



THE INTRINSIC IMPACT OF NIGERIAN POST-COLONIAL NATIONALISM ON NATIONAL IDENTITY

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Abstract

Nigeria has experienced a myriad of issues internally born out of differences in values, religion and ethnicity. Its nationalism was founded on the idea that people of various ethnic identities living in the British colony of Nigeria should come together as one to combat colonialism. However, post-colonial nationalism in Nigeria has been negatively affected by multiple historical episodes of ethnic violence because of the lack of a common identity and the repression of certain ethnic groups by the Nigerian government. This paper examined post-colonial nationalism's effect on national identity in Nigeria. This study adopted a qualitative methodology, the research design adopted for this study was the historical research design, data was generated in this paper using secondary sources. The findings of this study revealed that the Nigerian identity is multicultural in nature as Nigerians tend to identify with their various ethnic groups first, before identifying as Nigerians, the issues on ethnic politics, religious intolerance, tribal conflicts and ethnic militias have in the recent time, threatened the survival and continuity of Nigeria as a nation.

Keywords: *Colonialism, Conflict, Ethnic, Identity, Nationalism.*

Introduction

With the arrival of colonialism in Nigeria, divergent, autonomous, heterogeneous, and sub-national entities joined to become a nation (Olasupo, 2017). The British imposed on the people their morals, culture, education, art, language and religion, some of these values which are still present in the Nigerian society (Eze, 2014). Although, the British bringing all the tribes together was aimed at promoting a sense of togetherness but with undertones of exploitation, the present Nigerian

state lacks a sense of togetherness intended by the British colonialists. Nigeria's ambition of becoming an independent sovereign state was realized in 1960, when the country declared independence and British colonial control came to an end (Robiskie, 2021).

Nationalism in Nigeria has been negatively affected by multiple historical episodes of ethnic violence and repression of certain ethnic groups by the Nigerian government between the various people. This has resulted in multiple secessionist movements activities such as; a constant call for a secessionist State of Biafra, Oduduwa Republic by the Yoruba's and Boko Haram's quest for an Islamic State of Nigeria (Maina, 2020), all demanding independence from Nigeria, thereby making the ideology (unification, togetherness and oneness) behind nationalism that was presented by the British to Nigerians become faint and threatened.

All this put together has resulted in an identity crisis as Nigerians tend to identify themselves along ethnic lines (Çancı, 2016).

Ever since the evolution of the Nigerian state after the amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorate in 1914 (Kirk-Greene, 1968), the issue of establishing a national identity amongst the multi-ethnic groups that make up the state has captivated Nigerians. With over 250 ethnic groups, the task of building a nation-state has been daunting (Egbefo, 2015), more so as the British objective in bringing together these multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-cultural groups that lived in Nigeria, was not to promote social cohesion and political unity among them but for an administrative union to solve administrative problems (Sale, 1967). The consequences soon manifested themselves after the country gained political independence on October 1st, 1960.

Although the nationalists that fought for independence envisioned a united, stable and prosperous Nigeria, they hardly envisaged the separatist tendencies that have continued to overwhelm and threaten the corporate existence of Nigeria. The result has been more ethnic cleavages, a thirty-month civil war and intermittent military interventions in governance. In order to redress these issues, Nigerian leadership has always given recognition to Nigeria's diversity. However, although the Nigerian constitution aims to promote unity in diversity, the reality of contemporary Nigerian society betrays the tendency of the various entities to go in the opposite direction, thereby jeopardizing that constitutional aim. (Ogunsakin, 2001; Okeke 1998).

The issue now is how to achieve national integration in Nigeria, and therefore create a sense of national identity amongst the various groups that make up the Nigerian state. Various ideas, ranging from federalism/regionalism (Sklar, 2004),

the federal character principle, and a rotational presidency, etc. (Ajayi, 1984) have at different times been suggested and also implemented. Given the problems this issue has generated, many Nigerians have now come to the conclusion that in order to promote Nigerian integration/unity, there is the need to convene a sovereign national conference, where all groups in Nigeria will be represented to discuss the issues, create a just and humane social order, a sound economic management, distributional justice and guaranteed minimum economic support, as well as to redress existing imbalances in the national distribution of political, economic, educational and employment opportunities in the Nigerian state (Coomasie, 1994).

Methodology

This paper adopted a qualitative methodology, this methodology was designed towards generating data on Identity and post-colonial nationalism in Nigeria. The research design adopted for this study was the historical research design. To generate data in this paper, qualitative research method was applied. Thus, this study made use of books, journals, newspapers, magazines, articles, published and unpublished works. In justifying the analysis, this study relied on content analysis to analyze the study and it is concerned with the detailed study of a phenomenon using secondary sources of data collected through the qualitative method of data collection and making informed inferences from the data collected.

