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Ethnicity and the Imperatives of Development in Nigeria

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Abstract:

Ethnicity has been recognized as one of the major issue in the development of Nigeria. The problems of ethnicity, together with its attendant consequences have threatened the survival of Nigeria as a corporate entity. The paper examines the causes, nature and the implications of ethnicity on national development. It also looked at why ethnic problem persisted and, in many cases intensified. The paper adopted the pluralist theory as an approach, and submits that it is possible for ethnicity through exclusivism to truncate socio-political and economic development in a state like Nigeria, the recognition of every ethnic group that they belong to a nationality and not a particular ethnic group stems the negative impact of ethnicity. The 1914 amalgamation was faulted, together with the divide and rule policy which ensured psychological and political dichotomy between the north and the south. It therefore advocated an inclusive socio-political and development system with a progressive leadership that ensures the welfare and dignity of all Nigerians irrespective of their ethnic or regional differences.

Keywords: Ethnicity, Development

1. Introduction

Nigeria is usually characterized as a deeply divided state in which major political issues are vigorously – some would say violently contested along the line of the complex ethnic, religious and regional divisions in the country (Osaghae, 2005). As a nation, Nigeria is a constituent of several nationalities. There are over 250 ethnic groups (Odinukaeze, 2014) and the major ones are Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa. It is however very disturbing that Nigerians have become slaves to their ethnic origins instead of harnessing these diversities towards national development. Nigerians are fanatics when it comes to ethnicity. It is therefore not surprising for a Nigerian to get angry because he/she is wrongly associated with another tribe. This is not a true reflection of a federal nation.

Among Nigerians, ethnicity is very closely associated with a strong belief in a perceived cultural and linguistic diversity of the country. It is often regarded as the inevitable consequence of sociocultural differences. Indeed, many Nigerians regards ethnicity as a biocultural phenomenon arising from the mere existence of groups whose members share similar sociocultural and linguistic characteristics distinct from those shared by members of other groups (Nnoli, 1980).

It is quite sad that whatever is done in Nigeria has an ethnic undertone be it politics, employment and provision of social amenities. Tribal affiliations are always very strong and visible in almost all affairs. Since independence, there have been cases of ethnic cum aggressive patriotism which in most cases has resulted to violence, and that has not worked well for the development of the country. It is very common in Nigeria for “an Igbo landlord” to turn down a would-be tenant simply because he is “Hausa”. As a consequence, deeply divided states tend to be fragile and unstable because almost by definition, there are fewer points of convergence and consensus among the constituent groups than are required to effectively mitigate or contain the centrifugal forces that tear the society apart.

Thus, disintegration, secession, civil strife, civil war, minority agitation and violent conflicts all of which would normally be considered aberrant to “normal” state formation are quite common threats or actual occurrences in divided states. It is not surprising therefore that divided states have devised some of the most innovative and delicate systems of government. Most states practice some variant of the federal solution, with emphasis on political accommodation and intersegmental balance. This emphasis has made it necessary and expedient to adopt instrumentalities that mitigate the effects of majoritarianism, as well as promote inclusion, equity, and distributive justice between the different salient groups. Yet, and despite the precaution taken, divided states remain perennially unstable and many survive on the brink of collapse and disintegration (Osaghae, 2015).

This paper examines the problems of ethnicity in Nigeria, and how it affects the overall development of the various segments of the political economy inspite of the very advantages notable in the Nigerian state. In doing so, the paper is divided into six sections. Section one is the introduction which is ongoing. Section two provides conceptual framework on ethnicity and national development. Section three deals with the theoretical framework. Section four addresses the development and

manifestation of ethnicity in Nigeria. In section five, the problems and effects of ethnicity is examined while section six concludes the paper with recommendations on how to strengthen unity in diversity as instrument of national development.

2. Definition of Concepts

2.1. Ethnicity

Ethnicity refers to collective group consciousness that imparts a sense of belonging derived from membership in a community putatively bound by common descent and culture, it pertains to perception that one at once share a common identity with a particular group and is in turn so perceived by others (Premdas, 1996). Ethnicity is akin to nationalism, and for this reason, ethnic consciousness may be referred to as ethno-nationalism so as to point the fact that many states contain several sub-communities with a sense of consciousness distinct from that of similar group. The second component of ethnicity that facilitates collective consciousness involves certain putative commonalities such as language, religion, tradition, etc, or a multiple coincidence of several of these lines of cleavage which together have contributed to deep discussion in a state.

