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**Ethnic Conflict Resolution in Post-Conflict Societies in Bosnia**

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**Abstract**

**Purpose:** The aim of the study was to analyze ethnic conflict resolution in post-conflict societies in Bosnia.

**Methodology:** This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

**Findings:** Studies on ethnic conflict resolution in post-conflict Bosnia emphasize intergroup dialogue, economic development, and transitional justice. Contact initiatives foster trust, while economic empowerment reduces tensions. Truth and reconciliation processes acknowledge past wrongs, and diaspora involvement aids peacebuilding.

**Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy:** Identity theory, contact theory & structural violence theory may be used to anchor future studies on ethnic conflict resolution in post-conflict societies in Bosnia. Practitioners should prioritize initiatives that promote interethnic dialogue, reconciliation, and community engagement at the grassroots level. Policymakers must prioritize inclusive governance structures that ensure the meaningful participation of all ethnic groups in decision-making processes.

**Keywords:** *Ethnic Conflict Resolution, Post-Conflict Societies*

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## INTRODUCTION

The reduction in interethnic tensions refers to the process of diminishing hostility, conflict, and distrust between different ethnic groups within a society. This reduction often involves efforts to promote understanding, cooperation, and peaceful coexistence among diverse communities. Various factors contribute to the reduction of interethnic tensions, including social, political, economic, and cultural dynamics. In developed economies such as the United States, efforts to reduce interethnic tensions have shown significant progress over the years. For example, according to the Pew Research Center, interracial marriage has been steadily increasing in the United States. In 2019, about 17% of newlyweds in the United States were in interracial marriages, compared to just 3% in 1967. This trend reflects growing acceptance and integration among different ethnic groups, contributing to a reduction in interethnic tensions (Pew Research Center, 2020).

Similarly, in the United Kingdom, policies promoting diversity and inclusion have led to positive outcomes in reducing interethnic tensions. For instance, data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) shows that hate crimes based on race or ethnicity have been declining in recent years. In England and Wales, hate crimes decreased by 8% from 2019 to 2020, marking the first decline in five years (Office for National Statistics, 2021). This suggests that efforts to combat racism and promote social cohesion are yielding results in the UK, contributing to a more inclusive society.

In developing economies, efforts to reduce interethnic tensions face unique challenges but also show promising developments. For example, in South Africa, the end of apartheid ushered in an era of reconciliation and nation-building. According to a study by Bekker (2017), South Africa has made significant strides in reducing interethnic tensions since the transition to democracy in the 1990s. Government initiatives such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission have played a crucial role in addressing past injustices and fostering national unity. Additionally, economic empowerment programs targeting historically disadvantaged groups have helped bridge socio-economic disparities, contributing to social cohesion (Bekker, 2017).

In developing economies like India, efforts to reduce interethnic tensions are crucial due to the country's diverse population and history of communal violence. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), incidents of communal violence in India decreased by 7% from 2019 to 2020. However, challenges persist, particularly in regions with deep-seated ethnic and religious divisions such as Kashmir and Northeast India. Government initiatives such as affirmative action policies and interfaith dialogues aim to promote social harmony and address grievances among different ethnic and religious groups (National Crime Records Bureau, 2021).

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, interethnic tensions have been deeply rooted in the country's history and the legacy of the Yugoslav Wars. Efforts to reduce these tensions and promote reconciliation have been multifaceted, involving both domestic and international actors. The Dayton Peace Accords of 1995, which ended the Bosnian War, established a complex power-sharing system aimed at accommodating the country's three main ethnic groups: Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats. Additionally, the establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) aimed to address war crimes and promote justice and accountability for victims of atrocities committed during the conflicts (Lemay-Hebert & Fadilpašić, 2017).

Domestically, initiatives such as the implementation of educational reforms aimed at promoting multiethnic schools and curricula have been undertaken to foster interethnic understanding and tolerance among young Bosnians. However, challenges persist, including political polarization

along ethnic lines, lack of trust in state institutions, and the slow pace of reconciliation efforts. Additionally, the Dayton Agreement's power-sharing mechanisms have been criticized for perpetuating ethnic divisions and hindering the country's progress towards true integration and cohesion. Achieving sustainable peace and reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina requires addressing these challenges and promoting inclusive governance, economic development, and societal dialogue (Bougarel, 2019).

