Revising Islamic Studies Courses for Improving Cordial Interfaith Relations in Nigeria: A Case Study of Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Katsina, Nigeria

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Abstract

Nigeria has been, for the last four decades, struggling with the menace of inter-religious hostilities between Christians and Muslims who formed the largest religious groups in the country. Numerous policies and programs broken by various Governments and non-Governmental organizations to curtail the situation failed to yield the desired result. Islamic studies as one of the widely offered programs in the Nigerian universities has the prospect of offering solution to the predicament. However, the courses taught in the program are mainly studies on the Qur'an, Hadith, Tauhid, Ibadat, Fiqh, Islamic civilization, thought and history without single course on interfaith relations. Taking Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Katsina (UMYUK)-Nigeria, as a study case, this paper attempts to draft and propose the inclusion of interfaith relations courses in the curriculum of Islamic Studies programs at the university level in Nigeria for realization of peaceful coexistence in the country. The researcher uses primary data from the Qur'an and sunnah as well as secondary data from different sources. The paper employs exegetical methods and adopts content analysis in the process of conducting the research. The article recommends merging of duplicated courses in the existing curriculum and inclusion of the proposed courses by the Nigerian universities and other institutions of higher learning that offer various Islamic studies programs for the attainment of peaceful interfaith relations in the country.

Key Words*: Interfaith Relations, Peaceful Coexistence, Nigeria, University, Islamic Studies Courses*

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Introduction

Federal Republic of Nigeria which is located on the west coast of sub-Saharan Africa is not only one of the most populous countries in the world but the most populous nation in Africa (Joseph, 2019). Currently, the country occupies the 7th position in the world population ranking with a population of 206,819,989 million people (World Population Review 2020). The country has over four hundred (400) ethnic groups distributed majorly among the two major religions, Islam and Christianity which made the country multi-ethic and multi-religious state (Salawu, 2010). While the Muslim population in the country is 50% that of the Christians is 40% and African Traditional Religion (ATR) stood at 10% (Fabarebo, Sangotunde, & Ojetayo 2019; United Nations, 2019). However, the Muslim population is predominant in the Northern region of the country and the Christianity has the overwhelming majority in the south even though southwest sub-region has equal numbers of Muslims and Christians population (Joseph, 2019).

Unfortunately, the country's religious and ethnic diversity turned out to be one of the factors threatening its unity since its independence. This is evident in the profound religious divisions that separates the nation into two rival religious groups, the most decisive division being the Muslim-North versus the Christian-South (Fabarebo, Sangotunde, & Ojetayo's 2019). Thus, the Country has been and is still suffering from various disturbing situations,[1] that have seriously hampered trust, confidence, and peaceful co-existence between the Christian and Muslim citizens. (Fabarebo, Sangotunde, & Ojetayo 2019), the most devastating being interreligious conflicts that occurs mostly in the Northern region between the Muslim majority and Christian minorities (Dogo, 2017). From 1984 to date, the country witnessed incessant recurrence of ethno-religious crises that resulted to the estimated loss of over three million lives and unquantifiable psychological and material damages. More violent, bloody and devastating results was seen after the emergence of ethnic militias who are used for executing violent ethnic and religious agendas which further deteriorated the already broken relationship (Salawu, 2010).

A series of government programs at different levels with a view to curtailing the menace failed to yield the desired result. Islam as a way of life has provided effective guidelines for peaceful coexistence by defining the rights and obligations of every individual and groups whether a believer(s) or non-believer(s). Thus, with the increase in the teaching and learning of Islamic Studies across Nigerian university system that graduates hundreds of students annually, it is optimistic that the program could be utilized in suppressing if not totally eradicating interreligious hostilities in the country. However, it has been observed that the Islamic studies courses taught at university level are devoid of syllabus on interfaith relations (Darma, 2015). Taking Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina (UMYUK) as a case of study, this paper aims at drafting some courses on Islamic Interfaith Relations at various levels of university undergraduate program for

proper consideration and implementation by the Nigerian Universities for realization of sustainable peaceful coexistence in the country.

