Ethnicity and Identity Crisis: Challenge to National Integration in Nigerian

Osimen, Goddy Uwa*, Balogun Akinyemi & Adenegan Taiwo Samuel

College Of Social And Management Sciences, Achievers University, Owo. Nigeria.

Abstract: *Nigeria's large number of ethnic groups, inequalities among them in size, resource endowment, education and access to state power and resources, her highly developed and factionalized indigenous bourgeoisie, makes her ethnic situation perhaps the most complicated in Africa. The experience has been equally bad and sad, spanning a bloody civil war (1967-1970) and perennial threats to the survival of the country, and one of the 1990 abortive coup d' etat, whose organizers planned to dismember the country. Today in Nigeria, there is serious rivalry among the ethnic groups over issues such as power and resource sharing formula; the status quo is being resisted by the minor ethnic groups especially in the Niger-delta region that produces the bulk of crude oil in the country which Nigeria depends today for most of its foreign exchange. The objective of this paper therefore, to examine and provide answers to the following questions: what is ethnicity? To what extent has ethnic identity affected national integration in Nigeria? What steps has been taken to address the fall out of the various ethnic identity motivated crisis in Nigeria? As a guide to answering the overarching research questions, historical overview of ethnic nationalism in Nigeria and its challenges of national integration were documented and some proactive measures were discussed.*
Key Words: *Ethnicity; Identity Crisis; National Integration; Nigeria*

I.   Introduction

Nigeria as a nation is an aggregation of several nationalities and therefore, from time immemorial, even before the advent of colonial masters, ethnic identity have defined the scope of political intercourse in heterogeneous and pluralistic societies like Nigeria prior to the amalgamation of the entity nationality such as Ibo, Hausa, Yoruba, Nupe, Tiv, Urhobo, Itsekiri, Jukun, etc was on its way to nationhood independent of one another but dependent socio-economic wise, thereby creating a chain of inter-relationships among the people inhabiting Nigeria today (Ademola (2000). However, the amalgamation of these peoples, who are ethnically, religiously, culturally, and idiosyncratically different, coupled with the fact that structurally the emergent regions before the amalgamation were practically of unequal sizes, unequal population, and operating as many systems of government as there were ethnic nationalities created the historical antagonistic centrifugal forces that have always worked to the advantage of the originators of the amalgamation (the colonialist). This is not only to the disadvantage of the amalgamated peoples (Nigerians), but may have well turned out to be at the expense of the corporate existence of the amalgamated peoples.

In addition, the antagonistic centrifugal forces heralded and entrenched monsters that have always consumed Nigerians and their collective desires for unity and development as manifested in the form of ethnicity, tribalism, politics of prebendalism, elitism, greed, antagonism, civil strives, corruption, etc. However, the debate over this phenomenon has regrettably acquired an ethnic exclusion of several ethnic groups in corridors of power.

Lord Lugard; aptly gives this picture when he stated that:

> *"…… on my part I later had a second thought I could not explain how and why I sent such a memo to London. But what is both puzzling and battling was the decision of the thirteen egg heads in the commonwealth office to consent and approve the amalgamation, but be this as it may, beyond a mere human wish."*

To my best, the 1914 amalgamation exercise embarked upon by Lord Lugard of the areas of North and South of the river Niger and Benue was a unification without unity or at best unity in diversity. In the absence of a national ideologically oriented political structure representing defined interests of Nigerians across the ethnic divide, ethnic based political movements have filled the void to challenge the present distribution of power and wealth, demanding a restructuring of political system in such a way that will grant them equitable access to these properties. For example, Afenifere and the Odua people's congress represent the Yoruba ethnic group, while the Ibos are represented by Ohanaze Ndigbo . The Arewa consultative forum has emerged as the defender of northern interests who feels threatened by the challenges to their power and identity, while the south-south people's assembly speaks for the Niger delta states. Even in the Niger delta we have contending ethnic organizations vying for their particular ethnic interest which are not always in confluence with the universal