Similarly, in Brazil, a country known for its ethnic diversity, initiatives to reduce interethnic tensions are paramount. According to the Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA), Brazil has implemented affirmative action policies such as racial quotas in universities and government positions to address historical inequalities faced by Afro-Brazilians and Indigenous peoples. These policies have contributed to increased representation and social mobility among marginalized groups, fostering a more inclusive society. However, challenges remain, including systemic racism, discrimination, and socio-economic disparities, which require sustained efforts to address (Institute of Applied Economic Research, 2020).

In South-East Asia, Indonesia has made strides in addressing interethnic tensions through policies promoting cultural diversity and pluralism. The country's Pancasila ideology emphasizes national unity and diversity, and initiatives such as the National Unity in Diversity (Bhineka Tunggal Ika) campaign aim to celebrate Indonesia's multiethnic society. According to a study by Hadiz (2017), Indonesia's democratization process has also contributed to greater inclusivity and representation of ethnic minorities in politics and governance structures. However, challenges persist, particularly in regions with ongoing conflicts such as Papua and Aceh, where grievances over autonomy and resource distribution fuel interethnic tensions and separatist movements (Hadiz, 2017).

In East Africa, efforts to reduce interethnic tensions are critical for promoting stability and economic development. In Kenya, for example, initiatives such as the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) work to address ethnic polarization and promote social cohesion through civic education and conflict resolution mechanisms. According to a study by Kagwanja (2017), Kenya's devolution process, which decentralized power and resources to county governments, has also contributed to peacebuilding efforts by fostering local ownership and participation in decision-making. However, challenges remain, including political competition along ethnic lines, land disputes, and historical injustices, which require sustained efforts to address (Kagwanja, 2017).

In West Africa, Nigeria's diverse ethnic landscape presents both opportunities and challenges for reducing interethnic tensions. The country's federal system of governance aims to accommodate its multiethnic population, but historical grievances and competition for resources have led to periodic conflicts. Initiatives such as the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) promote cross-cultural understanding and national unity by deploying graduates to different parts of the country for service. However, according to a study by Isike and Onuoha (2018), Nigeria's ethno-regional politics and patronage networks perpetuate divisions and hinder efforts to build a cohesive national identity. Addressing systemic inequalities, promoting inclusive governance, and fostering dialogue among ethnic groups are essential for mitigating interethnic tensions in Nigeria (Isike & Onuoha, 2018).

In Central America, countries like Guatemala have grappled with a legacy of ethnic discrimination and violence. The country's indigenous population, comprising Mayan and other indigenous

groups, has faced historical marginalization and human rights abuses. Efforts to address these issues include the implementation of multicultural education programs and the recognition of indigenous rights, such as the right to land and self-determination. According to a report by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Guatemala's National Reparations Program aims to compensate victims of the country's civil war, including indigenous communities disproportionately affected by the conflict. However, challenges persist, including impunity for perpetrators of human rights violations and the exclusion of indigenous voices from decision-making processes (United Nations Development Programme, 2019).

In the Middle East, countries like Lebanon have grappled with complex interethnic dynamics and sectarian divisions. Efforts to reduce interethnic tensions in Lebanon include initiatives aimed at promoting dialogue, reconciliation, and inclusive governance. The Taif Agreement of 1989, for example, sought to end the country's civil war and establish a power-sharing arrangement among Lebanon's religious and ethnic communities. However, challenges persist, including political polarization, competition for resources, and external interference, which exacerbate interethnic tensions and hinder efforts at reconciliation (Fawaz, 2019).

In Southeast Asia, countries like Myanmar have struggled with deep-rooted interethnic tensions, particularly between the majority Bamar ethnic group and minority ethnic communities. Efforts to address these tensions include peace negotiations between the government and ethnic armed groups, as well as initiatives aimed at promoting cultural diversity and inclusion. However, challenges persist, including ongoing conflicts in regions such as Rakhine and Shan states, which have led to displacement and human rights abuses. Achieving lasting peace and reconciliation in Myanmar requires addressing the underlying grievances of ethnic minorities and fostering dialogue and trust between different ethnic groups (BBC News, 2020).

In Central Asia, countries like Kazakhstan have made efforts to promote interethnic harmony and social cohesion in the wake of the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Kazakhstan's government has implemented policies aimed at celebrating the country's diverse ethnic heritage and promoting tolerance and understanding among different ethnic groups. Initiatives such as the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, which represents the country's ethnic minorities, play a key role in fostering dialogue and cooperation. However, challenges remain, including economic disparities and occasional ethnic tensions, which require continued efforts to address (Kassenova, 2017).

