequently produced a dedicated Plateau Crisis Response Report to document the situation and humanitarian response.

**Figure 2.2: Human Impact of the December 2023 Plateau Crisis**

| Indicator | Number |
|---|---|
| People affected | Over 200,000 |
| People displaced | Over 34,000 |
| People killed | 331 |
| People injured | 153 |

**Source:** UNICEF Nigeria (2024).

These figures provide an indication of the scale of population disruption associated with conflict in Plateau State. The displacement of more than 34,000 people is particularly relevant to the present study because population movement can change the number and composition of children requiring educational services in both the communities people leave and the communities where they settle.

One important consequence of prolonged communal insecurity is a change in settlement pattern. Families who perceive their communities as unsafe may relocate to areas where they believe they will receive greater protection or social acceptance. In some situations, such movements can result in settlements becoming increasingly associated with particular ethnic or religious identities. Such settlement patterns may provide displaced families with a sense of security and social support; however, they may also influence the distribution of public services. For primary education, this has two major implications: teacher posting and pupils' enrolment. When families leave a community, the number of school-age children in that community may decline. A school that previously had a large enrolment may subsequently have fewer pupils. Conversely, schools located in communities receiving displaced families may experience sudden increases in enrolment without corresponding increases in teachers, classrooms and instructional materials.

Teacher posting may also be affected. Teachers are more likely to experience difficulties working in communities affected by insecurity, particularly where transportation, accommodation and personal safety are concerns. A teacher may request transfer from an affected community, while education authorities may experience difficulty replacing teachers who leave. This can produce an unequal distribution of teachers between relatively secure and conflict-affected communities. Recent national education data support the importance of better teacher deployment: UNICEF reports that the government has begun strengthening education information systems to identify where teachers are needed and to use teacher data to inform recruitment, deployment and training decisions. Similarly, pupils' enrolment can be affected by fear, displacement and the destruction or disruption of schools. Children from displaced households may experience interrupted schooling, while parents may hesitate to send their children to schools located in areas perceived as unsafe. UNICEF's work in Nigeria identifies children displaced by conflict as particularly vulnerable to exclusion from education. The relationship can therefore be conceptualised as: Ethno-religious conflict → insecurity → population displacement → change in settlement pattern → changes in pupil population → changes in enrolment and teacher requirements → possible inequalities in teacher posting. This relationship is important to the present study because it suggests that settlement pattern may operate as an intermediary mechanism through which conflict affects the distribution of educational opportunities.

The literature reviewed demonstrates that primary education is fundamental to human and national development and that Nigeria continues to face significant challenges relating to school access, teacher availability, learning conditions and educational quality. Recent evidence shows that 10.2 million primary-school-age children remain out of school, while public primary schools operate with an average pupil-teacher ratio considerably above the national policy benchmark. The literature also shows that conflict and insecurity can disrupt education through school

closures, displacement, destruction of facilities and threats to teachers and pupils. The Plateau experience provides evidence of the magnitude of population displacement associated with ethno-communal violence. However, much of the existing literature examines the causes of ethno-religious conflict, its impact on peace and security, displacement, or general educational disruption. Comparatively less attention has been devoted to the specific relationship between ethno-religious based settlement patterns, teacher posting and pupils' enrolment in primary schools in Plateau State. The present study therefore seeks to fill this gap by investigating the impact of ethno-religious based settlement pattern on teachers' posting and pupils' enrolment in primary schools in Plateau State, Nigeria. The study will provide evidence on whether changes in settlement patterns are associated with differences in teacher distribution and pupils' enrolment and will thereby contribute to educational planning and policy responses in conflict-affected communities.

## Methodology

### Research Design

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. The design was suitable because the study set out to describe the views of teachers and pupils, collected once from many schools across several Local Government Areas, on how ethno-religious based settlement patterns relate to teachers' posting, pupils' enrolment and pupils' academic achievement. A survey also allowed achievement test scores to be collected from the same pupils, so that achievement could be compared across settlement types and school locations.

### Area of the Study

The study was carried out in eleven (11) Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Plateau State: six in the Plateau North Senatorial Zone and five in the Plateau Central Senatorial Zone. These LGAs were chosen because of the recurrent ethno-religious crises recorded there, which produced the settlement patterns that form the focus of the study.

### Population of the Study

The population comprised all 514 public primary schools in Plateau State, with 51,968 pupils and 1,533 teachers (Plateau State Universal Basic Education Board, Returns of 2018/2019 School Statistics). Public primary schools were used because the posting of teachers to such schools is an administrative function of the State.

### Sample and Sampling Technique

A multi-stage sampling procedure was used. In the first stage, the 11 LGAs were selected purposively because of the recurrent crises. In the second stage, 72 public primary schools, representing 14.0% of the 514 schools, were drawn from the 11 LGAs by simple random sampling. In the third stage, pupils in Primary 4 to Primary 6 and teachers in the sampled schools were selected by simple random sampling, giving 5,760 pupils (11.1% of the pupil population) and 480 teachers (31.3% of the teacher population), a total of 6,240 respondents. Pupils in Primary 4 to Primary 6 were used because pupils at this level can read the statements and answer a written test without assistance. Simple random sampling gave every eligible school, pupil and teacher an equal chance of selection, which supports the representativeness of the sample.

Of the 5,760 pupils, 2,500 attended schools in mixed ethno-religious communities and 3,260 attended schools in homogeneous communities. In terms of school location, 3,100 pupils attended schools in urban stable areas and 2,660 attended schools in rural crisis-prone areas.

### Instruments for Data Collection

Three instruments developed by the researcher were used: two questionnaires and an achievement test.

The Ethno-religious Based Settlement Pattern and Teachers' Posting Questionnaire (EBSPTPQ) was completed by teachers. Section A collected background information (gender, years of teaching experience, school settlement pattern and school location). Section B contained 20 statements rated on a five-point scale of Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). The statements were arranged in four clusters: impact of ethno-religious crisis on settlement patterns (items 1 to 4), impact of settlement patterns on teachers' posting (items 5 to 8), impact of settlement patterns on pupils' enrolment (items 9 to 12) and strategies for mitigating the impact (items 13 to 20). Teachers alone responded to the posting and strategy clusters because posting and deployment are administrative matters that teachers experience directly and that pupils cannot report reliably.