interests. On both side of the Niger and Benue, competing ethnic political movements and Para military brigades have been established to advance the courses of their respective ethnic interest. Competing ethnic nationalisms, challenge the sovereign of a state. In Britain, for instance, the Scottish question remains a formidable challenge for west minister. Thus, it would be an act of political folly for any statesman or academic to disregard the dynamics of majority – minority ethnic conflicts in their respective states. If there is any time to address the ethnic question in Nigeria again, it has to be now. A nation held hostage to preventable events of tragic nature and at the front burner repeatedly are questions we have refused to face squarely: Who we are, where we belong, what we represents, what does Nigeria mean to us, do we want to remain one, and how. (Charles Dickson, 2013).

II.   Conceptual Clarifications

It is important to understand and have the conception of three key terms, ethnicity, identity crisis and national integration. The concept ethnicity, is relatively new hence, there are different definitions by various scholars. Though, there are general agreement on a few points which germane to understanding the phenomenon. It is agreed that though ethnicity is a derivative of the ethnic group, it only occurs in situations involving more than one ethnic group or identity and to fully understand the meaning of ethnicity, we have to first of all understand what ethnic group entails. This is particularly important because of the systemic differences in the definition of ethnicity across societies Osaghae (1994:44), notes that ethnicity is problematic phenomenon whose character is conflictual rather than consensual. Having enumerated the features of ethnicity on which scholars agreed. He stressed that ethnicity is a conscious behaviour based on ethnic identity or loyalty in a competitive situation involving more than one such identity, which is aimed at furthering interests of the individual and/or group. In political terms, it refers to the ethnic-identity based behaviour which seeks, in a competitive setting, to capture political power at the micro level and state power at the macro level. The definition of identity (crisis) is also an integral part of defining ethnicity.

Therefore, to understand it better in this work, I have to conceptualize the two words "identity and crisis". Elebeke(2010:22) defined identity as 'a process located in the core of the individual and yet also in the core of his communal culture, a process which establishes, in fact, the identity of these two identities. Your identity is who you are. So, an identity crisis is when you either lose track of who you are or do not feel happy with who you are and want to change your life or restructure it. A major transformation in a person's personality and the way they do things may occur if they have an identity crisis.

What is national integration? The word integration means "the bringing of people of different racial or ethnic groups into unrestricted and equal association, as in society or an organization" .Soukhanov (1996:938) If we adopt the above definitions of the word integration, then "national integration" in Nigeria will literally mean the bringing of the different ethnic ,racial, religious, economic, social and political groups into unrestricted and equal association on national issues. In this vain, online legal dictionary " define national integration as the process through which people live within the geographic boundaries of a country forget their differences of race, religion and language and feel the spirit of unity and allegiance to the nation". National integration reduces socio-cultural and differences or inequalities and strengthens national unity and solidarity, which is not imposed by any authority. People share ideas, values and emotional bonds. It is feeling of unity within diversity. National identity is supreme. Cultural unity, constitution, territorial continuity, common economic problems, art, literature, national festivals, national flag, national anthem and national emblem and so on, promotes national integration. Nigeria has more than three hundred ethnic groups with several languages and dialects. There are different social, economic and political groups. These groups exist in order to promote their specific group interests and wellbeing. It is a natural thing to find different social, economic and political groups but, co-existing side by side in a particular geographical location. The strength of such is that what is lacking in one group is supplemented by the other. So, in the end the various groups benefit from mutual co-existence and co-sharing of resources.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory that best captures and explain ethnicity and identity crisis is the classical model theory by Clifford Geertz. The classical model theory which is   titled" integrating revolution" offers an explanation for the difficulties in nation-building in the new states and on the other hand, how the problem can be overcome. Following Geertz distinguishes between "primordial" ties which are affinities based on the "given" of life which seem to flow more than natural than rational choice (blood and kinship ties, tribe, region, religion) and "civil" ties which are affinities based on socio-economic grouping (class, status, part, professional group). Primordial ties by their very nature, (and especially because being territorial defined, they can be based for asserting the right to national self-determination) tend to be highly resistant to civil order. Civil ties, on the other hand, are usually cross-cutting cleavages with crisis-crossing memberships and are therefore, more amenable to civil

order. If the "nation-state" is to survive which presupposes the resolution or a process by which primordial ties will be supplanted by civil ties and ultimately subjected to civil order.