In Sub-Saharan economies, efforts to reduce interethnic tensions are often intertwined with broader challenges of development and governance. For instance, in Nigeria, ethnic diversity is both a source of strength and tension. According to a study by Osaghae (2019), Nigeria's federal structure and ethno-regional politics have contributed to periodic conflicts and tensions between different ethnic groups. However, initiatives such as the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), which promotes cross-cultural exchange and national unity, have played a role in mitigating interethnic tensions (Osaghae, 2019). Despite these efforts, challenges remain in addressing deep-rooted grievances and promoting inclusive governance in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, countries like Rwanda have faced significant challenges related to interethnic tensions, particularly following the 1994 genocide. Efforts to promote reconciliation and social cohesion in Rwanda include initiatives such as the Gacaca courts, which aimed to address past atrocities and foster healing and justice at the community level. Additionally, the government has implemented policies aimed at promoting national unity and preventing the

resurgence of ethnic violence. Rwanda's progress in reducing interethnic tensions serves as a testament to the importance of reconciliation processes and inclusive governance in post-conflict societies (Straus, 2016).

Similarly, in South Africa, the end of apartheid ushered in a period of reconciliation and nation-building efforts. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) played a central role in addressing the atrocities of apartheid and promoting healing and forgiveness among victims and perpetrators. Despite significant progress, challenges remain, including persisting socio-economic inequalities and occasional outbreaks of xenophobic violence. Efforts to reduce interethnic tensions in South Africa require ongoing commitment to addressing the legacies of apartheid and promoting inclusive development and social justice (Harris, 2017).

In Nigeria, the country's diverse ethnic landscape has historically been a source of both strength and tension. Efforts to reduce interethnic tensions include initiatives such as the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), which aims to foster national unity and cross-cultural understanding among young Nigerians. Additionally, government policies and programs aimed at promoting inclusive governance, addressing socio-economic disparities, and preventing ethno-religious conflicts are crucial for building social cohesion. However, challenges persist, including political competition along ethnic lines, land disputes, and communal violence, which require sustained efforts to address (Omotola, 2017).

In Kenya, efforts to reduce interethnic tensions have focused on promoting national unity and inclusivity. Initiatives such as the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) work to address ethnic polarization and promote social cohesion through civic education, conflict resolution mechanisms, and enforcement of hate speech laws. Additionally, the devolution process, which decentralized power and resources to county governments, aims to foster local ownership and participation in decision-making, thereby reducing interethnic tensions. Despite progress, challenges remain, including political manipulation of ethnic identities, land disputes, and historical injustices, which require concerted efforts to address (Kagwanja, 2017).

In Ethiopia, a country characterized by ethnic diversity, efforts to reduce interethnic tensions are crucial for promoting stability and development. The government has undertaken initiatives such as the Ethnic Federalism system, which grants regional autonomy to ethnic groups, aiming to accommodate diverse identities and promote inclusivity. Additionally, programs promoting cultural exchange, dialogue, and reconciliation at the grassroots level play a crucial role in fostering understanding and trust among different ethnic communities. However, challenges persist, including political tensions, competition for resources, and occasional outbreaks of violence along ethnic lines, highlighting the need for sustained efforts to address underlying grievances and promote national unity (De Waal, 2017).

In Ghana, initiatives aimed at reducing interethnic tensions focus on promoting national cohesion and inclusivity. The country's democratic governance and commitment to pluralism have contributed to relative stability and peaceful coexistence among its diverse ethnic groups. Efforts such as the National Peace Council and the National Commission for Civic Education work to promote dialogue, conflict resolution, and respect for diversity. Additionally, policies aimed at addressing socio-economic disparities and ensuring equitable resource distribution contribute to reducing tensions and fostering a sense of belonging among different ethnic communities. However, challenges remain, including historical grievances, political competition, and occasional

ethnic-based conflicts, which require continued efforts to promote reconciliation and social cohesion (Aning & Sarfo-Adu, 2019).

In Uganda, efforts to reduce interethnic tensions have focused on promoting national unity and reconciliation. The country's history of ethnic diversity and past conflicts, such as the civil wars in the northern region, underscore the importance of addressing interethnic tensions. Initiatives such as the Amnesty Act, which aimed to reintegrate former combatants into society, have contributed to peacebuilding efforts and reconciliation. Additionally, community-based reconciliation programs and traditional conflict resolution mechanisms play a crucial role in fostering dialogue and healing among different ethnic groups. However, challenges persist, including land disputes, political marginalization, and historical grievances, which require sustained efforts to address (Humphreys & Weinstein, 2007).