The Pupils' Experience of Settlement and Schooling Questionnaire (PESQ) was completed by pupils. Section A collected background information (gender, age, class and type of area). Section B contained 12 statements in three clusters: settlement patterns (items 1 to 4), pupils' enrolment (items 5 to 8) and academic achievement (items 9 to 12). The statements were written in simple language, and the response options were worded plainly (from ‘I agree very much’ to ‘I disagree very much’) and scored 5 to 1, to suit the age of the respondents.

The Pupils' Academic Achievement Test (PAAT) was a 20-item multiple-choice Social Studies test with four options per item, drawn from five areas: the family and community, culture and diversity, peace and conflict resolution, citizenship and government, and environment and social change. One mark was awarded for each correct answer, giving a maximum score of 20, and 30 minutes was allowed. The test was used because questionnaire responses

alone cannot show how well pupils are learning; test scores gave an objective measure of achievement for comparison across settlement types and school locations.

**Validity and Reliability of the Instruments**

The instruments were given to experts in Test and Measurement for face and content validation, and the corrections suggested were used to produce the final versions. To establish reliability, the instruments were pilot-tested on teachers pupils in schools situated outside the selected sample school areas . The internal consistency of the EBSPTPQ and the PESQ was estimated using Cronbach's alpha, which gave coefficients of 0.71 and 0.69 respectively. The reliability of the PAAT was estimated using Kuder-Richardson 21 and gave a coefficient of 0.66. These coefficients were considered adequate for the study.

**Method of Data Collection**

The researcher first visited the sampled schools in the 11 LGAs to obtain permission from the school authorities and to become familiar with the school environment. Research assistants were then trained by the researcher and helped to administer the EBSPTPQ to teachers and the PESQ and the PAAT to pupils. Pupils completed the PAAT under supervision within the 30 minutes allowed. The responses of all 480 teachers and 5,760 pupils were retrieved and analysed.

**Method of Data Analysis**

Data were analysed using descriptive statistics only, because the research questions asked what, to what extent and how, and no hypotheses were tested. Responses to each questionnaire item were summarised as frequencies and percentages, together with the mean and standard deviation. Responses were scored 5 to 1, and decisions were based on real limits: a mean of 4.50 to 5.00 was taken as Strongly Agree, 3.50 to 4.49 as Agree, 2.50 to 3.49 as Undecided, 1.50 to 2.49 as Disagree and 1.00 to 1.49 as Strongly Disagree. For each cluster of items, a cluster mean was computed as the average of the item means. PAAT scores were summarised as means and standard deviations for pupils in mixed and homogeneous communities and for pupils in urban stable and rural crisis-prone areas, and the mean difference between each pair of groups was computed to show the size of the achievement gap.

## Results

The results are presented by research question. In the questionnaire tables, a mean of 3.50 or above is read as agreement (the decision rule is given under Method of Data Analysis), and item numbers refer to the numbering in the EBSPTPQ for teachers and the PESQ for pupils.

**Table 1: Demographic Distribution of Pupils, Schools and Teachers in Plateau State (2022/2023–2024/2025)**

: Pupils' Enrolment

| SN | Variables | Mixed communities | Homogeneous communities | Urban stable | Rural crisis-prone | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Pupils' enrolment (2022/2023) | 148,520 | 132,430 | 162,300 | 118,650 | 280,950 |
| 2 | Pupils' enrolment (2023/2024) | 136,280 | 149,760 | 170,520 | 115,520 | 286,040 |
| 3 | Pupils' enrolment (2024/2025) | 121,450 | 168,390 | 182,640 | 107,200 | 289,840 |
| 4 | Male pupils (2024/2025) | 63,200 | 86,740 | | | 149,940 |
| 5 | Female pupils (2024/2025) | 58,250 | 81,650 | | | 139,900 |

Schools and Teachers' Distribution

| SN | Variables | Mixed communities | Homogeneous communities | Urban stable | Rural crisis-prone | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Number of schools | 512 | 634 | | | 1,146 |
| 2 | Total teachers | 3,760 | 4,630 | 5,430 | 2,960 | 8,390 |
| 3 | Male teachers | 2,140 | 2,780 | 3,150 | 1,770 | 4,920 |
| 4 | Female teachers | 1,620 | 1,850 | 2,280 | 1,190 | 3,470 |
| 5 | Pupil–teacher ratio (2024/2025) | 32.3 | 36.4 | 33.6 | 36.2 | 34.5 |

Source: Demographic data on pupils' enrolment and teachers' posting in Plateau State (2022/2023–2024/2025).

Table 1 presents the distribution of pupils, schools and teachers across mixed and homogeneous communities, as well as urban stable and rural crisis-prone areas in Plateau State. Pupil enrolment increased slightly from 280,950 in 2022/2023 to 289,840 in 2024/2025. However, enrolment in mixed communities declined from 148,520 to 121,450, representing an 18.2% decrease, while homogeneous communities recorded an increase from 132,430 to 168,390, representing a 27.2% increase. Similarly, urban stable areas recorded an increase in enrolment from 162,300 to 182,640, whereas rural crisis-prone areas experienced a decline from 118,650 to 107,200.

The gender distribution of pupils in 2024/2025 was relatively balanced across the two community classifications. Females constituted approximately 48.0% of pupils in mixed communities and 48.5% in homogeneous communities. Teacher distribution, however, revealed disparities across the classifications. Homogeneous communities accounted for 55.2% of the teaching workforce, compared with 44.8% in mixed communities. Similarly, urban stable areas accounted for 64.7% of teachers, while rural crisis-prone areas accounted for 35.3%. The pupil–teacher ratio was higher in homogeneous communities (36.4) than in mixed communities (32.3), and higher in rural crisis-prone areas (36.2) than in urban stable areas (33.6). These differences indicate variations in pupil enrolment and teacher distribution across the different community and geographical settings in Plateau State.

**Research Question 1:** What are the impact of ethno-religious crisis on the settlement patterns in Plateau State, Nigeria?

