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Ethnicity, Cultural Diversity and Security Challenges in Nigeria: Implications for National Development.

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ABSTRACT :

One of the unresolved issues in the Nigeria State is the challenges of ethnicity and identity based conflicts which diversity for socio-economic development. Thisstudy interrogates the content and context of Ethnicity, cultural diversity and challenges of insecurity on national development in Nigeria. This paper adopts relative deprivation and theory to explain the sustained armed conflict in the Nigeria state. This article relied mainly on secondary data which comprises of documents, monographs, manuscripts, books and journals as well as relevant materials on the subject. The central argument is that the unequal distributions of power and resources among groups that are also divided by race, religion or language, in Nigeria serves has a breeding ground for conflict. Also, it was revealed that Nigeria leaders lack the capacity to provide more peaceful means of resolving conflict, especially as most state have failed to establish an appropriate legal systems and frameworks for peaceful resolution of conflicts. The paper recommended that addressing these multifaceted threats requires a comprehensive approach encompassing not only military action, but also the need for dialogue, reconciliation, socio-economic development, government, government, and inclusive nation building in Nigeria.

Keywords: Ethnicity, Cultural Diversity, Insecurity and National Development

Introduction

Nigeria as a country is blessed with abundant natural and human resource; Nigeria is far less developed today than where it was at the time of political independence in 1960. By lack of development, we mean Nigeria has a very fragile political entity characterized by weak infrastructural base, insecurity, poor communication network, extreme and pervasive poverty, poor access to health facilities, low per capital income and high rate of unemployment, and corruption in every sector. One of the cogs on the wheel of Nigerian development trajectory is an ethnicity identity crisis.(Ogunmola and Sheu ,2018).

The Nigeria State which was born and nurtured by the British colonial rule through the amalgamation of 1914 was not properly groomed by its parents. The implication of this is obvious, peoples of multiple-racial origin, diverse and wide cultural backgrounds were loomed together while people speaking different languages, and at different social and political development were welded into a nation; Thus, the natural affinity that hither to exist between people was effectively replaced by artificial geographical divisions imposed upon them by their colonial administrators thereby leading to lose of identity. The tribal identities became more pronounced as social boundaries of the major language groups became transformed as people in each ethnic group or tribe became more conscious of their historical, cultural, social and economic uniqueness (Omolara,2008). The above scenario resorted to ethnic rivalry, competition unnecessary suspicion among the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria. In the past, ethnic crises and ethno-religious violentwas at the low ebb in Nigeria, but as the social problems have worsened in the country with no help from government so has religious. This has caused many people to be easily converted to extremist movements. The sufferings of people are expressed through ethno-religious violence and hostility. One can argue on the above premise, that gross inequality in the society can be an incentive to violent activities and support. Ethnic conflict affects the lives of huge number of people and properties destroyed around the world affected the economies and thus the livelihood of millions of people globally.

This paper argues that political and economic deprivation occasioned by leadership incapacity to manage the diversity had promoted the primordial ethnic identity crisis in Nigeria. Also, the paper contends that primordial ethnic identity had created malicious ethnic structure which has brought about underdevelopment through consistent contending ethnic strive in the Nigeria State till date. The paper suggested the key ideas of the prevailing explanations, tracing the root of the problem to the colonial period, leadership ideology and behavior and concludes that without national integration, the social-economic, political and cultural development of the country and its citizens will remain a pipe dream.

Conceptual Clarification

Ethnicity

Ethnicity has literally defined the path ways of the structures, ideologies and the philosophy's of the actions of the players of politics, military or civilians admirations alike (Abiodun and Adenuga, 2018)). The development of Nigerian federalism as a dynamic process can best be understood with reference to the ethnic configuration in Nigeria. Olanrewaju (2011) traced the origin of ethnic pluralism in Nigeria to colonialism. He stated that the indigenous nationalities that hither to existed that were brought together under new state of colonialism were not integrated horizontally with one another, but were vertically divided and strung to the new national capital and foreign metropolis for political, administrative and economic purposes.