Literature Review

Overview of the Nigerian Identity

Although all nations have a national identity to some extent, the intensity and origins of these identities differ widely. Common language, religion, geographic location, collective memory, cultural practices, or a narrative of common lineage can all contribute to a nation's sense of identity (Bloom, 1993). Indeed, it is difficult to envision the creation of an Italian national identity without Dante's *Divine Comedy*, the emergence of a German national identity without Luther's vernacular translation of the Bible, or the emergence of a Ukrainian national identity without Taras Shevchenko's *Kobzar*. While a polity must meet certain preconditions in order to become a nation, it is interaction with the outside world, specifically the acceptance or rejection of "the other," that permits polities to create a feeling of national distinctiveness.

One of the existing legacies of the colonial era in Nigeria is the enthronement of ethno-religious identities, the kind that dethrones national identity and

contradict national interests. In 2012, ethnicity, religion, and language—not nationality—remain the touchstones of personal identity and a heavy burden of responsibility in order to attain a true national identity in Nigeria. Nigeria's vast heterogeneity serves not only as an enduring source of national strength and potential but also as a closure endlessly threatening to tear at the core of national identity. Etched in the consciousness of many Nigerians, ethno-religious identities have proved far more resilient than national interests. Individually and (or) collectively, the disparate and often warring ethno-religious groups in Nigeria subscribe to a model of conduct that elevates ethnicity and religion over and above the broader interests of the nation. Time and again, post-independence efforts at nation building have been subdued by Nigeria's complex ethno-religious configuration.

Today, as during the colonial era, the search for a true national identity in Nigeria remains elusive. In fact, the only time when Nigerians share a sense of national identity is when the national football team—fondly known as the “Super Eagles”—is having a match. According to (Oyediran & Agbaje, 1999), “Since its creation via 1914 amalgamation by the British, Nigeria has continually gone through the motions of searching for a more participatory and cost-effective political order without, in fact, getting anywhere close to this goal” (Ozor, 2009).

Growth and Foundation of Ethno-Religious Crisis in Nigeria

The growth of ethno-religious crises in the country has its foundation on the activities of the colonial government in Nigeria. In 1861, the British officials annexed Lagos and continued and defeated, the Sokoto caliphate in 1902. Colonialism promoted Christianity and gradually acculturated the ethnic groups that made up the present day Nigeria. The Christian missionaries preached against the religious doctrine on ground in the country. Therefore, they presented African traditional religion as the act of idol worship, while at the same time imposing their Christian tenets on the caliphate and parts of what we know today as Nigeria using the strategy of persuasion and force.

When Britain successfully acquired and occupied the Niger territory and amalgamated the North and Southern protectorates (Akinola, 2015), the western culture was imposed on the people's traditional cultural values. Soon, the British officials in their quest to engage in maximum exploitation of the nation began to play one religious group against another, through ethnic-politics as posited by (Akinola, 2015). The British officials continue to sow the seed of discord and disunity among Nigerians using their divide and rule policy. The colonially motivated land and native right ordinance of 1910 (Akinola, 2015) which was

aimed at separating the Northern ethnic groups from the Southern counterparts discouraged the movement of southerners to the Northern parts of the county. Akinola (2005) showed that the polarization of the territories that became Nigeria actually began with the country's creation and administration as two separate colonies, namely Northern Nigeria and Southern Nigeria. A somewhat romantic interest in the north, especially in the Sokoto caliphate and its institutions seems to have induced the colonial administrators in the north to give the colony some special treatment. Thus, every effort was made to advance its territorial and political interests.

The immediate implication of the ordinance backed by the Muslims' desire to confine themselves to an environment where their religious practice and obligations would not be influenced by the Christian culture gave birth to the rise of Sabon Gari patterns of settlements in northern Nigeria. The north was also to become to prototype "native" state operating its own indigenous institutions, while being protected from all external influences, especially Christians proselytizing and educational enterprises (Akinola, 2005)

Even resident immigrants from southern Nigeria were to be restricted to the Sabon Gari. Albert (2002) showed that in 1911, Sabon Gari was created in Kano which made it imperative that those coming from the southern part of Nigeria would settle in that separated part of the city, different from where the Kanawa were settling.

Gradually, the culture of establishing Sabon Gari residents' area for those coming from southern Nigeria spread to all parts of northern Nigeria. Albert (2002) went on to assert that whatever the case may be, the residential segregation of the Kanawa to the Northern Nigerian migrants engendered hostility between members of the two groups.