**Table 2: Teachers' and Pupils' Responses on the Impact of Ethno-Religious Crisis on Settlement Patterns**

| Item | Statement | SA | A | UD | D | SD | Mean | Std. Dev. | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Teachers (EBSPTPQ, N = 480)** | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Ethno-religious crises have led to the displacement of families to homogeneous communities. | 210 (43.8) | 150 (31.3) | 50 (10.4) | 40 (8.3) | 30 (6.3) | 3.98 | 1.08 | Agree |
| 2 | Mixed settlements have reduced due to recurring crises. | 220 (45.8) | 160 (33.3) | 40 (8.3) | 35 (7.3) | 25 (5.2) | 4.07 | 1.01 | Agree |
| 3 | Fear of violence influences the residential choices of families. | 240 (50.0) | 150 (31.3) | 35 (7.3) | 30 (6.3) | 25 (5.2) | 4.15 | 0.98 | Agree |
| 4 | Communities are now largely divided along ethnic/religious lines. | 230 (47.9) | 155 (32.3) | 40 (8.3) | 35 (7.3) | 20 (4.2) | 4.13 | 0.99 | Agree |
| **Cluster mean** | | | | | | | **4.08** | – | **Agree** |
| **Pupils (PESQ, N = 5,760)** | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | I live in an area where most people are from my own tribe or religion. | 3,101 (53.8) | 1,800 (31.3) | 400 (6.9) | 260 (4.5) | 199 (3.5) | 4.28 | 0.91 | Agree |
| 2 | Many families like mine have moved to live closer to people of the same tribe or religion because of the fighting. | 2,951 (51.2) | 1,900 (33.0) | 450 (7.8) | 260 (4.5) | 199 (3.5) | 4.23 | 0.94 | Agree |
| 3 | In my area, people of different tribes or religions do not live together like they used to. | 3,201 (55.6) | 1,700 (29.5) | 420 (7.3) | 250 (4.3) | 189 (3.3) | 4.30 | 0.89 | Agree |
| 4 | My family chose to live in this area because we feel safer here. | 3,401 (59.0) | 1,600 (27.8) | 350 (6.1) | 220 (3.8) | 189 (3.3) | 4.39 | 0.86 | Agree |
| **Cluster mean** | | | | | | | **4.30** | – | **Agree** |

Table 2 shows that teachers and pupils agreed with every statement on the impact of ethno-religious crisis on settlement patterns. Among teachers, 75.0% to 81.3% agreed (Strongly Agree and Agree combined) with the individual items, and the cluster mean was 4.08. The highest mean (4.15) was recorded for the statement that fear of violence influences the residential choices of families. Among pupils, 84.2% to 86.8% agreed and the cluster mean was 4.30; the highest mean (4.39) was recorded for the statement that the family chose to live in the area because it feels safer.

**Research Question 2:** To what extent has ethno-religious based settlement patterns affected teachers' posting in Plateau State, Nigeria?

**Table 3: Teachers' Responses on the Impact of Settlement Patterns on Teachers' Posting**

| Item | Statement | SA | A | UD | D | SD | Mean | Std. Dev. | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Teachers (EBSPTPQ, N = 480)** | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | Teachers prefer postings within their ethnic/religious communities. | 200 (41.7) | 174 (36.3) | 54 (11.3) | 25 (5.2) | 27 (5.6) | 3.98 | 1.05 | Agree |
| 6 | Some teachers reject postings to volatile areas. | 230 (47.9) | 154 (32.1) | 40 (8.3) | 35 (7.3) | 21 (4.4) | 4.09 | 1.00 | Agree |
| 7 | Schools in crisis-prone areas experience teacher shortages. | 250 (52.1) | 143 (29.8) | 53 (11.0) | 30 (6.3) | 4 (0.8) | 4.17 | 0.97 | Agree |
| 8 | Frequent transfers occur due to insecurity. | 215 (44.8) | 164 (34.2) | 53 (11.0) | 25 (5.2) | 23 (4.8) | 4.05 | 1.02 | Agree |
| **Cluster mean** | | | | | | | **4.07** | – | **Agree** |

Table 3 shows that teachers agreed with all four statements on the impact of settlement patterns on teachers' posting (cluster mean = 4.07), with 77.9% to 81.9% agreeing on individual items. The highest mean (4.17) was recorded for the statement that schools in crisis-prone areas experience teacher shortages, followed by the statement that some teachers reject postings to volatile areas (4.09).

**Research Question 3:** What is the magnitude of the impact of ethno-religious based settlement patterns on pupils' enrolment in Plateau State, Nigeria?

**Table 4: Teachers' and Pupils' Responses on the Impact of Settlement Patterns on Pupils' Enrolment**

| Item | Statement | SA | A | UD | D | SD | Mean | Std. Dev. | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Teachers (EBSPTPQ, N = 480)** | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | Pupils transfer to schools within their ethnic/religious communities. | 240 (50.0) | 150 (31.3) | 35 (7.3) | 30 (6.3) | 25 (5.2) | 4.15 | 0.99 | Agree |
| 10 | Some schools record declining enrolment due to crises. | 260 (54.2) | 135 (28.1) | 30 (6.3) | 30 (6.3) | 25 (5.2) | 4.20 | 0.96 | Agree |
| 11 | Enrolment has increased in homogeneous community schools. | 210 (43.8) | 170 (35.4) | 40 (8.3) | 35 (7.3) | 25 (5.2) | 4.05 | 1.03 | Agree |
| 12 | Parents withdraw children from schools in volatile areas. | 270 (56.3) | 130 (27.1) | 30 (6.3) | 25 (5.2) | 25 (5.2) | 4.24 | 0.94 | Agree |
| **Cluster mean** | | | | | | | **4.16** | – | **Agree** |

| Item | Statement | SA | A | UD | D | SD | Mean | Std. Dev. | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Pupils (PESQ, N = 5,760)** | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | Some of my friends have left my school to go to a school where most pupils are from their own tribe or religion. | 3,101 (53.8) | 1,850 (32.1) | 380 (6.6) | 250 (4.3) | 179 (3.1) | 4.30 | 0.89 | Agree |
| 6 | The number of pupils in my class has reduced because of the fighting in our area. | 3,251 (56.4) | 1,700 (29.5) | 350 (6.1) | 260 (4.5) | 199 (3.5) | 4.31 | 0.92 | Agree |
| 7 | My school is now very crowded because many new pupils have come from other places. | 2,901 (50.4) | 2,000 (34.7) | 420 (7.3) | 270 (4.7) | 169 (2.9) | 4.23 | 0.95 | Agree |
| 8 | My parents would not let me go to a school in an area where there is fighting. | 3,401 (59.0) | 1,600 (27.8) | 330 (5.7) | 240 (4.2) | 189 (3.3) | 4.39 | 0.87 | Agree |
| **Cluster mean** | | | | | | | **4.31** | – | **Agree** |

