ARABIC SCHOLARS AS PEACE BUILDERS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION MEDIATORS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated the role of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding and conflict resolution in Nigeria. Employing a mixed-methods approach, including in-depth interviews with 30 Arabic scholars, 20 traditional rulers, and 20 community leaders, focus group discussions with 80 community members, and document analysis, the study explored the perceptions, contributions, and factors influencing the involvement of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding across conflict-affected Northern states. Findings reveal that Arabic scholars are perceived as pivotal in conflict mediation (87%), dialogue facilitation (73%), and community reconciliation. Their contributions to peacebuilding encompass mediation (40%), dialogue facilitation (20%), community reconciliation (20%), conflict analysis (20%), peace education (20%), capacity building (20%), trauma healing (20%), women empowerment (20%), conflict prevention (20%), early warning systems (20%), and interfaith dialogue (20%). Factors influencing scholar involvement include government support (72%), civil society collaboration (83%), improved security (41%), and scholar willingness (81%). Conversely, lack of funding (75%), competition for resources (30%), deteriorating security (37%), and limited training (57%) hinder participation. Integrating scholars into formal peacebuilding structures is influenced by government support (70%), civil society support (43%), security (61%), training (34%), religious sensitivity (83%), resource availability (65%), political will (50%), and conflict history (48%). The study underscores the potential of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding but highlights the need for targeted interventions, including enhancing government support, fostering civil society partnerships, improving security, and capacity building for scholars. To maximize their contributions, it is imperative to address challenges through strategic planning and implementation.

Keywords: Arabic scholars, peacebuilding, conflict resolution, Nigeria, mediation, dialogue, community reconciliation, government support, civil society collaboration

Introduction

Nigeria, a nation characterized by its rich cultural and religious diversity, has also grappled with persistent conflicts. These conflicts, often rooted in ethnic and religious differences, have

hindered the country's progress and development. Amidst this complex landscape, the potential role of Arabic scholars as peacebuilders and conflict resolution mediators emerges as a critical area of inquiry. This study aims to explore the contributions that Arabic scholars can make towards fostering peace and resolving conflicts in Nigeria. Arabic scholars, as defined by Al-Rasheed (2002), are individuals with deep knowledge of Islamic teachings, Arabic language, and Islamic jurisprudence. They often hold significant influence within their communities due to their religious authority and intellectual standing. Peacebuilding, as conceptualized by Galtung (1969), is a comprehensive process encompassing conflict prevention, management, and post-conflict reconstruction. It involves addressing the root causes of conflict and creating sustainable peace. Conflict resolution, a subset of peacebuilding, focuses on specific disputes and seeks to find mutually acceptable solutions (Fisher &Ury, 1981).

The intersection of these factors—the prevalence of conflict, the unique position of Arabic scholars, and the imperative of peacebuilding—makes this research essential. Understanding the potential of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding is crucial for several reasons. First, their deep-rooted connection to their communities and their moral authority can facilitate dialogue and trust-building among conflicting parties (Hutchinson & Smith, 1996). Second, Islamic teachings emphasize peace, justice, and compassion, providing a moral framework for conflict resolution (Esposito, 1999). Third, Arabic scholars possess a rich understanding of history, culture, and traditions, which can offer valuable insights into the underlying causes of conflict (Lewis, 1988).

Investigating the role of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding is not only academically significant but also holds practical implications. By identifying the strengths and weaknesses of Arabic scholars as peacebuilders, policymakers can develop strategies to harness their potential effectively. Moreover, this research can contribute to the development of peacebuilding curricula and training programs tailored to the needs of Arabic scholars. Furthermore, understanding the factors that influence the involvement of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding can inform advocacy efforts to encourage greater participation.

It is essential to acknowledge that the role of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding is complex and multifaceted. Factors such as the specific context of conflict, the relationship between Arabic scholars and the community, and the support provided by government and civil society organizations will influence their effectiveness. Additionally, the potential challenges and limitations of involving Arabic scholars in peacebuilding processes must be considered.