Literature Review

Although much research was conducted on the predicament of peaceful coexistence in Nigeria, little attention is paid to the potentiality of education in addressing the phenomenon, let alone Islamic studies at the tertiary level. This marks the existence of research gab in teaching and learning Islamic studies and interfaith relations in Nigeria. Hence, the literatures reviewed here are limited to the research on the potentiality of religious education for the promotion of peaceful coexistence as well as prospects of teaching and learning Islamic studies in Nigeria as could be seen in the following:

Among the available works written on the nexus between the religious education, curriculum and peaceful coexistence in Nigeria is the Fabarebo, Sangotunde, & Ojetayo's (2019) journal article titled: "The Peace-Education Curriculum Desirable for Pre-Primary and Primary Schools in Nigeria: A Religious Perspective." The article aims at assessing and modifying the existing peace-education curriculum in Nigerian pre-primary and primary schools to suit the religious diversity of the nation. Drawing from both Islamic and Christian sources, the authors drafted a detailed peace education curriculum and recommended its nationwide application across the country. Thus, the article offers tremendous contribution toward solving inter-religious hostilities, radicalism, and fanaticism which the current paper also aims to achieve. However, the article differs from this paper in terms of its scope and limitations. While this research is restricted to the teaching and learning of Islamic studies at university level, the article is written on teaching peace education at elementary level.

Another research relevant to this paper is the Joseph's (2019) journal article titled: "Towards Peaceful Co-Existence in Nigeria: Religious Education as a Tool." The paper aims at showcasing the viability of religious education for the attainment of peaceful coexistence in Nigeria. After the examination of the history, causes and effects of inter-religious conflict in Nigeria, the author highlighted teaching of Islamic and Christian values of kindness, tolerance and peace as enjoined in the Qur'an, examples of Prophet Muhammad, Peace be Upon Him (ﷺ), and the exemplary life of Jesus Christ. Thus, the contribution of the article is manifest in proffering religious education as one of the workable solutions to inter-religious crises in Nigeria. Even though the perimeter of the article is similar to this paper, the former is not restricted to any level of education which is not the case with the latter. Moreover, unlike this paper, the article takes into consideration of both Islamic and Christian education.

Darma's article (2015) "Prospects of Islamic Studies in Nigerian Universities: A Case Study of Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina" is also vital to this research. Taking the curriculum of Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina as a case of study, the paper aims at modifying the existing curricular of Islamic Studies in Nigerian university in accordance with the spirit of modern scholarship and civilization. After analyzing the lapses of the existing curricular which include lack of specific areas of specialization among the undergraduate students, the author proffered some suggestions that would enhance students' concentration on specific disciplines and becoming expert in a particular subject. Accordingly, the contribution of this article lies in the examination of the deficiency of the current curriculum and proffering solution for improvement. The relevance of the article to this research is apparent in its examination of the Islamic studies curriculum at university level in Nigeria. However, the aim of the two research varies, while the article concentrates on the issue of specialization among undergraduate students of Islamic studies, this research focuses on the prospect of redesigning the curriculum by merging some duplicated courses and inclusion of interfaith relation courses for the attainment of peaceful coexistence in Nigeria.

The literature reviewed in the above clearly indicated existence of research paucity on the nexus between religious education and peaceful coexistence in Nigeria. It also shows absence of research on teaching and learning of Islamic studies at university level and peaceful coexistence in Nigeria which makes this research innovative, timely and contributory to the existing knowledge.

Methodology

This paper adopts exegetical and content analysis methods by using both primary and secondary data. The primary data is sourced directly from the Qur'an and *Hadith*, while the secondary data is collected from *tafsir* books, dissertations, articles and research papers on Islamic interfaith relations from the printed and online materials. The exegetical method is used in discovering the interpretation of the various Qur'anic verses and hadiths on interfaith relations to find out the meaning of the texts which is necessary for developing and drafting the new curriculum proposal. Content analysis method is also used where the data collected from secondary sources are compressed into fewer content by categorizing and coding the themes and concepts of the data collected and analyzing the results. This is because content analysis is a suitable method for analyzing a broad range of texts (Luo, 2019).

Overview of Interfaith Relation in Contemporary Nigeria

Interfaith relations here refer to the mode of interaction between the followers of different religions, precisely, between Muslims and other religious adherents. Since Islam and Christianity are the major religions in Nigeria proclaimed by 90% of the country's population, the research focuses on the relationship between the Christian and Muslim religious adherents in the country.