Applied to Nigeria, the crisis of national identity and ethnicity is explained by the prevalence of primordial sentiments. Contrary to the expectations of adherents of the detribalization thesis, increasing modernization has heightened the importance of these sentiments. This is the paradox of African development which exacerbates the crisis of national identity. In the words of Crawford Young, 'in dialectic symbiosis with the apparent triumph of the nation-state model has been the emergence, reinforcement or diversification of social and political expressions of cultural pluralism (group identities founded upon affinities of ethnicity, religion, language, race, region). (Crawford Young, 1979 .59)

Ethnic Nationalism And The Quest For Integration In Nigeria: Historical Perspective

Nationalism, within the African context, simply refers to an act of political awareness or consciousness of the colonized people .However, Nigerian nationalism by the 1940s was already facing regional and ethnic problems to its goal of promoting a united, pan-Nigerian nationalism. Nigerian nationalism and its movements were geographically significant and important in southern Nigeria while a comparable Nigerian nationalist organization did not arrive in northern Nigeria until the 1940s.This regional division in the development and significance of Nigerian nationalism also had political implications for ethnic divide-south Nigeria faced strong ethnic divisions between the Igbo and the Yoruba while northern Nigeria did not have strong internal divisions, this meant northern Nigeria that is demographically dominated by the Hausa was politically stronger due to its greater internal unity than that of southern Nigerian that was internally disunified.

It is no longer plausible to account for the rivalry and disunity among ethnic nationalities in Nigeria strictly in terms of cultural divergence or irrational loyalty to primordial like what it was in India, Indonesia and Latin America. But the political consciousness that might have enhanced a sense of Nigerian nationality and unity, drawing together the disparate ethnic groups within the borders of the former colony, took the form of ethnic nationalism. This emerged with the politicization of the different cultural and ethnic elements and their mobilization for political objectives, which included regional autonomy in a multi-national state, or even the total break u of Nigeria into one or more independent sovereign nation-states. This "accentuated centrifugal tendencies in the country and eventually aborted the birth of a truly independent and unified nation-state" In truth, ethnic nationalism in Nigeria continues to work against the integration of the different ethnic nationalities, with dire consequences on the continued existence of the country. During the colonial era, ethnic nationalism showed itself in an aggressive regionalism with the formation of political parties along ethnic and regional lines. For instance, there was the Northern People's Congress (NPC), formed by the northern educated elites in 1951. The National Council For Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC), formed by national political party, but it was quickly taken over by Nigerians of the Igbo extraction. In the West, there was the Egbe Omo Oduduwa, which quickly metamorphosed into a political party in 1951, by the name of the Action Group, dominated by the Yoruba nation. These regional political parties sought to advance regional and ethnic interests instead of the overall interest of the country. This further exacerbated the ill-will already existing between the different ethnic groups, eventually leading to the Igbo attempt to secede as a separate, sovereign nation, in 1967. Their decision as no doubt assisted by the fact that the territory in which they lived was rich with oil, but the result was civil war, because the politicians representing the other nationalities did not wish to lose Nigeria's most profitable asset, its oil reserves. The Igbo lost that war, but remain unhappy, complaining that they do not benefit sufficiently from the vast profits resulting from the exploitation of the extensive oil wealth lying beneath what they regard as their ancestral lands. The disunity of the major ethnic groups in the country was very much evident in the events that unfolded between 1948 and the attainment of independence in 1960. During this period, the Igbo-Yoruba ethnic rivalry and the North-South majority-minority ethnic group cleavages became unmistakable. For instance, "the Yoruba-Igbo rivalry was finally played out on the floor of the Western House of Assembly where the AG exploited ethnic sentiments and the pitfalls of the electoral college system to edge out Azikwe who had won a seat in Lagos and was widely expected to have been elected into the House of Representatives from that constituency." The North-South hostility reached its peak in the pre-independence era in 1953, when the North refused to go along with the AG-led motion for independence in 1953. The events that followed culminated in the famous bloody Kano riot of 1953, which lasted from May 15 to May 20, 1953.