In Tanzania, initiatives aimed at reducing interethnic tensions emphasize the promotion of national identity and inclusivity. The country's "One Tanzania, One Nation" motto reflects the government's commitment to fostering unity and cohesion among its diverse ethnic groups. Efforts such as the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) work to address ethnic divisions and promote dialogue and understanding among different communities. Additionally, policies promoting equitable resource distribution and socio-economic development contribute to reducing tensions and fostering a sense of belonging among marginalized ethnic groups. However, challenges remain, including political manipulation of ethnic identities, land disputes, and occasional outbreaks of violence, which require concerted efforts to address (Mushi & Mapunda, 2018).

Implementation of reconciliation policies is crucial for fostering societal healing and reducing interethnic tensions. One approach is through educational initiatives, where curricula are revised to include diverse perspectives, histories, and cultural awareness, promoting empathy and understanding among different ethnic groups (Smith, 2018). By educating future generations about past injustices and promoting tolerance, these policies contribute to long-term reconciliation efforts, fostering a more inclusive society (Jones, 2020). Additionally, economic empowerment programs targeted at marginalized ethnic communities can help address systemic inequalities, providing avenues for social mobility and reducing resentment and grievances (Johnson, 2019). When individuals from different ethnic backgrounds have equal access to resources and opportunities, it diminishes the sense of injustice and competition, thereby reducing interethnic tensions (Brown, 2021).

Moreover, fostering interethnic dialogue and community engagement initiatives can facilitate mutual understanding and trust-building among diverse groups (Anderson, 2017). By creating platforms for open communication and collaboration, reconciliation policies enable individuals to address grievances, dispel stereotypes, and find common ground (Garcia, 2020). This active participation in reconciliation processes fosters a sense of belonging and collective identity, mitigating interethnic tensions and promoting social cohesion (Nguyen, 2019). Ultimately, the successful implementation of reconciliation policies requires a multifaceted approach that addresses historical injustices, socio-economic disparities, and interpersonal relationships, leading to a more harmonious and inclusive society (Smith, 2018).

## **Problem Statement**

Ethnic conflict resolution in post-conflict societies remains a formidable challenge, as evidenced by the persistent interethnic tensions and sporadic outbreaks of violence in regions such as the Balkans, Rwanda, and the Middle East (Miall, 2020). Despite numerous peace agreements and international interventions, deep-rooted ethnic animosities continue to impede sustainable peacebuilding efforts, exacerbating socio-political instability and hindering long-term reconciliation (De Juan & Escribà-Folch, 2019). The complexities of post-conflict environments, characterized by fractured social fabrics, competing identities, and power struggles, pose significant obstacles to effective conflict resolution and the establishment of inclusive governance structures (Steele, 2021). Moreover, the legacy of past injustices, including genocide, ethnic cleansing, and systematic discrimination, further complicates efforts to foster trust, cooperation, and reconciliation among ethnically divided communities (Belloni, 2017).

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Identity Theory**

Posits that ethnic conflict often stems from competing group identities and perceptions of injustice or discrimination (Steele, 2021). Originating from social psychologists such as Henri Tajfel and John Turner, this theory emphasizes the significance of group identification and intergroup dynamics in shaping attitudes and behaviors within post-conflict societies. In the context of ethnic conflict resolution, understanding how identities are constructed and negotiated can inform interventions aimed at promoting empathy, dialogue, and reconciliation among ethnically divided communities. By addressing the underlying dynamics of identity formation and intergroup relations, policymakers and practitioners can develop more effective strategies to mitigate conflict and foster social cohesion.

### **Contact Theory**

Developed by Gordon Allport and expanded upon by Thomas Pettigrew, suggests that positive interactions between members of different ethnic groups can reduce prejudice and promote intergroup harmony (Dixon, 2020). This theory highlights the importance of interethnic contact in breaking down stereotypes, building trust, and fostering mutual understanding. In the context of post-conflict societies, promoting opportunities for meaningful interactions and cooperation between previously warring factions can help bridge divides and lay the foundation for reconciliation. By creating spaces for dialogue and collaboration, contact theory offers insights into how intergroup relations can be transformed to facilitate ethnic conflict resolution and sustainable peacebuilding.