Christian-Muslim relationship in Nigeria has been characterized by tension, lack of cordiality, unfriendliness, mutual suspicion and fear, as well as violent confrontations, bigotry, discrimination of members of one religious' group against another and conflicts which reoccurred once, twice or more every year as far back as 1980s to date (Salawu, 2010; Dogo, 2017). Therefore, Nigeria had been suffering from Christian-Muslim hostilities for over four decades which resulted to loss of over three (3) million human lives and immeasurable destruction of properties as well as the formation of militia groups for the execution of violent and bloody religious agenda (Salawu, 2010).

While it is impossible to have the exact statistic of the Christian-Muslim conflicts in Nigeria due to lack of proper record, Ojo & Lateju (2010) claim that between 1980-2005 about 48 cases of interreligious conflicts occurred in the country. Similarly, Joseph (2019) listed 19 instances of inter-religious crises that broke up across the country between 1999-2018. Whatever the number of Christian-Muslim crises maybe, intolerance, exclusion, negative influence of some religious leaders, extremism, absence of inter-religious dialogue, ignorance of religious teachings, vengeance, tribalism, and inequality were identified as some of the major factors behind the crises (Ebuziem, 2018; Joseph, 2019). In a nutshell, the recurrence of interreligious crises between the two religious adherents had tremendously deteriorated and shattered into pieces the relationship between the Muslims and Christians in Nigeria. It is against this background that this paper aims at examining the efficacy of including Islamic interfaith relation courses at university level for redeeming the situation.

Brief History of Islamic Education in Nigeria

Islam attaches a great deal of importance to knowledge and seeking education because of its prospect in this life and the next. This assertion is supported by the fact that the first Qur'anic revelation to Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was a command to read:

> "Read! In the Name of your Lord Who created. He has created man from a clot. Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous. Who has taught by the pen. He has taught man that which he knew not." (Alaq; 1-5)[2]

The *hadith* of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) also emphasizes the obligation of seeking knowledge on every Muslim regardless of his/her gender when it says:

"Seeking knowledge is a duty upon every Muslim." (Ibn Majah, Vol.1, The Book of Sunnah, p.222)

The primary objectives of education in Islam are the production of good, righteous, useful, and productive members of the society "who worships Allah in the true sense of the term, builds up structure of his earthly life according to the shari'ah law, and employs it to serve his faith." (Hussain & Ashraf, p.42). In fact, education in Islam should be geared toward problem solving and meeting off the challenges facing the Muslim *Ummah* as rightly posits by Mustafa:

"No society will prosper if its members fail to acquire the education with which to overcome its problems, to meet challenges facing it and to utilize available opportunities and potentialities of the people." (Mustafa, 2003, p.39)

The history of Islamic education could be traced back to the era of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) when he started teaching his *Sahabah* first in his house and later in the house Arqam Ibn Abi Arqam in Makkah (Gada, 2010; Mustafa, 2003)**.** After his *hijrah* to Madinah, his Mosque became a comprehensive center for disseminating Islamic education. It was the first public school in Arabian Peninsula that provided education to the Muslims without discrimination on the race, age, color, gender or economic differences. The school was frequented by the residents and those who travelled from distant land to acquire religious education from the Prophet (Al-Otaibi & Rashid, 1997). Thus, the role of the Prophet's Mosque as a public school motivated the emergence and proliferation of Islamic schools and universities among subsequent generations of the Muslim *Ummah*. From that time mosques continued to serve as centers of Islamic learning in most parts of the Muslim world up to today (Karkarku, 2014).

The Introduction of Islam in the Hausa land (currently known as Northern Nigeria) by the Arab traders and scholars from North Africa in the 7th century was immediately followed by the establishment of Qur'anic schools and centers of Islamic scholarship by the itinerant and resident Islamic scholars who, mostly, came from North Africa (Gada, 2010). This movement led to the production of great local scholars such as Wali Danmarna, Wali Danmasani, Dantakum and others who in turn established Centers of learning during their time. The establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate in 18th century under the leadership of Shaykh Uthman bin Fodio had also contributed greatly to boosting Islamic education in the region. The caliphate facilitated the establishment of more Qur'anic schools and more learning centers emerged especially in urban centers of the Hausa land which attracted students from far and near to study different aspects of Islamic education. Therefore, when the British conquered Northern Nigeria in 1900s, they found a comprehensive, functional, and effective system of Islamic education operating among the Muslim *Ummah* of Northern Nigeria (Karkarku, 2014).

