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### **Aim & Scope of the Journal**

The Journal of African And Global Issues Quarterly (JAGIQ) would re-engage the multiple lingering challenges within the African discourse with a view to adopting most appropriate means of addressing Africa's growing challenges within regional and global contexts. Hence, the journal would achieve these goals by providing a robust platform for intellectual engagement and stimulation among scholars, academicians, diplomats, security experts, administrators, and even policy makers.

The Journal of African And Global Issues Quarterly (JAGIQ) is a double-blind review and open access journal with a focus on publishing original research articles, scientific and theoretical research, conceptual and empirical works, case studies, comparative studies, field work reports and review which touches around the thematic field of core African emerging issues within the context of global interaction. The JAGIQ would encourage submission of articles across the sub discipline of Political Science, International Relations, Security Studies, Economics, Geography, History and Diplomatic Studies, Sociology, Psychology, Peace and Conflict Studies, and History.

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Manuscript submission would be on a rolling basis, and peer reviewed articles reflecting tabular forms of responses to reviewer comments and resubmitted to JAGIQ would be published frequently three times a year (April, August and December). The journal will be abstracted and indexed in well refereed and most authoritative academic databases such as EBSCO, ProQuest and Sabinet and accredited by IBSS and Scopus.

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### **Editorial Note**

Since the end of the Cold War, many African countries have been enmeshed in a series of protracted conflict, accounting for internally displaced persons, refugee and migration crisis as well as the death of thousands of civilians. Acknowledging that these obstinate conflicts impede meaningful advancement, African countries via the African Union and in conjunction with international organizations have persistently fashioned out various peace frameworks with a view to nipping these conflicts in the bud. Nonetheless, majority of Africa countries have witnessed a relapse into deadly conflict with manifestations in the increasing trends of terrorism, organized violence, ethnic and religious crisis, secession and even political violence. Regardless, the African continent continues to dominate discourse across the globe with no end in sight.

Consequently, a series of actors have pointed out that such continuous relevance further demonstrates the changing nature of increasing reality associated with global politics, some others have dismissed such position. While these varying positions remain prevalent, existing academic journals on the subject matter have further worsen the situation due to their inability to provide the required attention these emerging issues requires. This first volume presents articles that captured the changing dynamics and problems of democracy, governance and conflict-based relations in a number of African states, with special focus on the Lake Chad region. It outlined the ways in which these challenges that have caused massive poverty could be managed through food security, business education, diplomacy, peacebuilding and good governance. You are therefore encouraged to relax and go through the content of this issue.

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**THE CHALLENGES OF DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION IN  
AFRICA: NIGERIA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC EXPERIENCE**

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**Abstract**

Nigeria pride herself as one of the giants in the continents of Africa owing to its population, landscape and natural resources endowment. Nigeria, like most Africa countries gained her independence from the Britain in the late 1950s during the cold war that reshaped global politics and enthroned democracy as the most acceptable form of government in the world. Nigeria's journey into nationhood has been characterized by several events ranging from military intervention to civil war, ethno-religious conflicts, corruption, political instability, insecurity and economic crisis among others. Nigeria's return to democratic rule in 1999 after about three decades of military rule raised the hope of its citizens that constitutionalism, rule of law and credible democratic process will be restored; almost two decades after, six successful democratic transitions and general elections, the country is still struggling to consolidate its democratic process. Elections have been hailed as the hallmark of democracy, but the challenge of conducting free and credible elections that will be acceptable by all parties has being a challenge in Nigeria's fourth republic. The story is not different in most African countries, for example, Kenya's Presidential elections among others.

This paper takes an historical analysis into Nigeria's post-independence political experience, it empirically reviewed it trends since her return to democracy in 1999, identified the challenges of democratic consolidation in the country and finally, proffer solutions that will strengthen and enthrone democracy in the country and the continent at large. The paper is qualitative in nature; it relied on the author's compilations and secondary sources of data. Data collected were analyzed using content analysis method.

**Key words:** Democracy, consolidation, fourth republic, election and corruption.

## **Introduction**

Nigeria's return to democratic rule on 29 May, 1999 after almost three decades of military rule raised the hopes and expectations of her citizens for good governance in a liberal society. However, after two decades of uninterrupted civil rule, six successive democratic transitions (1999, 2003, 2007, 20011, 2015 & 2019); the debate for democratic sustainability and consolidation is still at its peak in the country. The basic elements that characterize democratic rule such as respect for the rule of law, free, fair and competitive elections, constitutionalism, competitive party system, citizen's participation and representation, accountability and transparency in governance are far from reach.

The country is bedeviled with a mirage of challenges ranging from electoral malpractices and violence, weak public institutions, insecurity, corruption, judicial rascality, abuse for the rule of law, ethnic and religious divide to lack of trust among others. The concept of democratic consolidation is universally premised on two basic assumptions. One is that there is an already existing state of democracy in the country. Two, which must be an offshoot of the first is that there is need to sustain and consolidate the existing democratic gains (Kolawole, 2011). Nigeria had attained the basic of the first assumption by moving from authoritarian regime to civil rule. Unfortunately, the country is still struggling with sustaining democracy.

Nigeria's journey into nationhood predates her independence in 1960. The focus of this paper is her political experience from independence till date with emphasis on the fourth republic. Between October 1960 to January 1966, the country was under civil rule (first republic); The military ventured into Nigerian politics in January 1966 and held sway to October 1979 (13 years) when power was returned to democratic government in October 1979 referred to as the second republic. The military took over the political leadership of the country barely four years into the life of the second republic (1979 - 1983). A period some scholars called "the second coming of the military" which lasted for sixteen years. Although, the country witnessed the abortive third republic (1990 - 1993) with this period (Etebom, 2015; Zaira, 2013; Adeniyi, 2010; Ola & Tonwe, 2003).

The Nigerian state like most African countries had experienced military intervention shortly after Independence. The country was under the siege of military dictatorship for 29 years out of her first 39 years' post-independence history as a nation (1960 - 1999). Despite the 20 years of uninterrupted democratic rule, the country is still struggling on all fronts; political, economic, security, electoral, cultural and unity to sustain its democracy far from consolidation. It is against this backdrop that this paper analyzed Nigerian political post-independence history and examined the trends in the fourth republic. The paper further identified some major factors militating against democratic consolidation in the country and made policy recommendations.

## **Conceptual Clarification**

### **Democracy**

The term "democracy" means different things to different people. There is a wide range of perspective as to the meaning and content of democracy as well as to the conditions for its realization, all of which vary depending on the proponents: philosophical, ideological, political, social, cultural and economic perspectives. In the word of Bernard Crick (1993), The world "democracy" is perhaps the most promiscuous word in the world of public

affairs. A term that can mean anything to anyone is in the danger of meaning nothing at all. Among the 193 countries worldwide that are recognized by the United Nations, 123 are said to be democratic (<http://www.freedomhouse.org>). thus, more than half of those countries have set up a form of government that is characterized by the participation of its people, under whatever form it may be.

A more helpful starting point from which to consider the nature of democracy is Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address (1863), which in today is the most popular definition of democracy. He defined democracy as "the government of the people, by the people and for the people" "what this makes clear is that democracy links the government and people.

This idea of democracy has been postulated earlier by some philosophical and political thinkers in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), John Locke (1632-1704) and John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), emphasized the view that, all social institutions are betterment of man as an individual. They laid the foundation for the development democratic thinking (Moyeh, 2015). Hobbes argued that the state was created by the people through a social contract for the protection of personal interests. Locke made his contribution to democracy by regarding the consent of the people as the basic of political power. He contended that, "political power was the trust of the people in the hands of government" "while Mill sees democracy as that form of government in which the whole people or some numerous portion of them, exercise the governing power through deputies periodically elected by themselves.

The ideas of the early political thinkers that laid the foundation of democracy were clarified and given practical shape by thinkers of succeeding centuries such that by the 19<sup>th</sup> century, systematic ideas in the liberal theory of democracy had begun to develop. Bentham and Mill (2009), for example, advocated the right to vote and representative government, thereby, laying a

theoretical foundation for adult franchise. By the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the liberal democratic theory was strengthened on the account of extension of franchise to women and lowering the age of voting to 18 years, thereby liberal democracy was more equalitarian. The overall concept of democracy or democratic rule as defined by various scholars has gone beyond the thoughts of the early thinkers.

Sir Karl Popper posits that:

By democracy, I do not mean something as vague as “the rule of the people” or “the rule of majority” but a set of institutions (among them especially general elections, i.e. the right of the people to dismiss their government) which permit public control of rulers and their dismissal by the ruled and which makes it possible for the ruled to obtain reforms without using violence, even against the will of the ruler (Popper, 1988).

Lipset, S.M in his book, *The Political Man* (1959), defined democracy as a political system which supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing the governing officials and a social mechanism which permits the largest possible part of the population to influence major decision by choosing among contenders for political office. From the above definitions, it is evident that elections are no doubt a critical part of modern democratic process. Ball (1989), identified the characteristics of liberal democracy to include the following: that competition is open and not secretive, it is based on established and accepted procedures. Entry and recruitment to positions of political power are relatively open, there are periodic elections based on universal suffrage, civil liberties are recognized and protected, etc.

The basic principal purpose for which democratic government is established by the people is in the protection and promotion of their right, interest and welfare. Democracy requires that each individual be free to participate in the political community's self-government. Thus, political freedom lies at the

heart of the concept of democracy (Huntington,1991; Palma, 1990; Dahl, 1966).

### **Basic Tenets of Democratic Rule**

1. The supremacy of the will of the people
2. Citizens participation
3. Equality
4. Political tolerance
5. Accountability
6. Transparency
7. Periodic elections
8. Independence judiciary
9. Neutrality of state institutions
10. Rule of law
11. Separation of power
12. Human rights
13. Public opinion and freedom of the press

### **Election**

Elections are the very core of democracy. Lindberg (2006), argued that many have hailed elections as the hallmark of democracy. It is what distinguished a military regime from a civil regime. The concept of election like other concepts in social science has no single definition. An election is a decision making process by which a population chooses an individual to hold public office. Elections have been the usual mechanisms by which modern representative democracy has operated since the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Elections are used to fill offices in the executive, legislative, sometimes in the judiciary and regional and local government. This process is also used in many other private and business organizations; from clubs to voluntary associations and corporations.

Elections are the very core of democracy. Even if democracy is conceived as involving more than elections, and even if an ideal democracy includes important forms of direct participation by citizens in many aspects of public decisions, still the most basic constraint on oppressive state authority that we have is the fact that we elect the decision-makers and can get rid of them if we dislike what they do. Generally, election is what distinguishes a military regime from a civil regime. It offers the people the opportunity and right to choose their leaders without hindrance, and it is the hallmark of democracy universally. However, in most cases, elections are means to an end in themselves. It serves as a process of achieving particular goals or aim for individuals or groups within a state, especially in the control of governmental power, and they serve as the source of political authority.

Ujo (2000), describes election as “a procedure that allows members of an organization or community to choose representatives who will hold position of authority within it”. The critical features of this definition of election are (1) procedure or process, (2) population or people, (3) representatives and, (4) position of authority, whether governmental or private. These features are important in any discourse on elections.

However, in discussing liberal democracy, Schumpeter (1947), believes election is the opportunity people have “of accepting or refusing the men who are to rule them”. While Sandbrook (1988), argued that election implies the right of virtually all adult citizens to vote and be guaranteed of a range of familiar political and civil rights in any society.

Adejumobi (2000) in his contribution sees election as a social pact between the state and the people positing that election symbolizes popular sovereignty and the expression of “social pact” between the state and the people, defining the basic of political authority, legitimacy and citizen’s obligation. It is the kernel of political accountability and a means of ensuring reciprocity and exchange between governors and the governed.

## **Democratic Consolidation**

The concept of democratic consolidation literally means an identifiable phase in the transition from authoritarian rule to civil rule and by extension, democratic system that are germane and fundamental to the establishment and enthronement of a state, institutional and enduring democracy (Oni, 2014). The concept is universally premised on two basic assumptions. One is that there is an already existing state of democracy in the country. The Nigerian state had erected only on the very fundamental tenets of democracy via her return to democracy rule and successive democratic transitions through regular periodic general elections. Two which must be an offshoot of the first is that, there is need to sustain and consolidate the existing base of democracy. According to Kolawole (2011), democratic consolidation would imply a need to make firmer, more solid and resilient the base of the existing democracy. But it needs to be understood that this second assumption itself flows from the consciousness of the fragility of the base of the existing democracy. He further argued that, it would be meaningless demanding democratic consolidation if advanced democracies like France, Germany or the United State of America. In those states, the democratic processes have been institutionalized. The challenge for Nigeria is traceable to the prism of historical emergence and military involvement in political. Essentially, arriving at a consolidated democracy requires nurturing democratic values and ethos, principles and institutions in a matured sense that prevents a reversal to a hitherto authoritarian regime. It also rests upon a strong and dynamic civil society whose responsibility it is to check repeated abuses of power hold public officials accountable for their actions and inactions in the management of public resources and also serves to mitigate political conflicts (Diamond 1994 cited in Oni, 2014).

The question on how to identify a democracy that is consolidated arises. Different criteria are proposed in extant literature to identify a consolidated democratic system (Schedler Andreas et.al 1998) but two are discernible in this context. First, there is the ‘two election test’ or put differently the ‘transfer of power test’. This criterion reckons with the ‘behavioural’ aspects

of democratic consolidation as it questions the attitude of political actors when defeated in an electoral contest. Clearly stated the probability of democratic survival is not high until and unless democratically elected regimes loose elections in subsequent contests and accept the verdict. Democracy is therefore consolidated when a ruling political party or class hands over power to an opposition party after losing the contest. This speaks volume of the readiness of major political players and their supporters to respect the rules that govern the game of electoral contest and their readiness to sacrifice their personal and/or sectional interest for the good of the democratic system.

The second is the “simple longevity” or “generation test”. The import of this criterion is that 20 years of regular competitive elections should be sufficient enough to adjudge a democracy consolidated irrespective of the fact that power is not transferred to another political party or class. The criterion argues that continuous and regular elections would have created in people a mind-set that develops apathy for any near alternative to democracy. It is therefore unthinkable for the electorates to explore another method of appointing their leaders. However, the foregoing discussion has evidently demonstrated that no one criterion or condition is a ‘pure type’ on its own and that democratic sustainability is a product of a combination of factors or conditions operating together. An accumulation of these facilitating conditions therefore offers the prospects of democratic survival and deepening to be enhanced. There have been 6 successive democratic transitions cum general elections; and 20 years of uninterrupted democracy in the country. However, the basic tenets of democratic rule are largely lacking in the country as will be discussed subsequently in the paper.

### **Nigerian Post Independence Political Experience**

The history of Nigeria as a postcolonial and independent state is not edifying. The country was exposed to disunity, leadership incapability, religious intolerance, ethnicity and corruption from independence in 1960. Pereti (2004) argued that nepotism, corruption and misrule in the Balewa’s

administration led to the military intervention in Nigerian politics barely six years after independence January 1966 there was a counter coup led by Northern elements in the military in July 1966. Sadly, these events laid the foundation of other political events in the country. This counter coup led to the Nigerian Civil War between 1967 - 1970. The first coup threw up General J.T.U. Aguiyi Ironsi as the first military Head of State in Nigeria. General Yakubu Gowon took over the leadership of the country in July 1966. The General Gowon led military government failure to return the country to civil rule as promised after the civil war was among other reasons given by the regime of General Murtala Mohammed for overthrowing the government in July 1975.

The General Murtala/Obasanjo regime succeeded in handing power over to civilian leadership in October 1979. it is worthy to note, that General Murtala did not live to see the end of that regime he was assassinated in an unsuccessful coup in February 1976 led by Lieutenant Colonel B.S. Dimka. General Olusegun Obasanjo, his second in command took over as Head of State and followed through the regime's transition programme to civil rule. The civil rule of Alhaji Shehu Shagari lasted for four years and three months when it was ousted by another military junta. The massive riggings, unprecedented post electoral violence, corruption and eminent collapse of the economy were the major reasons cited by the coup plotters which saw General Muhammadu Buhari assuming leadership of the country. The political events in the last Kogi and Bayelsa governorship elections characterized by massive rigging, political violence and manipulation under civilian leadership of the same General Buhari shows clearly that the Nigerian elite do not learn from history.

The regime of General Buhari was unseated in a palace coup led by General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida the coup of December 1983 was referred to as "the coup of the Generals". It was a bloodless palace coup that saw only the Head of State and his deputy removed from office the General Buhari's government was accused of rigidity and unpopular policies (Zaria 2013)

The General Babangida's regime organized the most-lengthy transition programme in Nigeria's history. The political rascality of the regime got to its peak in the wake of the annulment of the today's known "Democracy Day" June 12, 1993 Presidential elections the elections were adjudged by both local and international observers as the fairest and freest in Nigerian political history till date.

With the annulment of the June 12, 1993 President poll allegedly won by Alhaji M.K.O. Abiola and the protest against the government made the General Babangida led government stepped aside and formed an Interim Government headed by Chief Ernest Shonekan in August, 1993. The Interim government was ejected in another palace coup (bloodless) led by General Sani Abacha in November, 1993 on the ground that the government lacked the support of the already elected governors in the abortive third republic and the ability to wield command in the country. This was evident when the Governors refused to attend meetings with the Interim President.

The sudden death of General Sani Abacha on 8 June, 1998 dramatically changed the political terrain of Nigeria and paved way for the inception of Major General Abdulsalam Abubakar as new Head of State (Zaria cit). The General Abubakar led military government dissolved all political parties and activities. A new date was fixed for a return to civil rule. Finally, President elections were held as the climax of the regime's transition programme and Nigeria returned to democratic rule on 29 May, 1999 after almost three decades of military rule.

### **Challenges to Democratic Consolidation in Nigerian Fourth Republic**

Extant literatures have identified some factors engendering democratic consolidation in Nigeria since her independence in 1960. Noticeable among these factors are her historical limitation owing to the circumstance that led to the emergence of the Nigerian state through colonialism. Another factor is the military intervention in politics which spans almost three decades after independence. The problem of leadership has been a reoccurring decimal in

Nigeria's quest for development. Other factors included poverty, corruption, political violence, ethnicity and religious intolerance amongst others (Adeosun, 2014; Kolawole, 2011; Oni, 2014; Tinubu, 2009).

However, the trends since the country's return to democracy in 1999 have taken a new and threatening dimension. One would have expected the elite, politicians and citizens to take all necessary steps to withstand, combat and repel the centrifugal and centripetal forces in order to consolidate democracy owing to her history of military intervention in politics (1966-1979; 1983-1999). There have been six successive democratic transitions from 1999 to date (1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015, 2019). Each transition since 1999 have sprang up new and more challenges. The 1999 elections were won by the coalition of retired military officers. The 2003 poll was no different as it was a contest that involved two retired generals and head of state. The politics of *do or die*, electoral malpractices and post electoral violence characterized the 2007 and 2011 elections. In 2015, personality perspective took the center stage and money politics was at its peak with no post electoral violence. The incumbent president and ruling political party were defeated at the poll. The country and the international community celebrated in hope that Nigeria's democratic process is close to being consolidated. However, the high level of political violence, political manipulation, electoral malpractices and money politics that characterized the 2019 elections in the country left political actors and observers in the country and international community with a bitter tale. The level of political violence and use of state institutions against the will of the people in the recent Bayelsa and Kogi States Governorship elections further exposed the fragility of Nigeria's democracy. Unfortunately, Nigerians and her political leaders have failed to learn from history. There are increasing threatening challenges to the substance of the country's democracy after 20 years of democratic experience in the Fourth Republic.

1. Weak Public Institutions: the loyalty of public institutions involved in the electoral process in Nigeria are largely to the Commander -in- Chief

of the Armed Forces and the political party in power rather than the Nigerian state. The police, military and the electoral empire (INEC) are not free from this political partisanship in the discharge of their duties during the electoral process. Public institutions must be neutral in the discharge of their duties during and after elections.

2. Electoral Malpractice: No elections since 1999 has been free and acceptable by all the political parties involved the citizens and observers. The elections have largely been characterised by political violence, rigging, ballot box snatching, votes buying among others. There is the need for free, fair and competitive elections in order to consolidate the democratization process in the country.
3. Lack of Political Ideology: The rate at which politicians cross from one political party to another in the country shows there is no clear-cut political ideology in Nigeria's politics. Political ideology should be the guiding principle for political actions and policy.
4. Selective Respective for the Rule of Law: There is a high level of disrespect for the rule of law and constitutionalism in the country. The current government as well as past governments in this fourth republic are culpable. The illegal and continuous detention of perceived political opponents despite court orders is not healthy for democratic consolidation. All parties must obey court orders and respect the rule of law. This illegality is traceable to the military orientation in some of our national leaders.
5. Money Politics: Votes buying has become an acceptable phenomenon in Nigeria's polity. Until the will of the people are freely expressed without influence, elections cannot be said to be free and fair. The hallmark of democracy is free, fair and competitive elections.
6. Godfatherism: Political Godfatherism is anti-democratic and a destructive political phenomenon. Those who come into political offices not through democratic and transparent means will hold their loyalty to those who put them there and not the system. There is need to respect party's guidelines in selecting representatives to public office.

Godfatherism is a phenomenon that has found its way into almost all facets of our national life. Merit and capabilities are hardly used in the public service in the country.

7. Weak Political Opposition: The extent at which politicians defect from the opposition political parties to the ruling parties is frightening. The recent trends of defection by politicians who feel threatened by the anti-corruption agencies call for concern. Democracy cannot only strive when there is healthy political opposition in the country.
8. Political Desperation: Politics should be an opportunity to serve and not a means for self-enrichment. Political desperation either to hold onto power or get into office at all cost is the prime causes of the challenges confronting democratic consolidation in the country.
9. Apathy: Democratic consolidation demands the active participation of citizens. Voters are to come out and be able to express the right to choose leaders freely without fear or monetary influence. The level of political violence and lack of trust in the electoral process is largely responsible for voters' apathy.
10. Abuse of state resources: The amount of money needed to fund elections in Nigeria is huge. From party's ticket, primaries, campaign, settlement of political stakeholders to votes buying during elections. Since political offices are lucrative financially, public office holders use state resources to fund the electoral process in their favour.
11. Lack of Party Supremacy: This is one of the most dangerous trends in the fourth republic. Party members have no respect for political parties; and this is responsible for the high rate of defection witnessed especially after party primaries in the country.
12. Insecurity: Democracy cannot thrive in an unsecured environment. The security agencies are expected to be neutral and effective in the discharge of their duties before, during and after elections. Elections should not be seen as a do or die syndrome. The rate of political violence in the 2019 elections in some parts of the country and the post elections violence in 2011 amongst others should be checked. The high level of

insecurity in the country especially the insurgency in the North-East, robbery in the North-West roads, militancy in the South-South and kidnapping in the South-East will not enhance democratic consolidation in the country.

