



# Hausa Songs as Tools for Peace-Building and Conflict-Resolution

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**How to cite this paper:** Sani, A.W., Oumarou, A.I., Kodak, B. and Waliaula, S. (2026) Hausa Songs as Tools for Peace-Building and Conflict-Resolution. *Open Access Library Journal*, **13**: e15401. <https://doi.org/10.4236/oalib.1115401>

**Received:** April 22, 2026

**Accepted:** June 28, 2026

**Published:** July 1, 2026

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## Abstract

This article examines the roles of Hausa songs (*wakokin Hausa*) as cultural instruments for promoting peace and resolving social conflicts within Hausa society. The study, drawn from two purposively selected songs composed by Mansour Sani (Niger Republic) and Asabe Madaki (Nigeria), bears by a crowning stroke of fortune the same title “*Zaman Lafiya*”. It explores how oral musical performances function as mechanisms of social cohesion, moral instruction, and conflict mitigation. The songs are transcribed in their original Hausa language, translated into English, then subjected to qualitative textual and thematic analysis to facilitate global accessibility and scholarly interpretation. Anchored in a functionalist theoretical framework, the study argues that Hausa songs are not merely aesthetic expressions but culturally and socially embedded tools that reinforce collective values, encourage peaceful co-existence, and foster national integration. The findings reveal that themes such as unity, tolerance, forgiveness, and communal responsibility are central to both songs, reflecting deeply rooted cultural philosophies of harmony. The article concludes that Hausa musical traditions remain vital in contemporary peace-building efforts and should be recognized as indigenous knowledge systems capable of addressing modern social conflicts.

## Subject Areas

Literature

## Keywords

Co-Existence, Conflict Resolution, Oral Poetry, Peace Promotion, Songs

## 1. Introduction

In contemporary Hausa society, many artists such as Garba Dan Anko and Maman Shata are known for their contribution to social integration and development through their songs which are not only for ornamental roles, but principally for didactic functions. According to Hausa cultural perspectives, they are used to promote values including peace-building (efforts aimed at creating peace where war or hostilities existed before), honesty, integration, development, honesty to cite but a few. Also, they can stand for reservoir of Hausa cultures and vehicles for solving social problems. However, the world is increasingly threatened by ethnic or tribal conflicts. Besides, armed groups are inducing fear, traumatizing societies and coercing governments to achieve their ideological, religious or political propaganda [1]. Songs, as important components of folklore for the West African groups, particularly in Hausa society, are used by relatively many singers including Mansour Sani (Niger Republic) and Asabe Madaki (Federal Republic of Nigeria) for various pedagogical purposes. The Hausa people are one of the largest ethnic groups in West Africa, numbering approximately fifty million individuals, primarily residing in northwestern Nigeria and southern Niger within a region known as Hausaland. This group has rich cultural traditions and a history that dates back to around 500 CE, with origin tales linking them to a legendary founder named Bayajidda [2]. The Hausa people employ songs to teach, warn, sensitize, and punish anyone who misbehaves in their community. As a matter of evidence, the selected songs deal with peace promotion and conflict-resolution, that is efforts aimed at resolving conflicts and creating peace, and are subsequently used by the Hausa community to dissuade people from violence and wars that, in most cases, cause deaths, kidnappings, rapes, humiliations, inter-tribal conflicts and robberies amongst them. In this regard, [3] observes that, “every day in the world, thousands of people die from violence both in armed conflict and non-armed conflict situations. Everyday throughout the world, thousands of people die from hunger and other poverty related causes”. In this regard, economic and agricultural growths are decreasing and targeted people are forced to leave their homelands for neighboring safe environments.

Despite the foregoing, to achieve prosperous or developed societies, peace should be promoted via traditional means of education such as Hausa oral songs. In many Hausa societies, mostly nurtured in social conflicts, scholars from different disciplines are implicitly interested in producing scientific works that fight against or resolve conflicts in Africa as whole. For that matter, this article aims at examining how the selected songs promote peace and resolve conflicts. So, it addresses the issue of peace building and analyzes the Hausa oral songs as agents for promoting peace and resolving conflicts.

Songs, being one of the most useful components of oral literature in Hausa communities, are employed by Hausa singers as the one of the efficient tools for conveying diverse didactic messages in societies, especially those dominated by illiterate people. As such, the Hausa people generally rely on peace-promoting and

conflicts-resolving songs to teach or punish without using lashes. Many researches dealing with Hausa oral literature including [3]-[9] have been conducted, but only few of them have dealt with Hausa songs that promote peace and resolve conflicts in Hausa societies.

## 2. Literature Review

In Africa, particularly in Hausaland, people need peace for national integration and development. In this regard, any Hausa song dealing with peace promotion and conflicts prevention is highly welcome. In Hausa communities, songs play important roles for the cultural, social and national integration and development. But what does an (oral) song stand for? According to [5], “a song is an oral performance, a sub-genre of verbal art uttered or chanted by a persona, male or female, motivated by one specific subject matter. Oral song or poetry in general has been an issue of interest in the academic field for centuries”. In contrast to [5] [6] asserts that:

The term “oral” etymologically means to do with the mouth. Oral song is poetry that is composed and transmitted without the aid of writing. Oral song is sometimes considered to include any poetry which is performed live. Oral song exists most clearly within oral cultures, and much oral poetry, however, is memorized verbatim—through the precise wording, particularly of words which are not essential to sense or metre, do tend to change from one performance to another, and one performer to another.