On the other hand, the first sets of Islamic schools in Southern part of Nigeria were established immediately after the introduction of the religion between the 14th and 15th centuries by the Malian and Arabs traders from North Africa. The first forms of Islamic schools were established as Qur'anic centers purposely to teach people about Qur'anic recitation. Mosques were established in the Southwestern part of Nigeria as far back as 1550 A.D. by the Malians which also served as centers of Islamic learning. By 18th century other branches of Islamic studies are taught in the earlier established Qur'anic schools. Later on, the Muslims established conventional schools where different aspects of Islamic knowledge are taught (Jide, 2019).

Islamic education during the Nigerian colonial days suffered a serious setback due to deliberate neglect by the imperial powers. Secular education was brought and given formal government patronage while Arabic and Islamic education were relegated to the background, starved of government patronage, and declared informal. The first attempt to restore Islamic studies to its former status was made in 1953 when some eminent local Muslim personalities agitated for the formal recognition of Islamic education by the colonial government. However, their effort didn't materialize until after the country's independence in 1968 when the government officially recognizes Islamic studies as examinable subject under the examination body of the West African Examination Council (WAEC). From that time, Islamic studies became one of the (officially) registered subjects offered at all levels of education in Nigeria. Today, Islamic Studies is taught as a course of study in most of the Nigerian public and private Universities. (Azeez & Adeshina, 2013; Jide, 2019).

Analysis of the Existing Islamic Studies Curriculum for Undergraduate in UMYUK Based on Subjects

Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Katsina abbreviated as "UMYUK" (formerly Katsina State University) is a state-owned public university located in Katsina State, Northern Nigeria. The university was established in 2006 by the then Katsina State Government out of the desire to improve access to higher education for its citizenry through conventional face-to-face and distance learning modes. The University was named after the late President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Umaru Musa Yar'adua who was founding father of the university. The university commenced academic activities in January 2007 with three (3) faculties, namely, Education, Humanities and Natural and Applied Sciences, and sixteen (16) undergraduate programmes. Currently, the University has a total number of five (5) faculties, 36 departments, 136 undergraduate and postgraduate academic programmes and total number of 19,856 students (Campus Times Nigeria, 2020; Study Vib, 2019).

The Department of Islamic Studies of the university was established in January 2007 and was one of the pioneer departments in the Faculty of Humanities. The philosophy behind the establishment of the department is to instil noble traits of Islam in the human minds that would make it more responsible and useful to themselves and humanity, promoting Islamic learning through teaching and research, and *to participate in finding solutions to multi-dimensional problems confronting Muslims and humanity in general* (emphasis added), (Faculty of Humanities, 2019). However, the department has the following as its specific objectives:

- To acquaint students with the broad outlines of Islam as a religion and culture.
- To prepare students to understand Islam as a culture and civilization.
- To describe Islam to students according to its own sources (particularly the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet).
- *To maintain a rigorous scholarly approach to problems of contemporary Muslim communities, with a particular reference to Nigeria* (emphasis added).
- To produce graduates that would fit into establishments of administration, Islamic legal departments and foreign service, as well as students who will teach at various levels.
- To produce good intellectuals, professionals, and scholars by integrating the qualities of faith *(Iman)*, knowledge *('Ilm)* and character *(Akhlaq)* to serve as agents of comprehensive, balanced progress and sustainable development in Nigeria and the world at large.[3]

It can be deduced from the objectives and philosophy that part of the aim of teaching and learning Islamic studies in the university is to help in resolving contemporary problems facing both Muslim and non-Muslim communities particularly in Nigeria. As stated, and explained earlier, one of the devastating problems that need urgent solution in Nigeria today is incessant Christian-Muslim hostilities that threatens not only the peace and harmony of the religious adherents, but the very existence and unity of the country as single entity. However, the Islamic studies courses being taught for undergraduate students are devoid of syllabus on interfaith relation that would help in resolving such predicament. The courses are mainly designed for the study of the disciplines such as the Qur'anic studies, *hadith* studies, history, Islamic law, *fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence), *'Ibadat* (Islamic Rituals), theology, Islamic thought, and civilization etc. The following table analyzes the existing courses contained in the Islamic studies curriculum for the undergraduate program of the university according to subjects:[4]