Events surrounding her independence give credence to the claim that the pursuit of self-government lessens the likelihood of achieving cultural and political unity, or national integration. Ethnic-nationalists succeeded in wrestling independence from the colonial master but failed woefully in integrating the country. The relevant questions to ask are:

Why did the colonial nationalist in Nigeria fail to integrate the different nationalities living within the territory of the country into a cohesive national community? Why did the foremost Nigerian nationalist elites choose to sow the seeds of discord, and not unity in the country, with their choice of ethnic nationalism? Is there any hope of harmonious multi-ethnic integration today? (Adebola Ekanola 2006).

National Integration And Its Challenges In Nigeria

Our ethnic conundrum remains a major obstacle to the existence of a Nigerian state since the transition from colonial to neo-colonial dependence and till present day branded democracy. The conflict spiral generated by ethnicity can be seen at all the critical phases in Nigeria, its democracy, the party system, the electoral process and her economy and resources. The question of who or which ethnic group has stolen more continue to arise, is it the Yoruba, or Ibos, or who has abused power, the Hausa, or Fulani or who has produced president most, which religion has governed most are questions we still see with our so-called class of intelligentsia (Charles Dickson 2013).

The truth is that as much as some form of true federalism or on the extreme confederacy, resource control and largely self determination is desirable, however, the silence of ethnicity in Nigeria can only be properly understood in the context of power struggle among various factions of the ruling class, especially within the context of the lower class' ignorance through manipulation. The empirical fact being that ethnicity cannot be deconstructed because we have a faulty form of state and morally self-centered people in power. The issue of ethnic politics has been on the fore rather than the politicization of ethnic identities, with each passing phase, our ethnicity has been constantly shifting because of a fluid and dynamic nature of changing interest. At a time in Nigeria, it was zoning of presidency by the ruling party (PDP), today it is a perception that a part of the North does not want President Jonathan to succeed. The resurgence of ethnic identity only smacks off the total disillusion which the present 'regime' has brought about the insecurity and uncertainty that pervade the air. This renewed ethnic agitation surely has an implication both positively and otherwise, however, with a deaf and near-sighted government like the present one their solution is to wish the real issues away. I believed that the major issue in ethnic struggle is the phenomenon of politicized ethnicity. As Ake Claude once put it, conflict arising from the construction of ethnicity to conceal exploitation by building solidarity across lines, conflict arise from appeals to ethnic support in the face of varnishing legitimacy, and from the manipulation of ethnicity for obvious political gains which are not ethnic problems, but problems of particular dynamics which are pinned on ethnicity. This is the Nigerian situation.

Deep ethnic fears generated by in-built structures that promote unequal access to power and resources is being exploited. "The Yoruba man has done his own after eight years, he handed over to Hausa man, and an Ijaw man is currently on the throne and in 2015, whose turn to produce president is another dilemma which has been predicted by so many people, countries like USA as a tough period in the political history of Nigeria. Sadly when the ruling class loot, it's not ethnitically done, or on the premise of any region based looting formula. Settlers, landowners and natives are words which have become familiar in our national discuss for no good reason, no clear-cut or precise meaning at the heart of our crisis ridden drive towards attaining nationhood remains the ethno-related disgust we have for each other. Our ethnic idiosyncrasies according to Charles, have simply graduated into psychological mind frame with some sort of superiority complex. We all deduce an all-important cleavage to our immediate ethnic group.