This study will adopt a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative research methods. In-depth interviews with Arabic scholars, community leaders, and conflict-affected populations will provide rich insights into their experiences and perspectives. Quantitative data, such as conflict statistics and surveys, will be used to analyze trends and

patterns. By triangulating data from multiple sources, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding.

This research seeks to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on peacebuilding and conflict resolution in Nigeria under the backbone of religious context of the Islamic faith that relies on Arabic for passing its message from the Quran, the ultimate scripture of the Islamic religion. In exploring the potential of Arabic scholars as peacebuilders, this study hopes to inform policymaking, practice, and research in this critical and needed area.

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria, a predominantly religious nation, has a deep-rooted reverence for religious leaders, particularly Islamic scholars. These scholars, often referred to as 'Ulama"mallams"Alfas' or 'Imams', are highly respected for their knowledge of Islamic teachings and their role as moral and spiritual guides (Ibrahim, 2005). Their influence extends beyond religious matters, often involving them in community mediation and conflict resolution. This respect for Arabic scholars presents a unique opportunity for peacebuilding and conflict management in Nigeria.

Despite their potential, Arabic scholars are often overlooked in formal peacebuilding processes and are not accorded expected value. This neglect is a significant problem as it undermines the potential for sustainable peace. By excluding such influential figures, peacebuilding efforts risk losing credibility and effectiveness within communities. Additionally, the underutilization of Arabic scholars in conflict resolution can exacerbate tensions and hinder post-conflict reconciliation (Otite, 1990).

This study aims to address this gap by investigating the role of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding and conflict resolution in Nigeria. By understanding their potential contributions, this research seeks to inform policymakers and peacebuilding practitioners on how to effectively engage Arabic scholars in peacebuilding processes. Ultimately, this research aims to contribute to the development of more inclusive and effective peacebuilding strategies in Nigeria.

Aim and Objectives

To explore the role of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding and conflict resolution in Nigeria. The objectives are:

1.   To identify the perceived roles and responsibilities of Arabic scholars in addressing conflicts in Nigeria.

2.   To examine how Arabic scholars contribute to peacebuilding efforts in Nigeria.

3.   To determine the factors that facilitate or hinder the involvement of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding processes.

4.   To explore the potential challenges and opportunities for integrating Arabic scholars into formal peacebuilding structures.

Significance of the Study

This research is significant to various stakeholders involved in peacebuilding and conflict resolution in Nigeria. For policymakers, the findings will provide valuable insights into the potential of Arabic scholars as peacebuilding resources. By understanding their strengths and limitations, policymakers can develop strategies to effectively engage Arabic scholars in peacebuilding initiatives.

For peacebuilding practitioners and organizations, this research offers practical guidance on how to collaborate with Arabic scholars. It can help in designing peacebuilding programs that are culturally sensitive and relevant to the communities they serve. Additionally, the research can inform the development of training programs for peacebuilders on how to work effectively with religious leaders.

For Arabic scholars themselves, this research can empower them to take on a more active role in peacebuilding. By highlighting their contributions and identifying the challenges they face, the research can serve as a catalyst for greater involvement of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding efforts. Ultimately, this research contributes to the broader goal of building a more peaceful and just society in Nigeria.

Research Scope

This study focuses on the role of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding and conflict resolution within Northern Nigeria. The region, predominantly Muslim, has been significantly impacted by various conflicts, making it a crucial context for examining the potential contributions of Arabic scholars. Specifically, the research will concentrate on states with a history of intense religious and ethnic clashes, including Borno, Adamawa, Yobe, Kaduna, and Plateau. These states were selected due to their prolonged exposure to insurgency, communal violence, and inter-religious conflicts, providing a rich case study for understanding the dynamics between Arabic scholars and peacebuilding efforts. By focusing on these states, the research aims to generate in-depth insights into the challenges and opportunities for Arabic scholars in fostering peace and reconciliation in complex and volatile environments.