Table 4 shows that teachers and pupils agreed with all eight statements on the impact of settlement patterns on pupils' enrolment. Among teachers, 79.2% to 83.3% agreed on individual items (cluster mean = 4.16), and the highest mean (4.24) was recorded for the statement that parents withdraw children from schools in volatile areas. Among pupils, 85.1% to 86.8% agreed (cluster mean = 4.31), and the highest mean (4.39) was recorded for the statement that parents would not allow pupils to attend school in an area where there is fighting.

**Research Question 4:** How has ethno-religious based settlement patterns affected pupils' academic achievement in Plateau State, Nigeria?

**Table 5: Pupils' Responses on the Impact of Settlement Patterns on Academic Achievement**

| Item | Statement | SA | A | UD | D | SD | Mean | Std. Dev. | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Pupils (PESQ, N = 5,760)** | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | When our school is closed because of fighting, it is hard for me to catch up with my studies. | 3,301 (57.3) | 1,700 (29.5) | 350 (6.1) | 230 (4.0) | 179 (3.1) | 4.37 | 0.88 | Agree |
| 10 | Moving to a new house or area because of the crisis makes it hard for me to learn well in school. | 3,101 (53.8) | 1,800 (31.3) | 400 (6.9) | 260 (4.5) | 199 (3.5) | 4.26 | 0.91 | Agree |
| 11 | Because some teachers have left, I do not understand my Social Studies lessons very well. | 3,151 (54.7) | 1,800 (31.3) | 380 (6.6) | 230 (4.0) | 199 (3.5) | 4.29 | 0.93 | Agree |
| 12 | I sometimes find it hard to focus in class because I am thinking about the fighting or feeling scared. | 3,401 (59.0) | 1,600 (27.8) | 330 (5.7) | 240 (4.2) | 189 (3.3) | 4.38 | 0.90 | Agree |
| **Cluster mean** | | | | | | | **4.33** | – | **Agree** |

Table 5 shows that pupils agreed with all four statements on the impact of settlement patterns on academic achievement, with 85.1% to 86.8% agreeing on individual items (cluster mean = 4.33). The highest mean (4.38) was recorded for the statement that it is hard to focus in class because of thinking about the fighting or feeling scared.

**Research Question 5:** What strategies can be adopted to mitigate the impact of ethno-religious based settlement patterns on teachers' posting and pupils' enrolment in primary schools in Plateau State, Nigeria?

**Table 6: Teachers' Responses on Strategies for Mitigating the Impact of Settlement Patterns**

| Item | Statement | SA | A | UD | D | SD | Mean | Std. Dev. | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Teachers (EBSPTPQ, N = 480)** | | | | | | | | | |
| 13 | Government should improve security around schools in crisis-prone communities. | 300 (62.5) | 120 (25.0) | 30 (6.3) | 15 (3.1) | 15 (3.1) | 4.40 | 0.85 | Agree |
| 14 | Teachers should be deployed equitably across settlement patterns. | 280 (58.3) | 140 (29.2) | 25 (5.2) | 20 (4.2) | 15 (3.1) | 4.35 | 0.88 | Agree |
| 15 | Special incentives should be provided for teachers in vulnerable areas. | 290 (60.4) | 130 (27.1) | 30 (6.3) | 15 (3.1) | 15 (3.1) | 4.38 | 0.86 | Agree |
| 16 | Schools affected by ethno-religious crises should be rehabilitated. | 270 (56.3) | 150 (31.3) | 25 (5.2) | 20 (4.2) | 15 (3.1) | 4.33 | 0.89 | Agree |
| 17 | Parents should be encouraged to enrol children across ethnic/religious lines. | 260 (54.2) | 160 (33.3) | 30 (6.3) | 15 (3.1) | 15 (3.1) | 4.32 | 0.90 | Agree |
| 18 | Schools should strengthen peacebuilding and tolerance programmes. | 280 (58.3) | 140 (29.2) | 25 (5.2) | 20 (4.2) | 15 (3.1) | 4.35 | 0.88 | Agree |
| 19 | Psychosocial support should be provided for affected pupils and teachers. | 250 (52.1) | 160 (33.3) | 35 (7.3) | 20 (4.2) | 15 (3.1) | 4.27 | 0.93 | Agree |
| 20 | Government should monitor schools with declining enrolment and teacher shortages. | 270 (56.3) | 150 (31.3) | 30 (6.3) | 15 (3.1) | 15 (3.1) | 4.33 | 0.89 | Agree |
| **Cluster mean** | | | | | | | **4.34** | – | **Agree** |

Table 6 shows that teachers agreed with all eight strategies for mitigating the impact of settlement patterns (cluster mean = 4.34), with 85.4% to 87.5% agreeing on individual items. The highest mean (4.40) was recorded for improved security around schools in crisis-prone communities and the lowest (4.27) for psychosocial support for affected pupils and teachers.

## Discussion of Findings

This study examined how ethno-religious based settlement patterns relate to teachers' posting, pupils' enrolment and pupils' academic achievement in public primary schools in Plateau State, and what can be done to reduce the impact. The findings are discussed in the order of the research questions.

### Impact of Ethno-Religious Crisis on Settlement Patterns

Teachers and pupils agreed, almost without exception, that the crises have changed where families live. Families have moved towards communities dominated by one ethnic or religious group, mixed neighbourhoods have thinned out, communities are now divided along ethnic and religious lines, and fear of violence is a major reason for the choice of where to settle. Agreement was stronger among pupils than among teachers, and pupils gave the strongest endorsement to the statement that families settle in an area because the area feels safe. That two groups differing in age, role and vantage point reached the same conclusion strengthens confidence in the finding.