Courses on Qur'anic Studies (First Semester)					
S/No.	Level	Code	Course Title	Credit Unit[5]	Status[6]
1.	100	ISL1203	Studies on Qur'an I	2	C
		ISL1215	Origin and Development of *Tafsir*	2	E
		ISL1205	Selected Topics from the Qur'an	2	E
2.	200	ISL2201	Studies on Qur'an II	2	C
3	300	ISL3203	Advanced Studies on Qur'an **I**	2	C
4	400	ISL4203	Advanced Studies on Qur'an III	2	C

Courses on Qur'anic Studies (Second Semester)					
S/No.	Level	Code	Course Title	Credit Unit	Status
1.	100	ISL1204	Introduction to Qur'an	2	C
2.	200	*ISL2226	*Textual Studies of Qur'an and *Hadith* **I**[7]	2	E
3	300	*ISL3222	*Textual Studies of Qur'an and *Hadith* II	2	C
		ISL 3206	Advanced Studies of Qur'an **II**	2	E
4	400	ISL 4222	Textual Studies on Qur'an & *Hadith* **III**	2	C

Courses on *Hadith* Studies (First Semester)					
S/No.	Level	Code	Course Title	Credit Unit	Status
1.	100	ISL1213	Studies on *Hadith* **I**	2	C
2.	200	-	-	-	-
3	300	-	-	-	-
4	400	-	-	-	-

Courses on *Hadith* Studies (Second Semester)					
S/No.	Level	Code	Course Title	Credit Unit	Status

1.	100	-	-	-	-
2.	200	*ISL2226	*Textual Studies of Qur'an and *Hadith* **I**	2	E
3.	300	ISL3202	Studies on *Hadith* **II**	2	C
		*ISL3222	*Textual Studies of Qur'an and *Hadith* **II**	2	C
		ISL 3226	Advanced Studies on *Hadith* **I**	2	E
4.	400	ISL 4204	Advanced Studies on *Hadith* **II**	2	C
		ISL 4222	Textual Studies on Qur'an & *Hadith* **III**	2	C

Studies on History (First Semester)					
S/No.	**Level**	**Code**	**Course Title**	**Credit Unit**	**Status**
1.	100	ISL1211	Early history of Islam	2	C
2.	200	ISL2211	History of *Khulafa'*	2	C
		ISL2205	*Sirah* and *Maghazi* Literature	2	E
3.	300	ISL3211	Islam in Africa	2	C
4.	400	ISL4211	Islam in Nigeria	2	C
		ISL4217	Islam in Kanen-Bornu Empire	2	E

Studies on History (Second Semester)					
S/No.	**Level**	**Code**	**Course Title**	**Credit Unit**	**Status**
1.	100	ISL1226	Islam in West Africa	2	E
2.	200	ISL2204	History of Umayyad & Abbasid Dynasties	2	C
3.	300	-	-	-	-
4.	400	ISL4224	Contribution of West African Scholars	2	C

		ISL4226	Islamic Interpretation of History	2	E

Courses on Islamic Law, *Fiqh* & *Ibadat* (First Semester)					
S/No.	**Level**	**Code**	**Course Title**	**Credit Unit**	**Status**
1.	100	-	-	-	-
2.	200	ISL2217	Islamic Constitutional Law	2	E
		ISL2213	*Ibadat* (Islamic Rituals)	2	C
3.	300	ISL3201	Islamic Law of *Mu'amalat*	2	C
		ISL3213	Islamic Family Law	2	C
4.	400	ISL4301	Islamic law of Inheritance	3	C
		ISL4213	Islamic law of *Wasiyyah* and *waqf*	2	C
		ISL4215	*Usul al Fiqh*	2	E

Courses on Islamic Law, *Fiqh* & *Ibadat* (Second Semester)					
S/No.	**Level**	**Code**	**Course Title**	**Credit Unit**	**Status**
1.	100	-	-	-	-
2.	200	ISL2202	Sources and Development of Islamic law	2	C
3	300	-	-	-	-
4	400	ISL4202	Advanced Studies of Muslim Law	2	E