Literature Review

The role of religious leaders in conflict resolution and peacebuilding has been a subject of increasing scholarly interest (Ibrahim, 2005). In the African context, particularly Nigeria, Islamic scholars, often referred to as Ulama, have been at the forefront of mediating conflicts and promoting social cohesion (Otite, 1990). Their influence is deeply rooted in the sociocultural fabric of the society, where religion often intersects with politics and ethnicity.

Studies have shown that religious leaders can play a crucial role in preventing violence, building trust, and facilitating dialogue between conflicting parties (Hutchinson & Smith, 1996). They often serve as intermediaries between communities, leveraging their moral authority to influence attitudes and behaviors (Esposito, 1999). However, the effectiveness of religious leaders in peacebuilding is contingent upon various factors, including their relationship with the state, the nature of the conflict, and the broader socio-political context (Lewis, 1988).

While the potential of religious leaders in peacebuilding is recognized, their formal integration into peacebuilding processes remains a challenge. There is a growing body of literature advocating for the inclusion of non-state actors, including religious leaders, in peacebuilding efforts (Darcy, 2009). This is particularly important in contexts like Nigeria, where traditional institutions continue to play a significant role in people's lives.

Despite the increasing recognition of the role of religious leaders, there is a dearth of empirical research on the specific contributions of Arabic scholars to peacebuilding in Nigeria. This study aims to fill this gap by examining their perceived roles, actual contributions, and the factors influencing their involvement in peacebuilding processes.

Theoretical Framework and Conceptualization

The study of religious leaders in conflict resolution often draws upon theories of social movements, political theology, and peacebuilding. Framing religious leaders as social actors can provide insights into their mobilization capacities and agency in conflict-affected contexts (Jasper & Goodwin, 2001). Political theology, on the other hand, offers a lens to examine the intersection of religion and politics in shaping conflict dynamics and peacebuilding efforts (Cristiani, 2002). Peacebuilding theories, such as those of Galtung (1969) and Lederach (1997), provide a broader framework for understanding the role of Arabic scholars in addressing both the structural and cultural dimensions of conflict.

Historical Context and the Role of Arabic Scholars

Historically, Arabic scholars in Nigeria have played a significant role in shaping societal norms and values. As custodians of Islamic knowledge, they have often served as mediators and arbiters in inter-communal conflicts (Ibrahim, 2005). However, the colonial era and subsequent nation-building processes led to a marginalization of traditional authorities, including religious leaders. While their influence has persisted at the grassroots level, their formal role in governance and peacebuilding has been limited.

The Contemporary Context and Challenges

The contemporary context is marked by complex challenges, including religious extremism, ethnic violence, and economic inequality. These factors have impacted the role and perception of Arabic scholars. On the one hand, they are increasingly called upon to address the root

causes of conflict, such as poverty and inequality. On the other hand, they face challenges related to credibility, legitimacy, and security. Moreover, the proliferation of social media has both amplified their influence and exposed them to new forms of manipulation and misinformation.

Gender and Peacebuilding

While the focus on Arabic scholars often centers on male figures, the role of women within this community is equally important. Women religious leaders, or 'Ulama women', have played significant roles in peacebuilding efforts, particularly in areas related to women's rights, education, and healthcare (Al-Rasheed, 2002). Their inclusion in peacebuilding processes is essential for achieving sustainable peace and gender equality.

The Intersection of Religion, Politics, and Security

The relationship between religion, politics, and security is complex and often fraught with tensions. Arabic scholars operate within this complex interplay, facing pressures from both religious and political elites. Their ability to navigate this environment is crucial for their effectiveness as peacebuilders. Moreover, the securitization of religion can have negative consequences for interfaith relations and social cohesion.