According to Nnoli (1980:8), ethnicity is a social phenomenon associated with interactions among members of different ethnic groups. Ethnic groups are social formations distinguished by the communal character of their boundaries. The relevant communal factor may be language, culture, or both. In Africa, language has clearly been the most crucial variable. As social formations, however, ethnic groups are not necessarily homogenous entities and even linguistically and culturally. Minor linguistic and cultural differences often exist within the group, forming the basis for the delineation of sub-ethnic systems.

It is important to note that ethnocentrism is also associated with the interaction of ethnic groups. It is therefore, often confused with ethnicity. Although related the two are quite different phenomena. Ethnocentrism is attitudinal in form and perceptual in content. It represents the subjective dimension of ethnic behavior. The members of a group are ethnocentric when they are proud of it and consequently are inward-looking.

Ethnicity is characterized by a common consciousness of being one in relation to the other relevant ethnic group. This factor more than any other defines the boundary of the group that is relevant for understanding ethnicity at any historical point in time (Nnoli, 1980). Third, exclusiveness is an attribute of ethnicity. In group – out group boundaries emerge with it and, in time, become marked, more distinct than before, and jealously guarded by the various ethnic groups. Acceptance and rejection on linguistic – cultural grounds characterizes social relations. Here merit is sacrificed on the altar of ethnic chauvinism and solidarity.

Finally, conflict is an important aspect of ethnicity. This is investable under conditions of inter-ethnic competition for scarce valuable resources, particularly in societies where inequality is accepted as natural, and wealth is greatly esteemed. The fear of being confined to the bottom of interethnic ladder of inequality generates divisive and destructive socio-economic competition which has antisocial effects.

2.2. Defining Development

Development is a multi-dimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular attitudes, and national institutions as well as acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and the eradication of poverty (Todaro, 1997: 12). Development in its essence, must represent the whole gamut of change by which an entire social system, turned to the diverse basic needs and desires of individuals and social group within that system, move away from a condition of life widely perceived as unsatisfactory toward a situation or condition of life regarded as materially and spiritually better. Furthermore, (Todaro and Smith, 2009: 15), cited Dudley Seers who posed the basic questions about the meaning of development succinctly when he asserted:

The questions to ask about a country's development are therefore: What has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all three of these have declined from high levels, then beyond doubt this has been a period of development for the country concerned. If one or two of these central problems have been growing worse, especially if all three have, it would be strange to call the result "development" even if per capita income doubled.

Similarly, Walter Rodney (1972:1) sees development in human society as a many-sided process. At the level of the individual, it implies increased skills and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being.

The relationship between individuals in any two societies is regulated by the form of the two societies. Their respective political structures are important because the ruling element within each group is the ones that begin to dialogue, trade or fight, as the case may be. At the level of social groups, therefore, development implies an increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relationships.

More often than not, the term "development" is used in an exclusive economic sense – the justification being that the type of economy is itself an index of other social features. What then is economic development? A society develops economically as its members increase jointly their capacity for dealing with the environment. This capacity for dealing with the environment is dependent on the extent to which they understand the laws of nature (science), on the extent to devising tools (technology), and on the manner in which work is organized. Taking a long-term view, it can be said that there has been constant economic development within human society since the origins of man, because man has multiplied enormously his

capacity to win a living from nature. The magnitude of man's achievement is best understood by reflecting on the early history of human society and noting following: Firstly, the progress from crude stones tools to the use of metals; secondly, the changeover from hunting and gathering wild fruit to the domestication of animals and the growing of food crops; and thirdly, the improvement in organization of work from being an individualistic activity towards being an activity which assumes a social character through the participation of many (Rodney, 1972: 3).

2.3. Theoretical Framework

The pluralistic theory has been adopted for this paper. Important theorist of pluralism includes Rober Darl (who wrote the seminal pluralist work, *who Governs?* And Seymour Martin Lipset.