13. Corruption: The level of corruption in the electoral process in the country is alarming and frightening. All stakeholders are in one way or the other included in this act. The political parties during party primaries and nominations; the politicians during campaigns and votes buying on election days; the electorates, the security agencies and staff of the electoral empire are not left out. The courts are also involved. Until electoral corruption is checked and killed in all ramifications, it will be an impossible task attaining democratic consolidation in our polity.
14. Lack of Separation of Power: Separation of powers is a key component of democracy. There are three arms of government in the country; The Executive, Legislature and Judiciary. The relationship should be cordial with each arm playing its role effectively and responsively. However, the case has been different since 1999; the executive has always influenced the other two arms because of its vantage position and control of the nation's resources. The principle of check and balance which is the hallmark of presidential system of government is largely missing in our polity. The legislature, both at the state and national level have failed to rise above partisan politics and self-seeking agenda.
15. Rascality of the Judiciary: The judiciary is supposed to be a neutral arbitrator in the polity but it's not the case in Nigeria. The rate at which politicians secure court judgements and counter judgements in courts of the same jurisdiction calls for concern. Democracy cannot strive without an independent and impartial judiciary.
16. Religious and Ethnic Politics: One negative device that has deeply affected democratic consolidation in Nigeria is ethno-religious crises. The country in recent years has been divided along these political lines. There is the need for patriotism and inclusiveness to attain democratic consolidation in the country.

## **Recommendations**

In order to attain democratic sustenance and consolidation in our polity, some suggestions are made here.

1. The political elite should learn from history. Most of the reasons the military claimed brought them into politics in 1966 and 1983 seem to be repeating itself in our polity; such as political violence, rigging, post electoral violence, corruption, unpopular government policies, and ethno-religious crises among others. The political class must take steps that will enhance the sustenance of democracy in the country.
2. The electoral empire both at the national, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and state level, State Independent Electoral Commission (SIECs) should be independent of state influence. These empires should be empowered financially, logistically and given the free hands to operate without external influence. INEC under the leadership Prof. Attahiru Jega came close to achieving this in 2015. E-voting should be introduced to reduce the cost and risk involved in conducting elections in the country.
3. Monetization of the electoral process should be de-emphasize and stopped. Unfortunately, this political menace cut across the entire electoral process. From high cost of party tickets, campaign funding to vote buying among others.
4. Remunerations and allowances of political office holders should be grossly reduced. The study further suggested that salaries and allowances of political office holders should be made public for accountability and transparency in our polity.
5. Democracy can only thrive where there is constitutionalism. The rule of law should be enforced and respected at all levels by all. The Executive should respect the independence of the Judiciary, the Legislature should perform their duties without fear and favour; party supremacy and discipline should be enforced and those who abuse the law should be

made to face the law accordingly. The principle of check and balance should be strictly adhered to in governance.

6. Civil society and the media should be more alive and objective in playing their roles in the polity. Since they are key stakeholders in the democratization process, the government should not be seen to be taking any step that will suppress or hinder them from carrying out their role as watch-dogs in the society. Civil society should be non-partisan and apolitical in the discharge of their duties.
7. The Judiciary is the last hope of the common man and plays a critical role in the polity for the sustenance of democracy. It must be independent, impartial and courageous in the discharge of its function of adjudication. The courts should cooperate with the other arms of government but not succumb to intimidation.
8. There is the need to re-orientate the security agencies involved in the electoral process, that is, the military and paramilitary organisations. They are to secure the lives of the electorates, electoral staff and materials. They should be apolitical and non-partisan. Their loyalty should be to the Nigerian state and not the ruling party or President. They should adhere strictly to professionalism in the discharge of their duties. The study strongly recommends that the direct use of the military for electoral duties should be stopped. The military should keep to its basic constitutional responsibility of safeguarding the territorial integrity of the nation.

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**PRE-COLONIAL ICHI CONFLICT: FOCUS ON CRISIS  
DEVELOPMENT AND PEACEBUILDING STRATEGIES**

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**Abstract**

Conflict has remained a regular manifestation in human societies across ages. It is generally stated that conflict emerges from the heart of men who engineers crisis in different ages. This study focuses on the Ichi people. It traces the historical origin of Ichi people as well as their geographical features. The study used primary and secondary data as source of data collection on the causes and impact of conflict in pre-colonial Ichi. The data collected from the randomly selected interviews were interpreted thematically. It should be noted that the study was hinged on human relations image of conflict and interactionist conflict ideology and the research found that the Ichi people fought with Nnewi neighbours in the pre-colonial era, over a parcel of land. It documents the process of preparation for war and impact analysis as well as the traditional road to peacebuilding among the pre-colonial Ichi people. Finally, the research recommends increased peaceful inter-group relations between the Ichi people and their neighbours.

**Key Words:** Conflict, deity, peace building, Nnewi & Ichi

## **Introduction**

In different parts of Africa, communities and societies have fought at one time or another to maintain a given communal interest that was very dare for the survival of the people. At that time, armed conflict was perceived as a part for the survival of the shared interest, especially when confronted by hostile neighbours. While a number of people perceived armed conflict as an instrument for societal destruction, others perceived it as the continuation of inter-group relations. Inter-group relations at that time was driven by peaceful and violent factors that include inter-communal marriages, trade and economic exchanges as well as cultural exchanges, and armed confrontation of neighbouring communities.

The people of Ichi was no exception in the process of armed relations. The people of Ichi fought over almost everything they desired. This is because, power relations at that time was driven by the idea of might is right. There were lack of widespread geo-spatial institutions that managed the relations between one community and another, hence, for the Ichi people, who were traditional warriors; the ability to extend their sphere of influence through the manipulation of power was vital. Historically, the Ichi community has long being known as warriors that were hardly defeated in any battle they embarked on. The society trained their young men to be soldiers and brave. Their fighting force were mostly selected from the youths, especially those that were above twenty-five (25) years old (Akunne,2021; Nwokebi, 2021). These youths are trained using all means of informal education to acquire warfare skills that will enable them defend the Ichi community in the time of crisis.

Ichi is an autonomous community that is located at the Eastern part of the River Niger. The community is about 35km away from Onitsha, a metropolitan business hub of the Southeastern part of Nigeria. The community is located in Nnewi North Local Government Area of Anambra state. Ichi is surrounded on the North by Nnewi, East by Oba in Idemmili Local Government Area and in the West by Oraifite. It should be noted that

the community is surrounded in the South by Ojoto that is also in Idemmili Local Government area.

### **Traditional Geopolitical and Economic Features**

The topography of the town is purely hilly and the citizenry mainly settle and live in the valley, thus the problem of land for local cultivation has always been a regular occurrence. There are hills and attractive landscape namely Ugwu-obolo, Ugwu-obi and Ugwu Mmilingbo- Ekulo. There are many valleys between the above named hills and at Oka Mbana -Ogbe village. Some of the traditional rivers in the community have dried up due to the changing effects of global warming and environmental change (Mojekwu, 1994).

Ichi is rich in untapped natural resources such as chalk and coal. The neighboring communities to Ichi often visited the communities to purchase chalk of diverse colours, which are found in large quantities within Ekulo. The basic occupation of the people is basket making, subsistence farming and commerce, with special focus on retail and wholesale trade. Very recently, there has been increment in small -scale and medium sized businesses as well as industries that currently springing up in different parts of the Ichi community thereby increasing the settlement pattern of the people. The people has popular market days that include Eke and Afor-Uzo. The market used to be the centre of business transaction during the precolonial era and has continuously developed since independence, especially during this era of think-home business development.

Ichi as a community practices traditional monarchical system of governance, which vests almost all the power of administration on the traditional ruler known as the Igwe. The title 'Igwe', as it is pertinent to note, was a relatively new creation because the ruler of Ichi used to be known as the 'Obi' of Ichi, being the direct descendant of the first son of Ichi. In the olden days, various villages had their own 'Obisi' who were of course subject to the Obi of Ichi. They handled the cases and dispute arising in their domain and those they

couldn't solve were referred to the Obi for adjudication. The Obi relied on the advice of the different Obisi as well as the good counsel of other titled men in the community in managing conflicts and peacebuilding. It should be noted that conflict was a regular issue that manifests in different forms in every human environment (Ani & Alegu, 2015). The Ichi people were not immune from conflict in their inter and intra-group relations from the pre-colonial era to present.

### **Methodology**

This study was carried out in Ichi using qualitative methods of research. It primarily depended on oral sources from respondents in the process of data collection. The respondents were randomly selected and interviewed on the causes and impact of pre-colonial warfare in Ichi as well as the peacebuilding strategies that was applied by the people at that time. These respondents cut across different ages and gender as a way of ensuring that the account of different generations of Ichi men and women were captured in order to ensure balance and relative objectivity in the study. Their consent was received not to code their responses as key informant interviews but use their real names in presentation of the findings for academic purposes. Their responses were thematically gathered, analysed and documented as the findings of the study. A number of secondary sources were gathered in the development of the article.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Conflict is inherent in every society that is inhabited by man. It is as old as man on earth. Conflict manifest due to opposing goals, principles, strategies, ideologies, identities etc. It is generally stated that conflict arises when there are irreconcilable interests/ goals amongst individuals, groups, actors, states etc. Conflict could exist only as negative peace or manifest at the psychological level, thereby causing strains and stress in the minds of man. It should be noted that conflicts start from the minds of men and grow according to the changing influence of *conflict drivers*, which are influenced by the *conflict situation*, *conflict actors* and *conflict environment*. Park and

Burgess (2011:574) argued that “conflict is designed to expose divergent dualism and achieve some kinds of disunity, even if, it is through the annihilation of one of the conflict parties”. This study is rooted on the human relations image of conflict and interactionist conflict ideology.

**Human Relations Image of Conflict:** The apologists of this ideology see conflict as inevitable in all forms of human relations. For them, it is natural for men to engage in conflict. However, they maintain that how men manage their conflict situation could turn the nature of the conflict positively or negatively.

**The Interactionist Conflict Ideology:** They argue that conflict go beyond been inevitable as stated by human relations advocates but that harmonious, peaceful and cooperative relationships grow out of conflict experiences that were managed properly by those interacting with a transformative mindset.

In the pre-colonial Ichi society, there was no organized form of government that cuts across different communities that make up where we presently know today as Nigeria. Hence, in the event of any disagreement, conflict and armed confrontation becomes the easiest road to peace due to lack of institutions that have influence over the multiple sovereign and independent states, ethnic groups and communities that relates with each other at that time

### **Major Causes of Conflict in Pre-colonial Ichi**

Conflicts in the pre-colonial times across Africa are driven by multiple factors. There are various reasons that drives people to fight across different African communities. In West Africa, various groups of ethnic groups, especially in Nigerian, often engage themselves in armed confrontations with their neighboring communities. These armed confrontations were fought for various reasons that include the quest for political prestige or strategic economic gain. In such armed conflicts, captives were forced to become domestic slaves or were sold out for economic profit. In other scenario, the warlike sons and daughters of the community are often hired by neighbouring communities as machinery to fight for them. Such people

were compensated with parcels of land which them and their descendants either sales or occupies. Again, Ichi communities also hire mercenaries that are often incorporated into their communities. These class of special warriors that were hired in the community are necessarily invited when the major interest of the society, especially, attack on the little available land in the community is imminent. When they exhibit bravery in the course of the armed conflict, they are often rewarded with parcel of land too and consequently became part of the society by enculturation. What that meant was that weak neighbouring communities always avoided physical confrontation with the people of Ichi.

In trying to write about the pre-colonial warfare of Ichi community, one must present the historical demographical, political and cultural setting of the people called Ichi (Ezenwa, 2021). Ichi is an autonomous community that had a great deity called Agbaja. Agbaja was believed to be a real ancestral son of the community and a direct son of the Eri from the Nri historical hegemony and Igbo ancestry (Madu, 2021). The people were said to have fought many wars in the quest of their migration to their present settlement across the Omambala River.

It was said that the Agbaja, the 7th generational son of Eri from the lineage of warriors of those days were known for their strength in warfare and very good at craft of armed conflict. They were also good arts and craftsmen. Agbaja's descendants begot the Isu, Nnewi and Ichi from one mother and another mother begot Oraifite, all under Anaedo (Agu, 2021; Nnadi, 2021).

Furthermore, Ichi the direct son of Agbaja was said to have migrated from their former settlement at Nri down to Uke and Nnobi through the present Nnewi-Ichi to the present abode as their final settlement. And because of the inherited warlike posture and charism, they were able to assert their authority as the real owners of the land that they currently occupied in Ichi (Ujunwa, 2021; Okafor, 2021). As was the case then in those days, the first settlers becoming the owners of the land, Ichi through their brave and strategic

calculation that the environment with its mountain and valley will give them military security easily occupied the land effectively. Being bestowed with so much technicalities in the warfare expertise, it was said that they had very dangerous weapon of warfare that gave strategic victory in their armed confrontations (Agu, 2021; Okafor, 2021). This weapons were made on the specifications of the Ichi warriors by the blacksmiths. Furthermore, the people were involved in traditional religious practices which were noticeable in their quest for formidable army of those days. It was also stated that their deep believe in Chukwu, the Almighty God as well as the fidelity in offering libations to Him during warfare was a major source of victory.

### **Findings on Ichi Pre-colonial Armed Conflict**

Conflicts are either intra-communal or inter-communal in nature (Olaleye, 2016) across many pre-colonial African societies. However, Salim (1997) maintains that despite the nature of their localizations, the conflicts challenge both national, regional and global security. In Nigeria, intra-ethnic, religious, militancy-driven, terror-driven and other forms of communal crisis are widespread (Albert, 2007). These forms of armed confrontations have been there across the ages. There existed armed confrontation between Ichi and various neighboring communities. These armed confrontations were driven and sustained by many factors already discussed in the earlier part of the study. The armed conflict between Ichi and Nnewi was said to have occurred according to oral tradition in the dime past before the coming of the white men. The major cause of the armed conflict was boundary and land dispute between both communities that had a history of land scarcity. The Ichi argued that the land was conquered by them but the Nnewi maintained that the land was traditionally their own. It was when the land was taken away from them by the Nnewi that armament started on both conflict divide. The contested area, which was formally known as Akaboichi was the boundary leading to Uruagu Nnewi. The armed conflict over the land created series of wars between Ichi and Nnewi after which Nnewi claimed the land and changed it's name to Akaboukwu which it is still bearing till today and remained part of Nnewi.

Ichi community had traditional altars which served as platform for the people's faith. These alters were guided faithfully against any form of desecration by the masses of Ichi community and outsiders (Okafor, 2021). One of the most essential traditional alter was the big altar, sometimes called idols by Christian with the traditional name Udogwu. Udogwu is located at Umunandu part of Ichi. The Udogwu traditional alter has high degree of sacredness and even the host village were highly respected and also avoided by other people due to the fear and reverence for the powers of Udogwu, which they regularly consult. Udogwu was a powerful Idol that was well known for fruitfulness, riches and fertility. Over the years, people testified that the idol gave fertility to their farm lands, and caused increased wealth, while giving protection and fruit of the womb. These and If any one dares to desecrate the altar, that person will surely be put to death. Resistance to this declaration results to outbreak of armed conflict irrespective of who was involved.

Other causes of armed conflict in pre-colonial era include marriages, human sacrifices, and some other forbidden cultures like slavery. Marriages which were mainly to bring together two communities, as well as peace and harmony among the people sometimes causes violent conflict when there is increased disagreement due to domestic violence and other forms of physical attack. A major form of marriage that drove conflict from pre-colonial era to present was usually between the marriage contract between the Diala (son of the soil) on one hand and the Osu (outcast) or the Ohu (slaves) on the other. Slavery as one of the factors that caused conflict in the pre-colonial era cannot be neglected. Slave trade in those days was a major source of income therefore the bigger the slaves that a man has, the higher the income he will generate from selling them. The greed to make desperate and quick money from slavery sometimes forces family members to sell the own people to the slave buyers, which sometimes leads to armed confrontation. Whereby a prince from the royal family decides to take a wife from an accursed village (enemy community) or where A well respected man decides to marry a slave girl. In such situation, conflict will arise.

The preparation and impact of armed conflict in Ichi has strong root on the African traditional warfare preparatory styles. The chief priest the custodian of Udogwu and all other priests under the Udogwu were the main people involved in recruitment and organization of the soldiers in the era of armed confrontation, especially against another community. The native doctors prepare drinks, herbs and charms for the warriors to prepare them for both invisibility, brevity and victory. They were often given the Otua-ofelu ability of disappearing as soon as one's enemy is about to kill the warrior. This craft of invisibility is deeply rooted in the African way of life and cosmology. There was also another act of preparation that the warriors underwent. They were given the Onyoo- ofu charm. The Onyoo\_ ofu is the charm that have potent power to foresee the weak point and strong holds of the enemy. When the strengths and weaknesses of the enemies are investigated, the Ichi warriors will avoid falling prey to the area of their enemy's strength, while doing everything to attack from the point of weaknesses. There was also the Odu-una charm. The Odu -una has the ability to neutralize the enemy's charm during physical confrontation. It also weakens the charms that the enemy has planted in their own weapons.

Charms were implanted either by incisions of blade or sharp objects on the body or by mixing the charm in the blood of the warriors for them to drink. The chief priest administers the drinks/ charms and this they believe have the ability of intimidating their opponent on sighting them. The powerful influence of the charms could cause over-whelming victory and sometimes forces the enemies to surrender. Advanced level witchcraft /magical powers were equally manipulated as some warriors would sit on clay pot on top of the fire. Some normally wear armlet or cowries round their neck, waist or their wrist. Some will wear tortoise, which was believed to have potency against idolatrous fetish instrument. The youths, especially age grade groups, the younger ones from 20 to 40 year of age go to war in the event of armed confrontations from neighboring communities, whereas the older ones stay back and do the strategic planning.

It is noteworthy that before they go for war or any form of armed confrontation with an enemy community; all the warriors from different villages in Ichi will converge before Udogwu which is the central altar of the community for safe preparations. After the exercise, they will wash their head and face with water from Nwa Ngume River with some incantations before they set up for the war or armed conflict. Furthermore, they will then beat the gong and drums of war that informs the community of danger. At that point, a big cow is often sacrificed to the Udogwu before the warriors will take off. For sure, the precolonial people of Ichi believed in the combined powers of human preparation and influence of deity will give them resounding victory in any war.

However, the warfare between one Igbo community and another sometimes brings about peace and harmony amongst them. Conflicts lead them to the positivist perception of peaceful relations and they immediately follow the path of peace, thereby reconciling their differences and becoming friendly. Wars results to lose of lives and properties within the Ichi community and the affected conflict party, thereby making the loser community become slaves to the winner community. When the winning community takes over the geography of their neighbours, they are enslaved, while others become subjects, vassal settlements that pay tributes and royalties, etc. The population of the people was often greatly reduced during the period of armed confrontations. These pre-colonial arm confrontations often turn women to widows and children to fatherless orphans thereby making life difficult.

It is pertinent to note that wars during the pre-colonial period brought greater negative impact than the good it did for any community. It was generally believed that many Ichi men and women have lost their lives in armed conflicts. This of course became a great blow to them, as the unimaginable depopulation of people came about especially the ones that ran away for safety. It also affected the culture of food production amongst the masses as farmers were less disposed to go to their farms during armed crisis. Farms

were set ablaze, especially when the conflict manifests during the dry season. The implication was that the people's agricultural investments covering both food crops and cash crops, were often destroyed. Enemy communities try hard during the dry season to destroy everything that serves as the people's resources; thereby causing famine in such community.

### **Traditional Path to Peace**

Babbie (2009) argued that when conflict is perceived through the lens of cultural values; responses tend to be non-rational and that was why Boulding (2002) came up with the idea of 'inner core' values, and unique epistemologies that shaped who we are, how we identify ourselves and how others have respond, which according to him are complicated by existential conflict. Scholars also agree that both traditional and modern missions promote peacebuilding (Albert, 2007; Noll, 2013).

In the African context, there has been a resurgence of interest in different forms of customary conflict resolution, which usually feature mediation or deliberation by elders as well as other customary authorities (Buur & Kyed, 2007). Studies have documented successful local conflict resolution processes based on customary mechanisms in the pastoral areas of the Horn of Africa (Chapman & Kagaha, 2009; Frank, 2002). Farah (1999) maintained that a voluntary, bottom-up approach is the explanation for successful peacebuilding in Somaliland. It should be noted that customary institutions sometimes fulfill a vacuum in geo-political areas where state institutions are weak like Somalia (Boege, 2006) and in remote regions of northern Kenya (Menkhaus, 2008). There these customary institutions champion the peace process of a society and because the customary institutions are led by local actors, they strategically design a process suited to the local context, which often respond much faster than state-led initiatives (Imobighe, 2003). The pre-colonial peacebuilding process in Ichi was driven by customary institutions and way of life.

It should be noted that the immediate objective of every conflict resolution is to mend the broken or damaged relationship, rectify wrongs, and restore justice that will ultimately lead to peace. Another aim is to ensure the full integration of conflict parties into their own societies again and to enhance the culture of cooperation. Traditional societies resolved conflicts that lead to wars through internal and external social controls and direct negotiations as well as traditional diplomacy. The internal social control processes of deterrence, where societies manipulated actions that promotes personal shame on individuals while re-enforcing fear of supernatural powers was largely used in peacebuilding within Ichi. External controls in Ichi traditional peacebuilding rely on sanctions associated with action taken by others in relation to behaviors that escalate conflicts within the community.

However, in Ichi, there are different categories of pre-colonial conflict resolutions such as the role of the ancestors. The ancestors have been conceived as the living dead that has the characteristics of sharing dual existence with the living world and the spiritual community across many African societies. It is generally believed that the experience they gained while on earth usually informed the level of their metaphysical reflections of earth activities while in the spiritual community. Such experiences lead to the motivation to intervene in influencing the art of conflicts resolution. The ancestors would bring to bear on their ancestral and serene community, the art of facilitating peace and harmony, which undoubtedly, one will find out resonated in the modular exhibition of peaceful development through direct influence in dreams, physical appearance in trance etc thus, the art of conflicts resolution would not have been limited to earthly living and sojourn but that it continued in the ancestral community. In communities like Ichi, people recognized the presence of their ancestors which they believed had strong ability in wadding-off evil, fighting for them as well as protecting them from their enemies. On each occasion; from festivals or ceremonies to quest for peace in Ichi, the activities of the day are not complete without the invitation of ancestors to come and join them.

The council of elders and family heads in Ichi had the capacity to initiate conflict resolution. They outline actions that will lead or sustain the society into a culture of peace and harmony. They act as the custodians of law and order, which often directly influences social and societal engineering. It is believed that knowledge and understanding as well as the perception of the elders are strong library for the promotion of conflict resolution. Elders in Ichi are thereby considered as the best people to resolve conflicts that existed within Ichi community and between Ichi and other communities. Apart from this group, there are also the local chiefs, who seek the welfare of all the individual in the community. They are the people to lay complaint to the traditional ruler, Igwe and his cabinet and sometimes even suggests multiple paths to peace that the traditional ruler should consider. There were also certain cultural organizations that settle dispute and impose sanctions which must be obeyed respectfully within Ichi like the council of chiefs. The chairman of Ichi council of chiefs acts in his capacity as the head of the king's palace court called Uno-ikpe (Court) and the Igwe has the veto power, which he can exercise to over-rule any decision or judgement passed by the lower courts after due consultation with the elders of his Obi' known as Ndi- 'Oka - Ikpe (judges). In some cases, the judicial responsibilities are shifted to the age groups, secret societies and cultural organization in Ichi for consideration and settlement. The decisions reached by them were strictly respected and accepted.