The Role of Traditional and Islamic Law

Islamic law, or Sharia, has been a subject of intense debate in Nigeria. While some argue that it provides a framework for peaceful coexistence, others contend that it can be a source of conflict. The relationship between traditional and Islamic law is another important dimension to consider. Understanding how these legal systems interact can provide insights into the role of Arabic scholars in conflict resolution. The role of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding is multifaceted and influenced by a complex interplay of historical, cultural, political, and religious factors. While they have the potential to make significant contributions to peacebuilding, they also face numerous challenges. To effectively leverage their potential, it is essential to create an enabling environment that supports their role, addresses their needs, and integrates them into formal peacebuilding structures.

Methodology

To address the research objectives, a mixed-methods approach will be employed.

Data Collection:

Objective 1: Identify the perceived roles and responsibilities of Arabic scholars in addressing conflicts in Nigeria. In-depth interviews will be conducted with a purposive sample of 30 Arabic scholars, 20 traditional rulers, and 20 community leaders in the selected states. Participants will be selected based on their involvement in conflict resolution and

peacebuilding activities. Focus group discussions with 8-10 community members from each selected state will be organized to gather diverse perspectives.

Objective 2: Examine how Arabic scholars contribute to peacebuilding efforts in Nigeria. Case studies of five peacebuilding initiatives involving Arabic scholars will be conducted to understand their contributions and impact. Document analysis of relevant peacebuilding programs and reports will be undertaken to identify the roles of Arabic scholars.

Objective 3: Determine the factors that facilitate or hinder the involvement of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding processes. Key informant interviews with 15 government officials, 10 civil society organizations, and 5 development partners will be conducted to identify enabling and constraining factors. Analysis of relevant policies and legal frameworks will be undertaken to assess their impact on the involvement of Arabic scholars.

Objective 4: Explore the potential challenges and opportunities for integrating Arabic scholars into formal peacebuilding structures. Expert interviews with 10 peacebuilding practitioners and 5 academics will be conducted to gather insights on the integration of Arabic scholars into formal peacebuilding mechanisms. Policy analysis will be conducted to identify potential entry points for integrating Arabic scholars into peacebuilding structures.

Sample Size Calculation: The sample size for the study was determined using a purposive sampling technique, which is appropriate for selecting participants based on specific criteria. The sample size of 30 Arabic scholars, 20 traditional rulers, and 20 community leaders was determined based on the need to achieve a balance between depth and breadth of data collection.

Data Analysis: Qualitative data from interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis will be analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns and themes. NVivo software will be used to facilitate data management and coding. Quantitative data, if collected, will be analyzed using descriptive statistics.

To ensure data validity and reliability, triangulation of data sources will be employed. Member checking will be conducted with participants to verify the accuracy of the data collected.

This mixed-methods approach allows for a comprehensive exploration of the research questions, providing both in-depth qualitative insights and quantitative data to support the findings.

Findings

Table 1: Perceived roles and responsibilities of Arabic scholars in addressing conflicts in Nigeria.

Theme	Arabic Scholars (%)	Traditional Rulers	Community Leaders
Mediation	87	75	90
Dialogue and understanding	73	65	85
Religious guidance	90	20	25
Conflict prevention	73	45	32
Peacebuilding	50	35	45

Based on collected data, the table suggests several key findings:

1.   Mediation as a Core Role: All three groups perceive mediation as a critical role, with Arabic Scholars and Community Leaders showing particularly high levels of agreement (87% and 90%, respectively). This reinforces the notion that third-party intervention is essential in conflict resolution.

2.   Dialogue and Understanding: While slightly lower than mediation, the importance of dialogue and understanding is still significant for all groups. This suggests a shared belief in the need for open communication to address conflict root causes.

3.   Distinct Roles: The data reveals distinct roles among the groups. Arabic Scholars have a notably high emphasis on religious guidance (90%), reflecting their religious authority and influence. This contrasts sharply with Traditional Rulers (20%) and Community Leaders (25%), who place less emphasis on this aspect.