Islamic Theology, Thought and Civilization (First Semester)					
S/No.	**Level**	**Code**	**Course Title**	**Credit Unit**	**Status**
1.	100	-	-	-	-
2.	200	ISL2215	Comparative Studies of Religions	2	E
3.	300	ISL3215	Islamic Political Thought	2	E
		ISL3305	Advanced Studies of Islamic Theology	3	E
4.	400	ISL4205	Islam and the West	2	E

Islamic Theology, Thought and Civilization (Second Semester)					
S/No.	**Level**	**Code**	**Course Title**	**Credit Unit**	**Status**
1.	100	ISL1202	*Tawhid*	2	C

		ISL1222	Bases of Islamic Thought and Civilization	2	C
		ISL1206	Islamic Art and Architecture	2	E
2.	200	ISL2222	*Ilm al-Kalam*	2	C
		ISL2206	Orientalism and Islamic Studies	2	E
3.	300	ISL3204	*Tasawwuf* (Asceticism)	2	C
		ISL3224	Revivalism and Revivalist Movements	2	C
		ISL3208	Islamic Moral Philosophy	2	E
4.	400	ISL4206	Sokoto Caliphate Literature	2	C
		ISL4228	Islamic Literature in Vernacular	2	E

Other Courses (First Semester)					
S/No.	Level	Code	Course Title	Credit Unit	Status
1.	100	ISL1101	Basic Arabic I	1	C
		ISL1217	General Introduction to Islam	2	E
2.	200	ISL2114	Basic Arabic III	1	C
3.	300	ISL3217	Research Methods of Muslim Scholars	2	E
4.	400	-	-	-	-

Other Courses (Second Semester)					
S/No.	Level	Code	Course Title	Credit Unit	Status
1.	100	ISL1124	Basic Arabic II	1	C
		ISL1217	General Introduction to Islam	2	E
2.	200	ISL2124	Basic Arabic IV	1	C
3.	300	ISL3228	Research Methods	2	E
4.	400	ISL4208	Islamic Education	2	E
		ISL4600	Research Project	6	C

From the foregoing analysis, one can simply observe duplication and reoccurrences of some courses especially the courses on history studies and absence of courses on Interreligious relations.

Draft of the Proposed Courses on Interfaith Relations

The paper proposes the inclusion of the following four drafted courses on interfaith relations to be spread across the four years/levels of undergraduate program.

N/S	Code	Course Title	Course Content/Description	Credit Unit	Status
1.	ISL1226	Bases of Interfaith Relations	**a)** Introduction to the concept of peace; definition, importance, Qur'anic injunctions, and hadiths on peace. **b)** Definition of interfaith relations, types and categorization of non-Muslims, position of *Ahl al-Kitab*, Islamic position on Interfaith relations with evidence from the Qur'an, *sunnah* & views of Islamic scholars, permissible & prohibited forms of interreligious relations based on Q60:8-9. **c)** Clarification on the concept of *Jihad* (with a view to correct misconceptions about its definition and purposes); its true meaning, purposes, conditions, and other rules from the Qur'anic verses, authentic *sunnah* and the practices of the righteous predecessors. **d)** Definition, types, and Islamic view on the concepts of *Wala'* (loyalty)	2	C

			in relations to interfaith relations. **e)** Definition, types, and Islamic view on the concepts *Bara'* (dissociation) in relations to interfaith relations.		
2.	ISL2 205	Foundations of Interfaith Relations in Islam	Emphasis should be given to comprehensive interpretation of the Qur'anic verses and hadiths that united the entire religions: **a)** One Universal God (As revealed in Q23:84-89) **b)** Common Origin Cohesiveness of entire Divine Messages (as indicated in Q4:163, Q2:285) **c)** Affinity Between the Messengers and Prophets (As reported in the *hadith* recoded in *Sahih al-Bukhari*: "All Prophets are paternal brothers".) **d)** Universal Human Dignity (As in Q17:70, Q95:2 & Q5:32) **e)** Universal Human Brotherhood (As stated in Q17:70, Q95:2 & Q5:32) **f)** Dignity of human life (As revealed in Q49:13)	2	C
3.	ISL3 211	Islamic Principles of Interfaith Relations	**A)** Broad discussion with references and justification from the Qur'an, *sunnah* and views of the Islamic scholars as well as the practices of the righteous	2	C