Nnoli (1978) stated that the colonial urban settings constitute the cradle of ethnicity in Nigeria. He noted that the concept of ethnicity which has been prevalent in contemporary Nigeria does not have its equivalent in the various Nigerian languages among the pre-colonial politics. He pointed out that it was colonial urban setting that's what its referred to today as ethnic groups first acquired a common consciousness.

However, various accounts of the numbers of ethnic groups in Nigeria have been given by many scholars. Awolowo (1968) gave a figure of 51 nations. Murdock (1975) put his own as 62. Gandonu (1978) gave 161 figures of ethnic group. While Hoffman (1974) enumerated Nigerian languages and by this language criterion, indicated that there are about 400 ethnic linguistic groupings in Nigeria. Olanrewaju (2011) gave his own figure to be 389, meanwhile the dominant ethnic group in Nigeria remain the Hausas/Fulani, Yoruba and the Igbos. These three groups have been dominating the political landscape of the country ever since independence in such a way that allegiance to ethnic group comes first before that of the Nigerian state. The character of the Nigerian federalism tends to stimulate a template of crises and violence. It is a phenomenon embedded in its historical emergence. The creation of regions gave rise to tribal conflict when the colonial government established social amenities like roads, railways, postal services and urban centers. This led to competition among the people and inter-human hostility because their resources were limited. However, with the return of democracy in 1999, every tribe wanted to satisfy the narrow economic and social needs of their people which eventually gave birth to socio-political group along the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria. (Ohanaze Uudigbo for the Igbos South/East, Arewa Consultative Forum for the Hausa/Fulani North, and Oodua Peoples' Congress for the Yoruba South/West are socio-cultural group later turned to Ethnic Militant Group. The proliferation of ethnic group and ethnic nationalities, Nigeria experience has been that of diverse elements in the society constantly on edges, such that at a slightest provocation always degenerated to violence conflict.

Cultural Diversity

The concept of diversity is derived from the word "DIVERSE" which refers to many, differences, variety, heterogeneous, various and not the same. So, diversity means quality of being diverse, difference or unlikeness. The Merriam Webster online dictionary describes it as consisting of many different elements. In this chapter, diversity is conceptualized in terms of society that is characterized by pluralism. Edewor and Aluko (2003) assert what diversity is often expressed in the variation of race, genders, life styles, ages, religions, sexual preferences, geographical location, ethnic/tribal affiliations that exist in a state.

Culture on the other hand is conceptualized has the way of life, set of believes, attitude, emotions and values of a society or state that are transmitted from generation to generation. Therefore, the term in "cultural diversity" is the variations in the life styles, believes, attitude, values of a group of people living in a particular state. Nigerian as a nation has many ethnic group with various cultural differences. This includes; language, dressing, religion, food, occupation (e.g arts and crafts) greetings, shelter (i.e housing) and behavioral pattern.

- a) Language: This is one of the most remarkable differences which distinguish one culture from the other in Nigeria. Omotoso (2017) assert, there are more than 260 ethnic groups and over 500 indigenous languages in the country.
- b) Religion: Aside from the two major religions, Christianity and Islam, there are various traditional religious beliefs in Nigeria.
- c) Food: The food common to the southern part of Nigeria are tubers, such as cassava(fufu), Yam(pounded yam), while the northern eat food made from grains.
- d) Dressing: The Igbo man wears caftan and ties a wrapper, while the woman ties wrapper with a blouse. The Hausa man wears a babariga, while the woman wear clothes that often cover the whole body.
- e) Greetings: The various ethnic groups in Nigeria have their various ways of greetings. Hausa man squats while the females kneel down. The Yoruba man prostrates before elders while the female kneels down.
- f) Shelter: Climatic conditions of various zones reveal the differences in culture. A Fulani man lives in hut made with grasses. A Yoruba man will live in a brick house.
- g) Behavioral pattern: The behavioral pattern also varies from one culture to another. What is a taboo in one culture may not be a taboo in another culture.
- h) Occupations: There are differences in major occupations, for instance, those in the South engages in wood carving, the Northerners engage in leather works.