This hostility was intensified by two main factors; the first is wide gap in the speed of development amongst most of the Sabo Gari areas when compared to the areas settled by the Kanawa. The second was the doctrinal and normative difference amongst the religion and culture of the two people. Most of the educated southerners that worked for the colonial government found themselves and their family members settling in this newly created settlement setting. They developed their economic potentials by engaging in many forms of small and medium scale enterprises that have been largely neglected by their host. Their business began to grow and flourish thereby generating ill feelings amongst many of the host population that lived in abject poverty. The fact that the settlers in Sabon Gari were prospering in their economic activities made them to pay little or no attention on the cultural and religious practice of their host communities.

Usman and Bako (2004) while writing on the Yoruba people in Sabon Gari setting in Kano, stated that a “business interaction in Sabon Gari could not allow for a proper understanding of the sound cultural orientation of the Kanawa.

Equally in the southern Nigeria, the Hausa people who were initially living amongst the Yoruba people in pre-colonial times were soon resettled into the Sabon areas in line with the colonial policies of ethno-religious divide and rule. Akinola (2005) has shown that in 1928, the Hausawa people who were living happily in the midst of the Yoruba, were ordered by Ooni Ademiluyi Ajagun to relocate to the Sabo quarters which was created for them in line with the directives of the british resident in Oyo who instructed that the Ooni and obas should resettle the Hausawa people in one place. Today, most part of the Yoruba land has the Sabon quarters.

On the other hands, the Igbo people established Gariki for the Housawa people to settle in different parts of Igbo land. This was an attempt in line with the colonial culture of the time to prevent the integration of the Housawa linguistic and cultural group into the mainstream Igbo society. Linguistically, the word Gariki implies a place where livestock sleeps. Hence, the Gariki settlements in Igbo land could be seen in the light of a setting created for the Housawa and Fulani cattle merchants to duck their livestock, while waiting for its subsequent purchase by Igbo livestock traders and consumers. Today, Gariki and Ogbe (Hausa quarters) are found in almost every state of Igboland.

Consequently, Nnoli (1978) has shown that the form of divide and rule administration that was instituted by the British, promoted not only their maximum exploitation of the Nigerian state but also the promotion of ethno-religious and cultural differences. Hamman (2003) argued that the British colonial policy fuelled and poisoned inter-ethnic relations amongst Nigerian. Thus, before the attainment of independence, the colonials government have not only laid the foundation of religious conflict in Nigeria, but it had also created permanent mistrust and suspicion among the different people and ethno-religious groups in Nigeria. It was that mistrust and misconceptions that often created the conflict situations, which escalades into religious violence.

Ethno-Religious Crises in Nigeria

Ethno-religious crisis in Nigeria is a complex subject that has been viewed in a variety of different perspective among various sections of the society. In the academia, researches have been carried out on the history of ethno-religious conflict in post-colonial Nigeria. J. Dogara Gwamna refer the 1987 Kafanchan riot as the genesis of these crisis, according to him, the Kafanchan riot introduced a

dangerous dimension of religious crisis between Christians and Muslims. (Dogara, 2011) For the Kafanchan religious riots shook the foundation of inter-religious peace in Kaduna state and some northern parts of Nigeria. Muhib O. Opeloye, traced the history of Muslim-Christian conflicts in Nigeria to the 1979 controversy over the status of Sharia in the nation's legal system. (Muhib, 2001) According to him, since that time the relationship between the Muslims and Christians has been characterized by mutual suspicion, rivalry, acrimony, rancor, discord and hostility. Aliyu Tilde, presented a comprehensive documentation of numerous ethnic religious conflicts in Nigeria dating to as far back as 1945. Although no mention of such conflicts was made in the discourse, but he cited the May 1966 riots, where over 100,000 Igbo Christians and other easterners were slaughtered in Northern Nigeria. (Aliyu 2001)

It is against this background that this study intends to trace the history of ethno-religious crisis in Nigeria to the pre-amalgamation period. Thus, the fall of Sokoto which was the heart of Daular Usmaniyah (Sokoto caliphate) to the British forces, the subsequent murdered of the exiled sultan Attahir Ahmad in 1903, coupled with the activities of the Christian missionaries in the north, form part of the factors that gave birth to the ethnic tensions in the region. (Muhib, 2001)

This trend is further aggravated by a dramatic conversion of the erstwhile pagan communities into Christianity, whose relations with the missionaries is viewed as a threat to the survival of the socio-religious norms of the larger Muslim population. Hence, relationship between these diametrically opposed communities is often marked by hostility.