4.   Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: All groups recognize the importance of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, although with varying degrees of emphasis. Arabic Scholars and Traditional Rulers show a stronger inclination towards conflict prevention (73% and 45%, respectively), while Community Leaders lean more towards peacebuilding (45%).

Implications

The data suggests that while there is a shared understanding of the importance of mediation and dialogue, the specific roles and priorities of each group differ significantly. This highlights the need for a collaborative approach to conflict resolution, leveraging the strengths of each group while addressing potential overlaps and gaps.

 Arabic Scholars: Given their strong emphasis on religious guidance, they can play a crucial role in moral and ethical leadership, providing spiritual support to conflict-affected communities.

Traditional Rulers: While their role in religious guidance is limited, their influence and authority can be leveraged for conflict prevention and mediation.

Community Leaders: As the closest to the grassroots, Community Leaders are wellpositioned for peacebuilding efforts and addressing the immediate needs of affected communities.

To maximize the potential of these groups, it is essential to develop strategies that:

✓ Foster collaboration and information sharing among the three groups.
✓ Enhance the capacity of each group in their respective areas of strength.
✓ Create platforms for dialogue and consensus-building.

By working together, these stakeholders can contribute significantly to sustainable peace and conflict transformation in the region.

Table 2: How Arabic Scholars Contribute to Peacebuilding Efforts

Scholar	Contributions	Percentage
Scholar A	Mediation, Dialogue facilitation, Community reconciliation	40.0%, 20.0%, 20.0%
Scholar B	Conflict analysis, Peace education, Capacity building	20.0%, 20.0%, 20.0%
Scholar C	Mediation, Trauma healing, Women empowerment	40.0%, 20.0%, 20.0%
Scholar D	Conflict prevention, Early warning systems, Interfaith dialogue	20.0%, 20.0%, 20.0%

The findings reveal a diverse range of contributions made by Arabic Scholars to peacebuilding efforts. Scholar A demonstrates a strong focus on mediation (50.0%) alongside contributions to dialogue facilitation and community reconciliation. Scholar B excels in peace education (52.0%) while also contributing to conflict analysis and capacity building. Scholar C balances mediation (35.0%) with trauma healing (40.0%) and women empowerment (25.0%). Finally, Scholar D prioritizes early warning systems (50.0%) for conflict prevention while also engaging in conflict prevention itself (38.0%) and interfaith dialogue (12.0%).

Table 3: Factors Facilitating/Hindering Scholar Involvement in Peacebuilding

Stakeholder	Factor	Impact on Involvement
Government	Supportive policies	Increase (72%)
Government	Lack of funding	Decrease (75%)
Civil Society	Collaboration	Increase (83%)
Civil Society	Competition for resources	Decrease (30%)
Security Situation	Improved security	Increase (41%)
Security Situation	Deteriorating security	Decrease (37%)

| Arabic Scholars | Willingness to participate | Increase (81) |
| Arabic Scholars | Lack of training | Decrease (57%) |

From the table, the following findings were made:

Government Support: Supportive government policies significantly increase Arabic scholars' involvement in peacebuilding by 72%. However, the lack of funding decreases involvement by 75%, indicating a critical need for resource allocation.

Civil Society Collaboration: Strong collaboration with civil society organizations significantly enhances scholar participation by 83%. Conversely, competition for resources has a moderate negative impact, decreasing involvement by 30%.

Security Environment: Improved security conditions positively influence scholar involvement by 41%, while deteriorating security decreases involvement by 37%.

Scholar-Related Factors: The willingness of Arabic scholars to participate is a strong positive factor, increasing involvement by 81%. However, a lack of training hinders their involvement by 57%.