He further adds that in Hausa, the term “verse”, “poetry” and song are regarded to be synonymous. So, in Hausa society, songs are perceived as vehicles for educational purposes and are among the most useful oral genres in literature. As a matter of evidence, [10] argue that, in Hausa society, poetry is one of the principal genres of literature if not the most crucial one. Poetry propels social direction. In another comparative study on environmental songs in Kenya and Tanzania, [11] assert that music, as a form of oral art, promotes environmental awareness and advocacy. Using case studies from Kenya and Tanzania, the authors argue that East African music infused with suitable environmental practices can help mainstream environmental education, arouse public interest towards nature, advocate for change in mind-sets, and call for proactive action on environmental conservation, while still offering entertainment. As home to society’s values, norms and customs, oral songs in the historiography are the data bank for epistemology and philosophy. Through songs people learn, laugh, mourn, educate, console each other, inspire one another and at times pass secret messages.

Basically, oral singers are expected to educate on what constitutes an obstacle for people’s development and stability. In this regard, Mansour Sani and Asabe Madaki, through their songs meant to discourage troublemakers and fight against social conflicts, decided to promote peace in Hausa societies where conflicts are predominating. For them, these songs can speak in the names of voiceless people,

particularly in Niger Republic and Nigeria, two neighboring countries having the same religions, cultures and living modes. In fact, [12] argues that “an oral singer does not only entertain but also educates and informs the public about current events as well as the ancient historical accounts.” In Hausa communities, Hausa singers are expected to teach and they do not hesitate to criticize and condemn. Mansour Sani and Asabe Madaki explicitly composed their songs to denounce people’s atrocities by proposing solutions, denouncing armed or non-armed conflicts and promoting peace in Hausa communities.

However, peace is an important partner that is needed for any development. As a matter of evidence, [13] asserts that, “the survival of a society is a result of adequate conflict resolution and that unitive customs arise from the fear of social disintegration.” Consequently, peace is a valued, needed by all and its absence in a community leads to difficult or unusual situation. In this regard, [8] define peace as:

One of the highest values in every community. Its meaning is multilateral and multi-disciplinary, depending on which notion is central in the determination of “peace” as a concept. The most common use of peace is in the absence of dissention, violence or war. Peace is also seen as a state of mind in concourse with serenity: a state of harmony, tranquility, concord and balance of equilibrium of powers. Peace is the opposite of conflict; it abhors violence and war.

Similarly, [14] supports that:

Peace is a term commonly used to describe a state of being calm and quiet; a state of tranquility, free from argument, conflict, violence and disturbances. It is an avenue permeated with attitudes that allow people of all ages and all levels to co-habit in harmony. It is also considered as the development of behavior that can prevent the occurrence of conflict. Peace is a quality describing a society or a relationship that is operating harmoniously.

Many Hausa oral songs have significantly contributed to the conflicts’ resolution, maintenance and promotion of peace in the Hausa society. They are actively meant for this purpose. From this perspective, the article succinctly unravels their prominent functions which consist of ensuring peaceful coexistence and conflict resolution or prevention among Hausa people.

But in contrast to the previous arguments, [8] observe that, “instability is intimately linked to man; thus, they submit that: Conflicts are found at every stage of life; individuals, groups, associations, clubs, societies, local, national as well as international communities experience conflict in one way or the other. That, however, includes religious, ethnic, political and communal among others. Conflicts are features of life.” Beyond African views on the roles of songs, [15] argues that, “during the conflict in former Yugoslavia, music had an important role for raising national awareness. It was used as a tool for sending message to domestic

populations on whom they are and who they are not, as an instrument of presenting the country to the world audience in the preferred way. On the other hand, it was even employed as a weapon during the conflict and in the war aftermath.” Based on Hausa people’s perceptions oral poetry, one is reminded that oral songs are used to convey teachings and fight against conflicts in Hausa community.

### 3. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research design to examine the role of Hausa oral songs in promoting peace-building across different sociocultural contexts. Specifically, the research focuses on two songs that share the same title *Zaman Lafiya* but differ in content and contextual orientation, thereby providing a comparative basis for analysis. Despite these differences, both songs converge on a common thematic concern: the promotion of peace and social harmony. Songs titled or themed “*Zaman Lafiya*” (meaning “peaceful living” or “peaceful coexistence” in Hausa) represent a cornerstone of peacebuilding and cultural identity in Northern Nigeria. They circulate widely as sociopolitical anthems and therapeutic community tools, representing the ultimate philosophical goal of harmony within the Hausa worldview [16]. The data for this study consist of two purposively selected Hausa oral songs sourced from *YouTube* (<https://youtu.be/GsZyLcxHkvA?si=A5fy0fw2o0Gc2apz>). The selection was guided by its relevance to the theme of peace-building, cultural significance, and accessibility. Purposive sampling is deemed appropriate for this study because it allows for the intentional selection of texts that best illustrate the phenomenon under investigation.