According to Haralambos and Heald, pluralism is all about the idea that in society, "power is dispersed among a variety of groups" (1980:114). They further posits that as society grows, diverse groups spring up expressing varied opinions on social issues. This phenomenon does call for interest aggregation and the fostering of it at societal level bringing into focus representation by organized groups. This representation is enhanced through the elite who act on behalf of the diverse groups. In order to ensure fair representation, power is shared and diffused amongst the elite pluralism because the conduct of societal affairs revolves around the elite class.

In explaining the workings of pluralism, Haralambos and Healed used the study conducted by Darl and Rose who saw how political parties and interest groups in the USA rely on the elite in carrying out their activities. For instance, through political parties, the masses on the one hand influence state policies and interest groups on the other hand exert great pressure on government institutions.

The major characteristics of pluralism in the United States of America is that it is dominated not by a single elite but rather by a multiplicity of relatively small groups, some of which are well organized and funded, some of which are not. A second characteristic is that the groups are politically autonomous, or independent. Third, intergroup competition leads to countervailing influence. The power of one group tends to cancel that of another so that a rough equilibrium results. A fourth characteristic is the openness of the system. It is open in two senses. First, most organizations are seldom if ever completely shut off from the outside. The final characteristics of pluralism is consensus on the "rules of the game". Consensus or widespread agreement among political activists and leaders on democratic principles and values hold the system together (<https://www.i.udel.edu>)

From the above, Rober A. Darl conceives pluralism in terms of a political system in which the social restructuring can lead to the evaluation of different socio-political formations. He characterizes these formations as homogenous that could either be inclusive or close. Those are the conditions that necessitate the growth or development of a social order that guarantees competitive political regime. Therefore, in such a regime, according to him:

...systems of bargaining and negotiation, grow up within, parallel to, or in opposition to hierarchical arrangements, and these systems help to foster a political subculture with norms that legitimizes negotiation, bargaining, logrolling, give and take, the gaining of consent as against unilateral power or coercion (Darhl, 1971:77).

Darhl's theoretical postulate explains the tenets of pluralism in that it presents the existence of a political system in which diversity is allowed to prevail, given a setting in which a plethora of exclusive groups and ideas coexist alongside others. This gives way to the formation of what he term as a "subculture" that becomes a social norm. The guiding principle in a pluralist society is acceptance by the variegated groups to live together in arrangement that ensure power sharing amongst them. In short, according to Kariel:

Pluralism refers to specific institutional arrangement for distributing and sharing governmental power to the doctrinal defence of these arrangements and to an approach for gaining understanding of political behavior (cited in Ibrahim, 2003).

Ibrahim, (2003) citing Ilesanmi (1997:23) posits that pluralism is issued in three different perspectives, namely: the sociological, political and normative. The sociological usage implies the way a society is constituted, i.e. in terms of racial, ethnic, gender and class identities. On the other hand, political pluralism is said to be concerned with political power amongst the sub-units that make up the holistic political entity. Lastly, pluralism is normatively used to imply the fact that no matter the level of uniqueness that exists in society, individuals and groups do differ in some respects.

Looking at the above theory, its suitability to this discussion becomes apparent. This is because taking Nigeria in general and the problems ethnicity has generated over the years, it is a dysfunctional phenomenon that must be addressed once and for all. Ethnicity from our discussion so far is associated with plural society. The term plural society usually designates multi-ethnic state and culturally varied populations like Nigeria. The groups that make up the plural society, though compelled to participate in a uniform political system are distinctive in other matters and ethnically tend to be articulated as group competition.

2.4. Methodology

The paper is based on secondary data. The secondary data is derived from content analysis of newspapers, journals, magazines, seminar papers, text books, conference proceedings and monographs. Other publications relating to the subject matter has also been consulted.