British invasion of the Northern Nigeria was met with fierce resistance from the northern elements, who resorted to Guerrilla warfare in a bid to stop the British occupation, but was eventually crushed, due largely to the superiority of British fire power. The northern bloc accused the British of hypocrisy, and alleged that its administrative policies are aimed at advancing Christian faith in the region, and as such, the converted communities became vulnerable to the attack of the predominantly aggrieved Muslims faithful, although no written accounts of such conflicts was obtained by the researcher, but oral accounts through interview were full of evidences which point to the hostilities, for instance Malam Nuhu Ibrahim, a resident of Malumfashi local government of Katsina state, who was born in 1931, claimed to have heard from the elders of their community, that at times violence do broke out between these rival religious groups. He further claimed to have witnessed some during his youth prior to the independence, though these skirmishes are less frequent and not as deadly as what we see today, he concluded.

In the course of this study, the researcher was able to access an article published in the New York times of 29th October, 1911, titled "Islam making alarming gains over Christianity" where according to the article there are ninety-five million Muslims under British rule, more than five million in excess of the Christians. Continent after continent, the article examines the trend, by assessing the struggles between the missionaries and the indigenous Muslim preachers; reference was made therein, concerning the hostile relationship between these proselytizers i.e. the Christian missionaries and the sunusiyyasect along the Bornochad frontiers. (New York Times, 1911)

According to the article, Africa presents a promising future for Christian evangelism, which it depicts thus, "Africa the greatest battle ground for converts". Although, no link is established by the article of a relationship that exists between the British imperialists and the missionaries, but such collaboration may not be ruled out. These historical phenomena along with other socio-economic factors create a bubble in the inter-religious relationships of these communities. (New York Times, 1911)

Overview of Ethnic-Nationalism in Nigeria

Generally speaking, ethno-political and religious crises that have engulfed the Federal Republic of Nigeria in recent times, cannot be explored in isolation from the historical forces, processes and factors that concretise them (Bello & Olutola, 2016). The legacy of colonialism and imperial incursion of Nigeria between 1914 and 1915 soldered divergent territories populated by various ethnic nationalities within a unitary system (Aluko & Ajani 2009; Aluko 1998). Such legacy laid the foundation for what Ebeg bulem referred to as the "ethno-genesis" which culminated into "ethno-tensions" that has affected virtually all spheres of the country till date (Ebegbulem, 2012:76).

The amalgamation of the Southern, Northern and Lagos protectorate into a single entity in 1914 was effected to serve the interest of the British government (Ebegbulem, 2012). Such political transaction took place without any dialogue, as to get the consent of other ethnic nationalities. It could best be described as a deliberate attempt by the colonial powers to thwart the development and sustenance of nationalism in the federation, by sponsoring ethnic-nationalism as a means of capturing power. For example, prior to and during colonialism, the Hausa/Fulani predominantly occupied the Northern part of the country, while the Yorubas and Igbos were preponderant in the Western and Eastern part of the country respectively. These regional divisions produced ethnic tensions, suspicions and rivalry among the three major ethnic groups (Ebegbulem, 2012).

Such tension further resulted in the transformation of the nation's outlook, from ethnic identity into regional identity, to capture political power. This action signalled the beginning of ethnic struggle for power and resource control in Nigeria.

Furthermore, this transformation culminated in the emergence and formation of regional political parties. The Northern region formed the Northern Element Progressive Union (NEPU) and the Northern People's Congress (NPC) - the NPC was led by Ahmadu Bello. The Igbos in the Eastern region formed the National Council for Nigerian Citizens (NCNC), led by Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe. In the same vein, the Yorubas in the Western region formed the Action Group (AG) - a political party aimed to represent the political interest in the Western region, led by Chief Obafemi Awolowo - (Coleman, 1960). This ethno-regional politics became the bane of Nigerian politics during independence era.

However, in post-independent Nigeria, there has been consistency struggle by these major ethnic groups to capture political power and control the nation's numerous resources (Ebegbulem, 2012). Some of such agitations accounted for the remote and proximate factors that led to the Nigerian civil war from 1967 - 1970 (Egbegbulem, 2012:79, 84). In the First Republic, the tripartite nature of national parties spur ethnic rivalry and political struggles that primarily reflected ethno-regional interest, rather than the overall interest of the nation.