Insecurity

Survival is said to be the first priority for man, and this has come to him as the firstlaw of nature. In other to do justice to the meaning of the concept to insecurity, the place to begin is to seek to understand the concept of security. The search for a better understanding of security as a concept is easily frustrated by the absence of an agreed general definition. This is the case with most social phenomena because they are often approached from different perspective. Meanwhile, the concept of security has always been associated with the safety and survival of the state and its citizens from harm or destructions. This point is adequately demonstrated by Buzan (2006) when he lines up a number of scholars with their definitions of security. For Instance, Ozo (2007) defines security as "The relative freedom of harmful threats". Arnold Wolfers (2009) sees security in an objective sense, measures the absence of threats to acquired values; ina subjective sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked. Walter Lippmann (2014) sees it, "A nation is secured to the extent that is not in danger of having to sacrifice core values if wishes to avoid war and disable, if challenged, to maintain them by victory in such a war". These conceptions which are within the realist school of international relations generally believed that the state is the only institution which is vested with the responsibility and (power) to ensure the safety of its territory and its people. William (2008) equally submit that security most commonly associated with the alleviation of threats to cherish values, especially those threats which threatens the survival of a particular reference object. In line with the above Ogaba asserts that:

Security has to do with freedom from danger or threats to a Nation's ability to protect and develop its self, promotes it's cherish values and legitimate interest and enhance the wellbeing of its people. Thus, internal security could be seen as the freedom from all the absence of those tendencies, which could undermine internal cohesion, and the corporate existence of a country and its ability to maintain its vital institutions for the promotion of its core values and social-political and economic objectives, as well as meeting the legitimate aspirations of the people (Ogaba 2010: 35-36).

It could therefore be inferred that security, be it classical, state-centric and traditionalist or non-traditionalist is all about protection of assets including living and non-living resources against loss or damage. Therefore, the concept of insecurity means lack of security; uncertainty; a state of being subject to danger, threats and vulnerability. Insecurity is the condition of being threatened especially physically, psychologically, emotionally, or financially.

Development

Various arguments have been put in place to explain the concept of development. Dulfield (1934) sited in Bamidele (2020) conceives it as a normative process of becoming a series of inter-connecting movement leading from poverty and vulnerability to security and well-being. In the writing of Anderson and Woodrow, Development is defined as a process through which people's physical material; social/organizational; motivational/attitudinal vulnerabilities are reduced and capacities are increased (Anderson and Woodrow; 1988).

To Seers in Todard and Smith (2009:15), the questions to ask about a countries 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 level, 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 capital doubled. Todard and Smith (2009) conceive of development "as a multi-dimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular attitude, and national institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and the eradication of poverty". It entails a general improvement in the quality of life and the ability of the people to enjoy unhindered freedom. Related to the above, Abiodun and Adenuga (2018) quoting Rodney (1972) describes it as "the ability of a society to cater for the material and social well-being of his people."

Following from the above, specifically, the concept of development depicts general improvement in human condition. It is an attack on the chief evils confronting the modern world today; malnutrition, illiteracy, unemployment, diseases, slums, inequality and insecurity which are the common challenges facing the Nigerians societies till date.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework adopted for this research is the Relative Deprivation Theory; the theory of relative deprivation is one of the most popular behavioural explanatory frameworks utilized in the study of violence. This theory was propounded by the following scholars: Ted Gurr-1970, John Dullard-1939, Leonard Berkowitz-1962, James Davies-1972 etc.