Secret societies also helps in the culture of peace. In as much as they were used in armed confrontations against the enemy communities, they also join to resolve greater percentage conflicts that might result to wars and to restore peace among the people. This is because sometimes the physical strength of council of elders, age grade, is not enough to resolve conflicts especially those armed conflicts that are caused by the abuse of traditional believes and centre of faith like attacks on revered deity. Some elements of powers and authorities beyond the ordinary were needed to consult with the ancestor and the supreme forces in determining the processes of atonement that would

bring peace to the community. Therefore, secret societies perform a great role in resolving conflicts in Ichi.

Oracles were also major actors in the pre-colonial conflict resolution process. Most people at that time took their problems to the oracles in search of divine impartial wisdom of the gods as well as their intervention in ensuring societal peace. The oracles are extra human forces usually represented are accessed through carved wood, stone or iron, trees and hills located in revered places. Oracles in Ichi were believed to possess supernatural powers, hence they played important roles in bringing resolutions to wars and conflicts while dispensing justice among the people. The Udogwu was one of the oracles most Ichi people go to in the quest to restore peace and order in the community. In cases like marriage crisis between one family and another, people consults the Udogwu for speedy resolution. The people seek for justice and would sometimes go for vengeance where they are not satisfied with the results they got. Oracles are however consulted in this case to give them permission to go armed confrontation and to assure them of victory. Communities seeking for peace also go to visit the oracle to convince their enemies on the need to settle their differences for the sake of peace. The coming of Christianity and influence of western education has undermined the role of oracles in peacebuilding within Ichi. This is because Christian and educational influence tends to criticize and even cause physical damage on the oracles (Ayandele 1977; Ukeje, 1969).

## **Conclusion**

The pre-colonial wars were mostly a model of communication as a way to warn enemy communities never to challenge a group again. This study revealed that in most pre-colonial wars that the Ichi community went to, they were hardly defeated except war with the Nnewi people. It traced the causes of armed conflict in precolonial Ichi and revealed that these conflict had multiple implications for the society. It should be noted that wars are sometimes said to be a source of peace, but people were unlikely to engage

in wars for the sake of peace. This is because end point of wars has a great negative impact and it takes lot of efforts to restore peace and harmony, especially when the cost of the war was counted. To heal the wounds that war has caused is almost impossible. Even during the pre-colonial era, people go to war against a perceived enemy without knowing their degree of armed preparation and if they are unlucky and were not equipped with higher or more sophisticated weapons of warfare, they will be greatly defeated. Pre-colonial colonial warfare could be said to be a tough one.

Generally, wars are not good path to push peace. The impacts of the pre-colonial warfare in Ichi community has affected them so much that those people living in the river line areas and depend on the rivers for fish farming are disappointed because during these wars the enemy community look out on the people's resources and income earning in other to destroy it. They destroy the rivers through oil spillage causing the fishes to die and ensuring increased hunger. Finally, the study documents traditional paths to peace and conflict resolutions between Ichi and other communities or within the Ichi community. It revealed that conflict resolution process institutions and processes include the council of elders, secret societies, shrine/ oracles, ancestors and other external powers who join forces to ensure increased peace in the community.

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**“THE HUNGRY FOOD SUPPLIERS” : AN EXAMINATION OF  
POVERTY AND FOOD PRODUCTION AMONG THE RURAL  
FARMERS OF NKANU LAND**

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**ABSTRACT**

Farming is one of the oldest professions of the Igbo man. And food production precedes any other agricultural practices in Igboland. Food production as used here means the production of edible root crops like yams, cocoa-yam, and cassava, and cereal crops like rice and maize. Citrus fruits like oranges and mangoes, among other fruits. Other food crops worthy of mention are Okro, Melon, Banana/Plantain, Vegetables and Oil palm products. Each of these has its place in the food production chain in Nkanu area of Igboland. Poverty on the other hand, denotes socio – economic conditions of deprivation or lack of the basic necessities of life, in particular of things which are imperative but are absent and renders life indecent. These conditions are prevalent in rural areas of which major part of Nkanu land falls under. This paper examines the contradiction where rural Nkanu which contributes a huge proportion of food consumed in Enugu metropolitan city, still wallow in hunger and poverty. Attempts shall be made to ascertain the linkage between rural food production and poverty level in Nkanuland. And conclude that both the food producers and policy – makers must look at the food question as a triangular relationship between food production, distribution and consumption. Oral and written sources – archival materials, files, government documents/edicts, books, among others – were used to enhance wider scope of research.

**KEYWORDS:** Nkanu, Rural Farmers, Poverty, Food Production.

**INTRODUCTION**

Food is a basic necessity of life. Its importance is seen in the fact that it is a basic means of sustenance and adequate food intake, in terms of quantity and quality, is key for healthy and productive life. The importance of food is also shown in the fact that it accounts for a substantial part of a typical Nigerian

household budget. However, in 2012, the Global Food Security Index (GFSI) of the Economist Intelligence Unit ranked Nigeria the 80<sup>th</sup> nation among 105 countries with food affordability, availability and quality. According to the Index, Nigeria recorded weak scores in the areas of public expenditure on agricultural research and development, 0.0%; presence of food safety net programmes, 0.0%; gross domestic product per capita, 3.0%; proportion of population under global poverty line, 9.6%; food consumption as a share of household expenditure, 9.6%; and protein quality, 12.8%.<sup>1</sup> A brief explanation on the terrain under discussion is very important for proper assimilation.

Nkanu is a clan of people who have different migrational nature trail but with similar cultural and historical antecedents. She is one of the largest homogenous people among the Northern Igbo domiciled in the present Enugu State. Nkanu is made up of a block of twenty towns divided into five Local Government Areas, viz: Enugu East, Enugu North,<sup>2</sup> Enugu South, Nkanu East and Nkanu West. She occupies an estimated area of about 1602.22 square kilometres.<sup>3</sup> The vegetation of Nkanu falls within the forest belt of Eastern Nigeria, which is characterized by tall trees and tall grasses. But the frequent soil exposure, resulting from bush burning and the cut-and-clear system of farming, has greatly deterred the vegetative Nkanu area. During the rainy season, the area receives an annual rainfall of 1,750 – 2,000 mm that lasts from April to October, with annual temperature of about 75<sup>o</sup> F and 80<sup>o</sup> F which combine to make the climate genial and equable for food production.<sup>4</sup>

For emphasis sake and proper clarifications, using Enugu metropolis as a case study based on the fieldwork carried out by this researcher in all the major markets in Enugu and three vegetable oil manufacturing companies; Nkanu contributes four out of every five gallons of palm oil sold in Enugu markets; and 45% of palm kernel used by the various vegetable oil producing companies in Enugu. 30% of garri sellers; 15% of sweet potato sellers; 27% of plantain sellers; 15% of cocoyam (*ede*) sellers; 12% of banana sellers;

25% of water yam (*abana*) sellers; and 5% of local rice sellers; all got their produce from Nkanuland. She also contributes 15% of vegetables (fluted pumpkin, *anara* leaf, *ewa* leaf, bitter leaf, and African spinarch or green leaf) and 23% of fresh maize, sold at the Odegba market (a daily market specifically for vegetables and other fresh commodities).

Food production systems are at the forefront of development thinking since the crisis of staple food in the 1970s due to its importance to man.<sup>5</sup> In Igboland, food production is used interchangeably with agriculture. This is because of its dominating role compared to other agricultural practices, vis-à-vis other economic foundations of Igboland. In Nkanuland, economic activities before the invasion and intrusion of Europeans were largely restricted to the production of subsistence goods, mostly food crops for local consumption.<sup>6</sup> The major food production of Nkanu people in pre – colonial times were yam and cocoyam, just as in other parts of Igboland. Cassava later joined the fray after its introduction in Igboland in mid – 19<sup>th</sup> century, 1857. Other food crops and vegetables found in Nkanu are maize, rice, garden egg, vegetable juste, cowpea, melon, green or African spinarch, African yam bean, okro, bitter leaf, pepper, fluted pumpkin, among others.<sup>7</sup> Most of these crops serve both as food and cash crops.

This paper encapsulates two basic issues of historical research and the central argument running through it is the interaction between food production and rural poverty. Until now, the subject matter remains a neglected theme in the area under review. In the course of the research, attempts were made to ascertain the linkage between rural food production and poverty in Nkanuland. This paper is divided into six sub-headings. Following this introduction is an elaboration of what rural poverty entails; its challenges and problems. Then transition over time of food production chain in Nkanuland. Linkages between rural food production and poverty in Nkanuland will be established. Recommendations and way forward, and finally conclusion.

## **RURAL POVERTY: CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS**

Poverty denotes socio – economic conditions of deprivation or lack of the basic necessities of life, in particular of things which are imperative but are absent and renders life indecent for creditable people, even of the lowest order.<sup>8</sup> Absolute poverty is a situation of being unable or only barely able to meet the subsistence essentials of food, clothing, and shelter. But M. G. Meier opines that:

It is difficult to measure the extent of poverty ... poverty means more than low income, malnutrition, poor health and lack of education – and not all the poor are equally badly off in all respects. There is also room for disagreement about where to draw the line between the poor and the rest, and the correct way to calculate and compare incomes and living standards at different times and in different places. To compound these difficulties, the data neither are inadequate Nor is direct observation necessarily a reliable basis for generalization.<sup>9</sup>

In agreement with him, it is extremely difficult to arrive at a tight estimate of the extent of global poverty at any point in time. In 1981, about 600 million adults in less developing countries were illiterate and poor. While up to 400 million people were recorded to have very low life expectancy and about 780 million live on very low income.<sup>10</sup> Major World Bank reports issued within a couple of years of each other have provided estimates of the dollar-a-day headcount that differ by tens of millions of people. This reflects the difficulty of the task. The one dollar-a-day line was first set in 1987, and later the standard became \$1.08 using the 1993 United States purchasing power parity (PPP). In 2008, the equivalent line was reset at \$1.25 using the 2005 United States purchasing power parity.<sup>11</sup>

Furthermore, it is generally agreed that poor people mostly live in rural villages rather than urban centres. Away in the villages, the poor work on the farms to eke out a living for most of the hours of the day. The rural poor lack social amenities and services like proper education, health facilities,

good road network, pipe-borne water, electricity and so forth. The database for analyzing the living conditions of the rural poor is difficult for Nigeria including the Nkanu area. For instance, it is difficult even for wage earners in Nigeria to clearly budget their monthly salaries specifically for food, clothing, medical care, school fees and other things; signifying that their standards of living are low which makes the analysis of that segment of society difficult. According to the Federal Office of Statistics (FOS), in 1960, about 15% of the population of Nigeria was poor. But by 1980, this had rising to 28%. By 1985, it rose further to 46%, although it dropped to 43% by 1992. However, by 1996, poverty incidence in the country was 66% or 76.6 million Nigerians out of a population of 110 million then.<sup>12</sup>

**Table 1: Incidence of Poverty by sector and zone, 1980 – 1996.**

	1980 (%)	1985 (%)	1992 (%)	1996 (%)
National	28.1	46.3	42.7	65.6
Urban	17.2	37.8	37.5	58.2
Rural	28.3	51.4	66.0	69.3
South East	12.9	30.4	41.0	53.5

**Source:** FOS (1999) Poverty Profile for Nigeria, 1980 – 1996, Lagos.

Similarly, the rural diet of Nkanu people like every other Nigerian is not balanced. Malnutrition and protein – calorie famine are part of the everyday life of most village farmers in Nkanuland, and particularly affects old people, pregnant women and children who are perpetually exposed to infectious diseases without any choice or prospect of dealing with the problem. When one considers other requirements in the daily diets like milk, sugar, minerals, iron, to mention just a few, it becomes obvious that rural poverty referred to here is more alarming than one can imagine. The rural poor walk bare-footed for very long distances to markets and other places to sell their foodstuffs

and if they are sick and have to be treated, it must be in government unequipped clinics.

Indeed our present knowledge of rural poverty is not complete in any way. However, from the foregoing, the Nkanu rural poor are mostly non – wage earners, malnourished children, women and old people who manage to earn their living through the production of food crops by means of traditional methods. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in their 2009/2010 report, about 60% of Enugu State people are under absolute poverty line, of which 51.7% are classified as rural poor as if to live in the rural areas is synonymous with poverty.<sup>13</sup> The report went ahead to say that 23% suffer severity of poverty in food trends.<sup>14</sup>

**Table 2: Food Poverty Trends; 2003-2004 and 2009-2010.** (Based on Per Capita Measure)

	Head Count (%)	Poverty Gap (%)	Severity of Poverty (%)
Enugu State	63.8 and 73.2	25.6 and 37	13.2 and 23
National	80.2 and 75.7	41.4 and 36.6	26.4 and 22.1
Rural	83.9 and 77.7	43.8 and 38.8	27.4 and 23.8
Urban	75.3 and 72.2	38.3 and 32.8	25.2 and 19

**Source:** NBS, Harmonized Nigeria Living Standard, 2012.

Not many rural farmers have a strong liquidity base to reinvest the cash derived from sale of food crops into other areas which one may regard as new economic ventures for future development. Though, there are a number of yam, cassava, palm produce and rice farmers who could do so but they are not much and the overall outlook is what may be considered as growth without development.<sup>15</sup> The earnings from food producers are not enough to

provide for the maintenance of extended families, payment of school fees, among other. All these constitute the financial burdens of the Nkanu food producers whose general pattern of life has not yet experienced a radical departure from the austerity of the predominantly rural poor.

Finally, rural poverty as used in this paper encompasses lack of material comfort and necessities of life in the modern sense like goods and services. Overtime, it has been the rural poor farmers who provide both cheap labour and cheap food for urban dwellers. The inability of these food producers to use the sale of their farm produce to alleviate their sufferings is made possible through the activities of middlemen and non – indigenes that through the local markets and bought Nkanu foodstuffs cheaply hoard and resell it at exorbitant prices. Somehow, increased production of food cannot reduce this phenomenon.

### **TRANSITION IN FOOD PRODUCTION CHAIN**

Nkanu towns, according to Geoffrey Horne, are prosperous farming people.<sup>16</sup> Agriculture in pre – colonial Nkanu was the matrix in which economic activities were set, and every Nkanu man was a farmer.<sup>17</sup> The traditional method of farming in Nkanu involved shifting cultivation. This has proved to be an integral part of as well as an evidence of a systematic order in African subsistence economy.<sup>18</sup> Cutlasses, hoes, staking stick, and digger were among the commonest locally made farm implements extensively used by the farmers.

According to Marx, humans enter into definite connections and relations with one another and only within these connections and relations their actions on nature (production) take place. Whatever the form of the process of production in a society, it must be a continuous process of reproduction.<sup>19</sup> During the pre – colonial period (even till date) of Nkanu history, the people were basically an agrarian region and this is significant because agriculture acted as a turning point of most historical developments even before

industrialization, scientific and technological revolutions. In the Nkanu area, every family masterminded its reproductive activities.

For most African societies, the three most popular modes of production include, the communal – lineage mode of production, the tributary mode of production, and the slave mode of production.<sup>20</sup> Marx and Engels believed that each society is unique and one should allow some elements of flexibility because of the inherent contradictions in most socio – economic formations. And this is undoubtedly why it is possible to have societies which are classified as classless and non – capitalist having modes of production peculiar to them in their “infinite variations”.<sup>21</sup> The overwhelming majority of communities in Nkanuland, as well as in other Igbo communities, appeared to have had the communal – lineage mode of production.

The basic unit of production was the family or household, comprising the father and the mother of the house as well as the children and other relatives within the extended family system. Under this arrangement, the role of the head, usually the father of each household controlled almost every economic activity, especially the production of food for subsistence. When and how the farm calendar should be followed according to seasonal rains and when to allow farmland to go fallow were all elements of the man. The family head further determined the consumption of what was harvested and when, which crops/seeds would be reserved for the next planting season, and how much of the surplus would be sold or sent to extended relations.

Every domestic unit made deliberate efforts to ensure that all members of the household were well fed. But more importantly, the basic strategy enabled family heads to mobilize their entire household to produce more than enough food. It is also important to stress here that in pre – colonial Nkanu area, markets existed in the neighbourhoods where foodstuffs changed hands. This is because it was practically impossible for every household, village, community or town to embark on growing all the food crops.

Then came colonial rule with their economic agenda. Meanwhile, Nkanuland came under British colonial rule in 1910, two years after the famous Udi expedition in 1908 that led to the discovery of large deposits of coal in the Udi Hills in 1909. Nkanuland was under the colonial administration of Nkanu Sub – District of Udi Division in Onitsha Province.<sup>22</sup> We must not also forget that the method of expanding colonial rule by the Europeans in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was by violence and non – democratic means. The overriding argument for material purposes is that the colonial domination in the Nkanu area offers perhaps the most significant factor in the explanation of the contradictions which gave rise to massive food production and rural poverty among the rural farmers of Nkanuland. Although poverty existed before colonial rule, but the integration of colonial Nkanu territories into the capitalist system was to exacerbate the phenomenon almost beyond human imaginations.

The structure of the colonial economy was by nature, complex and contradictory. This is because the whole edifice of colonialism was ostensibly operated and geared towards expropriation of economic surplus.<sup>23</sup> From 1915, every development of the Nkanu area was consciously designed to establish a relationship between the area and the British colonial power so that the surplus created by the peasant farmers could be expropriated by Britain in the form of labour – power and the creation of a taxable wage – earning class.<sup>24</sup> In addition, infrastructural developments were undertaken, especially the opening of foot paths, roads and railways<sup>25</sup> to facilitate the institutionalization of colonial administration. All these contradictions have continued to generate questions as to what or in whose advantage colonialism was instituted.

The components of the colonial economy in practice in Nkanuland were taxation, colonial labour systems and the commercialization of surplus agricultural produce and commodity relations. Taxation of colonial territories was a means of fully and effectively incorporating areas into the colonial state. According to Lord Lugard,

Taxation was a stimulus to production, a source of revenue for the support of the colonial administration. 'It marks the recognition by the community of the protecting power' and finally it serves as the basis for the development of the system of indirect rule. Without income from taxation they could not provide for development let alone the payment of officials on a regular basis. Without a tax there can be no treasury, and without a treasury no eventual measure of self – rule.<sup>26</sup>

Here was the mode of operation and the fulcrum upon which the colonial economic structure rested. So in Nkanuland, every adult male in every domestic or household unit who was old enough to marry was assessed and earmarked for tax payment. In 1915, direct taxation was introduced in Nkanuland and later agricultural tax in form of produce was added, in the peak of World War 1.<sup>27</sup>

The significance of taxing agrarian peasants in kind or produce was to stimulate farmers to produce more of certain crops to the neglect of others, on the case of Nkanu, the emphasis was on palm oil and kernel. This tax in palm oil and kernel, and forced labour in the railway construction, among other grievances resulted in what later came to be known as the Udi Revolt. When a number of towns in the fifteen mile radius of what is now Enugu, among them Akegbe(Awkunanaw), Akpugo and Amagunze, saw that the British soldiers at Udi went out for the Cameroon War; and concluded that they were going to capture the very small number of soldiers left and kill them. It took a combined reinforcement from Lokoja and the remnants of soldiers left in the Province to crush the rebellion. And the people collapse under superior firepower of machine gun.<sup>28</sup>

In the 1920s, taxes were raised to 5s from 3s per adult male especially from indigenes living along the railway line who earn income from activities around the railway.<sup>29</sup> One of the immediate repercussions of these increased taxation was a sustained sale of palm oil and kernel, especially from 1919 when the people were relieved the burden of working in the coal mines.

Those who resisted taxation were made to suffer in a number of ways. Adult males who could not pay their taxes or evaded them were humiliated, tortured and punished by being made to roll on hot sand on a sunny afternoon, or to “frog jump” with their hands on their heads, facing the evening sunlight. Given the relatively high taxation on the Nkanu farmers, the people reduced their fiscal burdens through an active response and initiative towards the production of palm oil and kernel, and any of the food crops that attracts huge monetary income.

The colonial labour system refers to a broad phalanx of all British colonial strategies of labour organization employed to exploit the labour force of the Nkanu people. These include forced labour or conscription to the coal mines, human portorage, wage – labour, and whatever might stimulate labour migrations. The other important aspect of this was engagement of labour for public utilities like railway construction project in 1913 and roads construction.<sup>30</sup> Able – bodied Nkanu young men were forcefully recruited to clear access roads along the proposed rail route. Most of them worked corvee labourers in a variety of jobs ranging from “earth - work” to track – laying and bridge building at 12s per three weeks.<sup>31</sup> From this meagre amount, the colonial government still collected their tax. This railway construction work was called *oru owa ito*, for it lasted normally three months for every set of recruited workers. This was due to the excruciating and dehumanizing condition of the work.<sup>32</sup> In 1928, the construction of direct road from Enugu (passing through Nkanuland) to Port Harcourt was started. All at the hardest labour of Nkanu young men and in an effort to open up interior of Nkanuland for maximum exploitation of its human and material resources.

The end of the railway construction in 1916<sup>33</sup> ushered in a new scenario in the colonial labour system in Nkanu area. From 1916, the mining of coal in the Udi Coal Mine began in commercial quantity that yielded 24,511 metric tons of coal and the bulk of the labourers for the Colliery were recruited locally. Picks and shovels were used, head pan carriers were engaged, and prospectors worked from 6:00am to 5:00pm. So deplorable were the labour

conditions that many lost their lives. To ensure a steady supply of local forced labour, the Colliery Management signed and sealed an agreement with the two paramount Chiefs of Udi and Nkanu areas: Chief Onyeama Nwaeze Nwa Owushi of Eke and Chief Chukwuani Nwangwu of Ozalla respectively. The terms of the agreement provided that the two Chiefs would be paid recruitment fees, contingent on the number of labourers each was able to recruit for the mines.<sup>34</sup> But the Nkanu groups, because of their flair for agriculture and the availability of large parcels of fertile land, preferred to work in their farms, producing foods for the rising immigrants in the coal mines, rather than work on the coalfields themselves. Some who were already recruited abandoned it and returned to their farmlands. According to Dan O. Chukwu, by 1919, the colliery management had been ordered to terminate the recruitment of labourers of Nkanu origin. At the time, the production of palm oil and palm kernel had steadily been on the increase in the Nkanu area, and was gradually engaging the attention of the indigenes.<sup>35</sup> The reason for this stoppage was to enable the Nkanu people concentrate on palm oil and kernel, and other food production.

With the preference of food production by the Nkanu people against working in the coalfields or even the modern civil service, the colonial power embarked on the commercialization of “surplus” agricultural produce in the area. The method adopted by the colonial government to achieve this aim was the introduction of the Marketing Board, who fixed prices of every food produce brought to market and the fronting of its Licensed Buying Agents to buy them at such cheap prices. This negates the capitalists’ principle of demand and supply as determined by market forces. What this means was that Nkanu food producers no longer get commiserate amount of money from what they produce, yet they had to sell in order to get money for tax payment. This made their concentration shift to goods that brought higher market prices like palm oil and kernel, garri, rice, guinea corn, among others. This separation of cash and food crops made some individuals who couldn’t cope with the production of the former to join the trade sector.<sup>36</sup> Thus, reducing the manpower further.