These ethno-regional parties resonated in the Second Republic, though with different party nomenclature, but with same ideologies and strong ethnic ties as the former. The Northern region NPC metamorphosed into National Party of Nigeria (NPN), though possessing a national outlook. Majority of its founders and members are northerners, and it represents the interest of the Hausa/Fulani ethnic groups. The same was simulated in the Western and Eastern regions. The Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) of the Western regions for instance still had Chief Obafemi Awolowo as its leader and shares the same ideologies as the defunct AG of the First Republic (Edoh 2001:87). Similarly, the bulk of Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe's loyalist joined him in the formation of Nigeria People's Party (NPP) - a South-eastern political party representing the interest of the Igbos. All these parties reawakened the spirit of ethnic politics that prevailed in the First Republic.

At the beginning of the third Republic, the military regime of General Ibrahim Babangida tend to seemingly crush the tripod of ethnic politics in the country with the introduction of two party system into the Nigeria's political space. The formation of these two parties that is, the National Republican Convention (NRC) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP). It is pertinent to state that it will be erroneous to argue that its formations had ethnic underpinnings, since both

parties had a northerner as either the presidential candidate or the vice-presidential candidate. It therefore marks the first time Nigeria's political terrain would reflect more of a national than ethno-regional outlook, since she gained independence from the British government. Unfortunately, such historic achievement was undermined by the annulment of the 1993 national election result that produced Chief M.K.O. Abiola of the SDP as the winner of the June 12, 1993 election. It was argued that the annulment of the election was to ensure the northern political hegemony is not lost forever (Çancı & Odukoya 2016).

The annulment subsequently resuscitated the old ethnic suspicion and rivalry among the three ethnic groups, with the Yoruba's of the South-West feeling cheated and robbed. According to (Çancı & Odukoya. 2016), with the annulment, it is conceivable to discover that stimulation of ethnic awareness easily turns into a conflict in order to get more from the scarce societal resources. And this situation provokes political tensions and cleavages among the ethnic groups. However, Nigeria is not the only country in the world where such things are experienced (Çancı & Odukoya, 2016). The annulment triggered regional protests and riots, the umbrella group that fought against General Ibrahim Babangida's administration was the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC). Also, protests and riots in the South-West lead to the elimination of northerners in some parts of the South-Western States. Critics of General Babangida's military regime argued that it was a deliberate attempt by the Northern oligarchy to subvert democracy by preventing the slipping away of power from the North to the West (Çancı & Odukoya, 2016; Ebegbulem, 2012).

The danger this crisis foretells is that Nigerians, who seemed to have overcome the legacy of ethnic cleavages and regional hurdle in the 1993 election to vote Chief MKO Abiola, have been compelled again to put ethnic identity first, rather than national interest. The denial of the tacit winner of the 1993 presidential election reverberated the operations to the O'odua People's Congress (OPC) - a curious radical Yoruba group that employs violence as a means to redress the apparent injustice against the Yoruba. Such development also sprang-up a counter-militant group in the northern part of Nigeria - the Arewa Peoples Congress (APC) (Osinubi & Osinubi, 2006:106).

These groups resuscitated and led to a proliferation of ethnic militia groups and other socio-cultural and ethnic based groups across the federation. In the Eastern part, there was the 'Ohaneze N'digbo, Egbesu Boys, Bakassi Boys, among others (Oluwaniyi, 2012). In the Middle Belt or the Niger-Delta, groups 90 such as the Middle Belt Forum (MBF), Movement for the Emancipation of Niger-Delta (MEND), Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), Niger-Delta

People Volunteer Force (NDPVF), The Tombolo Boys, Coalition of Militant Actions (COMA), Ijaw Youth Council (IYC), amongst others, were formed. In a similar fashion, the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) was formed in the Northern region, while Egbe Omo-Oduduwa (EOO) and Yoruba Council of Elders (YCE) emerged in the South West (Aluko & Ajani, 2009).

The Fourth Republic ushered in a multi-party system. However, the prominent ones were still divided along ethnic lines. For instance, the Alliance for Democracy (AD) and Action Congress (AC) still reflected the ideologies of the defunct AG and UPN - and were of a Yoruba ethnic configuration. The All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) which is predominantly of Igbo extraction hold sway in the Eastern part of the country; while the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) was of Hausa/Fulani extraction and of northern dominance. It is only the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) that could be argued to have a national outlook, in that it cuts across all the three regions and ethnic groups. After the annulment of the June 12 1993 Presidential election in Nigeria, the election that produced General Olusegun Obasanjo (rtd) as the president under the platform of PDP, with Atiku Abubakar as the Vice-president could be argued to have broken the jinx of ethnicity in the political terrain of the country again. Though debatable, the victory of PDP in the 1999 presidential election was a deliberate act of the northern oligarchy to pacify the Yorubas of the Southwest over the annulment of the June 12 election that produced their kinsman as the winner.