An American quips "I am an American, I live in New York city, and I am of Scottish decent". A Nigerian proudly mouths "I am an Ishan man from Ekpoma in Edo State, Nigeria". The truth is that every nation has its own peculiar ethnic issue but how have we as Nigerians made an effort to manage our diversity has remained a political coinage. It is most painful that, the concept of a Nigerian remains vague and only at best illusionary not necessarily a people. A case of different templates for different ethnic groups, it may be good for Chike, but bad for Bayo, nice for Gyang but bad for Adamu. We have been robbed of meritocracy, excellence and unity, we are still battling favoritism, federal character or quota, zoning, catchments areas, state of origin in a world that is consistently getting smaller through globalization and the need to fight a collective cause despite the hypocrisy and shared interests. The Nigerian leadership is yet to produce a system of governance and functional blueprint that can exploit our differences. Everybody accuses the other of marginalization. The task at hand of nation-building is of null importance, the suitability of the person is very, very secondary. He has to be from the right zone and for spice belong to the 'right' religion.

The intellectual ignorance we still exhibit at this point of our national lives is agonizing; the 'southerners basics in the ignorance of his all-knowing nothingness while so divided. His 'northern' counterpart is left battling a slow and steady disintegration of a once fame unity amongst its subject and collapsing structure contrary to many assumption, our diverse ethnic identity cannot deter national and political integration because, the role and strength of our ethnic identities depends on the same factors that determine the silence of political identities in particular arenas. In other words, we have a situation whereby our ethnic identity in a politically misbalanced system, disorganized structure, and with a today-tomorrow government, we can ourselves promote, compromise and accommodate our differences.

The structuring of the regions at the inception of Nigeria's federalism also created an anomalous situation in which each region had a dominant majority and several oppressed and exploited minorities (Osaghae,1986). This form of ethnic structure and inequality between the dominant majority ethnic group and the exploited minority ethnic groups has resulted to unhealthy situation and fear of domination which has

manifested as threat to nationhood either as agitation for state creation or resource control. This form of ethnic structure in Nigeria is presented below in the map of Nigeria.
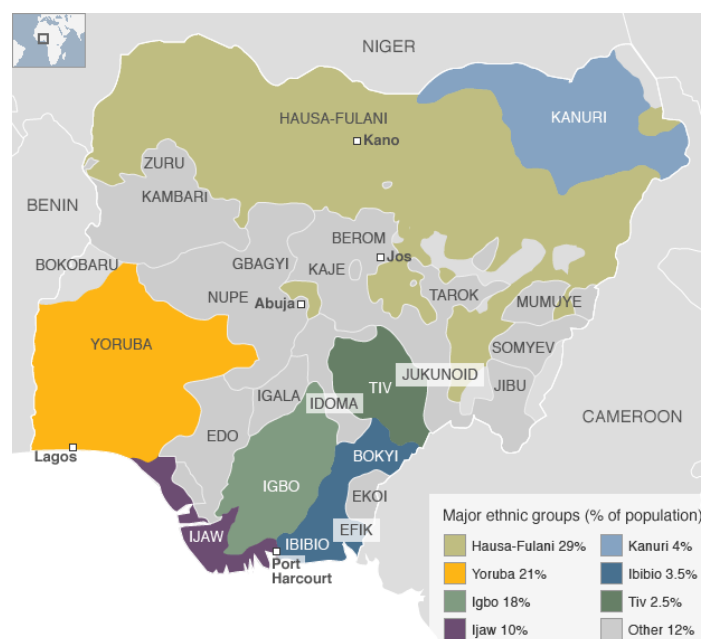
Mustapha, A.R 2005, (ethnic structure and inequality in Nigeria).

Why National Integration?

The nation is a cultural entity that binds people together on the basis of culturally homogenous ties common or related blood, a common language, a common historical tradition, common customs and habits. Posner (2005). A nation is thus an exclusive group, and its essential features include: a homogenous cultural unit; specific and shared identity among members; deep attachment to a specific territory – the earthly home; membership is limited by ties of blood, intermarriage, kinship and common descent; members have a shared understanding of who they are, how they originated and have developed over time, as well as collection belonging (Parekin, cited by Nna, 2005).