At the dawn of independence in 1960, the Eastern Nigeria government gave high priority to agriculture in its 1962 – 68 Development Plan, especially the establishment of Farm Settlement. But the farm settlement programme proved to be far less successful than the dream which conceived, bored and nurtured it. First, the programme turned out to be too expensive to be sustained, at 4,000 pounds per settler.<sup>37</sup> Yet, the crop yields in the settlements hardly justified the cost of the programme. Second, its high cost precluded emulation of the system by ordinary farmers in the neighbourhoods of the settlements. It thus failed in the important function of having a demonstration effect on surrounding communities. And could not bring about the modernization of the indigenous rural agricultural system.

Third, the programme focused mostly on the established export staples, namely; palm oil and kernel, cashew, among other tree crops. This position seemed a reversal of the official commitment to diversify the narrow base of the agricultural economy. The all important issue of increasing food production was underplayed. Food prices, especially in urban areas continued to rise. Thus, the vast majority of the rural farmers, untouched by the government programmes, continued to rely on their age – old system of cultivation and tools. Finally, many of the settlers had thought that the programme was designed to get them white collar employments as agricultural personnel. When this hope did not materialize, most of them deserted. The system, thus, failed in the important task of stemming the drift of youths from rural to urban areas.<sup>38</sup> Nkanu was even worse off, as none of her indigene benefitted from the programme nor was any of the farm settlement established in her territory.

With the burgeoning population of Enugu city by all classes of people from different areas of Igboland and other parts of Nigeria, the demand for food produce increased in the city. Fulfilling this demand rested on the shoulders of rural food producers of Nkanuland, the closest agrarian locality to Enugu. Just as during the era of colonialism, the people responded spontaneously to the increased demand for food produce. Thus, every market day in the

different Nkanu communities – Eke Agbani, Orié Mba Akpugo, Eke Amagunze, Afor Ugbawka, Orié Nara, Eke Nomeh, Eke Nkerefi, Afor Ugwogo Nike, Eke Obinagu Nike, Afor Ogbodo Amechi Idodo, Eke Owo, Afor Ubahu, among others – saw several line ups of vehicle thronged them to lift food produce to urban areas. But most of these traders brought their buying price very low so that they could make their own profit. Since there were many sellers who might depend on the proceeds for their daily feeding and upkeeps, their only option was to sell at the asking price of the buyers.<sup>39</sup> The resultant effect of this poor pricing was disenchantment among the producers and production dwindled.

The Nigerian – Biafra civil war, 1967 – 1970 that disrupted economic activities especially on the Biafran side brought another dimension to food production in Nkanuland after 1970. Immediately after the war, able – bodied Nkanu young men joined the frenze of rural – urban migration in pursuit of education, trade and artisanry. There were massive food exports to other parts of Nigeria, especially of palm oil to northern part of the country. With this new phenomenon, the increased production of certain food crops to the neglect of some became rife. The emphasis shifted to those crops that attracts more buyers for maximum profit.<sup>40</sup> Since there have been reduction in the production of food crops like yam, cassava, maize, etc, from Nkanuland, Enugu food consumers who had been the major absorber of food produced in Nkanuland resorted to importation of those food. A survey shows that from 1970 – 1990, 60% of yams eaten in Enugu came from northern Nigeria. 50% of garri and 45% of rice came from Abakaliki. 80% of beans from northern Nigeria.<sup>41</sup>

Federal government’s neglect of agriculture during this period owing to massive revenue coming from petroleum never helped matters. From the early 1970s, oil and gas accounted for between 95% and 98% of the country’s export earnings and hardly less than 83% of the central government revenue.<sup>42</sup> This resulted to deepening and widening poverty among rural farmers as the country turned to foreign food importation. No

wonder the era witnessed a proliferation of several poverty alleviation programmes by the government; viz – National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP) in 1972, the Agricultural Development Programmes (ADPs) in 1974, the River Basin Development Programme (RBDP) in 1976, Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) in 1978, the Green Revolution (GR) in 1979, the Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) in 1986, the Better Life for Rural Women Programme (BLRWP) in 1987, among others. All these bodies were tasked to reduce poverty among the citizenry, especially rural dwellers. On the part of Nkanu food producers, due to low patronage of certain staple food crops, productions were reduced also to subsistence level and total neglect and/or abandonment of some. The manpower was also no longer available as the craze for oil money pushed several young farmers to the urban areas.

### **LINKING RURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND POVERTY**

The nature of rural poverty in Nkanuland was neither natural nor an act of God. It was not a function of malevolent environment like natural disaster. Rather, it was caused primarily by human beings. In this case, the argument is that the British colonial rule started it and the early independence government of Eastern Nigeria did nothing to correct the trends. According to Karl Marx in his preface to a contribution to the critique of political economy; the capitalist mode of production means the development of all forms of capitalism since the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Europe. However, this subsequently involved exportation (expansion) of capital to other areas of the world via colonization (imperialism and monopolistic tendencies).<sup>43</sup>

For the period of fifty years when the Nkanu area was kept under the British colonial rule, imperialism went through the highest stage of capitalist development. The bane of the capitalist system in Nkanuland was that, rather than using the surplus value to reduce human suffering and develop the area, it was siphoned to Europe for investment purposes and so forth. To what extent the British colonial administration laid the basis for and contributed to rural poverty in the Nkanu area of Igboland, and the neglect of the

agricultural potentials of the area by the subsequent independent Nigerian governments, is the real issue here.

First and foremost was the fact that the colonial system neither completely destroyed nor preserved pre – capitalist modes of production that existed before its advent. Claude Ake captured the essence of this argument by saying that “the colonial economy was characterized by disarticulation or incoherence”<sup>44</sup> of parts that are neither complementary nor acted upon each other in reciprocal harmony. More specifically, it needs to be recalled that Nkanu people were agrarian long before the British colonial rule. However, with the introduction of commodity production and the social relations of production as well, the farmers were constrained to maintain a delicate balance of food and cash crop production; one for subsistence needs and the other for purposes of taxation. The desire to satisfy both ends remained insatiable since prices for primary produce were kept low by the colonial administration. The food producers had no choice but to adapt themselves to the dominance of the capitalist system. The situation would have been better if the system had forward and backward linkages between food production and the cash crop sector or any other that could produce by – products from the primary or raw materials. It put undue strain on the people and gradually led to the collapse of their means of survival.

Another way in which the British colonial economy created rural poverty situation in Nkanu area can be seen in their choice of what to produce, to whom to produce and distribution and/or consumption pattern. It is instructive to note that the cash crops from the area had both local and international markets but food crops at best had only local and inter – regional markets. During World War II, the colonial government encouraged and enforced the production of palm oil and kernel, as against other food crops, to enhance adequate supply to Britain in assisting the war efforts. According to the Resident Officer, Onitsha Province; over – production of garri means that the people are not bothering about palm oil and kernels. Palm oil and kernels help to win the war. Garri is merely a source of profit

to the producer of it and to the garri trader. As such therefore railments of garri have to be severally quota-ed. I know very well how easy it is to make garri and what good profits is to be had.<sup>45</sup>

In order to reduce garri production, they increased the taxation on garri and other food produce. The people defiled this increased taxation and continued in their food production. The colonial government decided to place strict control on the distribution of food produce in order to control price and profits. On August 28, 1944, the colonial government placed a ban on the sale of garri without government approval.<sup>46</sup> The same ban was also placed on yam, especially yams from the Idodo axis of Nkanuland, who are predominantly yam farmers.<sup>47</sup>

On the side of palm oil and kernel production which the colonial government encouraged, and the Nkanu people responded positively, was facing the challenge of who to produce for and how much to sell. The colonial government stopped the railment of palm oil and kernel to the north, so as to have enough for export to Europe. The military was given preference in getting palm oil that commencing from the 1<sup>st</sup> November, 1943, no non – military oil will be accepted by the railway in any month until 1,000 tins have been railed to Enugu for the military.<sup>48</sup> Prices were also controlled to favour the colonial agencies as against the local producers, and storage was discouraged so as to enhance availability of the produce. Thus, the production of food crops was not really encouraged by the colonial administration and the culture of saving was not inculcated.

Another way in which colonial rule in Nkanuland contributed to the emergence of rural poverty was through the drafting of young men into rail and road construction, while some were drawn to work in the coal mines at Iva. As earlier noted the people disdained this forced labour and showed it in their work ethics. Even though the recruitment of Nkanu indigenes was stopped in 1919, not all went back to farming. The result of this loss of young, able-bodied people from the area was the beginning of the neglect

and corresponding decline in agricultural production, especially in the food sector which has been left in the hands of old men and women.

Another way through which colonial rule enhanced rural poverty in Nkanuland was the operations of the domestic economy based on foodstuff marketing and distribution that was basically in the hands of non – indigenes. It will suffice to say here that in the complex arrangements of the colonial food market systems, indigenous entrepreneurs had not yet emerged to reinvest the gains they derived from foodstuff business to develop the area. The produce control board monopolized the export of major agricultural crops and also fixed prices they paid for produce, which were always far below the prevailing international market prices. O. N. Njoku attests that “Nigerian farmers at best received only 60% of the value of their produce”.<sup>49</sup> In Nkanu area, one Madam Lydia Eze of Nomeh was given a permit on September 14, 1944, to rail garri to the north. She later added palm kernel and oil, and other food crops with specified quantity.<sup>50</sup> She was expected to have access to 6 tons of yams per month from Agbani terminal and 2 tons per month from Nomeh terminal for movement to the north.<sup>51</sup> One Moses Nnaji of Enugwu Ngwo was given the sole license to transport yams from Idodo axis by lorry to Enugu for further distribution. He was also given the instruction not to carry more than 30 bags of palm kernel at a time in his lorry.<sup>52</sup> This non – liberalization of the food produce trade contributed to rural poverty in Nkanuland.

Finally, at the dawn of independence, Nkanu farmers demonstrated its readiness to fight poverty and hunger through massive production of food for the ever increasing population of Enugu metropolis. However, certain factors still hampered this progress. According to Francis Idachaba, “there is food in the rural and even urban markets, except that there is no money to buy it”.<sup>53</sup> Given the fact that Enugu was predominantly inhabited by civil servants whose vast majority fall under the category of minimum wage – earners, any off – set in salary payments automatically brings about collapse in food supply. Apart from the problem of insufficient and irregular

wages/salaries, food poverty in the Nkanu area was also caused by the fact that the people often have large families who must be cared for. So it has been that regardless of whatever quantity of food was produced, there were more than enough mouths to consume it. Against this background, it was easy to locate the food problem of the Nkanu people as partly occasioned by lack of means to purchase the necessary quantity and quality of food. But that was not all.

Also, there was no controversy about the fact Nkanu apparently produces or has the potential to produce more food than her domestic food needs. But the problem was that food was sold immediately after harvesting. Every market day in Nkanuland, vehicles loaded food produce bought to different urban areas in Igboland and the northern part of the country. This was caused by the inability of both farmers and policy makers to provide storage facilities, develop the agricultural sector in Nkanuland, and faulty marketing and distribution network.<sup>54</sup> As Idachaba puts it; there is enough aggregate production, but the observed food shortages are the results of unequal economic access to available food supplies, a situation rooted in unequal distribution of income and wealth.<sup>55</sup>

This situation gave room for the traders to exploit the Nkanu rural farmers. The policy makers of Eastern Nigeria, having known the role of the Nkanu rural farmers didn't do much, if at all to encourage them. None of the farm settlements established by the M. I. Okpara government was sited in Nkanuland. Except for the railway that crossed few communities and some roads opened by the colonial government, access to the interior of Nkanu communities and villages were never considered until 1979 when Jim Nwobodo became the Governor of Old Anambra State.<sup>56</sup> On the part of the people, immediately after the civil war, young men abandoned agriculture and food production and moved in droves to various urban areas where they engaged in animal butchering,<sup>57</sup> and other ancillary economic ventures.

The introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) by the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1986 put the final nail on the coffin of any hope for eradicating poverty among rural farmers, not only in Nkanuland but Nigeria as a whole. SAP enhanced wide – range of food markets, abolition of subsidy, restrictions on importation of food to encourage exportation of food, and the encouragement of individuals rather than government in food production. Thus, food production became very expensive for food producers due to the high cost of production ranging from land clearing to harrowing and harvesting, with the result that every item of food in both rural and urban markets became expensive.

The nature of rural poverty in Nkanuland during the post – colonial era can be analyzed from two other angles: one is from the point of view of the capacity of the small – scale subsistence farmer who is obviously incapable of using the arable farmland to produce adequate food. Small – scale farmers are still using the hoe and cutlass for most of their food production activities. Implements that would increase productivity, such as tractors and fertilizers, are unaffordable. All they can do is to try and cope with their subsistence strategies which are driven largely by rainfall and other weather conditions. The second angle is the nature of the food policies of the governments (Eastern Nigeria, East – Central, Anambra and Enugu States), which are more or less a repetition of the colonial – liberal approaches to the food question. This has been more of verbal expressions in fiscal planning without implementation. However one sees it, rural poverty in Africa is largely traceable to European imperialism as rightly conceived by the materialist conception of history.<sup>58</sup>

## **RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAY FORWARD**

A major contribution of this paper lies in unraveling the seemingly intractable mystery of poverty in Nkanuland. It points to the fact that, overall, Nkanu has not experienced any decisive structural change in spite of its proximity to the seat of power of Enugu. For this reason, this paper includes a humble but workable redefinition of development strategies

aimed towards uplifting the occupational base of rural farmers in the area. First, both producers and policy makers must look at the food question as a triangular relationship between food production, distribution and consumption. The campaign should not only be on boosting food production towards self – sufficiency in general, the people has never failed on that. Rather, important aspects like intervening variables of production cost, how to transform the means/process of production, and whether and when to sell or withhold foodstuff from the markets, should be included. This is because a careful examination to locate areas of dysfunction in the Nkanu food chain constantly suggested that the most serious problems of poverty lies with the distribution/marketing system, which is yet to be effectively dealt with.

Second, the Enugu State government must identify or re-evaluate the current areas of food problems and formulate the relevant food policies accordingly. It is also imperative they re-evaluate the poverty indices in line with the contemporary meaning of poverty, which goes beyond the description of gross national product (GNP) per capita income. Today, the phenomenon of poverty encompasses the very problems of living daily without the basic necessities of life for the vast majority of Nkanu rural dwellers. These problems include gender dimensions of poverty, illiteracy, and lack of pipe-borne water, electricity, good roads, clinics/hospitals, schools, etc. If the government's integrated rural development programme is to have an impact, then all these must be considered. An effective rural development programme will most likely increase the people's life expectancy, reduce rural – urban migration and decrease the mortality rates for infants and the general population as well as reducing unemployment and dependency burdens.

Third, reducing poverty among rural farmers of Nkanu is to adopt successfully traditional farming techniques and modern farming methods. This strategy involves a flexible interplay between shifting cultivation and crop rotation. Introduction of high yielding/pest-resisting seeds and sophisticated water management approaches for large farming activities with

or without artificial water supplies. The combination of old and modern farming techniques is like “a marriage of convenience” as most farmers in Nkanuland are not willing to relinquish their old methods of farming to stick to new methods. It is this synergy that performed the magic we saw in the Asian tigers of Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, China, Japan, India, among others.

Fourth, it is absolutely necessary to identify and empower genuine rural farmers who are literate with at least primary school education and accessible loans and/or credit facilities for the specific purpose of boosting rural food production. Here, the two major obstacles are the identification of genuine farmers and the frustrating rigours of loan procurement. Those mostly in need of loans for food production are the poor, small – scale rural farmers who are mainly women and illiterate. These groups of people have been the main producers of food crops in Nkanuland and as vanguards of sustainable economic growth, their access to loans or other factors of production – land, capital, and labour markets, will substantially reduce rural poverty. Rural farmers can be organized into Co-operative Societies, on the basis of crop acquisition, loan schemes and so on. These rural farmers are the best cornerstone of a comprehensive programme of poverty reduction. This is because a few of retired civil servants and political officers who venture into farming and food storage activities do not use the agricultural loans to generate the surplus necessary for dealing with food shortage. Apart from ensuring that only genuine farmers are the main beneficiaries and recipients of farm loans in cash, production loans could be secured in kind in the form of tubers, grains (rice paddy, maize, etc), and chemical fertilizers. The basic advantage of giving loans to farmers in kind is that unlike with cash loans, the issue of the money being used for things other than expansion of food production will not arise. It is rural farmers that know where poverty pinches most and stakeholders need to determine how they can be genuinely assisted.

Fifth, to reduce hunger and poverty in the Nkanu area, the people and government need to establish modern and/or proper storage facilities that are simple to maintain in and out of harvest seasons in every communities and villages. These lack of storage facilities results in much food being wasted or sold off at harvest times throughout Nkanuland. Foodstuffs that cannot be distributed or marketed at good prices during harvest times should be reserved for the interest of consumers during months of scarcity. If this is efficiently administered, it will forestall the profiteering operations of middlemen who hoard foodstuffs at harvest to re-sell at exorbitant prices.

If these measures are adopted, rural farmers of Nkanuland will likely experience enhanced liquidity base and this will as well lead to a reduction in the crippling poverty in the area in the long run. While the analysis contained in this paper and its efforts at finding solutions to rural poverty in the area are far from conclusive or definitive, it must be observed that the options are broad enough to meet the challenges of the current situation. Poverty do not only arise from lack of food or material possessions but also as problems of the mind, attitude, habit as well as the pedigree and orientation of people in life. So, this call for policy reforms is compelling because food insecurity and rural poverty in the midst of food production is a ridiculous, inexcusable contradiction and must be resolved.

## **CONCLUSION**

By now it would appear that the logic of the contradiction that poverty are almost always found in the midst of plenty. This has been explained in the best way possible, using the available statistical evidence on the Nkanu area of the present – day Enugu State of Nigeria. This is a strange phenomenon which is difficult to conceptualize. However, as the issues played out and examination proves, it is difficult to contradict this truth, at least for the farmers of Nkanuland. This paper has thus far sought to redirect attention to the activities of the overwhelming majority of Nkanu small – scale rural farmers upon who most people in Enugu metropolis and Nigeria depend for their food supply. Obviously, these rural farmers have never ranked among

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Of every five butcher in the various markets in Enugu, three are Nkanu indigenes. Same applies to other markets in Igboland and other parts of Nigeria, with variations. Personal survey from the author. This calls for further research.

The materialist conception of history starts from the proposition that the production of the means to support human life and, next to production, the exchange of things produced, is the basis of all social structure; that in every society that has appeared in history, the manner in which wealth is distributed and society divided into classes or orders is dependent upon what is produced, how it is produced and how the products are exchanged. See Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*.

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**HISTORICAL REVIEW OF TRADITIONAL DIPLOMACY AND  
CONFLICT IN ISUOKOMA**

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**Abstract**

*In Isuokoma clan, the diplomatic activities used by the people makes it imperative to take a cursory examination of the nature of intergroup relations that has existed between her and her neighbours. The study of diplomatic and conflict relations between Isuokoma and her neighbours reveals the contributions of Isuokoma neighbours to the political, economic, socio-cultural and religious development of Isuokoma and vice versa and also debunk Europeans assertion that African communities were in permanently in hostility with one another before the coming of the former, which was often used to justify European colonial conquest. The study used qualitative methodology to identify the place of trade, marriage, cultural and labour exchange as well as sale of arms, blood oath and conflicts in the development of the historic culture of diplomacy and conflict relations between Isuokoma and her neighbours. The study recommends increased community development and peacebuilding in the relations between Isuokoma and her neighbours.*

**Key words:** *Diplomacy, conflict, trade, marriage & Isuokoma*

## **Introduction**

Talbot (1937) was studying Igbo people and the nexus they shared with one another when his findings made him sum that a negro is the most gregarious of all men; his greatest joy is found in amusing himself with his companions in dances, plays, etc., and perhaps, his greatest grief is solitude. This love for company is no doubt one of the chief causes of the existence of the innumerable societies and clubs, secret or otherwise which permeates the whole coast into when most people are subdivided.

This is to show that from time immemorial, the Igbo people have devised numerous ways they interacted with one another in what may be called diplomatic relationship in the present parlance. Many studies have described this diplomatic relation in the past under such titles as intergroup relations (Mbalisi, 2015, Onu, 2021, Chimezie, 2021a, Duru, 1984). The essence of this was because communities in Igboland in the past were not self-sufficient; they depended on one another for certain basic necessities of life. Therefore, the need to satisfy their immediate wants compelled them to move away from their immediate environments in search of other resources and relationship with their neighbours. The foregoing was also in line with the general view that man is a wanting being, (Chimezie, 2021b) who goes after emerging wants on daily basis. Due to this desire to satisfy his other needs, man interacted with his fellow man which brought mutual understanding between the two and sometimes, this understanding was sealed with blood covenant, (Ajaegbo, 2021). With this in place, Isuokoma community in Ebonyi State, Nigeria was not isolated rather it had at various times interacted with her neighbours. Such neighbours the community had diplomatic relations during time under study included Isiogbo and Naara of Nkanu, Enugu State. These people occupied the North-Western borders of Isuokoma; on the North were the Ezza-Egu and Ohafia Agba of Ishielu. At the Southern part is bounded by Uburu in Ohaozara Local Government Area

of Ebonyi State, at the Eastern part of the clan were the Oshiri people (North East) and Onicha people (South East) all within Onicha Local Government of Ebonyi State; while on the North East and North West were the Ezza-Nkerefi and Nkanu of Enugu State, respectively.

Notwithstanding the complexities and skillfulness of the diplomacy practiced in this area for centuries, the history of Isuokoma has remained a field little explored, especially in the area understudy. A study on the origin and settlement of the people of Isuokoma is obviously difficult because of more or less scanty or complete absence of historical document of the people, (Chimezie, 2021c). Study on Isuokoma people has become imperative for clear understanding and appreciation of diplomatic relations between this ancient community and other neighboring communities. Even though a few history texts that dealt with the Onicha history which Isuokoma is inclusive exist, these only covered origin, political and social history of the people, in fact, it is tempting to go on to list neglected areas of Isuokoma historical research. The aforementioned gaps necessitated this study. This is a historical expository study that tends to unravel the technicalities of diplomatic relations that existed in Isuokoma during the period under review: (1989-2007).

### **Methodology and Scope**

This study is essentially a qualitative research. It utilized mainly primary and secondary materials to develop its content. The primary data were collected from different villages of Isuokoma. Special emphasis was paid on the aged townsmen, who gave their consent that their real names be used to sight the randomly selected key informant interviews. The information gathered from the field was thematically interpreted and presented in different sessions of the study.

In 1989, the Onicha Local Government Area was created in Ebonyi State. This local government contained the Isuokoma and majority of the communities it had diplomatic nexus. The creation of the local government

created a level of unity and another dimension in the diplomatic ties between these communities. By 2007, the diplomatic ties culminated in the settlement of one of the historic conflicts that bedeviled the communities starting from the colonial era. The subsequent paragraphs discussed the various diplomatic techniques observable in Isuokoma. But before that, a brief description of the concept of diplomacy was given below.

### **What is Diplomacy?**

Diplomacy can be said to have more political than cultural inclination. In its simplest form, it is the term used to describe the mode of interaction between two or more countries of the world. Although the art and act of diplomacy is not a recent occurrence and tracing the origin does not fall within the concern of this particular study. But suffices to stress here is that modern diplomacy is traceable to the 5<sup>th</sup> Century's Italian City-States where its goal was to establish representation and create a communication channel between the monarch and the city-states, Trunkos (2017a). Nowadays, diplomacy has developed to embrace wide range of activities which were never thought would be there from time immemorial. What then is diplomacy?