However, by way of definition, Gurr cited in Bamidele and Oluwasanmi (2018) conceptualized deprivation as a perceived discrepancy between, value expectation and their value capability. Value expectations are the goods and condition of life which people believe they are rightfully entitled to. Value capabilities are the goods and conditions of life they are capable of attaining and maintaining, given the social means available to them. This theory was propounded as part of part of efforts to bring synergy between socio-political and economic inequalities in the society to rebellions and insurrections. As individual and group-based theory of aggression, the relative deprivation theory argues that when expectation outstrips achievement regardless of the absolute levels of economic consumption or the provision of the political rights, frustrated is generated. In other words, it is the degree to which the group/individual feels deprived and its related anger and frustrations as mentioned above. People normally result to irrational behaviour and violence if they feel an intense of relative deprivation. Emphasis is on intensity and scope. In other words, if social

want formation exceeds social want satisfaction, then the consequences is social frustration which may lead to violence.

Thus, the collective frustration turns to anger and violence (Dollard et al, 1939; Davies, 1962; Feierabend and Feierabend, 1966). From the foregoing, this theory assists us to trace the casual factor of divining economic development in Nigeria and unstable security situation on the nation. The implication of Relative Deprivation Theory on security challenges and economy of the Nigerian state is that the tenets of social contract is most likely to be undermined, thereby paving way for military incursion into Nigerian Politics and continuous internal insurrection by Armed youths across the country distorted any meaningful efforts by the government in Nigeria. According to Isine (2008) cited in Evragboso (2010):

..... Security is viewed as a dynamic phenomenon as well as a social Problem in the county. It is the duty of the government to ensure the security of lives and property of its citizen.... Youth restiveness, agitation, protests and demonstrations these days are very violent and leads to sabotage of natal government installations like NNDC pipelines, NITEL cables and NEPA wires, thus, posing great threats to the economic life-wire of the state.

Consequences upon this, the improvement of the security apparatus of the Nigerian state as well as commitment of the government to address the core caucus of insecurity, ate likely panacea to the survival of sustainable economic development of the nation.

Insecurity in Nigeria and Challenges of National Development

Security is the pillar upon which every meaningful development could be achieved and sustained. Nigeria as a nation state has witnessed unprecedented series of agitations in the forms of ethnic violence, kidnapping and abduction, armed robberies, bombing, and carnages of all forms and magnitude in the past decade. National security is a premise for national economic growth and development of nations. This is because peaceful nations attract foreign investors while the domestic investors freely operate the economy with little or no tensions and apprehensions.

Lately, Nigeria has been enmeshed in a firebox of insecurity leading to scores of deaths of innocent civilians, foreigners, some members of the nation's security personnel, elected officials and many government workers. Nigeria has had its share of insecurity over the last two decades. According to Global Terrorism Index (GTI), Nigeria has two of the five deadliest terrorist groups in the world, namely; Boko Haram and Fulani extremists. Nigeria was rated the 3rd worst country with insecurity in the world in 2020 by the Global Terrorism Index (GTI), behind Afghanistan and Iraq. These ratings have been of significant concern to security experts and the government.

Major security threat in Nigeriaare obvious, with the coming to the scene by Boko Haram in 2002, the insecurity situation in Nigeria seemed to have assumed higher and more complex dimensions. Apart from the frequency and intensity of deadly attacks and carnages, insecurity situation in Nigeria cuts across cities, towns and villages that there is hardly anywhere to run to for cover. Lives and properties are not safe for urban dwellers as well as for the rural dwellers. People live in apprehension almost every day. Boko Haram launches deadly raids, in some cases hoisting its flag and imposing extremist rule on local people. It levies taxes on farms and the sale of agricultural products. (The Nation; July, 2015).

More also, there have been violent disputes between nomadic animal herders and farmers in Nigeria for many years. But disagreements over the use of land and water, as well as grazing routes, have been exacerbated by climate change and the spread of the Sahara Desert, as herders move further south looking for pasture. Thousands have been killed in clashes over limited resources. Benue State, in the center of the country, has recorded the deadliest attacks. Recently, seven people were killed when gunmen opened fire on a camp for those fleeing the conflict. (Daily Trust; May,2022).