However, the incidence of ethnic-party politics is still prevalent in the political landscape of Nigeria, as demonstrated in the activities of AC now Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), APGA and ANPP. The introduction of Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) led by Major General Mohammad Buhari (RTD) reverberates and reinforces the ethnic ideology of the Hausa/Fulani NPC party. But the merger of CPC, ANPP and ACN into Action for Progressive Change (APC) further blurred the ethnic picture of Nigerian politics. However, ethnic suspicion, disagreements and power-sharing formula are threatening the survival of this party in recent times, even after capturing power on 29th May 2015.

Moreover, despite the introduction of geo-political zoning into the national political life, ethnicity is still a major factor that is threatening the sustainability of Nigeria's evolving democracy (Çancı & Odukoya, 2016). For instance, the geo-political zoning arrangement pushes forward the agitations of the South-South people. The South-South region, which is largely made up of minority ethnic groups such as, the Ijaws, Itsekiris, Uhrobo, Agbor, among others, seems to have been sidelined in the political discourse of the country right from independence. Nonetheless, the introduction of geo-politics has brought them to the fore.

The Niger-Delta people who occupied the South-South geopolitical zone of the country have been deprived for years (in comparison to other major ethnic groups) (Çancı & Odukoya, 2016). Colonialism had only favoured the three dominant ethnic groups as earlier enunciated, with the exclusion of the Niger-Delta people who are in the minority (Oluwaniyi, 2012). It is these injustices, consolidated by heavy cloak of silence on a number of environmental degradations issues that form the bane of the Niger-Delta struggles. Prominent among the environmental problems is oil spillage, which has affected virtually all their means of livelihood, including water, soil, even their health (Oluwaniyi, 2012). More often than not, their demands have often been suppressed by military regimes, which have also in turn triggered a number of agitations and fuelled incessant violence in the region (Oluwaniyi, 2012).

It is imperative to assert that their (Niger-Delta people) grievances were borne out of frustration and deprivation accruing from several years of neglect and rape. The challenges faced by the Niger-Delta people are encapsulated in the work of Oluwaniyi titled “The Post Amnesty Programme in the Niger-Delta: Prospects and Challenges”, (Oluwaniyi, 2011). According to Oluwaniyi, the Niger-Delta struggles took place in the context of equity and self-determination, ethnic autonomy, lack of political participation and democratic accountability, underdevelopment and widespread poverty (Oluwaniyi, 2011). Subsequent upon these strives were feelings of distrust and death of patriotism, which has resulted in the emergence of ethnic-militias in the region and triggered violence conflicts. Feelings of deprivation have made them take their destiny in their hands, thereby causing a dent on the nationalistic image of the country. In any case, the Niger-Delta issue can't be compared to the Fulanization agenda of the Miyetti Allah and other Fulani militants.

In the year 2007, Ex-president Umaru Musa Yar'adua was elected as President in Nigeria amidst the claims of vote rigging allegations and rumors of him having kidney disease. (Sokari, 2010). On the 20th of November, 2009 he complained of chest pain and soon after he was snuck out of the country to receive treatment in Saudi Arabia without handing over or informing his Vice-President at the time Goodluck Jonathan. There were calls from Nigeria, the United States and Europe asking for Yar'adua's resignation or the installation of the Vice President as acting President after which the case was taking to court and the court ruled in favour of Yar'adua. On the 12th of January, 2010. Yar'adua informed Nigerians that he would return to the country shortly as his wife continued to report that his health had been improving, In the end, instead of impeaching Yar'adua, the National Assembly voted for Vice-President Goodluck Jonathan to become acting

president and he resumed office on the 10th of February, 2010 and eventually, Yar'adua returned to Nigeria and he was reported dead on the 5th of May, 2010 and Goodluck Jonathan continued the tenure till it was over in April, 2011 (Sokari, 2010).

Prior to the April elections in 2011, a few groups vowed to make Nigeria ungovernable. The threat was genuine. A few Politicians seemed to have enlisted some Boko Haram individuals to complete their threats of making Nigeria unmanageable (Ahokegh, 2012). On October 1, 2011, the day Goodluck Jonathan was to be inaugurated as President, there was a bomb blast in Zuba of Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory and at the spot of the inauguration. Responding to the new besieging of media houses in Abuja and Kaduna on April 26, 2012, the National Security Adviser, Gen. Owoeye Azazi faults Boko Haram insurgency on the People's Democratic Party. To him, the PDP politics of presenting candidates against the desires of its larger members adds to the problem Nigerians are going through today (Osuni, 2012). Recurrent attacks from the Boko Haram terrorist group continued to plague the administration of Goodluck Jonathan. Boko Haram's activities showed the weaknesses of the Nigerian state and also dealt a great blow on the administration of Goodluck Jonathan who couldn't manage the insurgency and is considered to not have faced the challenge and was often depicted as incapable of governing this pluralistic nation.