The selected songs were retrieved in audiovisual format and subsequently subjected to manual transcription in the original Hausa language. Following transcription, the songs were translated into English by the first author, who possesses native speaker competence in Hausa, to ensure accessibility for non-Hausa speakers and to facilitate broader scholarly engagement. Special attention was paid to preserving cultural nuances, metaphorical expressions, and context-specific meanings during the translation process. The analysis was based on specific and general themes that address conflict-resolution, peace-building and peace promotion. The study is grounded in the functionalist theoretical framework, particularly as articulated by [6]. Functionalism views cultural forms, including oral literature, as social institutions that perform specific roles in maintaining societal equilibrium. In this regard, Hausa oral songs are analyzed not merely as artistic expressions but as mechanisms of social regulation, cohesion, and conflict resolution. The two songs bear the same title, but have different content in both countries. However, their overall message is peace-building. As far as the data collection is concerned, only two Hausa oral songs related to peace-building are selected from *YouTube* (<https://youtu.be/GsZyLcxHkvA?si=A5fy0fw2o0Gc2apz>). So, both are transcribed, analyzed and translated into English language to make the Hausa

non-native speakers grasp their full meanings and the messages they convey. As far as the analysis corpus is concerned, they are analyzed based on a functionalist theory where social institutions are analyzed in terms of their functions or roles in societies. Moreover, to understand the component of the society one needs to know the functions of the selected Hausa oral songs and their contribution to social stability. Because of this, the functionalist theory is adopted for this research as for [6] the functionalist perspective is used to explain social institutions as collective means to meet individual and social needs. Functionalist themes in both songs include: peace promotion strategies, peace as a factor for national integration and unity, peace as culture and religious reservoir, ethnicity and tribalism, structural violence and insecurity.

#### 4. Data Presentation and Analysis

Asabe Madaki's song "*Zaman Lafiya*" (See Appendix 1) focuses specifically on peace promotion and conflict resolution. It operates as a didactic peace anthem situated within the socio-political realities of Nigeria—a nation marked by ethno-religious tensions, regional divisions (North-South, East-West) and insecurity (kidnapping, banditry). Like that of Asabe, Mansour Sani's song (See Appendix 2) is also used by the Hausas of Niger to promote peace and resolve conflicts. His song attempts to disassociate Hausa people with ethnicity, tribalism, and racism which are the major keys to social division in Niger. For Sani, all the Nigerien ethnic groups should unite for national, cultural and social development. Both singers assert that education and health are gradually impacted by insecurity in Nigeria and Niger.

However, both songs contain developmental ingredients for Hausa society and they could be used to promote peace as well as to prevent conflicts.

##### 4.1. Peace Promotion Strategies in the Two Songs

In Asabe's and Mansour's songs *Zaman lafiya*, peace is promoted through many strategies. First and foremost, peace is seen as the condition of human well-being. Second, peace is conceived of as the main factor of national integration and unity. Third, peace is considered as a cultural reservoir.

##### 4.1.1. Peace as a Condition for Human Well-Being

From the outset of the song, Asabe's projection in the future in line one and the repeated address of the chorus in line two function as a collective national appeal, positioning peace not as abstract, but as a shared civic responsibility (see **Table 1**).

**Table 1.** Peace as a shared civic responsibility.

1	<b>Singer:</b> <i>Yara yara manyan gobe, Yan yara manyan gobe, yara!</i>	Children, the leaders of tomorrow, Children, the leaders of tomorrow.
2	<b>Chorus:</b> <i>Yan Najeriya, yan Najeriya, yan Najeriya, kasata ku zauna lafiya</i>	Nigerians, Nigerians, Nigerians My country, live in peace!

In the above excerpts, Asabe Madaki is calling all her Nigerian fellow citizens in general and the Hausa ones in particular to promote peace and social cohesion. She is exhorting the Nigerians from different corners of the country to participate in peace-building than creating conflicts or civil wars regarded as social vices. According to her, there is no happiness, peaceful coexistence, royal kings, national integration and development without peace. Asabe's views in corroboration with social perceptions cry out that when there is no peace, education cannot be properly guaranteed. In Hausa land, no religion or other system has ever authorized division, civil war or conflicts, but encourages peaceful coexistence instead, especially between people from different tribes, religions and political parties in Nigeria. Asabe's song is consequently a tool used to combat such disunity and tribal differences. Her song also exhorts people to excel economically, politically, and socially.

A central ideological claim in the song is stated at the first line of verse three where the artiste says: *Jin daɗin rayuwa sai da shi yake samuwa* meaning "Good life is only possible with peace". This claim frames peace as instrumental, necessary for development, and existential, foundation of human happiness. This aligns with positive peace theory positioning peace as presence of well-being, not just absence of violence.