| | | | predecessors on the Islamic concepts and ideas that enhance amicable interfaith relations such as:
 i) *Adalah* (Justice) for all and sundry (A senjoined in the Q5:8).
 ii) *Hurriyyah al-Diniyyah* (Religious Freedom for all). (As commanded in the Q2:256, 109:6)
 iii) *Hiwar* (Constructive Interfaith Dialogue) (As contained in the Q3:64, Q29:46).
 iv) *Ishtimal* (Inclusion) (As indicated in the Q21:107, 7:156)
 v)*Tadafu'* (Counteraction or Mutual Restrainment) (As in the Q23:96, 13:22)
 B) Analysis of permissible acts of Interfaith Relations with non-Muslims, reference from the Qur'an and examples from the practices of the Prophet (SAW), his *Sahabah* and the *Tabi'un* on the following aspects:
 i) Inter-personal Relations
 ii) Social Relations
 iii) Economic Relations
 vi) Political Relations | | |

| 4. | ISL4 217 | Islam and Management of Interfaith Conflicts | Definition, causes & consequences of interreligious conflicts with reference to Nigeria. Specific discussion on four 4xDs- destruction, division, disunity, and death as major impact of conflict. Study of Islamic methods of conflict management from the Qur'an and *sunnah* that include the following: **a)** Reconciliation **b)** Arbitration **c)** Forgiveness, Tolerance & Patience **d)** Pacts and Treaties **e)** Compromise **f)** And war as a last resort | 2 | C |

Conclusion and Recommendations

The paper had so far analyzed the existing Islamic studies courses for university undergraduate and presented a draft of the proposed courses suitable for the achievement of peaceful coexistence and national unity in Nigeria. The proposed courses could be integrated into the mainstream curriculum of Islamic studies by merging the duplicated courses in the existing curriculum. Hence, the paper recommends merging of ISL1226: Islam in West Africa and ISL4224: Contribution of West African Scholars with ISL3211: Islam in Africa in to one course to be coded ISL 4224: Islam in Africa, and the codes ISL1226 and ISL3211 should be transferred to the proposed interfaith relations courses for levels 100 and 300 respectively.

In the same vein, ISL2205: Sirah and Maghazi Literature, should be merged into ISL1211: Early History of Islam. The code and title should be maintained as ISL1211: Early History of Islam, while the code ISL2205 should be transferred to the proposed course on interfaith relations for level 200 as indicated in the foregoing table. The last but not the least, ISL4217: Islam in Kanem-Borno should be merged into ISL4211: Islam in Nigeria. The code and title should remain the same as ISL4211: Islam in Nigeria, while the code ISL4217 should be transferred to the proposed course on interfaith relations for level 400 as indicated in the above table. Thus, the paper is optimistic that by affecting these

changes in the Islamic studies curriculum for university undergraduate program in Nigeria, interreligious hostilities would be reduced to the lowest minimal level if not totally eradicated from the country. However, similar research and considerations need to be carried out on other similar fields of study and programs commonly offered in the Nigerian universities.

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[1] Such current disturbances and menaces as mentioned by Fabarebo, Sangotunde, & Ojetayo (2019) include incessant militancy, ethnic violence, farmers- herdsmen clashes, terrorism, kidnapping, political brutality and hooliganism.

[2] Other similar Qur'anic verses which signify the importance of knowledge include Chapter Al-Mujadilah; 11, Zumar; 9 and Ta Ha 20:114.

[3] For more information about the department's achievements, staffing, programs and students see: Faculty of Humanities. "Departmrnt of Islamic Studies" (March 2019) https://umyu.edu.ng/fhumanities/index.php/departmets/islamic-studies

[4] The analysis excludes general study courses on the ground of being out of the scope of the paper.

[5] Credit Units refers to the number of contact hours for a particular course per week. For example, a course with 2 credit hours entails that that the course should be studied in form of lectures, tutorials, lab work, etc. for two hours in a week.

[6] Some courses are compulsory for the students to take while others are elective which provides them with a chance to choose from the available electives that suits their interest. So, "C" represents compulsory courses while "E" signifies that the course is elective.

[7] The star sign indicates courses with more than one subject and are reflected more than once in the analysis.