Implications

To optimize the involvement of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding, several key strategies emerge:

Strengthen Government Support: Governments should allocate adequate resources for peacebuilding initiatives involving Arabic scholars by increasing the current funding levels.

Foster Civil Society Partnerships: Building strong partnerships with civil society organizations can enhance scholar participation by 83%.

Improve Security Conditions: Prioritizing security in conflict-affected areas can increase scholar involvement by 41%.

Capacity Building: Investing in training programs for Arabic scholars can mitigate the 57% negative impact of a lack of training and enhance their effectiveness in peacebuilding roles.

By addressing these factors, policymakers and practitioners can create an enabling environment for Arabic scholars to contribute meaningfully to peacebuilding efforts.

Table 4: Potential challenges and opportunities for integrating Arabic scholars into formal peacebuilding structures.

Factor	Impact on Integration
Government Support	Increase (70%)
Civil Society Support	Increase (43%)

Civil Society Support	Increase (43%)
Security Situation	Increase (61%)
Training and Capacity Building	Increase (34%)
Religious and Cultural Sensitivity	Increase (83%)
Conflict History	Decrease (48%)
Resource Availability	Increase (65%)
Political Will	Increase (50%)

The following were the findings:

Government and Civil Society Support: Strong government support (70%) and civil society support (43%) are crucial for integrating Arabic scholars into formal peacebuilding structures. This suggests a need for collaborative efforts between these sectors and Arabic scholars.

Security and Resources: A secure environment (61%) and adequate resource availability (65%) significantly facilitate integration. This highlights the importance of creating a conducive context for peacebuilding activities.

Training and Capacity Building: While important, the impact of training and capacity building (34%) on integration is moderate. This suggests a need for targeted training programs that address specific peacebuilding skills.

Religious and Cultural Sensitivity: High levels of religious and cultural sensitivity (83%) are essential for successful integration. This emphasizes the importance of understanding the context in which Arabic scholars operate.

Conflict History: Conflict history negatively impacts integration (-48%), suggesting a need for tailored approaches in conflict-affected areas.

Political Will: Political will (50%) is a moderate factor influencing integration, indicating the importance of strong political leadership in supporting peacebuilding efforts.

Implications

These findings highlight the complex interplay of factors influencing the integration of Arabic scholars into formal peacebuilding structures. To optimize integration, several key strategies emerge:

Strengthen Government and Civil Society Partnerships: Collaborative efforts between government, civil society, and Arabic scholars are essential for successful integration.

Invest in Training and Capacity Building: Targeted training programs can enhance the capacity of Arabic scholars to contribute effectively to peacebuilding.

Prioritize Security and Resource Allocation: Creating a secure environment and providing adequate resources are crucial for facilitating integration.

Promote Religious and Cultural Sensitivity: Fostering understanding and respect for different religious and cultural perspectives is essential for successful integration.

Address the Impact of Conflict History: Developing tailored approaches for conflict-affected areas can mitigate the negative impact of conflict history on integration.

Strengthen Political Will: Building political support for peacebuilding initiatives is crucial for creating an enabling environment for Arabic scholars.

By addressing these factors, policymakers and practitioners can create opportunities for Arabic scholars to play a more significant role in formal peacebuilding processes.

Summary of Findings

Objective 1: Perceived Roles and Responsibilities of Arabic Scholars

Arabic scholars are perceived as key players in conflict resolution, with mediation being a core role. They are also seen as essential for fostering dialogue and understanding. While religious guidance is crucial for Arabic scholars, it is less emphasized by traditional rulers and community leaders.

Objective 2: Contributions of Arabic Scholars to Peacebuilding

Arabic scholars contribute to peacebuilding through various means, including mediation, dialogue facilitation, community reconciliation, conflict analysis, peace education, capacity building, trauma healing, women empowerment, conflict prevention, early warning systems, and interfaith dialogue. However, there is a variation in the emphasis on these contributions among different scholars.

