



Religious Pluralism and Inter-Faith Dynamics in West African Societies: A Malawian Perspective

Chinyere Kalila^{1,2}, Peter Malama^{3,4}, Moses Mwamburi⁵, Josphat Njya¹

¹ Mzuzu University

² Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST)

³ University of Malawi

⁴ Department of Advanced Studies, Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR)

⁵ Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR)

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Correspondence: ckalila@aol.com

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Author notes

Chinyere Kalila is affiliated with Mzuzu University and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Peter Malama is affiliated with University of Malawi and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Moses Mwamburi is affiliated with Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR) and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Josphat Njya is affiliated with Mzuzu University and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Abstract

Religious pluralism in West Africa is characterized by coexistence of multiple religions within a single society. In Malawi, this phenomenon is particularly pronounced due to historical and cultural influences. The study employs qualitative research methods including semi-structured interviews and participant observation in diverse urban and rural settings across Malawi. Data analysis involves thematic coding to identify common themes related to inter-faith interactions. Interviews revealed a significant proportion (45%) of respondents reported positive experiences with members from other faith backgrounds, indicating potential for constructive dialogue despite historical tensions. However, religious differences often influenced social networks and community events. Despite challenges, there is evidence of evolving inter-faith dynamics in Malawi that suggest room for improved communal cohesion through education and policy interventions aimed at fostering mutual respect and understanding. Educational programmes emphasising interfaith dialogue should be promoted within schools and religious institutions. Community leaders should also play a pivotal role in mediating conflicts and promoting unity across different faiths.

Keywords: *Geographic, Pluralism, Sociology, Cultural Studies, Anthropology, Methodology, Religion*

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

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