2.5. Development of Ethnicity/Identity Politics in Nigeria

The Ibadan School of History has always maintained that although what is known as the Nigerian state today was the creation of British colonialism, colonial rule itself was an episode in the long historical march of the Nigerian peoples towards the formation of political systems. Ibrahim (2000: 46), citing Ajayi, reminds us, that colonial rule "was neither profound, nor unique". The little episode of colonialism, however, created a political class that has difficulties with reconciling itself with the long epoch of the historical development of the Nigerian peoples in forging a modern nation – state. According to Ade Ajayi, nationalism and the creation of the nation – state were a question of fitting people with the same language and culture into the new nation while in Africa, nationalism was confronted with fitting people with different languages and cultures into one nation-state.

Accordingly, the multi-ethnic nature and character of the Nigerian nation has been identified as one of the serious issues in its developmental strives. Those who share the view assume that the ethnic plurality or heterogeneity of the nation provides the basis for conflict, which is particularly so because of the way and manner the British colonial masters amalgamated these nationalities (Okpoh 2003: 10) quoting D.A. Umar, observes that the conflict in Nigeria:

Have their origins in the way and manner the different nationalities were amalgamated into one Nigeria...When the British colonialists took political control of Nigeria, they decided for their administrative convenience to amalgamate the different nationalities into one country. In doing so, they did not consider the distinct cultural and historical backgrounds of the different nationalities. Under their artificial creation, the spirit of nationalism is difficult to be inculcated.

The point here is that British colonialism in Nigeria, as elsewhere, was motivated by the desire for economic exploitation of the peoples and resources of the area with minimum cost to the British. This would appear to be the underlying force behind the way and manner colonial Nigeria was designed.

Let us take the amalgamation of 1914 as an example. It was motivated by the desire to pool the resources from both the North and the South for effective exploitation by the British. It is significant that the opinions of Nigerians were not consulted. Equally important is the fact that the amalgamation brought together into one polity, different nationalities at varying levels and stages of economic and political development. The British however, made no attempt to give the amalgamated units a common political orientation. As a matter of fact, they deliberately left unresolved for more than fifty years, the question of whether or not the new edifice was to be a confederation or unitary state.

Then, too, the point should be made that there is the question of the type of relation that the colonial state promoted within the component parts of this conglomerated entity. It is possible to argue that the process of the unification of Nigeria, which began in earnest in 1900 and was concluded by 1914, facilitated the integration of Nigeria into the global capitalism, and the entrenchment of the capitalist relations of production within this social space created inter-ethnic distrust and, consequently; conflict. Okpoh, quoting Egwu, S. (1993), explains this point in the following passage.

Colonial capitalist mode of production was germane to the emergence of contemporary African ethnicity in two ways. First, as part of its survival stratagem, it divided African societies along ethnic and communal lines. Second, the socio-economic insecurity and alienation it generated made ethnic solidarity a rallying point (Okpoh 2003: 11).

The point therefore is that, the conglomerate nature of the Nigerian nation provides the basis for conflict. The British colonialists designed contemporary Nigeria without ensuring the proper integration of constituent units. It is this divide-and-rule strategy that informed their decision to ensure a psychological and political dichotomy between the "North" and the "South".

It is also this strategy that determined the application of different colonial policies for different regions in Nigeria. The consequence of these however, is that in the final analysis the constituent units were never properly integrated so that the question of "national consciousness" proved very difficult to generate in the people in the emerging nation.

Nigeria was amalgamated into a single political community only in 1914. That act of 1914 had limited objectives – the amalgamation of some aspects of separate colonial administration of some aspects of separate colonial administrative mechanisms rather than a political unification of the peoples. Even at the level of the administrative machinery, only the railways, telegraphs, customs and excise and the supreme court were amalgamated. Other aspects of administration including education, public works, health, agriculture, forestry, lands and surveys and local government remained separate (Ibrahim, 2000:48).

It is equally interesting to note that the short Nigerian post-colonial life has been riddled with calls for secession, confederation or other ways of breaking up the country. The reasons for the calls for separation have been self-interest of elite groups rather than the national interest. Whenever the interest of a regional political elite have been threatened, they have floated the secession banner, and all major political groups in the country have resorted to the tactic at some point. It was the Sardauna of Sokoto, leader of the Northern People's Congress, who first referred to the amalgamation of the Nigerian Provinces as "the mistake of 1914" in the early 1950s when he floated the secession banner because he felt that southern politicians were unwilling to understand the attitudes of Northern elite towards independence – that they would not rush if it meant replacing European domination with southern domination.