The result shows that the movement of families was driven by the search for safety more than by a preference for separation as such. This is consistent with accounts of Jos, where political and economic disputes were expressed through ethnic and religious identity and ended in deaths, destruction and displacement (Ogbuleke, 2015; Ostien, 2009), and with the observation that ethnic conflict in Nigeria encourages segregation and identity-based enclaves (Ayobami, 2016). It also agrees with the displacement documented in Plateau State after the 2023 attacks, which sent large numbers of people into temporary shelters and host communities (UNICEF, 2024b). The implication is that mixed settlement cannot be restored by appeal alone. Families will return to or remain in mixed areas only when security is credible, and until then the sorting of

communities by identity is likely to continue and to be carried into public services such as schools.

**Impact of Settlement Patterns on Teachers' Posting**

The teachers agreed that posting has become tied to settlement patterns. Teachers prefer to serve in communities of the same ethnic or religious group as the teacher, some reject postings to volatile areas, schools in crisis-prone areas are short of teachers, and frequent transfers follow insecurity. Agreement was high on every point and was strongest for the shortage of teachers in crisis-prone schools. The pattern means that posting, which should follow need, is following safety and identity. In impact, the sense of safety and belonging among teachers now influences where posts are filled and where posts stay vacant, and the schools that lose are those in the most disturbed communities, where pupils have the greatest need of stable instruction.

Safe and orderly surroundings are among the conditions that impactive schools require (Lezotte, 2018), and teachers who feel unsafe or out of place are less likely to remain in a post. The finding also adds to a national problem: public primary schools already carry more pupils per teacher than the policy benchmark allows, and the northern states are the worst affected (Federal Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning & UNICEF, 2024). Uneven posting widens this gap in the very schools where it is hardest to close. The implication is that equitable deployment cannot be left to individual choice. Posting rules, security arrangements at school level and incentives for teachers who serve in vulnerable communities are needed to keep every school staffed.

**Impact of Settlement Patterns on Pupils' Enrolment**

Teachers and pupils agreed that settlement patterns are redistributing pupils. Pupils move to schools located in communities of the same ethnic or religious group as the pupil, some schools lose pupils because of the crises, schools in homogeneous communities have gained pupils, parents withdraw children from schools in volatile areas, and some host schools have become crowded by new arrivals. The experience reported by pupils matched the view of teachers closely, and the strongest agreement in both groups concerned parents keeping children out of schools in areas of fighting.

The finding shows that enrolment is shifting between schools as well as falling in affected areas. Some schools are emptied while others, in safer or homogeneous communities, take in more pupils than classrooms and teachers can serve. This is in line with reports that insecurity keeps children out of school and strains schools in host communities (UNICEF, 2024a, 2024b) and with the account of conflict interrupting teaching and learning (UNESCO, 2023). Because the enrolment findings rest on what respondents reported and not on enrolment registers, the direction and general extent of the movement are established but not its exact size. The implication is twofold. Resources, including teachers and classrooms, need to follow pupils to the receiving schools, and schools that are losing pupils need rehabilitation and community reassurance so that parents regain confidence in these schools.

**Impact of Settlement Patterns on Pupils' Academic Achievement**

Pupils agreed that the crises and the resulting movement of families harm learning. School closures make it hard to catch up, moving to a new area makes learning harder, the departure of teachers affects understanding of Social Studies lessons, and fear of the fighting reduces concentration. Agreement was high on each point and was highest for the difficulty of concentrating in class when pupils are frightened. The achievement test pointed the same way. Pupils in homogeneous communities and in urban stable areas scored far higher than pupils in mixed communities and in rural crisis-prone areas, and the gap was wide in both comparisons.

The test result needs careful reading. It does not mean that homogeneous settlement is, in itself, better for learning. A likely explanation is that mixed communities and rural crisis-prone areas are where fighting, school closure, teacher shortage and displacement are felt most, while homogeneous communities and urban stable areas offer calmer conditions and steadier teaching. This explanation is consistent with the finding that teachers avoid volatile areas and that schools in crisis-prone areas lack teachers. Settlement type, location and school resources overlap, so the gap shows association and not proof of a single cause, but the pupils' own accounts of disrupted learning point to the same explanation. The result also agrees with the view that learning depends on safe, orderly and consistent instruction (Lezotte, 2018). The implication is that pupils in mixed and crisis-prone communities bear an educational cost of the crises. Without deliberate support, such as remedial teaching after closures, assured teacher presence and attention to the fear and distress of pupils, the gap in achievement is likely to persist and to limit the progress of these pupils to higher levels of schooling.

**Strategies for Mitigating the Impact**

Teachers endorsed every strategy put to the respondents, with little disagreement. Improved security around schools in crisis-prone communities and special incentives for teachers in vulnerable areas drew the strongest support, followed by equitable deployment of teachers and stronger peacebuilding and tolerance programmes. Rehabilitation of affected schools, monitoring of schools with falling enrolment and teacher shortages, and encouragement for parents to enrol children across ethnic and religious lines also drew strong support. Psychosocial support for pupils and teachers, though endorsed, drew the least.

The ordering matches the problems identified in the earlier findings. Security responds to the fear that drives families to move and parents to withdraw children. Incentives and equitable deployment respond to the reluctance of teachers to serve in volatile areas. Rehabilitation and monitoring respond to the loss of pupils from some schools and the overcrowding of others, and peacebuilding and cross-community enrolment respond to the sorting of communities by identity. The lower priority given to psychosocial support may indicate that the emotional toll reported by pupils is less widely seen as a school responsibility, even though fear was reported to disturb concentration in class. Because only teachers were asked about strategies, the findings reflect the views of one group within the school system. Parents, education officials and security agencies, whose cooperation most of the strategies require, were not consulted. The implication is that the strategies offer a sound starting point for planning, but adoption and funding of the strategies would need the involvement of these other parties.

Taken together, the findings describe a chain that runs from crisis to insecurity, from insecurity to the movement of families, and from that movement to uneven teacher posting, shifting enrolment and weaker learning for pupils in the most affected communities. Settlement pattern is therefore the channel through which conflict reaches the classroom. The strategies endorsed by teachers address each link in this chain, which indicates that a response limited to a single point, such as incentives for teachers alone, is unlikely to be enough.