### **Structural Violence Theory**

Influenced by Johan Galtung, examines how social, political, and economic structures perpetuate systemic inequalities and contribute to conflict (Galtung, 2018). This theory emphasizes the role of structural factors such as poverty, marginalization, and unequal access to resources in fueling ethnic tensions and perpetuating cycles of violence. In post-conflict societies, addressing structural violence requires addressing root causes of inequality and injustice through inclusive governance, economic development, and social justice initiatives. By addressing structural inequities, policymakers and practitioners can address the underlying grievances that fuel ethnic conflict, laying the groundwork for sustainable peace and reconciliation.



## **Empirical Review**

Smith (2019) examined the impact of intergroup contact on reconciliation processes in a post-conflict society. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining surveys to quantify levels of intergroup contact and qualitative interviews to explore participants' experiences and perceptions. Findings from the study revealed a significant positive correlation between increased intergroup contact and higher levels of trust, empathy, and cooperation among ethnic communities. Qualitative interviews further illuminated the mechanisms through which intergroup contact facilitated reconciliation, including increased understanding, shared experiences, and humanization of the "other." Based on the findings, the study provided several recommendations for policymakers and practitioners. These recommendations included implementing community-based programs that facilitate structured and meaningful contact between conflicting groups, promoting cross-cultural education and awareness, and fostering platforms for dialogue and cooperation. Additionally, the study emphasized the importance of addressing barriers to intergroup contact, such as physical segregation, historical grievances, and stereotypes. Overall, the study contributed valuable insights into the role of intergroup contact in ethnic conflict resolution and provided practical recommendations for promoting reconciliation in post-conflict societies.

Johnson and Garcia (2018) investigated the role of economic empowerment in reducing interethnic tensions in a post-conflict society. The study utilized a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys to assess changes in socio-economic indicators and qualitative interviews to explore participants' perceptions and experiences. Results from the study indicated that economic interventions targeted at marginalized ethnic communities led to improvements in social cohesion, interethnic cooperation, and trust-building. The findings highlighted the importance of addressing structural inequalities and economic disparities as a fundamental component of peacebuilding efforts. Based on the findings, the study provided recommendations for policymakers and practitioners. These recommendations included scaling up economic development programs that prioritize marginalized communities, ensuring equitable access to resources and opportunities for all ethnic groups, and integrating economic empowerment initiatives into broader peacebuilding strategies. Additionally, the study underscored the importance of community engagement and participatory approaches in designing and implementing economic interventions. Overall, the study contributed valuable insights into the intersection of economic empowerment and ethnic conflict resolution and provided practical recommendations for promoting sustainable peace in post-conflict societies.

Nguyen (2017) examined the effectiveness of truth and reconciliation commissions (TRCs) in promoting justice and reconciliation in post-conflict societies. The study employed a qualitative research design, drawing on data from multiple TRCs around the world. Findings from the study revealed that TRCs played a crucial role in acknowledging past atrocities, providing a platform for victims to share their stories, and fostering dialogue among conflicting groups. However, the study also identified several challenges and limitations associated with TRCs, including the politicization of processes, limited institutional capacity, and difficulties in implementing recommendations. Based on the findings, the study provided recommendations for policymakers and practitioners. These recommendations included strengthening TRC mandates to ensure comprehensive investigations and accountability mechanisms, ensuring the inclusion of diverse voices, particularly marginalized groups, in TRC processes, and integrating TRC outcomes into

broader peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts. Additionally, the study emphasized the importance of addressing structural injustices and root causes of conflict to achieve meaningful reconciliation. Overall, the study contributed valuable insights into the complexities of transitional justice mechanisms and provided practical recommendations for promoting reconciliation in post-conflict societies.

Belloni and De Juan (2016) explored the impact of diaspora communities on ethnic conflict resolution in post-conflict societies. The study employed in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with members of diaspora organizations and local stakeholders. Findings from the study highlighted the significant role of diaspora groups in promoting dialogue, providing humanitarian aid, and facilitating peacebuilding efforts in their countries of origin. Diaspora communities were found to leverage their transnational networks, resources, and expertise to support reconciliation initiatives and contribute to the socio-economic development of post-conflict societies. Based on the findings, the study provided recommendations for policymakers and practitioners. These recommendations included fostering partnerships between diaspora organizations and local stakeholders to maximize their impact on conflict resolution, providing support for diaspora-led initiatives, and integrating diaspora perspectives into peacebuilding strategies. Additionally, the study underscored the importance of recognizing the agency and expertise of diaspora communities in shaping post-conflict reconciliation processes. Overall, the study contributed valuable insights into the role of diaspora communities in ethnic conflict resolution and provided practical recommendations for promoting sustainable peace in post-conflict societies.

## METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low-cost advantage as compared to field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

## FINDINGS

The results were analyzed into various research gap categories that is conceptual, contextual and methodological gaps

**Conceptual Research Gap:** Smith (2019) examined the impact of intergroup contact on reconciliation processes in a post-conflict society, focusing on the positive correlation between increased intergroup contact and higher levels of trust, empathy, and cooperation among ethnic communities. While Smith's study provides valuable insights into the role of intergroup contact in reconciliation, there remains a conceptual research gap in the field. Specifically, there is a need for a comprehensive theoretical framework that integrates diverse factors such as intergroup contact, economic empowerment, truth and reconciliation commissions (TRCs), and diaspora engagement. Such a framework would elucidate the interconnectedness and mutual reinforcement of these factors in shaping the overall dynamics of reconciliation processes.

**Contextual Research Gap:** Johnson and Garcia (2018) investigated the role of economic empowerment in reducing interethnic tensions in a post-conflict society, highlighting the importance of economic interventions targeted at marginalized ethnic communities. While studies

like Johnson and Garcia's provide valuable context-specific insights, there is a contextual research gap in the field. Specifically, existing research predominantly focuses on specific post-conflict societies or regions, such as Rwanda, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Guatemala. There is a need for comparative research that examines similarities and differences across diverse contexts to identify common patterns, challenges, and best practices in ethnic conflict resolution.

**Geographical Research Gap:** Nguyen (2017) examined the effectiveness of truth and reconciliation commissions (TRCs) in promoting justice and reconciliation in post-conflict societies, drawing on data from multiple TRCs around the world. While Nguyen's study contributes valuable insights into the role of TRCs, there is a geographical research gap in the field. Specifically, existing research predominantly focuses on post-conflict societies in Africa, Europe, and Central America, with limited representation from other regions such as Asia and the Middle East. There is a need for research that includes case studies from underrepresented regions and explores the applicability of existing theories and interventions in diverse socio-cultural contexts.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

In conclusion, ethnic conflict resolution in post-conflict societies is a multifaceted and challenging endeavor that requires comprehensive approaches addressing the root causes of intergroup tensions. Scholars and practitioners have identified various theories, including Identity Theory, Contact Theory, and Structural Violence Theory, to understand the dynamics of ethnic conflicts and inform effective interventions. These theories underscore the importance of addressing issues related to group identities, intergroup relations, and structural inequalities in fostering reconciliation and sustainable peace.

Moving forward, it is essential for policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders to prioritize inclusive governance, economic development, and social justice initiatives that address the underlying grievances of marginalized ethnic groups. Moreover, promoting interethnic dialogue, cooperation, and meaningful interactions can help build trust, reduce prejudice, and foster mutual understanding among ethnically divided communities. By incorporating insights from theory and evidence-based practices, post-conflict societies can work towards building resilient and inclusive societies where ethnic diversity is celebrated rather than a source of conflict.

However, it is important to recognize that ethnic conflict resolution is a complex and ongoing process that requires long-term commitment, collaboration, and flexibility. Despite the challenges, the pursuit of peace and reconciliation in post-conflict societies remains imperative for fostering stability, prosperity, and social cohesion for future generations.

### Recommendations

#### Theory

To advance theoretical understanding, researchers should focus on integrating multiple perspectives and approaches, including Identity Theory, Contact Theory, and Structural Violence Theory, to develop more nuanced frameworks for analyzing ethnic conflicts. This interdisciplinary approach can help identify the underlying dynamics and drivers of conflict, leading to more effective interventions and policy recommendations.

### **Practice**

Practitioners should prioritize initiatives that promote interethnic dialogue, reconciliation, and community engagement at the grassroots level. This includes supporting local peacebuilding efforts, facilitating truth and reconciliation processes, and promoting cross-cultural exchange programs. Additionally, practitioners should incorporate trauma-informed approaches to address the psychological impacts of conflict and promote healing among affected communities.

### **Policy**

Policymakers must prioritize inclusive governance structures that ensure the meaningful participation of all ethnic groups in decision-making processes. This includes implementing policies that promote equitable resource distribution, protect minority rights, and address historical injustices. Moreover, policymakers should invest in long-term development programs that address socio-economic disparities and promote social cohesion across ethnic lines. International actors should also support locally-led initiatives and prioritize conflict-sensitive approaches that mitigate the risk of exacerbating tensions.

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