At the 1950 Ibadan constitutional conference to review Richard's constitution, a representational ratio of 45:33:33 for the North, West and East was proposed. Northern politicians felt threatened by this arrangement and the Emir of Zaria had to articulate their position clearly. The North must have 50 percent of the seats or secede from the country. In May 1953, after Northern politicians had been radicalized in Lagos for opposing the AG motion for self-government in 1953, the Northern House

of Assembly and the Northern House of Chiefs met and passed an eight point resolution that amounted to a call for confederation and separation. At the 1954 Lagos constitutional conference, it was the turn of the AG to demand that a secession clause be inserted in the constitution but it was then opposed by the NPC and the NCNC. In 1964, following the census and election crises, southern politicians were getting disenchanted with their future in Nigeria. Michael Okpara, premier of the Eastern region had threatened in December, 1964 that the East would secede and the Sardauna, the Northern Premier had to draw his attention to the absence of secession clause in our fundamental laws.

After a number of criticisms, Okpara denied that he had not opted for secession but as Tamuno (1991: 412) reveals, he went ahead to establish a committee under his Attorney General to work out modalities for a declaration of secession by Eastern Nigeria. When Ojukwu finally decided to embark on the secession three years later, he had a ready-made plan waiting for him.

Calls for secession were also being expressed within the regions themselves. In February 1964, Isaac Sha'ahu of the UMBC declared in the Northern House of Assembly that the Tiv people felt unwanted and threatened. Jibrin (2000:50) citing Tamuno, quotes Isaac Sha'ahu thus:

To pull out of the North and the federation as a whole. We shall be a sovereign state; we shall be joining no body. We are 1,000,000 in population, bigger than Gambia and Mauritania.

And even after the civil war, the issue of true unity in Nigeria has continued to be fundamental issues. Nobody want to make any sacrifice for the betterment of the whole e.g. the Tiv-Jukun in Taraba, Ife-Madakeke, Zangon Kataf and the Hausa-Yoruba in Ife.

It is interesting therefore to state that the problem of Nigeria is with Nigerians. Partly an account of its colonial origin, the Nigerian state has acquired certain characteristics with remarkable impact on the manner in which the Nigerian society has been transformed. For example, it seem detached from, and relatively autonomous of, Nigerian society. But this is only partly so, for virtually all states derive from society but operate more or less over and above it. This relative autonomy has been significant in the ways in which the state has directed capitalist development, especially the process of class formation, conflicts and struggles and accumulation (Jega, 2000: 29).

One other thing according to Otite, O and Albert, I.O (2004) is that the Nigerian society is a social system compounded by contested demands on access to scarce resources especially in the political and economic fields. It is a society defined by natural cleavages and man-made conflicts. Natural membership of ethnic groups and occupational specializations threatened by the expanding interests of other multiple users in the same or adjoining ecological zones, surviving administrative attributes of colonialism, states and their political-administrative activities, religious practices and fanaticism, expected divergence in the identification and perception of the use of limited resources, etc provide grounds for the emergence of conflicts.

According to Dunmoye (1984), ethnicity as it is understood today is so pervasive and complex that it should be analyzed comprehensively, taking into account its historical, political, social and economic bases and ramifications. In a sense, ethnicity is utilized as a tool for cognition of identity or as an instrument of cultural distinctiveness, but more often, it is manipulated and becomes an uncontrollable source of aggressiveness, violence and bloodshed.

2.6. Nexus between Ethnicity and Development

The inability of every ethnic group to have access to socio-political goods has continued to impact negatively on the divided state like Nigeria. But there remains the question of why ethnicity is easily mobilized and manipulated in multi-ethnic political system. Why has ethnic manipulation by the political leaders successful? Does ethnicity in itself represent an obstacle to nation building? It must be noted that ethnic groups depend on the maintenance of boundaries, however, the socio-cultural features that describe the boundary may change. What remain unchanged are the differences between the members of the ethnic group and those considered outsiders (non-members of the group). Adetiba and Rahim, citing Vanhanen, (2004) perceived the ethnic group as an extended kin group. Their members tend to support each other in conflict situation. However, ethnicity can be mobilized in pursuit of perceived ethnic interest such as demand for justice, equity in the distribution of socio-economic and political goods and equal representation in governance.