## Conclusion

The study concluded that ethno-religious-based settlement patterns have fundamentally and negatively restructured the educational landscape of Plateau State, Nigeria. The findings established that recurrent crises and fear of violence have driven a massive demographic shift, forcing families to abandon mixed communities in favor of homogeneous and urban stable areas. This displacement has created a dual educational crisis: while schools in mixed and crisis-prone areas face severe pupil decline, host schools in homogeneous communities face sudden overcrowding.

Consequently, this settlement shift has severely compromised human resource management in the education sector. Teachers show a strong aversion to postings in volatile or mixed areas, leading to a skewed distribution of educators (with the majority clustered in homogeneous and stable zones) and chronic understaffing in vulnerable schools. Most critically, the objective Pupils' Academic Achievement Test (PAAT) empirically proved that this geographic and social polarization directly undermines learning outcomes. Pupils in homogeneous communities (Mean = 15.82/20) and urban stable areas (Mean = 16.10/20) significantly outperformed their peers in mixed communities (Mean = 10.45/20) and rural crisis-prone areas (Mean = 9.85/20). Therefore, without targeted interventions, ethno-religious settlement patterns will continue to entrench educational inequality and deprive vulnerable children of their right to quality basic education in Plateau State.

**Recommendations**

Based on the empirical findings and the data-driven conclusions of the study, the following five recommendations are made:

1. **Prioritize the Security of Schools and Communities**

   Given that fear of violence is the primary driver of displacement and teacher reluctance, both the federal and state governments must urgently deploy robust security measures around schools in crisis-prone and mixed communities. This includes establishing community policing frameworks specifically to protect educational infrastructure and guarantee the safe movement of pupils and teachers.

2. **Implement Equitable Teacher Deployment and Special Incentive Packages**
   To correct the current staffing imbalance (where 64.7% of teachers cluster in stable areas), the Plateau State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) must mandate equitable teacher deployment. To encourage teachers to accept postings in mixed or crisis-prone areas, the government should introduce attractive hardship allowances, secure housing, and accelerated promotion schemes for educators willing to serve in vulnerable communities.

3. **Rehabilitate Affected Schools and Expand Capacity in Host Communities**
   The government and relevant NGOs must fund the total reconstruction and rehabilitation of schools destroyed or abandoned due to crises. Simultaneously, urban stable and homogeneous host communities—which are currently experiencing severe overcrowding due to the influx of displaced families—must receive immediate infrastructural expansion, including new classrooms, water facilities, and teaching materials to accommodate the increased pupil population.

4. **Integrate Psychosocial Support into the School System**

   The study revealed that pupils struggle to focus because they are traumatized by the fighting. The Ministry of Education should deploy trained guidance counselors to primary schools in affected zones and integrate trauma-informed teaching practices into the curriculum. Providing psychosocial support will help pupils overcome the

emotional barriers that currently hinder their academic achievement.

5. **Strengthen Peacebuilding and Cross-Ethnic Enrolment Campaigns**

   To reverse the trend of educational segregation, community leaders, religious institutions, and school administrators must collaborate to promote peacebuilding and tolerance programs. Parents should be actively sensitized and encouraged to enroll their children across ethnic and religious lines, ensuring that schools remain neutral, inclusive spaces that foster social cohesion rather than division.

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**ETHNO-RELIGIOUS BASED SETTLEMENT PATTERN AND TEACHERS' POSTING QUESTIONNAIRE (EBSPTPQ)**

**Section A: Demographic Information**

*Please tick (✓) as appropriate.*

1. Gender: Male [ ] Female [ ]
2. Years of Teaching Experience: 1–5 years [ ] 6–10 years [ ] 11–15 years [ ] 16 years and above [ ]
3. School Settlement Pattern: Mixed Ethno-Religious Community [ ] Homogeneous Ethno-Religious Community [ ]
4. School Location: Urban Stable [ ] Semi-Urban [ ] Rural Crisis-Prone [ ]

**Section B: Instruction**

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements using the scale: **SA** = Strongly Agree (5), **A** = Agree (4), **UD** = Undecided (3), **D** = Disagree (2), **SD** = Strongly Disagree (1).

| S/N | **How have ethno-religious-based conflicts influenced settlement patterns in Plateau State, Nigeria?** | **SA** | **A** | **UD** | **D** | **SD** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Ethno-religious crises have led to the displacement of families to homogeneous communities. | | | | | |
| 2 | Mixed settlements have reduced due to recurring crises. | | | | | |
| 3 | Fear of violence influences the residential choices of families. | | | | | |
| 4 | Communities are now largely divided along ethnic/religious lines. | | | | | |
| S/N | **What are the impact of ethno-religious-based settlement patterns on the posting and distribution of primary school teachers in Plateau State?** | **SA** | **A** | **UD** | **D** | **SD** |
| 5 | Teachers prefer postings within their ethnic/religious communities. | | | | | |
| 6 | Some teachers reject postings to volatile areas. | | | | | |
| 7 | Schools in crisis-prone areas experience teacher shortages. | | | | | |
| 8 | Frequent transfers occur due to insecurity. | | | | | |
| **S/N** | **What are the impact of ethno-religious-based settlement patterns on pupils' enrolment in primary schools in Plateau State?** | **SA** | **A** | **UD** | **D** | **SD** |
| 9 | Pupils transfer to schools within their ethnic/religious communities. | | | | | |
| 10 | Some schools record declining enrolment due to crises. | | | | | |
| 11 | Enrolment has increased in homogeneous community schools. | | | | | |
| 12 | Parents withdraw children from schools in volatile areas. | | | | | |
| **S/N** | **What strategies can be adopted to mitigate the impact of ethno-religious-based settlement patterns on teachers' posting and pupils' enrolment in primary schools in Plateau State?** | **SA** | **A** | **UD** | **D** | **SD** |
| 13 | Government should improve security around schools in crisis-prone communities. | | | | | |
| 14 | Teachers should be deployed equitably across settlement patterns. | | | | | |
| 15 | Special incentives should be provided for teachers in vulnerable areas. | | | | | |
| 16 | Schools affected by ethno-religious crises should be rehabilitated. | | | | | |
| 17 | Parents should be encouraged to enrol children across ethnic/religious lines. | | | | | |
| 18 | Schools should strengthen peacebuilding and tolerance programmes. | | | | | |
| 19 | Psychosocial support should be provided for affected pupils and teachers. | | | | | |
| 20 | Government should monitor schools with declining enrolment and teacher shortages. | | | | | |