It is clear that individuals are the units of integration, and members of a nation are integrated as they share a common identity. Thus, the term national integration is not applicable to a single nation, but involves two or more nations. A state is political entity that is in many cases made of more than one nationality group. Thus, for example Nigeria is made of about 250 ethnic groups (Coleman James, 1986).

The plurality of groups many times throw up centrifugal forces that tend to tear countries apart. This reality imposes the need to integrate the distinct ethnic groups to become a monolithic whole that shares a common identity and destiny. Essentially therefore, national integration is a process that attempts to erode the presence of micro-nationalities in place of a spirit of nationhood (Alapiki 2005). This is achieved through the breakdown of ethnic barriers, the elimination of primordial ethnic loyalties, and the development of a sense of common identity.

Integration can be categorized as a three-phased activity –as a project, process and product. Integration as a project is the desire for unity and the efforts directed towards it. The processes of integration are the practical actions that are taken to transform distinct nationality groups into a single nation. The product of integration deals with the outcome of integration process (Ferreira 2002).Gurr (2000), have also noted that two integration processes that can tackle the centrifugal forces associated with inter-ethnic diversity. First, is the use of state policy to prevent the dominance of one group at the expense of other groups Examples are federal character and quota system. The second is the use of policies and programmes to de-emphasize differences among nationality groups.

According to Richard (2006) while seeking independence from adult expectations and demands, the youth enter into what may be regarded as a form of almost compulsive conformity and loyalty to the peer group. This is often marked by intolerance of deviance to the sub culture; a situation which helps to increase the cultural gap between youths and the older generation, thus further distancing the former from involvement in mainstream social goal. Surely, youth violence is quite often viewed by social scientist as an expression of frustration. The militia activities in the Niger Delta of Nigeria speak volumes on the level of frustration of Nigeria youths in that region.

This is manifested in the prevalence of ethnic militias around the country, who are bent on protecting their individualistic and ethnic interests. My worry is that all these individualistic, religious and ethnic propaganda are done at the detriment of national integration. One group is prepared to eliminate another group so that they may exist without the other. This situation is worrisome. Should the progress of one ethnic, social, political and or economic group be done at the ruins of the others? Will it not be of more service to the development of Nigeria as one nation if all these various groups live together and promote collective interests rather than otherwise? To my mind, national integration in Nigeria after independence was and still is not a choice; rather, it is a necessity (Ajah 2006:9). In other words, the decision which was made by the people of Nigeria prior to independence to become the Federal Republic of Nigeria from Britain required that the various ethnic and religious groups accepted to integrate with one another. This step was necessary for the purposes of co-existence, co-sharing of resources, co-administration and co-development of the nation. As a result the people of Nigeria cannot shy away from coming together to live as a united nation under the rubrics of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. "This is why national integration is a necessary precondition to the unity and development of the country.

Therefore, this paper suggests that a transcendental national perspective should be adopted and put into practice as one of the ways that the people of Nigeria could promote national integration.

III. Conclusion And Recommendation

The greatest challenge facing Nigeria today is the threat to national unity, as centrifugal tensions, resource control and self-determination, ethnicity based identity politics and religious cleavages have enveloped national consciousness. Since independence in 1960, national integration has been a top priority of governments in Nigeria. The National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) Scheme, the Unity Schools, the Federal Character Principle, and State Creation are examples of state policies intended to achieve this goal. (Alapiki, 2005)

It is clear that the outcome of integration policies and programs in Nigeria have fallen far below expectation, as primordial ethnic loyalties are still deep seated. Ethnic particularism is seen as the major cause of this failure (Naanen, 1995), and consequently, suggestions on policy options are targeted to deal with this issue.