As far as Mansour is concerned, from the outset, his song establishes peace (*Zaman Lafiya*) as the highest socio-political good, surpassing even power and status (see **Table 2**).

**Table 2.** Peace as the highest socio-political good.

1	<b>Singer:</b> <i>Zaman lafiya, zaman lafiya</i>	Living in peace (2)
2	<b>Chorus:</b> <i>Zaman lafiya yafi zama dan sarki</i>	It is better to live in peace than to be a prince
3	<b>S:</b> <i>Yan uwana, mu zauna lafiya, ya 'yan uwa al'umma, tashin hankali bai kamace mu bai ma kyau ba</i> <i>Mu zauna lafiya, ya 'yan uwa al'umma (2)</i>	My brothers, let's live in peace. Conflict is not for us. Let's live in peace, dear brothers (2)

In the above excerpts, Mansour highlights the importance of peace by pedagogically and artistically repeating the central theme of the song, "*Zaman Lafiya*". As illustrated above by Asabe, for Mansour Sani too no religion in Niger authenticates conflicts but they all encourage Nigeriens to participate in the social integration and mutual respect among them. However, Mansour denotes that conflicts negatively impact people's activities including education, commerce, agriculture and prosperity. Such an oral song subsequently warns us against ethnicity, tribalism or social injustice mainly caused by social conflicts.

This line is ideologically significant. It subverts traditional hierarchies—where kingship symbolizes authority, wealth, and prestige—and replaces them with a moral hierarchy in which peace is the ultimate value. In doing so, the singer rede-

finds success not in terms of domination or power, but in terms of harmonious coexistence. From a peace-building perspective, this reflects a preventive strategy: by reshaping societal aspirations, the song discourages competition for power—a common source of conflict—and promotes collective well-being. Peace is indeed a supreme social value.

#### 4.1.2. Peace as Factor of National Integration and Unity

Asabe's song is a masterpiece in terms of national integration. There is a geopolitical mapping of unity, symbolically dissolving regional fragmentation and political polarization in this verse of Asabe's song: "*Oh, gabas da yamma, kudu da arewa ku bar fada da juna*" meaning "From East to West, North to South, stop fighting each other". Through this call, therefore, peace is constructed as spatially inclusive and nationally binding. In the case of Mansour Sani, the repeated refrain, "*Mu zauna lafiya, ya 'yan uwa al'umma*", (Let us live in peace, dear members of the community), functions as a discursive unifier. The use of '*mu*' (we), '*yan uwa*' (brothers/kin) and '*al'umma*' (community/nation) constructs a shared identity that transcends cultural and social divisions. These inclusive addresses are central to conflict resolution because they reduce "us vs. them" dichotomies, promote collective responsibility and reinforce social cohesion. Rather than blaming specific groups, the song frames peace as a common obligation, thereby minimizing defensiveness and encouraging cooperation.

#### 4.1.3. Peace as Religious and Cultural Reservoir

Though Mansour Sani mentions the important place of peace in the four first lines of his song, his ingenious flashback in the fifth line shows the true beginning of his composition (see [Table 3](#)).

**Table 3.** Peace as religious and cultural reservoir.

5	<p><i>S: Da fari na sanyo gwanin mu Sarki Allah</i>  <i>Wanda ya aiko Annabinmu dan Abdallah</i>  <i>Zan rero wakar da za'a kauce matsala</i>  <i>Wutar fitina kar a rura in ba'a kashe ta ba</i></p>	<p>Before I start singing, let me mention Allah, the most powerful and His messenger, Prophet, the son of Abdallah. I will sing a song that can help us get rid of conflicts.</p>
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Mansour begins calling Allah and mentioning the Prophet purposefully. He does so because he would like to legitimize peace religiously and call for Allah's assistance to make his song universally accepted in Hausa community. Peace is presented as divinely sanctioned. The invocation anchors the message of peace within an Islamic moral framework, which is deeply influential in Hausa society. Apart from the legitimization function, the invocation also serves two other functions. It serves as authority because the message gains credibility through religious reference. It also serves as moral obligation for the conflict avoidance becomes spiritual duty. So, by linking peace to divine authority, the song transforms it from a social preference into a moral imperative, thereby strengthening compliance. He reinforces his position in line 9 (see [Table 4](#)).

**Table 4.** Peace as a moral aim.

	<i>S: Zaman lafiya jin dadin mun dangina</i>	My relatives, peace is our happiness.
	<i>Talaka da mai shi kowa yana anfana</i>	Poor and rich men need peace
9	<i>Banbanci yare, kabila na sa fitina</i>	Language difference and ethnicity cause conflicts.
	<i>Kowane addini ba za ya ce ayi rigima ba</i>	There are no authorized religious conflicts.

In fact, no conflicts are authorized by religion and besides the religious memory of peace in Mansour's song, the same concept is recorded culturally in the song of Asabe. The nostalgic refrain in line five shows it in **Table 5**.