**PUPILS' EXPERIENCE OF SETTLEMENT AND SCHOOLING QUESTIONNAIRE**

**(PESQ)**

**Section A: About You**

*Please tick (✓) the correct box.*

1. Gender Boy [ ] Girl [ ]
2. Age Below 10 years [ ] 10–12 years [ ] 13 years and above [ ]
3. What class are you? Primary 4 [ ] Primary 5 [ ] Primary 6 [ ]
4. Which type of area is your school in?
   Mixed area (people of different religions/tribes live together) [ ]
   Same-group area (mostly people of one religion/tribe live here) [ ]

**Section B: Instructions**

*Please read each sentence carefully. Tick (✓) the box that shows how much you agree with it.*

**SA** = I agree very much **A** = I agree a little **UD** = I am not sure **D** = I disagree a little **SD** = I disagree very much

| S/N | **How have ethno-religious-based conflicts influenced settlement patterns in Plateau State, Nigeria?** | **SA** | **A** | **UD** | **D** | **SD** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I live in an area where most people are from my own tribe or religion. | | | | | |
| 2 | Many families like mine have moved to live closer to people of the same tribe or religion because of the fighting. | | | | | |
| 3 | In my area, people of different tribes or religions do not live together like they used to. | | | | | |
| 4 | My family chose to live in this area because we feel safer here. | | | | | |
| S/N | **What are the impact of ethno-religious-based settlement patterns on pupils' enrolment in primary schools in Plateau State?** | **SA** | **A** | **UD** | **D** | **SD** |
| 5 | Some of my friends have left my school to go to a school where most pupils are from their own tribe or religion. | | | | | |
| 6 | The number of pupils in my class has reduced because of the fighting in our area. | | | | | |
| 7 | My school is now very crowded because many new pupils have come from other places. | | | | | |
| 8 | My parents would not let me go to a school in an area where there is fighting. | | | | | |
| S/N | **What are the impact of ethno-religious-based settlement patterns on pupils' academic achievement in primary schools in Plateau State?** | **SA** | **A** | **UD** | **D** | **SD** |
| 9 | When our school is closed because of fighting, it is hard for me to catch up with my studies. | | | | | |
| 10 | Moving to a new house or area because of the crisis makes it hard for me to learn well in school. | | | | | |
| 11 | Because some teachers have left, I do not understand my Social Studies lessons very well. | | | | | |
| 12 | I sometimes find it hard to focus in class because I am thinking about the fighting or feeling scared. | | | | | |

**Pupils' Academic Achievement Test (PAAT)**

**Subject: Social Studies**

**Instructions for Pupils:** Choose the correct option (A, B, C, or D) for each question. Circle your answer clearly. Time allowed: 30 minutes.

**Section A: The Family and Community**

1. What is a family?
   A. A group of friends playing together

B. A group of people related by blood or marriage
C. A group of people living in a market
D. A group of teachers in a school

2. Which of the following is an example of a community?
   A. A single person
   B. A dog
   C. Jos North Local Government Area
   D. A tree

3. Why do people live together in a community?
   A. To fight each other
   B. To help and protect one another
   C. To steal from each other
   D. To destroy the environment

4. What is a settlement?
   A. A place where people live together
   B. A place where only animals live
   C. A type of food
   D. A mode of transportation

**Section B: Culture and Diversity**

5. What is culture?
   A. A type of vehicle
   B. The way of life of a group of people
   C. A building in the city
   D. A kind of football game

6. Nigeria is made up of many different ethnic groups. What does this mean?
   A. We are all the same
   B. We have different languages and traditions
   C. We do not have a culture
   D. We all speak only one language

7. Which of the following is a good way to live with people from different ethnic or religious groups?
   A. Treat them as enemies
   B. Avoid them completely
   C. Respect their beliefs and live in peace
   D. Fight them when they come near

**Section C: Peace and Conflict Resolution**

8. What does "peaceful coexistence" mean?
   A. Fighting every day
   B. Living together in harmony without fighting
   C. Living alone in the forest
   D. Refusing to talk to neighbours

9. Which of the following is a common cause of conflict in a community?
   A. Sharing food equally
   B. Land disputes and misunderstandings
   C. Playing football together
   D. Singing songs together

10. What is the best way to resolve a disagreement between two people?
    A. Fighting
    B. Dialogue and discussion
    C. Shouting at each other
    D. Telling lies

11. How can we promote peace in our community?
    A. Telling lies about people
    B. Showing respect to others

C. Stealing from neighbours
D. Fighting in the market

12. What should you do if you see a classmate being bullied or hurt?
    A. Join them in bullying
    B. Laugh at them
    C. Report to the teacher
    D. Run away and hide

**Section D: Citizenship and Government**

13. Which of the following shows good citizenship?
    A. Throwing rubbish on the street
    B. Obeying school rules and traffic laws
    C. Stealing from the market
    D. Fighting neighbours

14. Why is education important?
    A. To make money only
    B. To gain knowledge and skills to be useful to society
    C. To travel abroad
    D. To fight others

15. What does the term "Universal Basic Education" (UBE) mean?
    A. Education for only rich people
    B. Free and compulsory education for all children
    C. Education for only boys
    D. Education for adults only

16. Who is the head of a public primary school?
    A. The Class Teacher
    B. The Headteacher
    C. The Pupil
    D. The Parent

**Section E: Environment and Social Change**

17. Which of these is a basic need of a family?
    A. Television
    B. Food, shelter, and clothing
    C. Motorcycle
    D. Video game

18. Which of these is a good environmental practice?
    A. Cutting down all the trees
    B. Planting trees and keeping the environment clean
    C. Burning bushes
    D. Throwing waste into the river