Finally, unity occurs when all of the elements of a piece combine to make a balanced, harmonious, complete whole. Unity is another of those hard-to-describe art terms but, when it's present, your eye and brain are pleased to see it. In the process of researching to build up this work, the following have been suggested, that:

There should be constitutional framework that will reflect on the under listed pair of concepts. Our constitutional and developmental strategic choices lie between the following pair of concepts, among which we have to make the right choice, or get the right mix:

- Centre - State relations (power sharing)
- Region (State) - Nation (patriotism)
- Ethnicity - "Nigerianity" (loyalty).
- Settler - Indigene (Citizenship rights).
- Efficiency - Representativeness (Federal Character).
- Home Development - National Development (Residentiality).
- Religion-Secularism (freedom of worship).

All these contentions, which are real and dangerous, can be solved by taking some hard decisions, which I also consider must decisions. First of all, we must recognize the impact of whatever criteria we pick for our constitutional and national development needs. So far, since our Independence we have overwhelmingly depended on the geo-political criterion for attaining unity and integration or solving consequential problems arising there from. Look at the unending separations that had gone on in the name of allaying fears of domination by this or that, or attaining even development by "bringing Government closer to the people". Today, even if we want to break up, we don't know with whom to break-up!

And the fission has not ended; and will never end, as long as each fission always creates new estates for new landlords! The geo-political orientation stays, and cannot be discarded, if only because only within the institutional framework of geographical space - States, Local Government Areas; etc, people live and development takes place. But it must be doused with socio-economic criteria, because development is for people; not for mountains, hills and dales. In any case, if you hold the geo-political criteria - States, Local Government Areas as super most, you would always get those who will find it easier to manipulate them than human aggregations. The geo-political units must remain mere administrative units.

We may then retain the geo-political criterion for what it is worth, but must turn our dependence to the socio-economic criteria - people and their health and wealth. We must push our revenue sharing formula to support people even as the geo-political units remain as the theatres of operation. In this regard, one of the most important, urgent and intractable problem we must solve is that hideous settler - indigene confrontation. Also in

this regard, the constant refrain by governmental leaders telling us that a Nigerian is free to live anywhere he likes, earn wealth, build properties, is only good as rhetoric. The Constitution itself had given it validity. But it is the one problem that had deepened our disunity.

It created the problem of dual-indigeneity, which people seem to enjoy and operate, much to the annoyance and inevitable resistance of the host communities. Our Constitution therefore must be amended to give single indigeneity of anywhere a Nigerian chooses to stay, giving him indigeneity rights only in the state where he is staying. Hence, only his State of residence where he is living and earning is his State of origin. This must be made justiciable, and my long-lost friend, Chairman of the National Population Commission Sunday D. Makama must be made to recast his Census Registration Form, to effectively reflect this innovation. For the avoidance of doubt, what is meant here is that the State of origin concept must be abrogated and frozen immediately, and everybody automatically becomes the indigene of the State he is now staying and earning his livelihood. No more to-ing and fro-ing between the two poles; no more ferrying of personal goods between the two poles; no more marriage between "home-boy" and "home-girl", as deliberate policy of rooting oneself in his so-called "State of Origin". Loyalty must be to where you are staying and prospering; not to where you belong by birth.

The National Youth Service Corps Scheme, which had failed to serve its purpose because of lacking such a focus must now be reoriented, and State Governments must retain at least 10% of those serving in their respective State every year; to remain in the State of their service, not just at the mercy of fate but mandatorily absorbed into the State Civil Service and given all the protection and inducement that could make them accept the indignity of the state of their service, in replacement of that of their so-called State of origin. Federal Civil Servants, other than the men of the armed and security services, can be given the option of permanently staying in the station of final service, or return to the State of their origin. Members of the armed and other security services can also be given this option.