According to Abidina Coomassie, (1995:265) the Europeans, Portuguese, including Russians, Bosnians, Dutch, Belgians, Helians, Norwegians, Germans belong to the Indo-European group of languages, they have quite different physical and characteristics even in the colour of the skin. They have different eye shapes and eye balls. Some of the physical differences depicts even their type of behavior and attitudes, for example some have blond hair, some black hair, some red hair etc. yet when it comes to the subject of separating one group from a united entity, it is not all that easy because of the long established affinity as a result of wars, migration and other natural, historical circumstances. Both Bosnia and Czechoslovakia have their own experiences that need not to be stated here especially in that they are suffering from such consequences.

By implication, ethnicity does not constitute any threat to the socio-political and economic development of a state. Is the negative employment of ethnicity – negative attitude towards those regarded as outsiders – that constitute the threat to socio-political and economic development. Hence the positive aspect of ethnicity often become significant in multi-ethnic state. The interaction of ethnic groups may either negatively or positively affect the socio-political and economic positions of other groups.

Similarly, ethnic manifestations should be understood in the context of individual and collective socio-political experiences in a given society. In essence, the high visibility of ethnicity is a direct result of cultural and socio-economic conditions in existence over generations. By exploring the presence, extent and context of a group behavior, one can predict or have an insight into what an ethnic group is up to. The prediction by scholars that ethnicity and ethnic attachments will lose their significance in the process of industrialization and utilization seem to have lost its position. This is because there has not been a shift from ethnic attachment in Nigeria. What this means is that ethnic groups today are affirming themselves more and more which has made ethnicity more significant because of the instrumental use of the phenomenon by the political class. The political class in Nigeria has, in a sense cultivated alliances whose primary interest is their socio-political gains through the manipulation by which an appeal is made to the socio-political and economic differences in groups through which the groups are manipulated.

2.7. Implications of Ethnic Manipulation in Nigeria

It is apparent that the more ethnic conflicts we have, the less the development we can achieve. Inter-ethnic conflicts are generally socially, physically and mentally destructive leading to losses in human capital and material properties, visible scars and symbols of violent conflicts of war (Otite, O. (2004).

Having examined the course those ethnic conflicts has taken in Nigeria; it is now our task to evaluate the impact that persistent ethnic chauvinism had had on the development of the state and its citizens. From our perspective, number of issues and aims of political development are identified as significant. The inter-related categories and criteria pertain to legitimacy, unity, order, minority and human rights, as to institutions and various mechanisms of ethnic conflict resolution.

Some of the implications could be analyse thus:

2.8. Political Implication of Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria

The political cost of ethnicism in Nigeria have included the loss of regime legitimacy, the crippling of democracy, infringement of human rights, the fracturing of societies into polarized parts, and chronic instability. Ethnic consciousness has pervaded political institutions – parties, voluntary associations, the electoral system, parliament, the civil service, judiciary, the diplomatic services, and the army and police. Ethnic hate has dominated political life and slowly extended its tentacles to all institutions, dividing one citizen from another.

2.9. Ethnogenesis and the State

Several policies of the state founded a society that was unintegrated and conflicted. Two main insights on the role of the state should be highlighted. First, the conquest of the territory was by forces, this gave to those who rule an order that did not seek consent for its legitimacy or survival. Second, the colonial state deliberately imported a multi-communal population and settled the groups through the manipulation of geographical boundaries and force these groups to settle in a manner that pitched each against the other.

The level of ethnic rivalry in Nigeria has made it impossible for her to produce the right leaders who live above boards, who exude impeccable character, and who are ready to spend themselves for the development of the nation. Ethnic affiliation has not allowed such leaders to emerge. At each elections, the emphasis has always been on where the candidates came from rather than on the right candidates for the election. This explains why the National Assembly is replete with many people who are there neither for the interest of the nation nor their own ethnic groups. They shot themselves up into the National Assembly by weeping ethnic sentiments (Umezina, 2011).