**Table 5.** Peace as absence of conflict.

	<i>S: Jin dadin rayuwa sai da shi yake samuwa</i>	Good life is only possible with peace
5	<i>Mu zauna lafiya yan kasata</i>	Let's live in peace my fellow Nigerians
	<i>Mu zauna lafiya</i>	Let's live in peace
	<i>Ba tun yau ba ba tun yau ba</i>	Longtime ago, longtime ago

Yes, longtime ago our forefathers lived in peace. They did not fight each other and lived in perfect symbiosis. Asabe wonders we fight one another now. So, like Mansour recalling religious memory, Asabe is recalling cultural reservoir of peaceful living of our forefathers. She portrays peace as a lost ideal that can be recoverable when we connect ourselves with our cultural heritage; that of our past parents living in peace and harmony. This technique strengthens persuasion by suggesting that peace is not impossible as it once existed.

## 4.2. Conflict Diagnosis in the Two Songs

Like the peace promotion, Asabe and Mansour also propose some strategies to diagnose conflicts in their songs. They first highlight ethno-religious conflicts and condemn it. Second, they address the thorniest question of ethnicity and tribalism. They finally talk about structural violence and insecurity in their compositions.

### 4.2.1. Down to Ethno-Religious Conflict

Asabe's song stands as a powerful weapon against ethno-religious conflicts. The lyrics explicitly condemn religious and ethnic violence. The line 13 in **Table 6** exemplifies this (see **Table 6**).

**Table 6.** Condemning ethno-religious conflicts.

	<i>S: Ba fada addini na Kirista</i>	There is no authorized war by either
	<i>Musulmi suma na fahimta</i>	Christianity or Islam. We assist our neighbors.
	<i>Muna taimako ga mokobta</i>	My fellow Nigerians, let us live in peace.
13	<i>Yan kasa mu zauna lafiya</i>	Let us not show ethnicity
	<i>Kabilanci shi ma kar mu nuna</i>	Let us, from children to adults, be
	<i>Dukkannin mu mu rike amana</i>	trustworthy.
	<i>Tsofaffi da yara kanana</i>	We should all live in peace.
	<i>Kowa da kowa mu zauna lafiya</i>	Let's live in peace.

Key implications of this excerpt are that both Christianity and Islam are framed as peaceful religions and that violence is portrayed as human distortion, not religious mandate. This is a de-escalation strategy, removing ideological justification for conflict. Furthermore, there is a preventive conflict resolution strategy in the first line of Asabe's song (see **Table 7**).

**Table 7.** Conflict resolution strategy.

1	<i>Singer: Yara yara manyan gobe, Yan yara manyan gobe, yara!</i>	Children, the leaders of tomorrow, Children, the leaders of tomorrow.
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First of all, the choice of the word “children” is strategic in the sense that it includes all the children of Nigeria without exception. Second, the repeated motif “*Yan yara manyan gobe*” (Children, leaders of tomorrow) positions youth as agents of future peace and moral inheritors of national stability. In this sense, they must be all educated because educating them today is like training the leaders of tomorrow. If these leaders are well formed today, they will avoid conflicts or behaviors that can lead to conflicts.

Mansour Sani adopts dialogue and collective agreement as conflict resolution mechanisms in his song. This promotes consensus-building and mutual recognition. In line 9 in **Table 8** he says in **Table 8**.

**Table 8.** Promoting consensus.

9	<i>S: Zaman lafiya jin dadin mun dangina Talaka da mai shi kowa yana anfansa Banbanci yare, kabila na sa fitina Kowane addini ba za ya ce ayi rigima ba</i>	My relatives, peace is our happiness. Poor and rich men need peace Language difference and ethnicity cause conflicts. There are no authorized religious conflicts.
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This classic dialogic conflict resolution model is a crucial one as it helps identifying the causes of the conflict first. The song explicitly names key sources of conflict: “*Banbanci yare, kabila na sa fitina*” (Differences in language and ethnicity cause conflict). This line reflects a sociological awareness of structural conflict factors particularly, ethnic divisions, linguistic diversity and identity-based tensions. Importantly, the song does not deny these differences but frames them as manageable sources of conflict, not inevitable causes of violence. Additionally, the line: “*Kowane addini ba zai ce ayi rigima ba*” (No religion authorizes conflict) deconstructs the common justification of violence in the name of religion, reframing religion as a force for peace rather than division.

#### 4.2.2. Down to Ethnicity and Tribalism

Asabe continues to moralize her people by saying: “*Kabilanci shi ma kar mu nuna*” meaning let us not show ethnicity. Let us also not show tribalism. The song identifies tribalism as a root cause of conflict because tribalism promotes exclusion and fuels division. In the same line of thought, [6] supports that, “tribalism, reli-

gious and political differences are some of the problems that bring disunity in Nigeria. The Hausa oral song deals with these issues by calling on different ethnic groups, religious organizations, to integrate and give support and cooperation to whoever is ruling Nigeria for the betterment of the country.”