Another scariest threat to families in Nigeria is banditry and kidnapping. The frequent kidnapping of school children from their classrooms and boarding house in the North attest to the fact that nowhere is safe in the country.Some of the kidnappers are commonly referred to as "bandits". These criminals raid villages, kidnap civilians and burn down houses. Attacks by bandits have forced thousands of people to flee their homes and seek shelter in other parts of the country calls for serious concern to all and sundry.The north-west is the epicenter of these attacks. In Zamfara state alone, over 7,000 people have been killed since 2012 and the attacks are still going on. Hundreds of schools were closed following abductions at schools in Zamfara and Niger state, where children as young as three years old were seized and demanding a ransom.(The Leadership; August, 2019).

The insecurity challenge has assumed formidable dimensions forcing the country's political and economic managers and, indeed the entire nation, to rue the loss of their loved ones, investments and absence of safety in most parts of the country. Recent evidences show that terrorism is becoming frequent in Nigeria, ranging from incessant Boko Haram and its offshoot, the Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP) insurgency in the North East; Independent People of Biafra (IPOB) activities in the South-East states, kidnapping and vandalization of oil pipes in the South-South, nomadic cattle herders and farmers clashes in the Middle Belt, banditry and a thriving mass abduction-for-ransom business in the North-West and North-central states among others. (The Guardian, 14th July, 2020)

The number of violent crimes such as kidnappings, ritual killings, carjacking, suicide bombings, religious killings, politically-motivated killing and violence, ethnic clashes, armed banditry and others has increasingly become very worrisome. Government has tried everything from "force-for-force" to carrot-and-stick approach to diplomacy but the problem seems to rise with greater monstrosity like the proverbial phoenix. There has also been strong advocacy for a multi-stakeholder intervention to the insecurity question rather than lean on military options alone, but the problem has defied the present medication it is getting. Despite these efforts by the Government, the level of insecurity in the country is still high, signifying a worsened state of insecurity in the country. With the lingering security challenges and the difficulty of the security apparatus of the government to respond promptly to attacks on citizenry being the front burner to guarantee safety and security to lives and properties of the citizenry in the country, the question that borders everyone in Nigeria today is "can there be assurance of security?" can people still sleep with their two eyes closed? Is the security of lives and properties achievable? It is evident that government at all levels is confronting the situation head-on and dealing with it decisively even though more effort has to be put in place. The surge of insecurity in Nigeria is linked with the staggering poverty across the country.

Economic Effects

The economic costs of insecurity are enormous. People who joined the fighting forces, who are killed or flee, can no longer work productively; schools, power stations, and roads that are destroyed reduced the productive capacity of the economy. Further, displacement of people reduces the production of exports, thereby reducing foreign exchange earnings, import potentials and consequently further constraining output, leading to a decline in employment and earnings.

Terrorist activity also stifles growth by increasing the cost of doing business through higher wages, higher insurance premiums and increased security expenditures. These higher costs result in lower profits and, as a result, a lower return on investment. Terrorist attacks can also devastate infrastructure, causing business disruptions (Brodeur 2018). However, the intensity of the consequences of terrorist events on the economy may be varied across countries based on the economic structure.

Food Insecurity

This has been attributed to the challenges of insecurity in Nigeria, where people's significant sources of economic livelihood have significantly been affected by terrorism, banditry, and farmers/herders' frequent clashes. The inability of farmers to feel safe going to their farms and the forests being occupied by criminal elements have further affected food security and food prices in Nigeria. Insecurity in Nigeria has disrupted the supply chain as road transport that is regularly used to move goods and services from the Northern to the Southern part has worsened over the fear of kidnapping and diverting goods.

Low Direct Foreign Investment

Nigeria has been ravaged by terrorist activities which have made the country unsafe for Nigerians and foreign investors. The disturbing level of insecurity has rendered the economy unappealing to local and foreign investors, who have become apprehensive of investing and putting their hardearned resources in profitable investment in Nigeria (Chuku, 2019). The Nigerian business environment has been concerned about investment safety in Nigeria as some foreign investors are migrating to other safer neighbouring countries for investment. The potential in the tourism industry has equally been affected by safety concerns for tourists. There are high incidences of rural-urban migration, which has increased congestion in urban cities, accompanied by high levels of youth unemployment, especially in urban areas.