Kissinger was quoted in Jonathan et'al (2012a) to have defined it as a plea for good relationships between nations through negotiations against wars. The living Webster encyclopedic dictionary puts it as the science or art of conducting negotiations between nations", Jonathan et'al (2012b). According to the traditional American view, diplomacy is a process of ironing out differences through discussion with eventual agreement based on rational accommodation of reasonable interests" Jordan et'al, (2009). Furthermore, Jonathan et'al (2012c) concluded that it is "the science or art of resolving international conflict peacefully through agreements, compromises and settlements found in negotiations". (Nicolson, 1964) added that it is "the management of international relations by negotiation; the method by which these relations are adjusted by ambassadors and envoys; the business or art of the diplomatist." Trunkos (2017b) stressed that it covers all "the main instrument to implement national foreign policy

during peace and is also a tool that can be used to communicate during conflict”

All the definitions given above have one thing in common. The fact that diplomacy deals with verbal negotiation was overemphasized. It was Trunkos quoted above that attempted to include both conventional and unconventional instruments of communication. These researchers in the lieu of the foregoing give the operational definition of diplomacy to mean the activities, actions and reactions of both government officials and non-government officials that include but not limited to verbal negotiation and cultural dispositions that are geared towards obtaining and maintaining peace across borders. The multi-dimensional nature of international system from the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has made it difficult to pin diplomacy at official government-government talks as it used to be. Trunkos (2017c) observed that because of technological advances that have led to cheap and easy transportation and communication, the world is increasingly interconnected and many new tools are now available for diplomats. Bilateral negotiations and summit meetings have been the traditional approaches to resolving international issues, but in the 20th century, new diplomatic communications tools have emerged, such as public diplomacy (Cull, 2008), cultural diplomacy (Arnd, 2005), and cyber diplomacy (Potter, 2002). Since the beginning of the 20th century, how diplomacy is conducted and who the actors are have changed significantly.

One of the new dimensions of diplomacy enumerated above was cultural diplomacy. That is the area that mostly covers the diplomatic relations that existed between the Isuokoma and her neighbors. Here, their motive was to achieve the maximum group objectives with a minimum cost within a system of politics in which war is a possibility. To further do justice to this, finding on diplomatic and conflict relations between Isuokoma and her neighbours will be accessed under the following; blood oath, exchange of labour and sales of arms.

## **Findings on Diplomatic and Conflict Relations**

### **Blood Oath**

It is of important to state that, one of the diplomatic relations between Isuokoma and some of her neighbours (Uburu, Oshiri and Agba) was in the area of not shedding each other's blood . That of Uburu and Oshiri was due to the fact that Oshiri, Isuokoma and Uburu have a common tradition of origin. Furthermore, during an interview with Elder Odii (2020), he reiterated that there exist a historic alliance where both Oshiri and Isuokoma sought the protection of each other during wars. He furthermore added that they had common founding fathers (Akpata Eze and Eze Ntum) that during settlement periods, were not able to defeat each other during a confrontation. Consequently, both swore an oath of allegiance to be each other's keeper and to carry out hunting expedition which was what they hitherto, were known for. Furthermore, Oka (2020) explained that Isuokoma and Agba clans had bitter wars over supremacy which resulted in loss of lives and properties. Both clans decided to settle the conflict and swore an oath of allegiance not to harm any person that comes from both sides which up till today is been respected by the present generation of both the both clans. Philosophically, Isuokoma and these communities (Oshiri, Uburu and Agba) could not live to witness the killing of the other by any living being in any form to testify a bond covenant explained Odii, (2020). Generally, the blood oath between Isuokoma and the aforementioned served as a sealed and bond that made their diplomatic relations to remain cordial.

### **Exchange of Labour**

Labour can be defined as a man-made effort geared towards production of goods and services. It is germane to state that, during farming season there is to a very large degree an exchange of labour amongst Isuokoma and her neighbours. This is because during this season (farming), the labourers from Isuokoma community engaged in farming activities in her neighboring communities' farmland and vice versa. It is of import to note that, employing other labourers depended on the type of farm produce the farmer wanted to cultivate, (Omeke, 2020). The major occupation of people of Isuokoma is

farming. They cultivate yam, cassava, potato, rice, maize, palm produce (palm oil and kernel) and vegetables. Labourers from Ezzaagu, Agba, Oshiri and Onicha came to Isuokoma during farming season with their hoes and machetes to work on hire for Isuokoma farmers and vice versa. Those who owned tractors from Uburu came with their tractors to plough and harrow parcels of land for Isuokoma rice farmers observed Chukwu, (2020). With this, the relationship between these people remain cordial, not just during the farming season, but beyond. The essence of maintaining this cordial relationship without season is to always be in good terms to have each other's services whenever needed.

### **Sales of Arms**

Another area of diplomatic relations amongst Isuokoma and its neighbours was in the area of sales of arms. Ani, (2020) during an interview to these researchers explained that this diplomatic relation was necessitated as a result of the 97 years' wars also known as O.M.O (Obeagu-Mgbalukwu-Ojiegbe) war. The Isuokoma communities of Mgbalukwu and Obeagu who were persecuting the war against the Ojiegbe people were in dire hard need of arms and ammunition to continue the fight. The Isuokoma people approached the Oshiri people which the later was hitherto known to have fought the Ezza people during its early days of settlement at her present abode. Due to the cordiality between Isuokoma and Oshiri, the latter agreed to sell arms to the former. This has over the years remained a strong diplomatic bond that knitted these two together.

### **Exchange of Political and Cultural Ideas**

Culture is a term used to generally describe the totality of a people's way of life, or those distinctive attributes by which a people's way of life, or those distinctive attribute by which a people can be identified. Thus, it bestows an identity on a people. Over the years and due to the course of inter-group relations between Isuokoma and her neighbours, there have been a considerable exchange of political and cultural ideas between them (Isuokoma and its neighbours). These exchange ranges from alliance, burial

and marriage list. It is germane to take a cursory look at some of the exchange.

It is instructive to note that, the Isuokoma people exchanged some form of burial functions with her neighboring communities of Onicha and Agba. In Onicha community for example, the people do not bury their loved ones during January which is the beginning of year. This is due to the fact that January marks the beginning of a formal year and it is not wise to start the year with burial and mourning. The people (Onicha community) has decided to observe it as a custom to keep the month of January as a festival period marked by celebration, narrated Okorie, (2020) in an interview. Whilst in Agba community, the people do not bury during December and January due to the fact that the former is used for festive period which is characterized by celebration whilst the latter marks the beginning of the year which may result to a bad and unfruitful year if burials were to be held (Oka, 2020). It is important to note that, the Isuokoma people borrowed this culture from her neighboring community of Onicha. Hence, the people (Isuokoma) do not bury during January which is used to celebrate the beginning of the year. By extension, this share cultural practice has made their diplomatic relations to be cordial and lasting.

In the area of exchange of political idea, the Isuokoma people have often times established political alliance amongst her neighboring communities in order to protect her political ambitions. A notable example was her (Isuokoma) alliance with her Oshiri neighbours during one of the Local Government election which brought an Oshiri man, Chief Hon. Obasi Nwode to office. During the build-up of the election, the Isuokoma and Oshiri exchanged political ideas which paid off and eventually brought their candidate (Chief Hon. Obasi Nwode) into the position of Chairman of Onicha Local Government Area.

## **Warfare and Conflict**

Wars are very diverse. Wars arise from different situations and play different sorts of roles in bargaining over conflicts. Whilst conflict, by definition, is an intrinsic and inevitable part of human existence. However, violent conflict is not inevitable and as such is an anomaly. Conflict can also be defined as the pursuit of incompatible interests and goals by different groups. Armed conflict is the resort to the use of force and armed violence in the pursuit of incompatible and particular interests and goals. The worst forms of armed conflict include mass murder and genocide against unarmed civilians:

The major causes of conflict amongst communities is land which in international affairs is known as territorial disputes. The values States place on home territory seem undiminished despite the apparent reduction in the inherent value of territory as technology has developed. Historically, territory (land) was the basis of economic production – agriculture and extraction of raw materials. Winning and losing wars meant gaining or losing territory, which meant increasing or decreasing wealth. The goal of regaining territory lost to another State is called ‘irredentism.

The Isuokoma people have overtime, had conflict with her neighbouring communities based on land. This is due to the importance of land in Igbo land. Amongst these conflict was; the Isu Achara people and the Onicha people, Agbaebo and the Agba people, Mgbaleze and the Nkerefi people. It is of import to note that, all these conflict was based on land. That of Agbaebo and Agba was hinged on land and supremacy. Although, these conflicts never led to war because there were quelled by the Elders of the communities in order to maintain peace.

Although, the only known war the Isuokoma people has fought over land dispute was the 97 years’ war between the Obeagu and Mgbalukwu communities of Isuokoma and the Ojiegbe people. The war is also known and called O.M.O (Obeagu-Mgbalukwu-Ojiegbe) war, the war was

prolonged as a result of the lukewarm attitude of government and the spirit of retaliation amongst others.

The Ojiegbe people migrated from Ezza Ezekuna clan in the present Ezza South Local Government Area of Ebonyi State to Mgbalukwu Isuokoma. They were well received. They decided with time to pay taxes to Isuokoma where they lived and by so doing became citizens of Isuokoma through naturalization.

With time a big problem arose between the new settlers and that was the issue of tax payment. Some of them opted to pay tax at Afikpo because they were living in Isuokoma land which is in former Afikpo division. Others chose to pay at Abakaliki, their place of origin. This disagreement lasted many years. To resolve the conflict a tax boundary was drawn from Efuru stream at Okpuru Nwaneke shallow pond back to Mgbalukwu settlement by the white man. Those who lived between Mgbalukwu and Efuru stream pay tax at Afikpo. Those who lived between Efuru stream to Abanaba pay at Abakaliki division though living in Isuokoma land. Those who paid their taxes at Afikpo were given the name “Ojiegbe” to differentiate them from their kits and kins who paid at Abakaliki. The name Ojiegbe is also translated by some to mean “the people with gun” in recognition of their fighting ability.

The O.M.O (Obeagu-Mgbalukwu-Ojiegbe) war was as a result of struggle for more land which led to disorder culminating in physical confrontation in 1910 and also refusal to pay tributes and rents which resulted to three court cases which all cases were decided in favour of the landlords. The judgment of the courts was, however disobeyed. The continued disobedience of the court judgment led to bitter quarrels which prolonged the dispute to 2007. The Obeagu-Mgbalukwu-Ojiegbe) war lasted for 97 years. This war crippled economic activities, led to lack of infrastructural development, loss of lives and properties, fear of another, hunger and starvation, breakdown of law and order. It also strained Isuokoma relationship with the Ojiegbe people

especially the Ezza people because the latter assisted the former in persecuting the war.

Although, it is pertinent to note that, the war has been settled, it took a devastating effect on the inter-group relations between Isuokoma and Ojiegbe. Committees were set up to see to the maintenance of peace amongst the belligerent groups and to improve the already strained relationship between the warring groups.

### **Marriage**

This is the most popular amongst the social institutions world over. The institution is so important and highly recognized throughout Igbo ethnic group with particular reference to Isuokoma clan. The people of Isuokoma inter-marry with their neighboring communities of Onicha, Uburu, Oshiri, Naara, Nkerefi, Ezzaagu and Agba. It is noteworthy, that it is the customary rites of the community of the bride that is to be strictly used in such inter-marriages. Inter-marriage encourages extension of neighboring community relationship. Due to inter-marriages amongst Isuokoma and her neighbours, it encouraged paying of homage to the in-laws either during festive period or New Year period. This has helped to build healthy inter-group relations between Isuokoma and her neighbours, because as the children grow up, they (children) will also pay homage to their paternal homes depending on the nature of the marriage. Due to this inter-marriage between Isuokoma and her neighbours, it has helped in the avoidance of war amongst both communities (Isuokoma and her neighbours), because nobody will want his or her in-law to be a victim of war. This (inter-marriages) have promoted and facilitated peaceful co-existence amongst Isuokoma and her neighbours.

Furthermore, it is important to note that, the Isuokoma people have a long tradition of general marriage list, (Okorie, 2020). This helped to bring uniformity in marriage list amongst the communities that make up Isuokoma clan. Due to inter-group relations, the Onicha people copied this from Isuokoma. Hence, a more unified marriage list now exists amongst the

communities that make up Onicha clan; this serves as a cultural diplomacy between them

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Generally speaking, diplomacy is not alien to Igboland in general and Isuokoma in particular. Unlike the Eurocentric view that what was obtainable in a traditional Igbo society was series of wars, this study, focusing on Isuokoma has proved the forgoing conceived perception false. The study unravels certain cultural practices in Isuokoma that have over the years served as diplomatic tools. It thus stands to posit that the indigenous diplomatic tools of the Isuokoma were skillfully intertwined with their socio-cultural activities such that people of different ages and gender served as envoys in one capacity or the other. It was this configuration that made the relationship between Isuokoma and her neighbours to be a cordial one devoid of conflicts.

Finally, this study therefore made it obvious that diplomatic relations can best be archived when diplomatic tools are inbuilt in people's everyday lives. It therefore recommends that to solve the myriads of conflicts bedeviling the world today, there is need to intertwine modern diplomacy with people's day to day activities. the attainment of this will positively affect the way people and nations react with one another. This will in return guarantee world peace.

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### **Abstract**

*Water is a vital resource for nation states. It is a resources that neither knows nor respect nations boundaries, as such, this makes riparian states vulnerable to conflict. The water conflict in the lake is a unique and complicated situation because it is a transnational lake shared by four riparian states – Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria. Water conflict in this area is mostly triggered by two major factors such as unilateral decision by upstream riparian state in constructing dams for domestic and industrial purpose which severely affects the downstream riparian water security issues; and the potential for competing claims over the newly established islands as a result of receding waters of the lake chad. Even though, the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), an intergovernmental organization set in place to solved the water dispute in the lake chad area, some problems are still unresolved which is an important social and security related issues. This paper, therefore, is a historical presentation aim at exploring the history of water conflict among riparian states in the lake chad basin using qualitative method mainly secondary sources of data. Given the volatility of water disputes, this study would enlighten nations with similar situations as those of the Lake chad to work out a sharing formula that would minimize water conflict.*

**Keywords:** *water conflict, water cooperation, riparian states, Lake Chad Basin Commission & Lake Chad.*

### **Introduction**

The history of water conflict in the world can be dated back to over thousand years in 2400 BC, in the cities of Umma and Lagash not laying far from each other in southern Mesopotamia, close to the region where waters from the

Tigris and Euphrates merged (Reade, 2000). The location of the border between the two cities was a constant source of friction because places with best water resources tend to become attractive for settlement and later on center of conflict. This water conflict was regarded as one of the oldest in the history of world water conflict.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps, Africa has a long history of water related conflict and a good example is provided by the Manantali dam at the Senegal River hut. The governments of Mauritania and Senegal became entangled in the conflict - anti-Senegalese riots in Mauritania and anti-Mauritanian riots in Senegal forced tens of thousands of people to flee and hundreds of people were killed, while skirmishes between the militaries of both states brought them to the brink of war. The prominent case of the Nile River basin, which provides an example of a “water war” danger; It is often regarded to be a special case as the entire economic development of the downstream riparian state of Egypt solely depends on the waters of the Nile. Egypt which is the most powerful riparian state in both economic and military terms has declared that any unilateral activity by co-riparian states is a national security issue. In addition to the Nile, there are other potential hotspots of tension and thus possible conflict escalation in the world, however, the basins at risk identified in Africa are: Lake Chad, Incomati, Kunene, Limpopo, Okavango, Orange, Senegal, and Zambezi (Wolf et al, 2003).

This paper is a historical presentation aim at exploring the history of water conflict among riparian states of the Lake Chad. The study will look at the four riparian states of Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria due to their direct contact with the Lake. The main sources of data in this study were mainly secondary sources to address the following questions: Why is water a contentious issue in the areas of the Lake Chad basin? Is there any water conflict among the riparian states of the Lake Chad basin? How has the construction of dams by the upstream riparian states led to conflict? Is there

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<sup>1</sup> Water conflict chronology compiled from [www.waterworld/conflict/timeline](http://www.waterworld/conflict/timeline)

any cooperation mechanism put in place to regulate water conflict among the riparian states of the Lake Chad basin? The paper argues that management of water at international and domestic levels throughout history has been a source for interstate conflict and cooperation. Given the volatility of water disputes, this study would enlighten nations in similar situation as those of the Lake Chad basin to work out a sharing formula that would minimize conflict among riparian states.

## **LAKE CHAD WATER**

The Lake Chad<sup>2</sup> is a transboundary water resources, located in the west-central Africa sub regions and the fourth largest lake in Africa after Nyassa, Tangayika and Victoria, as well as the second largest endorheic lake<sup>3</sup> in the world (Hall, 2009). It is situated in an area that is mostly arid or semi-arid around south of the Saharan desert which covers 2,434,000 km<sup>2</sup> with a shallow (4 to 10 meters) body of fresh water and having approximately 35 million people (Magrin, 2016). Its sources of water usually comes from three main drainage system; the Chari-Logone River in Central African Republic, the Komadugu-Yobe river in Nigeria and the Yedsaram/Ngadda river in Cameroon (Okpara et al, 2015).

Lake Chad was once the sixth largest lake in the world, with a surface area of about 25, 000km<sup>2</sup> in the early 1960's, back then it was known as "Mega Chad", but, it has shrunk to 1,350km<sup>2</sup> losing almost 96% of its waters (Hall, 2009). The Lake straddled the countries of Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria, providing water for fishing, domestic use, hydro-electric power generation and agriculture, but nowadays it has dried out so much that actually only two countries – Chad and Cameroon- share it in narrow sense (Treszkai, 2018). This is why the discussions about the lake's receding was

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<sup>2</sup> It was also known as the Lake Megachad in the 1960's. The name Chad is a name given after the Chadians who lived around the lake in the sixteenth century by an author and imam Ibn Fortu

<sup>3</sup> Endorheic means the lake that has only input tributaries and its waters do not empty into another river but usually ended in the lake.

often reference to the 1960's. Water diversion associated with the construction of large irrigation and water development as well as Stream flow modification are identified as contributory factors in the receding of the basin over the periods 1970-2013 (Okpara et al, 2015).

### **RIPARIAN STATES WATER DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

In the 1970's, after the Lake Chad basin was hit by severe droughts, the four riparian states initiated a national hydrological projects by constructing dams on the Lake Chad's main tributaries in order to meet up with the demand of water for national development (Magrin, 2014). For instance, on the Chari-Logone River, which is a river system that consists of streams and rivers from Chad, Cameroon and the Central African Republic. At the initial stage, it provides 90% waters of the Lake Chad and stretches around 1,400 km and its basin covers 650,000 km and over the years, the lakes water discharge dropped at 55% (Zhu et al, 2019). On this river system, the Maga Dam was built on the upper part of the Waza-Logone flood plains in 1979 and spans 30 km with a catchment area of about 6,000 km<sup>2</sup>. It was built in order to improve food security problems by fish farming, rice cultivation etc. (Hall, 2009). Instead, it damaged the flood plain and decreased the economic value of the area as it affects the downstream population and the environment as well as reduced the size of discharge water into the lake.

In the same vein, on the Komadugu-Yobe river system which is around 148,000 km and consists of rivers converging into the Yobe River, is a vital economic center for the region's population despite it provides less than 2% of the lake waters and supports the Hadejia-Nguru wetlands (Hall, 2009). This river system, like the Chari-Logone river system is a transboundary system that flows from Nigeria through Niger and ended in the Lake Chad. It was also dammed in other to meet water and agricultural demands of its riparian states. For example, in Nigeria, the planned irrigation under water management works is estimated at 185,000 ha, of which only about 32,000 ha have been irrigated completely. In 1973, Nigerian government initiated the South Chad Irrigation Project in 1973 and built two (2) dams on the

Yobe, these are the Tiga dam and the Chalawa dam in 1974 and 1992 respectively (Hall, 2009). These two dams reduced the water runoff by 60%, and left only 1% to reaches the Lake, as a result, they virtually disrupted the natural balance of the water and thereby resulted in water low level, and consequently generated continuous tension in the Lake Chad basin.

These projects directly affected the downstream economies, as riparians increasingly diverted the lake's water upstream, a number of conflict emerged during the 1980's and 1990's, decline in fisheries, reduced available water for pastoralism and farming. Perhaps, these water projects were conducted unilaterally by upstream riparian states without consulting the downstream states.

### **WATER CONFLICT AMONG RIPARIAN STATES**

Water is so vital to the survival of nation states for strategic reasons in the international system, as nation states struggle to control and utilize this resource towards their survival, development and consolidation. Water resources can be a matter of life and death, an instrument for economic survival and growth, depending on how it occurs and managed. There are more than 260 rivers in the world that transcend international boundaries and are used by two or more riparian states. For instance, Africa has over 80 major trans-boundary river and lake basins, some of which are the largest in the world. These rivers and lakes, in combination with some large aquifers, offer great opportunity for developing and sharing the full potential of water resources of the region for household needs, hydropower generation, agriculture and aquaculture production, navigation, industrialization and other needs. Hence, it is easy to imagine the number of potential international water conflicts as a result of unilateral activity by a riparian states which usually affects the quantity or quality of water flowing down a shared river system and therefore, become a bond of contention. Nevertheless, water conflict among the riparian states of the Lake Chad basin is a typical example of such scenario.

Similarly, apart from unilateral activity by riparian states, water conflict among riparian state of the Lake Chad can be traced back to the European colonization of Africa (Okpara et al, 2015). While administering colonies in West Africa, the Empires of France, Germany and Great Britain attempted to delineate the borders of the four riparian states of the Lake Chad area – Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria. However, after these countries gained their independence in the 1960's, the borders were unclear and therefore, Cameroon recognized the Lake Chad borders delineated in the Thompson/Marchland Declaration of 1929, as this declaration specified the tri-border point with a straight line drawn to the mouth of the Ebeji River. Nigeria argued that the declaration were preliminary in nature and not binding and therefore rejected the Thompson/Marchland Declaration. As the surface water of the Lake changed, territorial conflicts between riparian states emerged.

## **NIGERIA AND CAMEROON WATER CONFLICT**

In 1981, tension and military encounters took place between Nigeria and Cameroon in the oil rich areas off of Rio del Rey which led to loss of lives and properties. This water conflict has its roots in the receding of the Lake Chad waters, the region's population increase and undermined borders. Unfortunately, Nigeria's shoreline receded rapidly compare to other riparian states, to the extent that Nigerian fishermen had to follow the disappearing waters of the Lake Chad. In doing so, they ended-up creating a resting places on newly formed island. The first established area was Katti Kime in 1959, and more resting places like Darak, Naira and Ramin Drinna eventually became villages throughout the 1960's as the shoreline continue to recede (Hall, 2009). According to Ethan, about 60,000 Nigerians followed the receding water from 1959-1994, engaged in fishing and cultivating their crops within the Cameroon's borders. To this end, the Nigerian government began to treat them as sovereign territories and eventually, the state levied taxes provided them with military and police forces, health centers, appointed village leaders known as Bulama, established a public school systems, established fishing regulations and award licensed to fishermen,

hence they regard themselves as Nigerians residing in Nigerian Territory (Hall, 2009). On the other hand, Cameroonian government viewed this act as acquisition of its territory and therefore accused Nigerian government of violating international obligations, under treaty and customary international law, by occupying, with the support of its security forces, parcels of Cameroonian territory in the area of Lake Chad.