All these are necessary because if we say "unity" and "integration", it is not geographic spaces that unite and integrate. It is people that unite and integrate. Ibadan will not come and integrate with Kano. Lagos will never come and integrate with Gwoza, though substantial Hausas and Gwozas are living in both towns and are making a good life of it. So, if you do not force or induce them, they will never integrate. Man being what he is, selfish and greedy; he will always exploit both situations to his maximum benefit. And we will remain disunited and un-integrated for the next forty-five (45) years. The freedoms enshrined in our Constitution are worthy, but for the moment are they not at the expense of our unity and integration?

This is also another hard but must choice we have to make. We have to transfer our loyalty to our adopted State from the State of birth. To facilitate this State, Local Government Area and township must be enabled to develop its local resources and attract in-migrants as social integration index will also attract Federal Allocation. Cynics will say this is crazy and childish. But the sane and matured one we are using had not worked; and will never work!

What remains is now to provide the facilitations that will be used to make this proposal work. Since every Nigerian will now be an indigene of where he is staying and not where he was born, there will be no animosity over which part of Nigeria is getting development attention. All parts of Nigeria will, and must get equal attention. That is what we call even development; even development measured in human term. The question is how we get this "even development".

Well, the Federal Government must take the most preponderant responsibility for it. All States must contribute to a national blue print. To effect this and to ensure implementation, the State Governors; not Ministers, will form the Executive Council of the Federation. For day-to-day policy implementation and supervision, what now passes as Federal Executive Council can be retained as Secretaries of their respective Ministries Funding is assured by the provision of Section 162 sub.2 of the Constitution but the Federation share can even be increased as the centre will now assume responsibility for even development, the formulation and implementation of which the President and the State Governors sit together on one-among equals basis. This is not abrogating Federalism because State Governors will still retain responsibility for the management of their States.

This may also be seen as a crazy and unworkable proposal. But it does not seem crazier than the present situation where never more than 50% of the Federal Budget ever gets implemented even as the President puts federal money and development where he wants. This proposal will also douse the "resource control" fire that keeps on raging, and the danger of federating geo-political units, which are always contending with each other for "fair share" of the "Federal Cake", which at the end of the day, never seems to be fair to any of the States.

As responsibility for even development is now squarely placed on the shoulders of the Federal Government (the centre), jointly formulated for implementation with the State Governments and Local Governments, all provisions of the existing Revenue Allocation Formula may stay. Additional socio-economic indices such as literacy rate, population, poverty rate, social integration rate, and United Nations Human

Development indices rate, must be included to enhance the principle of even development at the socio-economic level, and to centre people, rather than regions, as focus of consideration.

The Constitution should be amended as, and where should be so that the heat can be taken out of the present geo-political confrontations, which solved no problem, but kept on raging ever since the break up of the former regions in 1967 to allay the fear of "Northern Dominion"! Now, the 'monolithic North" is no more, but the demand for more States, Local Governments, etc keep on coming, which means our long-standing approaches never solved any problems, and we must try other ones, no matter how hard and crazy they are!

Government should device an equitable and not equal means of distribution of resources among the different groups. The principle of equity emphasizes that a group is given what it needs but the principles of equality emphasizes that each group be given the same amount, Thus if a small group is given the same as large group wastage is therefore encouraged, which also hampers development in Nigeria

The method of imparting to the Nigerian citizenry the spirit of patriotism should be revisited. Nigerians should be fully acquainted with the ethics of patriotism. They should be made to take the nation first before any sectional interest.

Media houses and the press should always be fair in their reports, especially when it involves crisis of ethnic and religious in nature.

Government at all levels must ensure the demoralization of the national economy to accommodate all categories of religious, cultural, ethnic and/or linguistics groups of various constituencies.

Minorities and other oppressed groups should strive and promote their specific interests through practical involvement in national and grassroots organization within the limits of democratic principles.

Formation of associations of purely tribal in nature should be out rightly discouraged.

There should be total war against the debilitating problems of ignorance, poverty and disease, therefore promoting the well being of the individuals that make up the nation.

There should also be a deliberate program of political and social reorientation of the entire citizenry. Such political and social orientation will go a long way in changing the negative stereotypes and negative values that have characterized the Nigerian peoples.

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