However, according to Madaki, ethnicity, kidnapping, rape, or any form of violence perpetrated by or against Hausa people should be immediately discouraged and her song simultaneously exhorts Nigerians and their leaders to prioritize peaceful coexistence by putting emphasis on people’s security and their properties since there is no regime in the world that can prosper without peace. As solution against the vice of tribalism, Asabe proposed collective identity over ethnic identity and moral and ethical reorientation. In fact, the song repeatedly calls for trust (*amana*), neighborliness and shared responsibility. These function as restorative ethics, aiming to rebuild social trust and communal bonds.

Mansour Sani continues in the same vein with this wonderful metaphor: “*Wutar fitina kar a rura in ba’a kashe ta ba*” in other terms “Do not fan the flames of conflict if it is not extinguished”. This metaphor is particularly powerful because it conceptualized conflict as fire; implying that it spreads rapidly, destroys indiscriminately and requires urgent containment. This metaphor functions as a preventive warning, emphasizing early intervention. It aligns with modern conflict resolution theories that stress the importance of conflict de-escalation before it becomes violent.

#### 4.2.3. Down to Structural Violence and Insecurity

A critical shift occurs when the singer, Asabe, addresses leadership with this alarming interrogative voice: “*Shugabannina ina tambaya...*” Dear leaders I have a question: This question is simply why are you not able to cope with issues of violence and insecurity? This question shows the chaotic situation people are in. Here, the song highlights the failure of governance, insecurity (kidnapping, killings) and fear among citizens. This introduces structural conflict analysis by highlighting that violence is not only interpersonal it is also systemic and political. The direct questioning of leaders introduces political accountability and bottom-up pressure for reform. This is significant because it moves beyond moral preaching into governance-based conflict resolution.

The same concerns are raised by Mansour Sani whose song addresses institutional dimensions of peace, particularly governance. The line 15 in **Table 9** is a perfect illustration (see **Table 9**).

**Table 9.** Accountability.

	<i>S: kowa na da laifi da dukannin zaman mu mu gyara</i>	We are all guilty, let’s correct our misbehaviors.
15	<i>Mai mulki adalci ne silar jagora Kay da ake mulki biyayya za kayi banda gadara</i>	A leader should be fair and the ruled should obey instead of disobeying.
	<i>Tarbiyar ‘ya’ya iyaye sai kuyo gaba</i>	Parents should continue educating their children again.

Here in the above excerpt, peace is linked to justice (*adalcɪ*), legitimate authority and social discipline. This reflects a functional balance that leaders must be fair and citizens must be cooperative. Such balance is essential for sustainable peace, as injustice and disobedience are common triggers of conflict. The song moves beyond diagnosis to propose solutions, particularly at the individual and collective levels: “*Kowa na da laifi... mu gyara*”.

(We are all at fault... let us correct ourselves). This is a remarkable conflict resolution strategy because it avoids blame-shifting, promotes self-reflection and encourages mutual accountability. Similarly, the expression “*Mu sauya halaye*” (Let us change our behaviors) frames conflict resolution as a process of moral transformation, not merely external negotiation. From many songs, Hausa people expect phrases like “*Mu sauya halaye*” that deal with peace-building within Hausa land through artistic functions.

## 5. Conclusions

Despite the intensification of the conflicts, the two Hausa oral songs bearing the same title “*Zaman Lafiya*” have significantly contributed to the promotion of peace in Niger Republic and Federal Republic of Nigeria. The Hausa people generally use songs to convey various didactic dimensions including cautions, entertainments and teachings. The strategy of using music for edutainment allows educational messages to be ingrained in entertainment channels in order to positively change behaviours and attitudes. Music focuses on the socio-cultural values and aids in the executions of day-to-day procedures [17]. In deed, Hausa oral songs are sustainable tools for promoting peace, the basis of national integration and development in both countries, but they could also be more effective, especially when measures are put in place as the majority of Hausa people are more attached to and fond of listening to songs. In this study, we have examined the two songs from Hausa communities in Nigeria and Niger, with a view to exploring how the songs are used for peace-building and conflict resolution. Content analysis reveals that the theme of peace runs across cultures.

The results of this research clearly depict that all societies need peace for their own security. Moreover, commercial, agricultural, cultural and political activities cannot be truly carried out without “*Zaman lafiya*” (peaceful co-existence). In fact, these songs show that ethnic, tribal and religious differences should be shunned in Hausa communities. Notwithstanding, they are meant for denouncing the same.

Basically, these two songs recommend Hausa people to get rid of social conflicts. By so doing, the Hausa world will forever know peace, especially if people remain united and accept one another despite their ethnic, religious or cultural differences. One is also reminded that ethnicity and insecurity are vices that mostly impact people’s social cohesion and have always been the main factors of people’s division. As many Hausa songs, examined by different other scholars, have not succeeded in conveying the message of peace-building, this paper how-

ever communicates the message of peace-building in Hausaland as contained in the *Zaman Lafiya* songs. The results of this research justify that both Hausa oral songs are employed to solve social conflicts by promoting social integration and development.

### Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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## Appendix 1

### Song No.1: *Zaman Lafiya* by Asabe Madaki

Original audio, Copyright © n.d., Asabe Madaki

N°	Original Song	Translation
1	<i>Singer: Yara yara manyan gobe, Yan yara manyan gobe, yara!</i>	Children, the leaders of tomorrow, Children, the leaders of tomorrow.
2	<i>Chorus: Yan Najeriya, yan Najeriya, yan Najeriya, kasata ku zauna lafiya</i>  <i>S: Jin dadin rayuwa sai da shi ya ke samuwa Mu zauna lafiya yan kasata Mu zauna lafiya Kira na wurin kowa Da gaskiya sai mun yarda Kowan mu da kowa</i>	Nigerians, Nigerians, Nigerians My country, live in peace!  Good life is only possible with peace Let's live in peace, my fellow Nigerians. Let's live in peace My call for everyone Truly, we must all admit that only peace can bring happiness.
3	<i>Dukkannin mu mun shaida Zaman lafiya ke kawo jin dadi Oh, gabas da yamma, kudu da arewa ku bar fada da juna Yan yara manyan gobe (2) Ya ku ka zama sarki Zaman lafiya aka ce ba bu jito ba bu komai hankali mun a tashe wazobiya kasata Najeriya</i>	From East to West and from North to South, stop fighting each other. Children, the leaders of tomorrow (2) How did you become kings? Let peace be our daily dream, let us awaken our minds, oh my beloved country, Nigeria.
4	<i>C: Yan Najeriya, yan Najeriya, yan Najeriya kasata mu zauna lafiya</i>	Nigerians, Nigerians, Nigerians My country, let's live in peace!
5	<i>S: Jin dadin rayuwa sai da shi yake samuwa Mu zauna lafiya yan kasata Mu zauna lafiya Ba tun yau ba ba tun yau ba</i>	Good life is only possible with peace Let's live in peace my fellow Nigerians Let's live in peace Longtime ago, longtime ago
6	<i>C: Muna zaman lafiya kasata</i>	We lived in peace in my country [Nigeria]
7	<i>S: Ku yan yara ku yan yara</i>	You, children! You, children!
8	<i>C: Sai da shi za mu je makaranta</i>	Only with it [peace], we can go to schools.
9	<i>S: Ba tun yau ba ba tun yau ba</i>	Longtime ago, longtime ago
10	<i>C: Muna zaman lafiya yan kasata</i>	We lived in peace, my fellow Nigerians.
11	<i>S: Ku yan yara ku yan yara</i>	You, children! You, children!
12	<i>C: Sai da shi za mu je makaranta</i>	Only with it [peace], we can go to schools.
13	<i>S: Ba fada addini na kirista Musulmi suma na fahimta Muna taimako ga mokobta Yan kasa mu zauna lafiya</i>  <i>Kabilanci shi ma kar mu nuna Dukkannin mu mu rike amana Tsofaffi da yara kanana Kowa da kowa mu zauna lafiya</i>	There is no authorized war by either Christianity or Islam. We assist our neighbors. My fellow Nigerians, let us live in peace.  Let us not show ethnicity Let us, from children to adults, be trustworthy. We should all live in peace. Let's live in peace.
14	<i>C: Kowa da kowa mu zauna lafiya (4)</i>	Let's live in peace (4).

## Continued

	<i>S: Shugabannina ina tambaya Min kun kayi wa al'umma? Kare dukiyar al'umma?</i>	Leaders, I have questions for you. What did you do for your people? Protecting people's public properties or their lives?
15	<i>Kare rayuwar al'umma? Suna kwana cikin tsoro Ana bin su ana horo Kidnapping, karkashe rayukkan y'an kasa a daina</i>	They sleep in fear. They are being disciplined [by armed bandits]. Stop kidnapping and killing Nigerians.
16	<i>C: Yan Najeriya, y'an Najeriya, y'an Najeriya kasata, mu zauna lafiya</i>	Nigerians, Nigerians, My fellow Nigerians, let's live in peace!