After years of disputes, the Cameroonian government took the matter to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in 2002 and the court's judgment was decided in line with the Thomson/Marchland Declaration favor. Nigerian government was however, asked to remove all public services and withdraw the military forces from that area (Treszkai, 2018). In December 2003, the United Nations (UN) office for the coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, reported that the first Nigerian villages within Cameroonian territories are now under the Cameroonian government. Perhaps, water conflict was resolved, but potential conflicts continue to threaten the stability of the region.

## **NIGERIA AND CHAD WATER CONFLICT**

Like in the Nigerian and Cameroon water disputes, Nigerian farmers and fishermen as well followed the receding lake and began to settle down in the Chadian territory of the lake (Ani & Uwizeyimana, 2020). Border disputes erupted to armed conflict over waters of the Lake Chad between Nigeria and Chad in 1983 when Chadian soldiers, about three thousand (3,000) of them attacked and occupied nineteen islands and six villages that belongs to Nigerian citizens (Ani & Ojakorotu, 2018a; Ani & Ojakorotu, 2018b; Ani, Ojakorotu & Uwizeyimana, 2019). The Nigerian army deployed four thousand soldiers to counterattack by invading the territory of Chad and stopped at 50km distance from N'Djamena which is the capital of Chad (Treszkai, 2018). Until 1986, the border of Nigeria and Chad was closed as a result of this short war (Treszkai, 2018) despite settlement between the countries ended this dispute, the ambiguity of their legal status has rendered the islands a political no man's land lacking legally defined national

affiliation, which has in recent years been occupied by Boko Haram insurgent group.

Water scarcity, however, was regarded as a fundamental reason for this military operations because prior to this attack, Chadians and Nigerians lived in harmony, peace and quietly shared the waters of the Lake Chad, until when the lake started drying up. In 2015, these countries came together to form a military alliance to fight against the Islamic Terrorist Organization popularly known as the Boko Haram, which pledged allegiance to establish an Islamic State. This organization aim is the enemy of the “west” and to fight against government, that was why they attacked the military and police at the beginning, but it later on, they extend their attack on civilians as well as occupying territories. Although, the Lake Chad Basin Commission countries in collaboration with the United States and France, launched a military operation against this organization, they launched occasional attack and is regarded as an active actor in the Lake Chad area.

### **WATER COOPERATION MECHANISM IN THE LAKE CHAD**

With the initiation of dam building and various water development projects, water sharing has been a major concern, particularly to the downstream riparian states and international law is not clear on the shared water courses, rivers or cross border aquifers. Water cannot be owned, but the methods by which an individual, a group, a legal entity or a nation can store, transfer and regulate the flow of water, makes this nation in control. Riparian states negotiate agreements using a mixture of both bilateral and multilateral negotiation, thereby, establishing right of use over water. Such mixture is often contradictory and in itself a cause of conflict, which sometimes lead to successes or failure in achieving cooperation over the control and use of water between the upstream and downstream riparian states. It is within this context that this section discusses treaties signed among riparians in the use and management of water in the Lake Chad at multilateral levels.

### **The Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC)**

Lake Chad Riparian's water cooperation is conducted within the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), which is one of the oldest multi-lateral basin organization in Africa. It was created on 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 1964 by the Fort Lamy (N'Djamena) Convention and Statutes by the heads of state of Nigeria, Chad, Niger and Cameroon as charter members. Indeed, in 1985 Summit, the LCBC was given a mandate to expand the basin riparian states jurisdiction from 966,955 to 1,035,000 square kilometers to include the following countries, Central African Republic (CAR) 1994 and Libya in 2008 to raise the current membership to six. Republic of Congo, Egypt, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo with observer status.

The LCBC is a multi-lateral organization to equitably manage resources, promote economic development and maintain peace and security in the basin (Mamman, 2018). The convention guarantees the sovereign rights of every riparian states over the waters of the Lake Chad water resources and prohibits any unilateral exploitation of the waters of the Lake Chad within its territories against the interest of co-riparian states in the basin. In addition, the rights of member states to plan projects in consultation with the LCBC was also recognized within the conventional basin (Bande: 2010). The organization is also expected to work hand in hand with the riparian states in order to address water sharing, conservation and management of the Lake resources as well as engaging in diplomacy to resolve water related conflict in the basin.

There are some international organizations and partnership that supported the LCBC. For example, international Court of Justice (ICJ) mediates disputes among co-riparians states whenever the need arises and the African Union (AU) has strengthened mandate of the LCBC to deal with cross border insurgencies and Boko Haram for example. Similarly, organizations like, UNEP, IUCN, WWF, FAO and the World Bank are integrated in the Lake Chad commission's political networking (Asah, 2015). The World Bank and IUCN (together with the British, Dutch, Nigerian government and LCBC)

for example, were involved in the development of irrigation projects and designing legal frameworks for water allocation respectively in the Lake Chad area (Asah, 2015). These partnership has influenced cooperation processes as well as management of transboundary resources through the LCBC. However, since 1964, the Lake Chad basin countries adopted several strategies to prevent the emergence of conflict among the communities as well as riparian states in the Lake Chad. These include: the establishment of the LCBC, periodic consultations, regulatory provisions, border management, military cooperation, stabilization program and sustainable development (Mamman, 2018).

### ***Major Efforts by the LCBC and its Partners***

Lake Chad riparian states and LCBC have engaged in a number of joint water management initiatives with the support of a number of international organizations for an urgent needs to restore and protect the waters of the Lake Chad (Onuoha, 2010). In doing so, the “Transaqua” project was undertaken in order to transfer the waters of the Congo Basin into the Lake Chad (Onuoha, 2010). This project is a genuine proposal to replenish the shrinking waters of Lake Chad by channeling about 2,600km canal from the Central African Republic of Congo to meet the Chari River that feeds into the freshwater Lake. The Transaqua project was ratified by the Nigerian government in partnership with the United Nations Development Project, the Chinese and Italian state owned engineering company Power China and the Bonifica respectively (Findlay, 2018).

In 2002, the Lake Chad Water Charter (LCWC) was adopted in order to define water management and wetland management objectives based on shared concerns. This charter also seeks to define responsibilities of national and regional authorities as well as to create the monitoring and sanctioning mechanisms needed to make agreements enforceable.

Furthermore, in an attempt to consolidate its position as a powerful transboundary institution, the LCBC began to include a broader security and

military mandate for the riparian states to jointly counter the Boko Haram insurgency, mainly through the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF). At a meeting in London in 2014, the combined militaries of Chad, Cameroon, Nigeria and Niger, (MNJTF) promised to deploy 3000 troops as well as exchange of intelligence and mainstreaming of border controls (Comolli, 2015).

### *Limitations of the LCBC*

Riparian states of the Lake Chad have been united to reap the benefit of coming together as well as to resolve their challenges. According to Mamman (2018), there are some factors, some self-made and others beyond their control which have become a stumbling block towards achieving these desired goals. These include; the four riparian states have neglected the region thereby resulting to lack of development; environmental challenges such as drying of the lake and desertification; and resultant humanitarian crises and terrorism.

Other factors that are also stood in the way towards the implementation of projects in the Lake Chad region includes among others, lack of experts and personnel both at the national and international level. Similarly, there is the failure of international agencies to effectively involve in the coordination of restoration projects in their regional partners. More so, the increasing Boko Haram threat is a major obstacle towards the technical implementation of projects, such as the Transaqua project.

It is important to point out that basin wide cooperation is challenged by power imbalances between riparian states. For example, Nigeria is the largest donor and accommodates three quarters of most irrigated land in the basin and therefore exerts a considerable influence over agreed outcomes, security strategies and development (Asah, 2015)

### **CONCLUSION**

Freshwater has become relatively scarce in many part of the world - especially in the Sub-Sahara Africa - because it is the core of human

existence. The Lake Chad which is located in west-central Africa has a dynamic nature in its shape, size and depth as it is constantly changing in response to variations in rainfall, temperatures as well as construction of water projects by the riparian states for national interest. As a result of rapid receding/shrinkage of the Lake Chad waters over the years due to stream flow modification and water diversion such as the construction of Yaguou-Tekele Dyke, Maga, Alau, Tiga, and Yeders dams on its main tributaries, water conflict eventually erupted among the riparian states. Perhaps, despite the establishment of the Lake Chad Basin Commission in 1964 as a multi-lateral organization to equitably manage resources, promote economic development and maintain peace and security in the basin, sustainable water management cooperation between riparian states remain a challenge in the Lake Chad basin, both for national government and international organizations involved in the area.

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**BECOMING A BUSINESS TEACHER IN NIGERIA: A  
PROCEDURAL ANALYSIS.**

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**Abstract**

*This paper discussed rudiments of becoming a Business Teacher. The paper discussed different definitions of Business Teacher education, objectives of Business Teacher Education, among others. It is apparent that Business teacher education cannot prepare her students without the use of different resources such as model office, Stapling machine, Stapling remover, Perforator, Stop watch, Wall clock, Shorthand dictionary, Demonstration stand, Filing cabinet, Tape recorders/consols, Head phones, Air-conditioning systems, Lecturers demonstration stand, trained personnel and so on. The paper revealed that some of the professional ethics of a Business Teacher include Maintenance of confidentiality of learners' personal Information, not administering corporal punishment on learners, Shunning sexual and related abuses of power, Inspiring self-discipline among learners, must be a vanguard against examination misconduct to mention but a few. To produce quality Business Teacher, it was revealed in the paper that such individual must be groomed on subject matter mastery, be flexible, be equipped with pedagogical knowledge, and be exposed to teaching practice among others. The paper identified challenges confronting BTE to include none commitment to academic engagements by BTE students, Corruption, Poor supervision and Inadequacy of instructional resources. It was recommended that managers of BTE programs should ensure that those admitted into the program are qualified and has the capacity to effectively acquire the needed skills as would be offered in the program, tertiary institutions should ensure that BTE teaching practice students has no other academic activity to involve themselves in through the period of teaching practice among others.*

**Key Words:** *Business Teacher, students, learning, educational system Nigeria*

## **Introduction**

Business teacher education (BTE) is one of the teacher education programs in Nigeria with very little literature. Though a lot has been written in the area of teacher education by different scholars from different educational background but that of BTE is yet to be extensive (Okifo and Ayo, 2015). Ekpenyong in Ekpenyong and Nwabuisi (2003) noted that BTE was abandoned by government from its introduction into educational system because they did not recognize its importance. This neglect is persisting as it is evident that little or no literature in BTE exists. Despite this obvious neglect, the need for Business Teachers (BTEs) in our schools at different levels is continually on the increase as the society is in dire need of skilled personnel to handle business activities. This makes it imperative for improved effort in recognizing BTE programmes in order to produce quality manpower that can effectively train students towards becoming self reliant thereby helping the government in winning war against unemployment in the country. Udoye and Ndum (2013) lamented that much emphasis on theoretical education has led to the production of graduates who do not possess employable skills thereby increasing the number of unemployed graduates. Be it as it may, graduate unemployment could be alleviated through production of quality Business Teachers (BTs) that effectively prepares students with relevant skills for self reliance after graduation.

Business Teacher Education (BTE) is an aspect of business education that prepares its recipients with needed skills for delivering business subjects at all levels of Nigerian Education. Ubulum (2000) defined BTE as an educational program that prepares its recipient with pedagogical and business competencies that are needed for teaching and learning different business subjects. BTE ensures that students are equipped with relevant skills necessary for impartation of business attitudes, skills and processes of

business into other people. Teacher Education (TE) generally assumes that learners are uninformed and unskilled until been exposed to activities and tasks that helps them in gaining necessary experience. According to Njoku (2002), the goal of BTE is the production of competent human resources who contributes to societal development through teaching of business subjects in schools and industries. BTs are prepared in different units of Business Education program to enable them acquire professional skills necessary for training of students and organizations in diverse business contents. It is imperative therefore to observe that BTs are well positioned to handle business related courses at all levels of Nigerian Educational system and as well facilitate business knowledge improvement in industries. From the foregoing, the following are some of the objectives of Business Teacher Education in Nigeria:

1. Production of manpower with necessary knowledge for impartation of business contents
2. Production of motivated individuals who will play vital roles in advancement of the visions of Business Education
3. Preparing the recipients with needed skills for further training in business studies
4. Producing individuals with prerequisite skills to contribute to educational development of the country
5. Equipping students with necessary competencies towards assisting business organizations in achieving their objectives.

### **Resources needed in preparing Business Teachers**

Training of Business teachers cannot be effective without the use of different resources that enhances their experience. These resources needed for effective training of BTs are expected to be replica of those they will use in their workplace after graduation (Chika, 2000). Resources required for training of BTs as identified by National Commission for Collages of Education minimum standard in Aliyu (2016) include:

1. **Machines and materials:** Manual typewriters of various makes and types, Computers, Swivel typing chair, Drop desk, typist, convertible desk, Instructor's Table, Instructor's chair, Stapling machine, Stapling remover, Perforator, Stop watch, Wall clock, Shorthand dictionary, Demonstration stand, Filing cabinet, Tape recorders/consoles, Head phones, Air-conditioning systems, Lecturers demonstration stand, Punching machine, File cabinet and Appropriate furniture as technology may dictate from time to time among others.
2. **Model Office:** Executive table with drawers and chairs, Secretary's table with drawers and swivel chair, Photocopier, File trays and string, Manual typewriters and computers, File cabinets, Adding and listing machines, Waste paper baskets and Any other latest office equipment in the market
3. **PERSONNEL:** Personnel should be at least one (1) academic staff per subject area with minimum qualification of first degree. The Staff/students ratio for skilled subjects should be 1:20 and 1:30 for other subjects. Other personnel at the departmental office include one senior typist or secretary, one (1) messenger/cleaner, one (1) technician/typewriter machine and studio attendant.

### **Professional ethics in Business Teacher Education:**

The Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) (2012) identified the following as some of the professional values, attitudes and conducts guiding teaching profession (BTE inclusive):

1. Honor learners' rights and dignity
2. Serve as model and mentors to learners
3. Have empathy for learners
4. Be corruption-free
5. Maintains confidentiality of learners' personal Information
6. Do not administer corporal punishment on learners
7. Shun sexual and related abuses of power
8. Inspire self-discipline among learners

9. Be a vanguard against examination misconduct
10. Check their ideological beliefs in dealing with learners
11. Uphold learners human right and discourage any form of discrimination
12. Do not plagiarize
13. Promote democratic decision-making
14. Control personal bias and apply objectivity in discharge of their professional duties
15. Contribute to academic development through teaching, research and community service
16. Treat parents and guardians with respect and courtesy
17. Stick to their areas of professional competence
18. Project exemplary character in society

### **Preparing Professional business teacher education graduates**

Business teacher education students are prepared to be able to teach both practical and theoretical aspects of business subjects at all levels of education. This however bestows them with the responsibility of ensuring that students are exposed to varying perspectives and views about world of business in order to broaden their interest to engage in business activities after graduation. Okolo & Okoli (2001), noted that Business Education aims at training needed human resources for industries and schools therefore the need for them to be competent to handle emerging challenges in their workplace. Building Professional skills and proficiency of Business Teacher Education graduate is not solely the responsibility of the school. The BTE graduates have also roles to play in preparing themselves for successful teaching career after graduation by improving their knowledge and skills towards meeting up with teaching realities. Therefore, products of BTE are expected to be prepared in these basic professional requirements for effective practice:

1. Knowledge of subject matter: the central requirement in BTE is the ability of BTs to understand what is to be taught (**America, 2014**). This is important as teaching means helping others to learn and have a change

in behavior. All other aspects of teaching such as content selection, content explanations, students evaluation among others are dependent on the knowledge of the teacher on what to teach. (Shantz and Latham, 2012) explained that specializing on subject to teach and its interrelatedness equips the teacher with scholarly knowledge which leads to professional performance. Therefore BTE students ought to be groomed in subject mastery to keep abreast with reality of interrelating different parts of an instruction into a whole for better understanding amongst students.

2. Adaptability to situations: since teaching profession exposes BTs to different learning environments, they are expected to be prepare to always adjust their teaching and learning according to the environment, needs of the students and location of their schools. This is very important as challenges in urban schools may not be the same with that of rural schools and BTs are expected to deliver optimally in their professional engagements. BTs ought to be trained to be flexible and adapts to instructional contexts, school posed challenges and environment posed challenges among others and improvise resources needed for effective teaching and learning.
3. Practical teaching: the essence of teaching practice in BTE among others is to bridge the gap between theory and practice (Aglazor, 2011). It is during the period of teaching practice that student teachers are exposed to practical aspects of teaching such as lesson planning, lesson note writing, classroom management, teaching methods, students' assessment among others. BTE students are exposed to real life classroom teaching under the supervision of professional teacher(s). Teaching practice helps in familiarizing the student teachers with the school as a workplace after graduation thereby becoming motivated to venture into teaching after graduation.
4. Pedagogical learning: there are different teaching methods applicable in teaching and learning of business subjects. Before embarking on practical acquisition of those teaching method skills, student teachers are

expected to have been exposed to different pedagogies theories in Business Education to arm them with the knowledge before teaching practice. Training the student teachers on different methods of teaching business studies will position them with expertise ability to know the one to use, how to use it and when to use it. With this, student teachers will be knowledgeable in selecting appropriate teaching methods that suit his/her instructions and peculiarities of the students.

5. Communication: the imperative of communication in classroom cannot be overemphasized. Despite how good an instructional content may seem, if the teacher lack basic communication skills to impart them to the learner, the content will be rubbish and achieving the instructional objectives will be near impossible. Leyaley (2015) noted that teachers need to be able to communicate effectively in order to deliver their instructions effectively to the learners thereby achieving the specific objectives of the instruction. When BTE graduates are prepared to communicate effectively, they will contribute to enhancing the students learning process thereby motivating them to learn both in classroom and outside the classroom.
6. Systematic information gathering: to be effective in teaching, a BTE graduate is expected to be able to gather information needed for quality instructional preparation and management and successful teaching career. According to Adeosun (2011), ability of a teacher to access information effectively and efficiently and also evaluate it critically propels a teacher towards functioning very well in the knowledge economy. Information gathering skills could not be solely learned in the school but BTE students can develop such through interactions with colleagues, students, parents, books and getting involved in professional trainings.

### **Challenges Confronting Business Teacher Education**

there are many challenges affecting training of BTs in Nigeria some of which include:

1. None commitment to academic engagements by BTE students: it is evident that desire not to be stressed has led many students into not taking their academic programs serious thereby contracting tasks assigned to them to others. For instance, it is glaring that most students in recent time does not write their assignments, research report, lesson notes among others themselves. The students makes payment to other persons to help them prepare these teacher training tasks.
2. Corruption: corruption in BTE has led to discouragement of hard work as both lecturers and students engage in varying unethical practices. Some shylock lecturers awards scores indiscriminately to students who meets up with their demands. Some of these demands including giving and receiving money, sex, and gift items with the intentions of influencing the receiver to award marks to the giver.
3. Poor supervision: the essence of supervision in education is to assist in ensuring quality of an educational program. Unfortunately, in BTE, some of the supervisors of the program either interlopers or shows apathy in discharging their duty appropriately.
4. Inadequacy of instructional resources: instructional resources are paramount in preparing BTE students. Worryingly, most BTE offering institutions lack necessary instructional materials for training their students in line with contemporary development in teaching and learning business subjects.
5. Unethical teaching practice: the importance of teaching practice in preparation of would-be teachers cannot be overemphasized. As important as it is, it is heartbreaking that students and their schools of attachment are no longer ensuring effectiveness of the program. This is a fact as most schools does not allow their TP students to handle instructions, record preparation and management thereby negating essence of the program.
6. Unsteady power supply: unsteady electricity supply negatively affect the activities of preparations BTs. With the trend in use of Information and communication Technology (ICT) in teaching and learning, teachers

trainees are expected to be trained with such resources but unsteady power supply handicaps utilization of such resources.

7. Societal neglect of BTE: despite the role of BTE in producing human resources for national development, it is unfortunate that it is seen as a program for less intelligent or poor students. In this regard, during admission process, it is always evident that most students sent to BTE programs are those that were unable to secure admission into some other programs. With this, BTE is bedeviled with admission of some students who finds it difficult to acquire needed skills the program offers.
8. Poor condition of service to teachers: the working condition of teachers generally is a crack in effective discharge of their duties. These teachers are not adequately motivated by their employees to put in their best in training the BTE students for optimal productivity. In view of this, some teachers involved in training BTE students prefer engaging in their private businesses to taking extra time in ensuring effectiveness of their instructions.

### **Conclusion**

Business education is a noble program for production of skilled business human resources for the world of business and knowledge economy. The production of those that will be training learners in business studies is of a great essence in producing handlers of business activities. Since wrong teaching has long-term effect in the life of a learner, BTE ought to be carefully positioned to give out to the society quality business teachers for effective teaching and learning of business studies. As an aspect of business education, BTE programs if well equipped will contribute in improving the standard of education in Nigeria through production of quality business teachers.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the discussions in this paper, the following are recommended

1. Managers of BTE programs should ensure that those admitted into the program are qualified and has the capacity to effectively acquire the needed skills as would be offered in the program.
2. Tertiary institutions should ensure that BTE teaching practice students has no other academic activity to involve themselves in through the period of teaching practice.
3. Supervisors of academic tasks in BTE should encourage their supervisee to understand that there is dignity in labour thereby motivating them to be executing their tasks by themselves.
4. Government at all levels, individuals, alumni association and philanthropists should be encouraged towards providing/donating needed resources for training of BTE students.

Managers of BTE programs should endeavour to procure, install and maintain alternative source of electricity in order to avoid over dependency on public power supply.

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## **PARTY POLITICS AND CHALLENGES OF NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

*The study examined party politics and challenges of national integration in Nigeria. It utilised a qualitative research technique with the aid of the interview guide. The research population comprised members of civil society organisations; academia; and political parties in Nigeria that were purposively selected. Ted R. Gurr's thesis on why men rebel served as the basis to unravel political violence and conflicts in Nigeria. The findings of the study revealed political violence and conflicts in Nigeria are the resultant effects of non-performance of Nigerian politicians. This and among others have stymied national integration in Nigeria. The study concludes and recommended that political activities are expected to integrate diverse ideas and needs in plural states. This can be possible when political leaders see politics as a service to the electorates and a privilege to intensified national integration in any society.*

**Keywords:** *Nigerian Fourth Republic; Party politics; political parties; National Integration; Ted Gurr Theory*

### **Introduction**

Modern states have been a challenge with disintegrative tendencies as a result of intolerance among different ethnic nationalities. This has been

demonstrated under the purview of party politics that embodied cabinet formation, ministerial appointment, campaign, nominations and selections of executives, elections, and so on. Party politics as a by-product of political parties' activities are designed to subject and tame ethnic intolerance thereby creating a conference of ideas for national development. Convocation of ideas described one of the primary functions of party politics in modern political parties' functions. By implication, it serves as a mechanism of assimilating plural states or ethnic nationalities into central norms of the government. Vertical and horizontal interactions built on confederation or federal system has strengthened the modern day's government and party politics. In other words, political activities are enhanced through institutional development such as active judiciary system, functional political parties, vibrant civil society organisations, and the unbiased media. One of the primary goals of these institutions is to ensure national integration among diverse ethnic groups and strengthen the laws of the land. Plural states that have existed over three decades with these aforementioned institutions are experiencing irredentism, secession, insurgencies, ethnic militias, terrorism, civil and communal war, just to mention a few.