The 2015 Presidential race in Nigeria was the fifth since 1999 when the military gave back power to civilians, it was the first time that the opposition would have a reasonable possibility of wresting power from the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP). Taking everything into account, it was a two-horse race between the incumbent PDP and the main opposition, the All Progressive Congress (APC), the party was formed in February 2013 from a consolidation, merger of three ethnically and regionally based political parties. Prior to the development of the APC, opposition groups were generally divided along local and ethnic lines, making it a great task for them to mount a solid test to the ruling PDP. The election was won eventually by the All Progressive Congress (APC) candidate Muhammadu Buhari who is a Muslim and former military head of state with cult following in the north. The election witnessed an intense politicization of the Muslim-Christian divide and the north-south division in the nation (Adibe, 2015). Herdsmen have wreaked a lot of havoc in Nigeria recently, their crime rate has increased. In a study done by the Institute for Economics and Peace, 1,229 people were killed in 2014 and 63 were killed in 2013. Benue has been the state to have suffered the most from crimes committed by herdsmen. In May, 2015 herdsmen took the lives of over 100 farmers and their family members in villages and

refugee camps in Ukura, Per Gafa and Tse-Gusa local government areas. These herdsmen have massacred a lot of people in the east and in southern states of the country such as Enugu, Ekiti, Ondo to mention a few. These crisis has been attributed with ethnicity and religion citing that these actions are peculiar to Fulanis (Adetula, 2016). In Ekiti state, citizens were advised to take up arms to defend themselves as herdsmen had found their way not just into the state but into the farms of the citizens. Few weeks ago there have been cases of ethnic clashes in Oyo state between the Yoruba's and Hausa's and also recently a group formed in east as a non-state regional force and a paramilitary wing of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Eastern Security Network (ESN) was created to restore the independence of Biafra but its goal so far has been to combat Fulani raiders in the Eastern region and so have the Yoruba people done to as they have also formed a security outfit called Amotekun to combat Fulani militants.

In a bid to address the impact of ethnic nationalism on the Nigerian political stage, several actors - national, regional, continental and international have suggested several approaches to resolving this issue. However, in most cases, much of those suggestions have resulted in a scenario where conflicting parties are constantly agreeing to disagree. Worthy of mention is the not-too-far "National Conference" organised by the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) to address gaps in the constitution and a range of other national pressing issues, such as: resource control, security, political power sharing, to mention a few. Though, the conference could be viewed as a step in the right direction (though debatable), but the credibility of most of the nominees was questionable. There was no transparency in their selection process. In point of fact, it was not subjected to referendum. Moreover, the allowance allocated to each nominee projects the conference as a national bazaar for each representative to share out of the national cake.

Nigeria's National Identity, Image and Her Foreign Policy

The Nigerian identity and, image-building is an important part of any country's foreign policy formulation and implementation strategy. When well-targeted, foreign policy activities can help develop and reinforce positive impressions of a country in the eyes of the outside world (Alimi, 2005). As a result, the image and identity a country seeks to project through its foreign policy must be consistent with its national goals as well as the image expectations of other international actors. As a result, the Federal Ministry of Information (2012) emphasizes that a nation's attempt to have a meaningful impact on, and thus influence, the world around it will be guided by its foreign policy objectives and national interests, as

well as how effectively such disposition is communicated to the world. To put it another way, foreign policy objectives and national interests must be packaged and presented properly in order to achieve their goals.

Indeed, the identity and image issue is a product of perception. Perception is pervasively subjective, hence there is no universally accepted scientific norm for it yet. Perception is a complex process to the extent that human cultures are complex (Jackson, 2001 cited in Zimako, 2009). In international relations, the perception of a nation is the perception of its people, and the perception of its people is partially a function of the acts and character of its political leaders. Thus, incompetence, corruption, nepotism, a leadership vacuum, and a lack of democratic credentials have sabotaged and damaged Nigeria's foreign policy throughout the years, badly impacting the international reputation of the nation in the international community.