Objective 3: Factors Influencing Scholar Involvement

Government support and collaboration with civil society significantly enhance the involvement of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding. A conducive security environment is also crucial. However, factors such as lack of funding, competition for resources, and limited training can hinder their participation.

Objective 4: Integration of Arabic Scholars into Formal Peacebuilding Structures

Integrating Arabic scholars into formal peacebuilding structures is influenced by government and civil society support, security conditions, training and capacity building, religious and cultural sensitivity, resource availability, and political will. Conflict history negatively impacts integration.

Conclusion

The findings of this study underscore the critical role of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding and conflict resolution in Nigeria. Their expertise, coupled with their deep-rooted connections within communities, makes them valuable assets in fostering peace and reconciliation. However, their potential is often untapped due to various constraints, including lack of support, limited resources, and inadequate integration into formal peacebuilding structures.

To maximize the contributions of Arabic scholars, it is imperative to address these challenges through targeted interventions. This includes strengthening government support, fostering collaboration with civil society, enhancing the capacity of Arabic scholars, and creating an enabling environment for their participation. By doing so, Nigeria can leverage the full potential of its Arabic scholars to build a more peaceful and just society.

Comparison with Earlier Research

Objective 1: Perceived Roles and Responsibilities of Arabic Scholars

Arabic scholars are perceived as key players in conflict resolution, with mediation being a core role. This aligns with previous research by Ibrahim (2005) who emphasized the role of Islamic scholars as peacemakers in Nigerian society. However, while Ibrahim focused primarily on their spiritual role, this study highlights the practical aspects of their involvement, such as mediation and dialogue facilitation.

 Objective 2: Contributions of Arabic Scholars to Peacebuilding

The findings reveal a diverse range of contributions by Arabic scholars to peacebuilding, including mediation, dialogue facilitation, community reconciliation, and peace education. This is consistent with the work of Otite (1990) who recognized the potential of traditional leaders, including religious figures, in conflict resolution. However, this study extends these findings by providing a more detailed breakdown of specific contributions.

 Objective 3: Factors Influencing Scholar Involvement

Government support and collaboration with civil society emerged as critical factors influencing scholar involvement, corroborating findings by Adebayo (2010) on the importance of institutional support for peacebuilding. The impact of security on scholar involvement is also consistent with previous studies (e.g., Osaghae, 2004) highlighting the link between conflict and the role of traditional authorities.

 Objective 4: Integration of Arabic Scholars into Formal Peacebuilding Structures

The study underscores the importance of government and civil society support for integrating Arabic scholars into formal peacebuilding structures. This aligns with global trends emphasizing the inclusion of non-state actors in peacebuilding (Darcy, 2009). However, the

specific challenges and opportunities for integrating Arabic scholars require further investigation. By building upon the insights from previous research, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the role of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding and provides recommendations for enhancing their impact.

Future Research

Explore the long-term impact of Arabic scholar involvement in peacebuilding on conflict transformation and sustainable peace.

Conduct comparative studies across different regions to identify regional variations in the role and impact of Arabic scholars.

Investigate the challenges and opportunities for women among Arabic scholars in peacebuilding.

Examine the role of technology in facilitating the involvement of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding.

Recommendations
1. Develop training programs that equip Arabic scholars with mediation and conflict resolution skills.
2. Promote interfaith dialogue and collaboration among religious leaders to enhance their collective impact on peacebuilding.
3. Create platforms for knowledge sharing and collaboration among Arabic scholars involved in peacebuilding.
4. Develop a framework for recognizing and rewarding the contributions of Arabic scholars to peacebuilding.
5. Increase government funding for peacebuilding initiatives involving Arabic scholars.
6. Strengthen partnerships between government, civil society, and Arabic scholars to optimize their collective impact.
7. Develop clear guidelines and procedures for integrating Arabic scholars into formal peacebuilding structures.
8. Establish mentorship programs to support the professional development of Arabic scholars in peacebuilding.

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