## Appendix 2

Song No.2: *Zaman Lafiya* by Mansour Sani

Original audio, Copyright © n.d., Mansour Sani

N°	Original Song	Translation
1	<i>Singer: Zaman lafiya, zaman lafiya</i>	Living in peace (2)
2	<i>Chorus: Zaman lafiya yafi zama dan sarki</i>	It is better to live in peace than to be a prince
3	<i>S: Yan uwana, mu zauna lafiya, ya 'yan uwa al'umma, tashin hankali bai kamace mu bai ma kyau ba Mu zauna lafiya, ya 'yan uwa al'umma (2)</i>	My brothers, let's live in peace. Conflict is not for us. Let's live in peace, dear brothers (2)
4	<i>C: Mu zauna lafiya, ya 'yan uwa al'umma</i>	Let's live in peace, dear brothers.
5	<i>S: Da fari na sanyo gwanin mu Sarki Allah Wanda ya aiko Annabinmu dan Abdallah Zan rero wakar da za'a kauce matsala Wutar fitina kar a rura in ba'a kashe ta ba</i>	Before I start singing, let me mention Allah, the most powerful and His messenger, Prophet, the son of Abdallah. I will sing a song that can help us get rid of conflicts.
6	<i>C: Mu zauna lafiya, ya 'yan uwa al'umma</i>	Let's live in peace, dear brothers.
7	<i>S: Maza har mata, ina kiran al'umma Zaman daji shi ake kira da salama Duk wanda ya ki jin bari ba zaya kin ganin hwama ba</i>	I exhort men and women to live in peace But whoever refuses will regret it.
8	<i>C: Mu zauna lafiya, ya 'yan uwa al'umma</i>	Let's live in peace, dear brothers.
9	<i>S: Zaman lafiya jin dadin mun dangina Talaka da mai shi kowa yana anfana Banbanci yare, kabila na sa fitina Kowane addini ba za ya ce ayi rigima ba</i>	My relatives, peace is our happiness. Poor and rich men need peace Language difference and ethnicity cause conflicts. There are no authorized religious conflicts.
10	<i>C: Mu zauna lafiya, ya 'yan uwa al'umma</i>	Let's live in peace, my brothers.
11	<i>S: Karatu bai yi sai idan ana lau lafiya Kasuwa da siya sai da zama lau lafiya Noma da kiwo sai in ana lau lafiya Ci gaban rayuwar mu zaman lafiya zai sa gaba</i>	Education, commerce, agriculture, breeding and social development can only be possible when there is peace.
12	<i>C: Mu zauna lafiya, ya 'yan uwa al'umma</i>	Let's live in peace, my brothers.

## Continued

- C: Mettons la main pour un meilleur lendemain, parce que le monde est divisé, le gouvernement de mon peuple séparé, pourquoi pas avancer, et même pas évoluer, théorie qui m'a fait couler les larmes. Ils ont tué les fils du peuple, quand est-ce la paix va faire son arme de guerre, la France avec tout s'étole. Prions, j'appelle ça ton de guerre, ils ont tué nos soldats a Inates, d'autres bombardes a Chinagoder.
- 13 Cultivons la paix, cultivons, souhaitons la paix.  
Na ce cultivons la paix, cultivons, souhaitons la paix.  
Dévastatrices comme prix sanguinaire n'est plus entres plusieurs nations ou groupes d'individus pour un intérêt commun ou qu'un intérêt est même menacé. Il existe plusieurs fonds de guerre dans la guerre dont la guerre civile, tribale, ou même mondiale. La guerre se caractérise par la perte de vies humaines, intérêts, et financiers de tous ces derniers.
- 14 C: *Mu zauna lafiya, ya 'yan uwa al'umma*  
S: *kowa na da laifi da dukannin zaman mu mu gyara*  
15 *Mai mulki adalci ne silar jagora*  
*Kay da ake mulki biyayya za kayi banda gadara*  
*Tarbiyar 'ya'ya iyaye sai kuyo gaba*
- 16 C: *Mu zauna lafiya, ya 'yan uwa al'umma*  
S: *wannan fitina tayi yawa*  
17 *Allah ya kiyaye Cututtuka, ga hatsura hayaki ake yi,*  
*kowannen mu ina kira mu sauya halaye, tashin hankali ba*  
*za ya aifa muna mai ido ba*
- 18 C: *Mu zauna lafiya, ya 'yan uwa al'umma*  
S: *abin da mun ka fadi, fata na ace kun dauka, Mansur da*  
19 *Mansur muka rera wannan waka*  
*Bari inda rabon wuya bata hana wasu shan duka*
- 20 C: *Mu zauna lafiya, ya 'yan uwa al'umma*  
21 S: *Mu zauna lafiya, ya 'yan uwa al'umma*  
22 C: *Mu zauna lafiya, ya 'yan uwa al'umma (2)*
- Let's join hands for a better future because the world and the government are divided, why not to move forward and graduate, the theory that brought tears to my eyes.  
They killed the sons of the people. When will peace become an issue to requested for?  
France is crumbling with everything. Let's pray, I call this a sign of war. They killed our soldiers in Inates while others are bombed at Chinagoder.  
Let's foster peace, cultivate and wish peace.  
Let's foster peace, cultivate and wish peace.  
Devastating events, such as bloodshed, no longer exist between several nations of groups of individuals, nor does a common interest exist, or an interest is threatened. There are several wars in within war including civil, tribal, or world wars. Life is characterized by the loss of human lives, interests, and financial resources.
- Let's live in peace, dear brothers.  
We are all guilty, let's correct our misbehaviors.  
A leader should be fair and the ruled should obey instead of disobeying.  
Parents should continue educating their children again.
- Let's live in peace, dear brothers.  
Such a conflict bothers too much.  
May Allah prevent us from diseases and I exhort everyone to change their bad characters as conflicts do not produce positive results.
- Let's live in peace, my brothers.  
We, singers, wish Allah accepted our preachings.  
Punishment is the reward of stubbornness.
- Let's live in peace, dear brothers.  
Let's live in peace, dear brothers.  
Let's live in peace, dear brothers (2).