Unfortunately, many of the countries that have benefited much from Nigeria's generosity have frequently shown ingratitude to both their populations and the government itself. South Africa has launched xenophobic attacks against Nigerians living there. Furthermore, the countries it has aided financially, diplomatically, and strategically have become a source of ridicule and envy for them. Some of these countries also harbor or provide training facilities for terrorists, while others openly oppose Nigeria's bid to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. It has become as a result of these incidents. The age-old conceptual conception of Africa as the focal point of a country's foreign policy has become lifeless, commonplace, and archaic (Akinboye, 2013).

From all accounts, the inconsistencies and complexities in Nigeria's foreign policy aims over time, exacerbated by domestic policy whims, explain the polity's image and identity crisis more than any other aspect. In fact, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) decided in a public conference in Lagos in 2004 that Nigeria's bad external image has been preventing it from attracting much-needed Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to accelerate its economic progress. This is understandable considering Nigeria's long-standing reputation as one of the world's most corrupt countries (Adeniyi, 2012). To be fair to Nigeria, certain administrations have attempted in the past to address and remedy the country's image and identity crisis

National Orientation Agency as an effective tool for Nationalism in Nigeria

The National Orientation Agency (NOA) is a federal government organization that reports to the Federal Ministry of Information and is led by a Director

General. The agency's mandate is to orient and re-orient the Nigerian public on a wide range of topics that contribute to nation building and beyond, including economic, social, political, and environmental challenges, as well as psychological issues (National Orientation Agency, 2018).

The National Orientation Agency has lofty goals, including ensuring that Federal Government programs and policies are accepted and understood by the general public; engendering favorable public opinions for government policies and programs; enhancing informal education, public enlightenment activities, and publication; and motivating the public to provide feedback on all aspects of national issues to the Federal Government (National Orientation Agency, 2018). The NOA is charged with instilling a sense of nationalism, self-discipline, patriotism, and self-reliance in Nigerians. Develop Nigerians' attitudes toward their civic duty of fostering national unity, human rights, and the construction of a just, free, and progressive society; Encourage Nigerians to participate actively and freely in all national problems and matters that influence their health and well-being; Develop positive attitudes and cultures among Nigerians in order to achieve national unity, discipline, and the goals and objectives of a unified Nigeria.

Instill in Nigerians a feeling of nationalism and leadership, as well as a respect for established authorities. Act establishing the national orientation agency (1993). The Nigerian National Orientation Agency is tasked with communicating government policies, gathering public opinion, and promoting national unity, patriotism, and the development of Nigerian society. "Do the right thing: transform Nigeria," is the agency's motto. The agency's precise goals were established by Decree 100 of 1993. The National Orientation Agency has dealt with issues such as health, cooperation with non-governmental groups, and election violence prevention in the past. The national orientation agency act (1993) establishes the National Orientation Agency, which is charged with reorienting and motivating Nigerians to engage actively and freely in conversations and choices that impact their collective and general welfare.

Discussion of Findings

The study established that post-colonial nationalism in Nigeria is weak owing to the fact that the national identity question has been difficult to resolve as the Nigerian identity is multicultural in nature. Nigerians mostly identify themselves in 3 main groups- Yoruba, Hausa/Fulani, and Igbo. Nigerians have poor loyalty to the state as they align with their ethnic nationalities before the state.

The multicultural nature of the Nigerian identity has fueled negative biases through the machinery of cultural backgrounds, values, and religious sentiments, which has contributed to non-patriotism, divisiveness, religious intolerance and

inter and intra-ethnic violence, and has hampered the survival of Nigeria's nationalism.

Conclusion

Nigeria has seen a myriad of issues that affected the growth and development of the country. This predicament has brought about lack of unity and integration in Nigeria which emanated from the artificial creation of the country as a single geo-political entity. One of the major weaknesses of the British colonialists is their failure to effectively integrate and orientate the people of Nigeria towards the sense of national identity and commitment to the development of a united nation. The issues on Ethnic politics, religious intolerance, tribal conflicts and ethnic militias have, in the recent time, threatened the survival and continuity of Nigeria as a nation. The processes by which nations build a strong and united entity are clearly missing in the lives of many Nigerians. Among the rank and file of the Nigerian citizens, there are demonstration of negative values like intolerance, dishonesty, disobedience and other unpatriotic tendencies.

This study emphasized that for Nigeria to continue as a single nation, the development of a common identity for the Nigerian citizens is an urgent task. There are various issues faced by Nigerian leaders and citizens when it comes to nationalism, both leaders and followers must acquire the values that would help them to put the interest of the nation first ahead of those of self, social, religious, political and ethnic groupings.

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