A growing body of academic literature has addressed these problems that have led to the recommendation of integrative policies and reforms such as the adoption of the federal system, unitary system, creation and annexation of regions and states, yet, the quest for national integration has preoccupied modern states.

Certain questions have been raised why countries are a challenge with disintegrative ideas? Have political parties outlived their usefulness? What systems needed to tackle the problem of ethnic intolerance? What are the factors aiding national disintegration? To what extent can the multi-party system strengthen national integration? Is party politics antidote to nation-building? These questions are begging for answers among academia and political leaders that seem to be debated by supporters of democratic and

authoritative systems. While these two concepts have been sustained and thrive in China (East) and United States (West). But countries in Africa are a challenge with underdevelopment syndromes amidst these West and East ideas. It is on this backdrop, this study seeks to interrogate party politics and the challenge of national integration in Nigeria. However, this study is an extraction of PhD thesis from a study conducted in Nigeria at the Department of Political Science, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, 2013 to 2018. Findings in this study are revealed based on exclusive interviews with research organisations, political parties' leaders and civil society organisations. Below are facts and extant literature used in the course of the study

### **Statement of Research Problem**

Right from independence till date the Nigerian state has suffered from cohesion problem whereby ethnic nationalities tend to identify with primordial interests than the status quo that define the unity of the country. This manifestation resulted in a bloody civil war of many months and subsequent decried of marginalisation in the various part of Nigeria. In addressing this menace, subsequent governments and political parties have proffered certain integrative mechanisms and commissions towards building a formidable country. State Creation, Federal Character Mechanism, Quota System, National Youth Service Corps, Unity Schools, Niger Delta Ministry, and so on, were recommended by studies and adopted by existing and past governments yet the issue of national integration has become a recurring decimal till date. Consequently, studies in this regard focused more on ethnicity and with little attention to party politics and challenges of national integration in Nigeria, hence, the study.

### **Objective of this study is to:**

1. assess and identify the protracted nature of disintegrative tendency in Nigeria; and

2. evaluate the roles of party politics towards national integration in Nigeria

## **Conceptual Reviews**

### **Party Politics**

Party Politics in this context refers to the activities of political parties in the course of capturing state power and in exercising that power through the formation and implementation of public policy as initiated and executed by political actors (politicians) which direct the affairs of political parties. These activities cut across several actions and decisions taken by politicians during campaign exercise, during Intra and inter-party electoral processes, decisions of the government on political appointments, distribution of powers among levels of government, allocation of resources, etc, some of which may be injurious or supportive to national integration. It also includes the activities of political elites, both as members of ruling and opposition parties, with conflicting interests of either defending government policies even when they are wrong or promoting actions that could destabilize the ruling party and discourage national unity.

### **Theories that underpinned National Integration**

There is a growing body of literature on national integration that has entertained the works of Amital Etzioni, Carl Rosberg, Paden and Edward Soja, Myron Weiner and others. For Amital Etzioni notion of national integration was centred on the strength of a national government to be in charge of weapon and instrument of violence. This definition stresses absolute control of items that marred disintegration and coercive power of the government upon the citizens. Other scholars like Coleman and Carl Rosberg identified the need to decrease progressively the regional and cultural tensions, and discontinuities. They added that national integration revolves around political integration and territorial integration. For them, political integration is centred on bridging of the elites-mass gap in the vertical plane, and territorial integration connotes progressive lessening of

ethnic ties and tensions and discontinuities arising from the region under the horizontal plane to attain territorial political entity.

Myron Weiner identified the point of convergent between and among different groups into a forged territorial nationality that is superior to existing ethnic loyalties, but able to determine what is good for them. This view seeks the convocation of different ideas and creating a balance for all nationalities to be able to interact within the state. This definition shared similarity with that of Leonard Binder that sees national integration as a consensus of a cultural-ideology of a very high degree of embracement or comprehensiveness. A political parties expert, Duverger has seen it as an act or a process of unification of all groups towards a harmonious entity built on the contribution groups in an equal manner. Here the question of fairness, justice and consensus among the existing groups described the concept of national integration. From a sociological perspective, Emile Durkheim described national integration as organic solidarity that strengthened all interests in the national discourse. Here there is absolute support and contribution to the central system that embodied the parts. Jacob and Tenue see national integration as a state of mind of existing groups to live together sharing thoughts and items in the same political community premised on the development of programmes that affect the entity.

From the array of definitions that exist in studies within plural or homogenous states on the concept of national integration. Interests, tolerance and compromises are variables that united scholarly conceptualisations. In other words, national integration is not case found in plural or multi-ethnic states, but the calls for national integration do exist in a homogenous political entity. Views and interests are propelling factors that create disintegration and also integrations depending on how the governors and the governed strike a balance.

There are communities of same ancestral lineage and whose socialisation encourages intra-marriage, yet, there are sharp issues of disagreement leading to communal war. In Nigeria, the case of Modakeke and Ile-ife (two Yoruba communities of the same language, culture and ancestral origin) people in Osun state; and Emede and Igbeide (two Isoko communities of same beliefs, norms, ancestral origin) in Delta state communal war described the inevitability of national integration in all political entity.

The political entity called Nigeria is an embodiment of over 200 beliefs and three major leading ethnic groups (the Hausa/Fulani; Yoruba; and the Igbo). The state was created and annexed by British colonial administrators as at 1906 and 1914 which officially gain Independence in 1960. Communities within the political configuration of Nigerian state are dissimilar and similar which have experienced bloodbath through communal war. This gives credence into why the investigation and the choice of Nigeria as a focus of this study.

### **Overview and Challenges of National Integration in Nigeria**

In developing countries like Nigeria the course for national integration has been marred by different groups such as the activities of the Niger Delta militants against the vandalism of oil pipelines and kidnappings; the agitation of the Indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB) for secession; the O’odua People Congress; and the Boko Haram. At one point in time, these groups have threatened national integration in Nigeria. Leadership failure has been seen as reasons for the emergence of these interests’ organizations and the governments of Nigeria of different tenures have suffered damaging effects. Leadership failure that embodied lack of internal party democracy resulting to party conflicts which led to the using of Nigerian youths for the act of thuggery; hooliganism; and terror during, after and pre-elections administrations. These sets of youths and other concern Nigerians have drawn the attention of subsequent governments in Nigeria concerning the abysmal institutional failure and infrastructural decay but it seems the

situation is getting worse looking at the frequent violence and calls from these groups and others. Here this study identified with the Human Psychological Thesis popularly called Relative Deprivation and Aggression-Frustration Theory. It is on these grounds the study will adopt the Relative Deprivation Theory as an instrument of understanding the causes of internal party crises and its implications on national integration in Nigeria.

Nigeria is one of the states in West Africa that harboured over 10 different types of resources, but the one that has attracted more revenue into the country in recent time happen to be the crude oil. This was made in by Garuba (2006), who argued that the country annual revenue from crude oil resources is about US\$7.09 billion (£4 billion). But much of this revenue has not translated into development in Nigeria. Scholarly works on the effect of abundant natural resources as means for development has been refuted and tied into the narratives of the Dutch disease (Auty, 1997; Auty & Gelb, 2001; Frankel, 2010). But the case of Nigeria is traceable to corruption and institutional weakness. The oil companies have failed in their response to be fair to the Nigerian people especially in the region that this product is been explored (Akpabio & Akpan, 2010). This unwholesome interaction is one of the thrusts of national crises in Nigeria. The Nigerian Fourth Republic is expected to tame decades of institutional weakness and corrects imbalances in the society. But recent occurrences in the polity and the level of social unrest among Nigerians revealed that underdevelopment has eaten deep into the fabric of the Nigerian system. The Nigerian elites especially the ruling class has seen politics as a career and means to end. Elections have been subsumed into the atmosphere of winners take all, and the losers are seen as a problem to the Nigerian society. The Electorates are seen as beggars and the instrument in the hand of political gladiators to realise their selfish goal. The elites have made this possible due to the policy of impoverishment instituted by the ruling class against the masses to expand their political empires.

## **Nigerian System: Frustration, Aggression, Anger and Deprivation Thesis of Ted Gurr**

Ted Gurr's thesis on why men rebel has been utilised as a means of understanding terrorism; protests; insurgencies; war; and communal clashes (Richardson, 2011; Pettigrew, 2015). There are a dearth of scholarly works on the utilisation Ted Gurr thesis, failure of party politics vis-à-vis social unrest and insurgencies in Africa especially Nigeria. This study covered this vacuum through the assessment of party politics in Nigerian and its implication on her national integration. Consequently, the relative and deprivation notion is premised on denial and reaction. It occurred in party politics when an individual committed his or her resources into an elections or the formation of a government and in expectations of services such as good roads; scholarship and better educational system; better health care services; political education; and shelter. When the government of the day failed to fulfil what was said during elections campaigns or stated in the party's manifestos then aggression, anger and frustration set in as a result of partial or absolute denial (deprivation). This has led to ethnic nationalist movement; ethnic militias; political violence; communal war; and religious clashes in recent times.

Party politics is expected to generate positive effects to all nationalities after elections. In other words, the governours are expected to execute programmes that will alleviate the desires of the entire citizens. This can only be possible when elections and constitutionalism are observed in a society. Citizens of a state tend to be frustrated when their expectations from governments are not met concerning bargains before the elections or there are alterations based on their desires. The book *why men rebel* by Ted Gurr classified this as discrepancy (Saleh, 2013). Most times this atmosphere normally leads to political tension among the governors and the governed leading to the state of frustration and aggression as a result of deprivation or denial. Deprivation in the context of failed promises from the governors

(politicians) made by them during campaigns and non-adherence to the constitution.

The above scenario has been common in newly democratic states that Nigeria is inclusive. Party politics in these states especially in Nigeria after her Independence has been ethnic and elitist driven against the expectations of the electorates. The wealth of the Nigerian state has been channelled to personal gains and self-glorification which attracted a lot of literature among policymakers and academia. This has manifested in the form of political violence and insurgencies in recent time (Ikelegbe, 2014). In Nigeria, the Boko Haram menace in the North, secession movement by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in the East, the Niger Delta Militant in the core south, and the arm-robbery cases in the core west are all the resultant effects of discrepancy scheme by the Nigerian politicians. Failed leadership in terms of the high rate of corruptions and underdevelopment in the country are the primary bases why aforementioned groups do what they do in Nigeria. This has brought frustrations, anger, and pain to Nigerians. Party politics is a means and end to national development and integration. This has been systematically designed through the instrument of the ballot system whereby citizens votes in legislatures, presidents and other government officials. The elected officials are expected to demonstrate and fulfilled various mandates or the electorates promises made before the elections and after the elections.

But in most African party politics especially in Nigeria, there are two types of politicians that tend to create discrepancy leading to frustrations and anger among Nigerians. The first set, the one that enjoyed popular votes or majority but later failed to execute the promises or the reasons why he or she was voted for, and the second set, are the politicians that used their economic power and technical know-how to buy votes and intimidate voters and acquired political offices by forces. These are the sets of politicians that have paraded the Nigerian political system right from 1960 till date. Looking at the above observation, the theory of frustration, aggression and deprivation

by Ted Gurr revealed why there are protracted crises in the Nigerian political system. In managing this menace subsequent governments have put in place measures, yet, insurgencies and social unrest have become the order of the day. The occurrence of this has been associated with social consciousness and progressive awareness among Nigerians. For some many years, the Nigerian elites have played various types of identity politics. This has been demonstrated in the context of ethnic identity politics whereby failed elites at the national level cajoles his or her nations to fight against the central government. Here demands are made before the government of the day making these elites to be recognised and elevated into the clique or oligarchy of the ruling politicians. This type of politics has resulted in the politics of zoning, state creations, proportional representations, quota system, federal character, and among others, which have not yielded positive effect in the Nigerian system. These mechanisms in some cases have deepened disintegration tendencies in the place of national integration.

The politicisation of ethnic identity has been the line of thought and instrument of subjecting the electorates into perpetuate underdevelopment trapped in Nigeria. The media has been an important means in the hands of the elites to propagate deceptions and remain in power at the expense of the masses. But there is a cycle of reactions and dousing the actions from the masses and the ruling elites respectively. The ruling elites like the Nigerian case are in controlled of the Judiciary, media, security institutions and other institutions that have a huge influence on the masses. The above institutions have been used to keep the electorates in check and render their activism meaningless.

In a related thought by Saleh (2013), economic discrimination and inequality are the most dominant core factors that instigate violence or unrest. This can be intensified when the major ethnic groups tend to impose certain beliefs or an act of assimilating in the whole system. This normally generates minority ethnic identity or chaos leading to the call for referendum or secession. This

line of thought captured the struggle of Niger Delta people in the Southern region of Nigeria. The region has generated over 80% of the country revenue but yet suffered from abject poverty. This has led to the kidnapping of oil workers and vandalism of oil pipelines in the region which can be classified in terms of frustration, anger, aggression and deprivation orchestrated by the Nigerian elites for many decades.

### **National Integration: Nigeria's case**

Immediately after her independence in 1960, the thrust of leadership fell on the then nationalists that formed political parties and the adoption of the federal and parliamentary systems. The essence of political parties was to give each unit or region the sense of leadership towards building a viable nation-state, and which also reflected in the core values of federalism that was adopted. This choice of systems of government was informed due to the artificial creation and years of ruler-ship by the British colonial masters. The British system or legacy left disjointed societies and disjointed institutions that made the adoption of multi-party system and federalism seem genuine in the eyes of the then nationalists. The multi-ethnic nature was also a factor and precursor to the adoption of the systems. Consequently, the leadership of the country emerged through elections and appointment of candidates into offices. There was the existence of three major parties that have ties with ethnic doctrines and loyalties.

This was evidence how these political parties emerge from the major ethnic nationalities, and this signalled national disintegration. This scenario led to political resentment, fear of domination, and corruption. Resentment in the context of hate speech, fear of domination occurred when the minority ethnic groups that occupied Mid-West, Core South-South exercised fear of domination and internal colonisation; and corruption in the area of rent-seeking and prebendalistic politics. The politics of resentment and intolerance that was evidence in derogatory tones, gestures and utterances by Sardauna of Sokoto in the North against other ethnic groups; likewise Dr

Nnamdi Azikiwe; and Chief Obafemi Awolowo and their kinsmen. Below are comments accredited to the aforementioned leaders in Nigeria:

For Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe from the Eastern part of Nigeria noted in one his speech that: *it would appear that the God of Africa has specially created the Ibo nation to lead children of Africa from the bondage of the ages...the martial prowess of the Ibo nation at all stages of human history has enabled them not only to conquer others but also to adapt themselves to the role of preserver. The Igbo nation cannot shirk from its responsibility.* In response to this Chief Obafemi Awolowo reacted that: *It seems to me the Zik's policy was to corrode the self-respect of Yoruba's people as a group to build up the Ibos as a masterpiece, and this was corroborated by his kinsman of the Egbe Omo Oduduwa group Sir Adeyemo Alakij: The big tomorrow for the Yorubas is the future of our children...How they will hold their own among other tribes in Nigeria* (Ezeibe & Ikeanyibe, 2017).

The Northern part of the country also dance into the music and noted that: *it is the southerner who has power in the North. They have control of the railway stations, of the Post Offices, of Government Hospitals, of the Canteens; the majority employed in the Kaduna secretariat and Public Works Department are all southerners; in all the different Departments of Government, it is the Southerner who has power* (Ezeibe & Ikeanyibe, 2017).

This atmosphere and coupled with corruption led to the military in politics in a bloodbath coup in 1966 and same year another coup took place among the Nigerian military elites. The first coup enthroned an Igbo man into the title of the head of state from the East, and the second coup catapulted Hausa/Fulani man from the North. At the same period, a popular politician in the West has been charged in the act of treasonable felony. By 1967 the declaration of secession by those in the East was orchestrated by Col. Emeka Ojukwu Dumegwu against the federal government of Nigeria under the leadership of Yakubu Gowon that led to civil war. The war lasted for 2years,

6 months, 1 week and 2 days (from 6th of July 1967 to 15th of January, 1970). Few years after the civil war the Nigerian military ousted Gen. Yakubu Gowon regime in a palace coup on 30th July 1975 that brought in Brig. Murtala Mohammed as the then head of state and in 13th of February, 1976 he was assassinated in an abortive coup led by Col. Buka Suka Dimka. From 1976 to 1979 Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo was considered by the then supreme military body as the head of state after the death of Col. Dimka.

In 1977 a constituent assembly was formed to draft a new constitution which came to be in 1978, the period that coincided with the ban on political parties was lifted. Between 1979- 1983 about six political parties dominated the political scene. The Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) led by a Yoruba-man; National Party of Nigeria (NPN); Greater Nigerian People's Party (GNPP); Nigeria Advance Party (NAP); Movement of the People Party (MPP); and People Redemption Party (PRP). These parties were not different from the first Republic political parties that were operated within ethnic and religious ideas. Elections were conducted and the issue of irregularities and electoral fraud marred the system of electoral administration and political scheme repeated itself in the second elections conducted. The civilian leadership of the then administration was characterised with heavy corruption allegation. This and among others led to the civilian administration to be toppled by the then Nigerian military that brought in Gen. Mohammed Buhari as head of state.

Political parties in the First and Second Republics demonstrated below the standard which was subservient to their ethnic nationalities and downplayed national identity and patriotism. The era of Gen. Mohammed Buhari marked another dictatorial leadership that led to the militarising of the Nigerian federation. In 1985 his regime was overthrown by a coup led by Major Gen. Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida (IBB) and other members of ruling Supreme Military Council (SMC). IBB rule as president of the country from 27th

August 1985 to 26th 1993, and in 1993 was the year that the ban on political parties was lifted leading the formation of two major parties. The National Republic Convention (NRC); and the Social Democratic Party (SDP) were formed that cut across the major ethnic nationalities in Nigeria. The system was seen as two-party configurations that attempted to strengthen national integration in the country which seem to be the best system in Nigerian party politics. The formation of these two parties appeared to be non-ethnic grounded and unbiased to most analysts.

The presidential elections voting behaviour was not limited to a region or ethnic group rather votes were harvested from the then existed regions by the presidential candidates. Based on the popular resort on the media and electoral observant, Chief Moshood Kashimawo Olawale Abiola of the Social Democratic Party led in the election and secured a good number of votes over Alh. Bashir Tofa of the National Republic Convention. But on the 23rd of June, 1993, the election result was annulled after several court order and reports from international bodies to declare who won the presidential election. This period was another dark era in the history of Nigeria that justice and light were autocratically suppressed without redemption from any quarters.

National protest against the annulment of the presidential election and as at July 31, 1993, the National Defence and Security Council (NDSC) announced an interim National Government that comprised members of the two parties (SDP and NRC) together with some military officers. Yet, the demand for justice by Nigerians heralded the political scene whereby chronic human activists made demands upon the then ruling government to declare the winner of the 12th June 1993 presidential winner. The Nigerian government then engaged in a radical clamped of those making demands upon the government. In 17th of November, 1993, the head and leader (Chief Ernest Shonekan) of the interim government tendered his resignation, and General Sani Abacha assumed the mantle of leadership.

The Nigerian military stylishly orchestrated palace coup that seems to be the resignation of the Interim leader. The values of National integration have eroded in this period arising from military gladiators and self-centred interests. Conferences, meetings and calls were made in recognising the 1993 elections but the then military dictator seen it as the act of disloyalty against the power of the federal government. Series of arrest were made, detained and most organisations were proscribed. On September 30, 1996, five political parties were recognised and allowed to fixture in the coming elections under the controlled of by Gen. Sani Abacha. They are Committee for National Consensus (CNC); United Nigeria People's Convention (UNPC); National Centre Party of Nigeria (NCPN); Democratic Party of Nigeria (DPN); and Grassroots Democratic Movement (GDM). These political institutions solely picked Gen. Sani Abacha who transmuted as one party flag bearer and same year more states were created in order accommodate more interests as means to national integration amidst of denial of the mandate of the Nigerian people.

This consensus of political parties was seen as a rape on democratic institutions in Nigeria by democratic bodies and individuals. On May 5, 1998, the European Union described the political drama and the transition process as shameful and undemocratic. Ever before, and before this time the United Action for Democracy (UAC) led a massive protest that led to several Nigerians death. As at May 1998, the Group of 34 popularly known as G-34 that comprised of multi-ethnic coalition sent a communique to Gen. Sani Abacha about the over overwhelming consensus from the then political parties as unlawful and doesn't promote the essence of democratic values. Yet, Abacha proceeded with his plans and on June 8, 1998, Gen San. Abacha dies mysteriously which led to another military in the person of Gen. Abubakar Abdulsalami assumed the position of head of state of the federation. The following month, Chief M.K.O. also died after several pains from the detention and this sparked a heavy riot from all the parts of the

country. This incidence shocked the national integration of the country and there were general beliefs that the Nigerian state has collapsed after several ugly occurrences.

On October 19, 1998, about 9 political parties have emerged through the transition government of the Gen. Abubakar Abdulsalami different from Gen. Sani Abacha's five political parties that threatened national cohesion. The All People Party (APP); the People's Democratic Party (PDP); and Alliance for Democracy (AD), these were the officially recognised parties that contested the 1998 presidential election. The PDP was elitist in nature arising from the G-34 crops of ethnic elites coalition; the AD was more of Yoruba-based political parties, and the APP seems to be national but not as the PDP. On February 27, 1999, the presidential election was conducted and the candidate of the PDP, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo won the presidential election and another civilian government was inaugurated. From all available indications party, politics in the inception of the Fourth Republic was inclusive in terms of regional representation of the Nigerian elites during the formation of the government. But certain attributes were dominant in the personalities that served as president and the period of terms in office. The emergence of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as the candidate of the PDP and finally won the presidential election arises out of the solemnly displayed by the Nigerian elites towards the Yoruba nation as compensation after the death of Chief M.K.O. Abiola through Gen. Sani Abacha detention. This also strengthened national integration in Nigeria. The first four years of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo leadership entertained more Nigerian ethnic groups and this was possible how the PDP sprang up from the G-34. The Senate president slot went to the Eastern part of Nigeria, the Vice president came from the Northern part of the country and Mr President from the Western part of Nigeria. This configuration and other prevailing variables aided national integration after years of darkness the country experienced from the military leadership.

Party politics and the bid for national integration at the beginning of the Nigerian Fourth Republic brought hopes and aspirations to Nigerians. But this hopes and restoration of greatness were dashed when politicians particularly the PDP arms saw party politics as an instrument of self-glorification, personal career and not service to the electorates. This characteristic instigated ethnic militias, regional militancy and insurgencies, Islamic fundamentalist popularly known as Boko Haram, youth unrest, more of arm-robbery in the street, and girls' exploitation. This situation was aggravated when elections reflected only the will and mandate of certain oligarchy in the country against the majority. Electoral violence, intimidation, thuggery, and so on marked several election in Nigeria. Citizens' votes and voices were not properly recognised in party politics in Nigeria within the 16 years of PDP leadership and other opposition parties in Nigeria.