Increase in the number of Internally Displaced Persons

The security challenges have affected chiefly women and children in Nigeria. There are increasing cases of health crises, hunger, and starvation. Women and girls have been exposed to rape, forced marriages, lack of education, lack of equal economic opportunities, and other abuses even in camps for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) where they seek refuge. The death of able and productive men over insecurity has caused an unbalanced marriage market for women at marriageable age with fewer men at their disposal. Further, displacement of people reduces the production of exports, thereby reducing foreign exchange earnings, import potentials and consequently further constraining output, leading to a decline in employment and earningsThere are tendencies of a crisis economy, a situation where people take undue advantage of the security situation in a place to their economic benefit and enrichment.

Low Level of School Enrollment

The security attacks in different parts of Nigeria, especially the kidnap of school children in the North-West, North-Central, and North-East, have increased the number of out-of-school children. This statistics has over 10 million children out of school, the highest in the world according to United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). These figures were projected to worsen by the World Bank in 2022. According to the World Bank, Nigeria has been the world's poverty capital since 2016 (World Bank Report).

About 2,000 students have been abducted from their schools since December 2020, many only released after thousands of dollars are paid as ransom. The number of school children unable to go back to school or continue with their education, loss of people's source of income, health crisis, migration induced by insecurity, hunger, starvation, unemployment, and gender-based violence present a considerable challenge to this present administration. Government at state and local levels must complement and collaborate with relevant stakeholders to identify sustainable

but practical solutions to these issues. Nigeria's ability to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 is also a concern to foreign development institutions in Nigeria.

Increases Government Expenditure on Defense

The budget allocation to secure the country by the Nigeria government is enormous. Despite government's burgeoning recurrent expenditure on internal security both at the National and State levels, individuals in their various rights, work places and houses spend heavily to provide security for their personal lives and properties. Despite these efforts, the menace keeps exacerbating.

Conclusion and Recommendations

One of the primary purposes of a States is to provide security and public goods to the citizens living within the states. Insecurity has reached frightening proportions in Nigeria, to the extent that nowhere is safe. On daily basis, lives are lost, the population is depleted, businesses are paralyzed, investments are plummeting, multinational corporations are shutting down and relocating to the neighboring country, unemployment is on the high side, and the citizens are displaced and becoming refugee in their father's land. Clearly, this represents a severe threat to Nigeria's government and economic growth. The study revealed that high unemployment rate; domestic capital formation, foreign direct investment, government security and education spending are negatively affected by the growing level of insecurity and, thus, retarded the national growth. Also, Nigeria for so long has a large neglected youthful population, dilapidated infrastructures and social services. Another major issue is lack of effective leadership, solid institutions, and embellished political irresponsibility which has been the major problem in Nigeria since independence. Also, part of the problem is the political and economic deprivation occasioned by leadership incapacity to manage the diversity had promoted the primordial ethnic identity crisis in Nigeria. Good governance, provision of a safe and secured environment for human capital development, improved access to social and economic services is the starting point to inclusive growth of any economy

In order to ameliorate the incidence of crime, the federal government should embarked on the criminalization of terrorism by passing the Anti-Terrorism Bill, fundamental surveillance as well as investigation of criminal related offenses, heightening of physical security measures around the country aimed at deterring or disrupting potential attacks, strengthening of security agencies through the provision of security facilities and the development and broadcast of security tips in mass media. Also, there should be religious, ethnic and political tolerance on the side of the leadership and the citizenship at all levels of government.Furthermore, education, tolerance, dialogue and reconciliation among others should serve as tools with which to douse the social violence that emerges from any part of the country. Moreover, government should formulate a formidable youth policy towards reducing the menace of youth unemployment to thereby reducing poverty among the teaming population of youth in Nigeria.

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