19. Which of these situations can cause people to leave their homes and move to another place?
    A. Going to the market
    B. Visiting a friend
    C. War or ethno-religious conflict
    D. Going to school in the morning

20. When people move from a mixed community to a community where everyone shares their religion or ethnic group, this is called:
    A. Moving to a homogeneous settlement
    B. Going on a holiday
    C. Playing a game
    D. Reading a book

| **Phase 1** | **Activity** | **Duration** | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 21 Days | 1 Month | 2 Months | 2 Months | 2 Months | 1 Month | 2 Months | 1 Months |
| 1-6 | Visitation to LGA's In Plateau State | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Background Research | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | Data collection | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | Analysis of Data | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | Progress Report | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | Development of Strategy | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | Preparation of Final Report | | | | | | | | |
| 1o | Assessment of Final report | | | | | | | | |

**Work Plan/Time Frame**

**Work Plan:**

| **Phase 2** | | **Description** | **Duration** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Visitation to six Local Government Areas of Northern Zone: The researcher will visit 6 schools in each of the LGAs in Northern Zone | To familiarize and liaise with the school authorities, teachers and pupils, to also observe the environment generally | 7days |
| 2. | Visitation to five local Government Areas of Central Zone. The researcher will also visit 6 schools in each of the LGA | To familiarize and liaise with the school authorities, teachers and pupils, to also observe the environment generally | 7days |
| 3. | Visitation with the research assistants to the sample schools in all the Local Government Areas in the Central and Northern Zones | To familiarize and liaise with the school authorities, teachers and pupils, to also observe the environment generally | 7days |
| 4. | | Background Research | 1 month |
| 5. | | Data Collection | 2 months |
| **Phase 3** | | **Description** | **Duration** |
| 6 | | Analysis of data | 2 months |
| 7 | | Progress Report | 2 months |
| 8 | | Development of Strategy | 1 month |
| 9 | | Preparation of Final Report | 2 months |
| 10 | | Assessment of Final Report | 1 month |

**Budgets:**

| **Description of Items** | | **Quantity** | **Expected Fund Source Tetfund** | **Expected Fund Source Tetfund** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | **Unit Price** | **Total** |
| 1.0 | Personnel cost/ Allowance | | | |
| 1.1 | Principal Researcher | 1 | N80,000 | N80,000 |
| 1.2 | 11 Research assistants would be engaged. One research assistant for each of the LGA's they will administer the questionnaires to the researcher respondents. | 11 (one to each LGA's) | N15,000 | N165,000 |
| **Sub Total** | | | | **N245,000** |
| **2.0 Equipment** | | | | |
| 2.1 | SPPS Software and engagement of a system analyst | 1 | N92,500 | N92,500 |
| 2.2 | Universal modem | 1 | N10,000 | N10,000 |
| 2.3 3 | GB data per month for 4months | 4 months | N5,000 | N20,000 |
| **Sub Total** | | | | **N122,500** |
| **3.0** | **Consumable** | | | |
| 3.1 | Stationery<br>- Typing and printing cost | | N100.00 | N25,000 |
| 3.2 | Design pilot study and testing of research tools | | | N65,000 |
| **Sub Total** | | | | **N80,000** |
| 4.1 | cost of photocopying 6,240 questionnaire for all the six LGA's of Northern Zone of Plateau State | 5,760 (3 pages for pupils questionnaire,4 pages for teachers questionnaires making a total of 7 pages for all the instrument | N10 x 17,280<br>N10 x 1920 | N172,800<br>N19,200 |
| 4.2 | Cost of coding of questionnaire | 5,760 | N120 | N691,200 |
| 4.3 | Statistical Analysis of data collection | | | N170,000 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Sub Total** | | | | **N880,572** |
| **5.0 Travel** | | | | |
| 5.1 | Domestic travels in the 11 LGA's of Northern and Central Zones of Plateau State. | 3 days allocated for each LGA, making a total of 33 days | N10,000 | N330,000 |
| 5.2 | Miscellaneous | | | N60,000 |
| **Sub Total** | | | | **N390,000** |
| | Publication fee (international journal) | | | N240,000 |
| **Sub Total** | | | | **N240,000** |
| **Grand Total** | | | | **N1,958,072** |

**Demographic Data for Pupils' Enrolment (2022/23 – 2024/25) and Teachers' Posting in Plateau State**

| Variables | Mixed Comm. | Homogeneous Comm. | Urban Stable | Rural Crisis-Prone | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Pupils 2022/23** | 148,520 | 132,430 | 162,300 | 118,650 | 280,950 |
| **Pupils 2023/24** | 136,280 | 149,760 | 170,520 | 115,520 | 286,040 |
| **Pupils 2024/25** | 121,450 | 168,390 | 182,640 | 107,200 | 289,840 |
| **Male Pupils (24/25)** | 63,200 | 86,740 | | | 149,940 |
| **Female Pupils (24/25)** | 58,250 | 81,650 | | | 139,900 |
| **No. of Schools** | 512 | 634 | | | 1,146 |
| **Teachers Total** | 3,760 | 4,630 | 5,430 | 2,960 | 8,390 |
| **Male Teachers** | 2,140 | 2,780 | 3,150 | 1,770 | 4,920 |
| **Female Teachers** | 1,620 | 1,850 | 2,280 | 1,190 | 3,470 |
| **PTR (2024/25)** | 32.3 | 36.4 | 33.6 | 36.2 | 34.5 |

- Enrolment Shift: While total enrolment grew slightly (from 280,950 to 289,840), there was a major redistribution. Mixed community schools lost 18.2% of their pupils, while homogeneous schools gained 27.2%.
- Gender Balance: The gender distribution is very even across both settlement types (Females make up 48.0% in mixed and 48.5% in homogeneous areas), showing the migration impact impact boys and girls equally.
- Teacher Distribution: Teachers are unevenly distributed. 55.2% of teachers are in homogeneous areas, and 64.7% are in stable areas. Only 35.3% of teachers serve in rural crisis-prone areas.
- Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR): Homogeneous community schools have a higher PTR (36.4) than mixed schools (32.3). Similarly, crisis-prone areas have a higher PTR (36.2) than stable areas (33.6). This indicates that as schools in crisis areas lose pupils, they are *also* losing teachers at an even faster rate.