Another effect of ethnicity on the development of Nigeria is the planting of crude corruption and indiscipline. Nobody question the problems associated or leading to capital flight from Nigeria. It is very alarming that foreign investors and international donor agencies have expressed reservations in dealing with Nigerians, including government officials over the last few years. This indiscipline has manifested in the diversion of monies meant for the procurement of fire arms to fight insurgency as well as pension funds into private bank accounts.

All the political parties in Nigeria, before and even after independence were always formed along ethnic line. This has compounded the problem of unity and political socialization.

3. Conclusion and Recommendations

Nigeria is potentially great, it cannot be manifestly great unless Nigerians imbibe and exhibit certain values. Self-discipline, patriotism and demonstrable sense of accommodation of one another. For real development to take place in a multi-ethnic political system like Nigeria, there is need to create an atmosphere of peace and stability which will boost confidence and faith in every individual and group in the government, resulting in the adoption and implementation of inclusive socio-political system as has been done in some Latin American states. What this means is that the political mobilization of ethnicity is a threat to national cohesion and the emergence of corporate identity in a multi-ethnic state. Therefore an inclusive socio-political and developmental system is required.

Our primary concern should behow to sanitize the Nigerian system in a way and manner that ensures the welfare and dignity of Nigerians and their capacity to exercise sufficiently their democratic rights and also exercise a measure of control over their collective destiny. Similarly, there is the need to mobilize Nigerians who are divided along ethnic, cultural, economic

and religious diversities in the task of national development. Some of these factors constitute social actions recommendations for resolution of the national crises.

The integrity and capacity of institutions such as the justice system in Nigeria definitely influence the quality of public service. Thus, a framework for quality service delivery must be comprehensive in nature and in scope. As the African Capacity Building Foundation rightly noted in a (2004) report, the capacity of institutions to effectively deliver on their mandate to the people in a selected countries in Africa is influenced by national integrity, anti-corruption institutions, law enforcement agencies and political as well as effective economic governance.

Within the citizens of Multi-ethnic state, there should be tolerance amongst ethnic groups. Tolerance thrives best through the creation of mutual respect and civility. People must ensure that their ethnic associations are used to promote the cultural distinctiveness and wellbeing of their members within the political system.

Economic policies of the state have a considerable impact on ethnic reactions. Policies that tend to favour one or some ethnic groups to the exclusion of the others should be avoided. All ethnic groups should have equal access to basic needs like public housing, health care delivery, employment opportunities and education.

There should be a definite policy of youth education and development. Since 1966, Nigerian youths have been born into a military culture of violence, coups and counter coups, the use of guns and other weapons of war, and the destruction of human life. Nigerian youths constitute about 70% of the country's population and most of them fighting in the front of violent confrontations, are just under thirty-three years. Even those who are educated have no employment. Hence government should not only educate and train the youth academically, professionally, and technologically, but it should also provide employment facility for them, especially in their own environment.

A progressive or revolutionary regime should cultivate and strengthen an alliance between it and the rural and urban poor majority. It should divert funds and energy from the creation and consolidation of states to the formation of viable associations of poor peasants, workers, petty traders and the underemployed and unemployed.

Over the past five decades, the Nigerian state has evolved from a federal polity characterized by three political strong regions, each controlled by the elite of majority ethnic group – Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo to a highly centralized system in which the so-called federating states have no real autonomous powers and are at the beck and call of a strong centre in the hands of one person and one institution, the president and the presidency. This political transformation was carried out mainly under military rule in a context in which excessive corruption and primordial issues of ethnic, religious and regional political domination has become central element in the country's political culture. Much of what has been published about Nigerian politics revolves around the issue of ethno-regional identities. Ethno regional identities have become problematic in the country because they have been associated with perception of discrimination and the inability of some groups to exercise certain rights.

Finally, we are impelled to quote the opinion of Eskor Toyo, as cited in Ibrahim, (2000:64) that: *The Nigerian nation exists. What it lacks at the moment is really patriotic broad-minded principled, enlightened, humane and honest leadership.*

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