Conversely, the coming in of another party (the All Progress Congress, the APC) under Gen. Mohammed Buhari (Rtd) as at 2015 signalled another bundle of hopes and confidence. But the first four years of the APC under President Mohammed Buhari and other opposition parties seem not to be different from the style of the PDP. The role of party politics towards national integration in the Nigerian Fourth Republic is still much in doubt as a result of neopatrimonialism or rent-seeking style of politics in Nigeria. However, more of this has been revealed below from the exclusive interview received during the fieldwork.

### **Research Methodology**

The study adopted a qualitative approach in the investigation through the means of an interview guide. The population of the study comprised the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP); All Progressive Congress (APC); All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA); Transition Monitoring Group (TMG); CLEEN Foundation; Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, Abuja; Nigeria Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; National Institute for Policy

Journal of African and Global Issues Quarterly (JAGIQ) Volume 1, Issue 1, 2021 and Strategic Studies (NIPSS); Aminu Kano Centre for Democratic Research and Training, Bayero University; Social and Governance Policy Unit, Nigeria Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER), Ibadan; Institute for Development Studies, University of Nigeria; National Institute of Education Planning and Administration (NIEPA), Ondo town; Centre for Human Development (CHD), Ibadan; Claude Ake School of Government, University of Port Harcourt; Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD); and Nigerian Academics that was purposively selected. Some names were mentioned in the course of the findings and transcription. Permission was given to this effect.

### **Interview Guide**

1. What are did you understand by the terms Party politics and National Integration?
2. To what extent has party politics aided national integration in Nigeria?
3. What are the issues that have threatened national integration in Nigeria?
4. What are the remote causes of those factors as earlier mentioned?
5. What are the ways national integration can be build

### **Discussing of research findings**

Party politics entails the leadership of the ruling political class within legal institutions and outside the institutions. For Olaniyi argued that *Party politics are activities of political parties in a democratic environment to seek for the control of political offices through the stated norms of elections* (Olaniyi, 2001:99 cited in Azeez, 2009:2). National integration occurred when certain norms and feelings are created by the ruling class to bring different nationalities into acceptable identity by all. This can be attained when there are functional political parties with strong and identifiable ideologies that considered the needs of diverse ethnic nationalities in the country like ours. Also, the media in all her dealings should be unbiased, fair and transparent to the public; a free and independent

judiciary; vibrant civil society organisations; active and educative population.

Political parties are legal institutions that strived to captured votes through strategic campaigns aim to win elections and control the government. Primarily political parties are institutions build national interests through the process of articulation and aggregation of interests (NIPSS, Interview, 2018; CLEEN Foundation, Interview, 2018).

Party politics has influenced the togetherness of Nigerians on two occasions. The first one was the nationalists fight for independence; and the second one was the incidence that engulfed the June 12, 1993, presidential election. Nigerians from all quarters were united to demand the winner of the election and it sprang into the coming in of the first president in the Fourth Republic. The Fourth republic sets new agenda, happiness and dreams for Nigerians to deepen democracy and national integration. But the political class as it was in the first and second republics displayed self-centredness; parochialism; and ethnic hatred to each other which endangered Nigerian democratic stability and national integration.

The above observation also revealed the views of one professor of Political Science in his article who stated that the Nigerian state has witnessed poor party politics as a result of lack of internal party democracy, *ethnicisation* of party politics, poor political leadership and lack of clear cut party ideologies (Omodia, 2010). He added that the aforementioned factors have snowballed have threatened the survival of the Nigerian Fourth Republic, and by extension national integration. The analyses above also reflected the summation of Giovanni M. Carbone in his investigation on African politics identified that *African parties have often conveyed the image of patronage and tribal politics* (Carbone, 2007:8). In a study by Babangida (2002) cited in Adeleke and Charles (2015), revealed the effect of ethnic politics as follows:

Wastage of enormous human and material resources in ethnically inspired violence, encounters, clashes and even battles, heightening of fragility of the economy and political process, threat to security of life and property and disinvestment of local and foreign components with continuous capital flight and loss of confidence in the economy; and increasing gaps in social relationship among ethnic nationalities including structural suspicions and hate for one another. Ethnic nationalism is equally responsible for the uprising of ethnic militias across the country.

The feeble nature of political parties in Nigeria has marred all the basic elements of institutionalization, which has further eroded patriotism among Nigerians. Recruitment and other functions of political parties in Nigeria are tilted and controlled by the elites for personal gains. These have made political parties not to perform and contribute to national integration in Nigeria.

The above observations were also buttressed by some respondents who identified poor institutionalisation of party politics as a huge barrier to national integration. That the masses are detached from the political system and this has stymied good governance in Nigeria.

Extrapolating from the above discussion, national integration in a plural society is the attainment of a sense of community among the diverse groups within its territorial extent with adequate means of accommodating and resolving their particularistic differences. The major problems of national integration which have been identified as mass-elite conflict, inter-ethnic conflict and territorial boundary problems continue to constitute serious impediments to the achievement of a cohesive society.

Consequently, the Nigerian situation manifests and presents two of the identified problems. There is a gap between the elite and the masses of the people as a result of the disparity in the social and economic levels of the classes. But this inter-class gap per se is not at the moment injurious to

national cohesion. The most serious problem has, however, been the unhealthy suspicion, rivalry and conflict among the ethnic groups. Nigeria has many ethnic groups with three large ones. Each of the three groups was in terms of geographical extent and population strength capable of existing as an independent nation. The heightening of inter-ethnic conflict could, however, be ascribed to colonialism. Though many factors ranging from ethnic to cultural divergences pose serious difficulties for integration and national unity, this is not to say that in pre-colonial times, there had been no form of cooperation among the various

### **What are the issues that have threatened national integration in Nigeria?**

Currently, the Nigerian system is facing insurgencies leading to the burning of houses and killing of Nigerians. This killing cut across all ethnic nationalities but some part of the country especially the Igbos have felt that is a plot to drive them from the Northern part of Nigeria. Also, the several killing carried out by herders against Nigerians has been classified as Fulani/Hausa agenda to Islamised and Fulanised Nigeria. These incidences have threatened national integration in the country leading to a call of the referendum by the Indigenous People of Biafra led by Nnamdi Kanu. In the core South-south, there are issues of pipeline vandalisation due to lack of development, and while the region has been the main economy stay of the country.

The issue of indigene and settler syndrome in Nigeria is a barrier to National integration. Citizens whom migrant to another part of Nigeria cannot participate fully during elections and partake in political offices. You can only see such cases Lagos state. During the era of state creations, some persons have been denied their benefits due to the question of who is a real citizen or native of a particular place. *Some people are regarded as 'settlers', even though "they might have been born, lived, schooled, worked and paid their taxes in the place for decades, yet they are not recognized as indigenes"* (Okonkwo *et al*, 2015). As Ojo *et al* (cited in Okonkwo *et al*, 2015) have

observed,...The creation of new states and local governments immediately fuel pressures for discrimination against new classes of so-called ‘non-indigenes’, that is Nigerians resident in states or local governments other than their own.

This thinking is against the provision of the Nigerian *constitution*. .....religion is another issue here in Nigeria both in the political appointment and other activities in Nigeria. There is hatred among religious groups in Nigeria which has resulted in crises during President Goodluck Jonathan Ebele administration in the country. This has been properly documented in the work of Obasi (2010), who stressed that:

since the return to civil rule in May 1999, there have been well over 100 religious and ethnic conflicts resulting in great losses of lives and property, the most recent of which are the series of conflicts that started from Maiduguri on February 18th, spreading to many other cities in the country (Potiskum, Kontagora, Enugu, Onitsha, Bauchi, and Katsina)” (Saleh, 2010). This identity crisis replicated itself in other parts of Nigeria. As Obasi has succinctly argued, “the conflict among Itsekiri, Ijaw and Urhobo in the Delta region, Zango Kataf in Kaduna State, Tiv/Idoma in Benue State, Modakeke/Ife in Osun State, Umuleri/Aguleri in Anambra State, Shadam in Plateau, and many areas fit in neatly into the permanent strangers’ phenomenon in Nigeria”. It is, therefore, within the ambit of reason to argue that “...rather than promoting national integration, the reorganizations (creation of states and local government areas) provoked an unprecedented orgy

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of protests, demonstrations and riots involving tens  
of fatalities” (Obasi, 2010).

The discussion of this section has shown that the elites’ roles in national integration are numbed, trapped, and caged by ethnicity. This is correct because history has shown that the success and failure of any nation or people is largely a reflection of its elites approach to national development. In solving the problem of ethnicity and indigenous issues, the ruling elites have introduced different integrative mechanisms to enhancing national cohesion and peaceful coexistence on grounds of the incompatibility of federalism. The failure of federalism as an integrating mechanism led to the introduction of such integrative mechanisms as Unity School, National Youth Service Corp, Federal Character, State Creation and Rotational Presidency and they were thoroughly discussed and analysed. The above-listed variables are part of the issues stressed in the works of Anifowose (1999), Clerk (2000), Tyoden (2000), Elaigwu (2000), Babalola (2008), and Dele (2016). These studies have made salient recommendations for deepening national integration.

But despite these integrative mechanisms, in recent studies have revealed that there are growing waves of political resentment leading to the call for secession and social unrest in the country (Ezeibe, 2015; CITAD, 2015; Ejekwonyilo and Khanoba, 2017; Ikelegbe, 2014). Other scholars like h Osaghea (2004), Oni and Ayomole (2013), have argued against the aforementioned variables and stressing the importance of the constitution. That all Nigerian political system needs can be found in the constitution that revealed the basic rights and obligations of the federating units.

An executive member of APGA Mbaso observed that:

I think Nigeria as a developing country has done seriously well. Right from 1960 till date, our way of thinking and party formation has drastically changed. The set of party politics we encountered as at various republics tell

that we have gone far. The issues of challenges are normal in nation-state like ours despite various insurgencies and youth unrest we remained one and is good to our democracy and development of our identity as one nation. Although our leaders, still revolved around primordial and prebendalistic politics I believed for the next 20 to 50 years we will be more united.

He further added that:

Leadership succession is the problem facing Nigeria since 1960. The mode of transfer power from one government to another is always accompanied by tension. This tension is anchored on the fact that leaders are imposed. The problem has been attributed to the persistent interruption by the military, since 1960. With the inception of democracy in 1999, there was positive hope about leadership succession in the country, but the reverse was the result as all elections conducted were seriously accompanied by tensions, fraud, rigging, intimidation leading to voters' apathy and this has distorted the progress towards nation building or national cohesion in Nigeria.

On same notes a member of National Institute of Education Planning and Administration (NIEPA), Ondo town argued that:

One of the major problems of Nigeria is the issue of politics of exclusion and marginalization. Nigeria has been battling with this problem right from independence because the country is one of the most ethnically diverse countries in Africa with sharp ethnic identities which have been a big challenge to her democracy and national integration but

successive governments and political parties have initiated institutions such as federalism, multi-party system but it seems nothing has been done. This can be associated with the insincerity of political actors in the system

Subaru (1998:31 cited in Olanrewaju, 2015), also alluded to Hassan's position when he opined that Nigeria is one of the most ethnically diverse countries in the world with over 250 ethnic linguistic groups, some of which are bigger than many independent states of contemporary Africa, and this is not unconnected with the adoption of federalism and this has *not been a remedy to manage Nigerian society because minority agitation against marginalization remains unsolved*. For Akin from one of the civil society organisation equally stressed that:

Party politics in the area of policy implementation in Nigeria has been a challenge to national integration. For instance, the South-South question in Nigeria represents a high profile case in terms of minority marginalization; it became public knowledge with the discovery of oil in Oloibi in commercial quantity. Not only that, the South-South agitation in Nigeria is primarily based on the quest for resource control as a result of oil discovery in the region while the conflict in Niger Delta has its roots in the increasing protest of the region against their political, economic and environmental disenfranchisement. The Militias have become increasingly violent both towards one another and towards civilians; kidnapping victims which include not just oil workers, but also children and other people who are not associated with the oil industry. But Nigerian politicians have underplayed these issues with bias mind and politics of segregation, hate speeches have become the order of the day which has threatened the national cohesion

Also supporting the views held by Akin, Jega (2003:27 cited in Olanrewaju, 2015) stressed that there is a problem of national disaffection by the Nigerian

electorates in various elections and party politics as a result of economic hardship and political violence perpetrated by the political bourgeoisie (selfish leaders) in the system. According to him:

Under conditions of economic crisis and subsequent structural adjustment, there has been a swift decline in the ability of the Nigerian state to provide for the basic socio-economic needs of the people. Similarly, there has been the increased exclusion of a segment of the elite and the bourgeoisie in the offices, and an acute marginalization of the majority of the population from the benefit of development projects and socio provisioning. All these have led to an increasing crisis of legitimacy of the state. As the state experience, a process of decomposition and composition and disengages from critical socio provisioning; only the constituent groups have tended to rely on the identity-based struggle for access to the state and the resources that it controls to protest exclusion and oppression as well as to demand basic right and socio-economic provisioning.

Linking party politics with internal colonialism, an officer from the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), Shamsudeen observed as follows:

Party politics has taken the dimension of internal colonization and exploitation by one ethnic group against the others in Nigeria. But with the growth of democracy, democratic institutions and education, some of the members of the dominated or “internally colonised” ethnic nationalities begin to question their memberships to the larger political community (national identity); they question why they should cooperate with the other ethnic nationalities in the country and or, see themselves as one (national

integration) when their slots of national resources are being taken by “non-indigenes” in their midst, and why the other ethnic regions are developing at their own expense by harnessing the natural resources found in another ethnic region, this is a big challenge to national integration in Nigeria. In other words, the rise of Militancy, Avengers and other ethnic militias especially in the south-south region is as a result of failed policies in Nigeria.

Similar views were also expressed by Akwara *et al* (2013) who remarked that: *they question why their indigenes are not found within the corridors of power in their natural ethnic regions and at the national level, and why they should continue to support the governments at all levels, and therefore employ all possible means to bring the governments to be responsible and accountable.* This has led to the proliferation of ethnic militias that terrorize the citizens across the country; and the adoption of different legal frameworks that challenge national laws in some parts of the country.

Conversely, Olanrewaju (2015) observed that the crisis in the Niger Delta is not unconnected with the problem of marginalization in terms of economic resources and political affairs. Despite the fact, the region produces 80% of Nigerian income; the region suffers seriously from poverty and low economic empowerment. However, the state further suffers a legitimacy crisis as excluded groups emerge to demand their portion of the national cakes. In Nigeria, national integration is the main problem in the process of nation-building. This is largely because the country is divided along with ethnic and religious diversity. This has been one of the most complex problems facing the country since independence.

These contradictions can only be resolved through a discussion of the “national question” in the various countries. An officer from Transition Monitoring Group, Babalola views on the challenges of national integration is stated thus:

Challenges of national integration are of various dimensions. Meanwhile, free and fair elections and the principle of zoning are the major problems of national integration in the country. The principle of zoning adopted by PDP somehow works but it has deepened the politics of divide. That is before elections, the elites within their regions or ethnic zones tend to create a sense of sharp division to get certain resources into their personal affairs and this system of party politics has disengaged Nigerians from the polity, I mean the masses, the governed, this is a big challenge to national integration because people that ought to serve as instrument of driving the goals of the nations are disenfranchised within the political process

In supporting the view above Ogbeide (2012), indicated that Nigeria has failed in several elections in the country, reports from across the country show that the mandate of the people has been abused, traumatised and brutalised. In effect, the evidence of several elections demonstrated that INEC visibly deficient in logistic and preparations for elections. Nigerians could no longer afford to tolerant this level of vulgar disenfranchisement which is a blatant rape on the will of the people and this has negative bearings on national integration. Similarly, a member from the CLEEN Foundation posited that:

A large number of political parties lack internal party democracy. Candidates are predetermined before the elections. Typical of this was last Ondo State governorship election and other elections in the country. Generally, monetary politics and godfatherism pose challenges for national integration. When democratic values are not at play then national integration will be rhetoric

In a different view, a respondent added that:

The problems of the state of origin instead of the state of resident and good governance are issues serving as

a challenge to national integration. This situation has disenfranchised Nigerians in a different part of the country who are not in their ancestral land (state of origin). It is on these atmosphere politicians have intensified politics of hatred between and among ethnic groups in Nigeria. This scenario has derailed political parties their primary function of national integration in the country, nepotism, sectional, elites and ethnic interests have become the nature of party politics in the country

This situation which contradicts Edmund Burke's and other scholars' understanding of political party as "*a body of men and women united, for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed*" (Edmund Burke cited in Clark, 2000). An official of the Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) views the challenges of national integration as follows:

All the political parties are ethnic or regional party except PDP and APC. Majority of the political parties in the country are ethnically and tribally established. But these major parties lack good leadership virtues and their internal management have created unresolved grievances and crises which have divided Nigerians into different factions and camp. Within PDP we have Sherief faction, Jonathan's factions, etc., likewise in APC Bukola Sarake's faction, Bola Tinubu factions and Buhari factions, *this is not funny*, this is why political parties in Nigeria and their leaders cannot integrate Nigerians.

Another school of thought has situated this argument on colonialisation which has led to the merging different ethnic groups into a country. After the amalgamation of Northern and Southern protectorates, Sir Frederick Lugard, the then Governor-General, created Nigerian Council. Sir Clifford

in 1922 introduced a new Legislative Council as stipulated in the new Clifford Constitution. This new Legislative Council was however restricted to the Southern Protectorate while the North was governed by a proclamation from the Governor (Clark, 2000). Buttressing the argument above Olusanya (1980 cited in Clark, 2000), argued that:

Failure of Sir Clifford to fully integrate the North and South was the most unconvincing act. The result was that the failure added to the challenges of national integration in later years. This is because the arrangement only served to perpetuate ethnic parochialism. Thus, the 1914 amalgamation of the two protectorates created merely administrative and not national integration. And after the departure of the colonial masters in 1960, ethnic elites consolidate their powers and this has been transferred to various Republics in Nigerian party politics

Richard Constitution of 1946 merged North and South. However, this also had some inherent loopholes which did not augur well for any meaningful National integration. The most salient of these was the establishment of Northern, Western and Eastern Provinces, each with a House of Assembly or Regional Council, consisting of members elected by the Native Authority. These came to be compounded by other problems which in the end made instability inevitable, and in the long run, did not augur well for national integration. In a different argument, Oluwafemi one of the respondent equally added that:

One of the greatest challenges to integration in the Nigerian state is the Niger-Delta question. The principle and theory of integration demand the removal of barriers to integration; it means equating or ensuring the development of all parts in the integration equation. But the case of this region poses the greatest challenge... the problem of youth restiveness arising from unemployment, poverty and lack of proper education. These variables constitute a big issue in Nigeria and which have bearings with the

failure of leadership or party politics in the country. Those who allied with certain values such as the Boko Haram ideas and kidnapping business, seen this involvement as a means of survival. Since those that they entrusted their mandate has failed them especially on good policies and its implementation. The quest for 1958, 1960 and 1963 pattern of revenue allocation remain in the minds of those in the Niger Delta... a robust federal system should build and allow each region to develop in it pace but successive governments have reversed the permutation and this has created a problem in our federal structure... this is where the Niger Delta question arises

On this issue, Ehwarieme & Cocodia (2011); and Darah (2012), stressed and stated that in 1958 the allocation of revenue from mining rents and royalties was in order of 50% to the area where a mineral was mined, 20% to the central government and 30% to a Distributable Pool Account. The region that earned 50% also shared in this 30% based on equity. This progressive provision was included in the constitutions of 1960 and 1963. However, this principle has been distorted in the present allocation formula, hence the region or zone which produces the wealth of the nation, now seem to receive the least governmental intervention. This situation has led to militancy and the quest for 'resource control' which may deny other regions of enormous resources they currently enjoy while contributing minimally to the wealth of the nation. Differential levels of development which constitute the problem of regional integration in Africa has the same effect to national integration in Nigeria (Ehwarieme & Cocodia, 2011; Darah, 2012). In a similar note, a respondent named Nworga observed that

... issues such as Boko Haram, quit notice, secession, militancy, hate speeches, employment, leadership failure these are some of the issues threatening Nigeria unity or what you called national integration. The issue of hate speeches and secession have eaten deep into the Nigerian political system. Nigerians

don't see themselves as one. The issue of hate speeches started in the days of Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, Tafawa Belewa and Obafemi Awolowo. Different derogatory phrases and sentences were used that marred the unity of Nigeria then. Even, one of the prime factors that led to the civil war was as a result of suspicious and the fear of superiority of one ethnic group over the other.

Orji, one of the respondents added that:

... the major challenge of national integration in Nigeria happened to be the attitude of political leaders towards issues affecting one region or ethnic group. The Boko Haram insurgency wasn't taken seriously at the initial stage during President Jonathan/Sambo Administration. What I'm saying is that ethnic and regional politics is still much alive in Nigeria political system and a country that is divided along ethnic or regional interest cannot consolidate national integration. The ongoing hate speeches in the country, secessionist movement, quit notice and the unrepentant activities of the militancy and Boko Haram have been linked to party politics of ethnicity and regionalism. These actions have impacted negatively into Nigeria's integration....the politics of dividing the country into South and North or Geopolitical zones connotes regional or ethnic interests and this not healthy for the country. However, the APC government has put in place mechanisms to checkmate the activities that encourage and promote ethnic divides especially on hate speeches and the APC government is very meticulous in its appointment. The Nigerian military, the National orientation agency, etc. have been strengthened to ensure national integration.

On the same bases, Adeseke of the PDP from Ondo state likewise observed that:

... the activities of Boko Haram, weak institutions to tackle corruption, the health of the president, quit notice, secession, militancy, hate speeches, employment and inflation; these are issues serving as a challenge to national integration. That's why some of us are calling for the restructuring of the Nigerian political system and if the Buhari's administration continues in this manner on the pretence on the fall dollars and blaming past administration in their woos then Nigeria is on the path of collapse or disintegration....

Equally an academic from Edo University has added that:

... and these activities of these individuals have threatened national integration in the past and have given a negative image to Nigeria in the comity of nations.

Nigeria's political parties have worsened the Nigerian political system, the issue of the ceremonial primary election, automatic ticket, the syndrome of party's founding fathers, zoning have caused a setback to the enthronement of democracy and if there are no institutions to consolidate democracy and then the question of national integration is irrelevant and unattainable. If the people have to be incorporated and play an active role in their polity this will signal national integration and this can be done through selfless leadership and patriotism.

From the above revelations, the study has identified that the elite's interest and the roles of party politics especially within political parties have affected the quest for national integration. These were justified through the information given by respondents during the course of the fieldwork. And

works of scholars such as Ikelegbe (2014), Omodia (2015), Egwu (2014), Ayoade (2008), Okonkwo *et al* (2015), have identified that issues such as internal party democracy and the problem of lop-sidedness of Nigerian federal system have given birth to divided politics which has affected the quest for national integration.

### **Findings and Conclusion**

This study utilised a qualitative technique through the means of an interview guide. Ted Gurr thesis *why men rebel* was used to reveal the implications of party politics' failure in Nigeria. This study identified that due to the unperformed nature and failed promises of the Nigerian politicians in respect of the provision of a better education; and other critical infrastructures. This has created porous society and political erosion which has given birth to insurgencies; social unrest and ethnic militias. This and among others have served as a barrier to national integration in Nigeria. Subsequent governments have attempted to tame the menace through the provision of federal character, creation of Niger Delta Ministry; amnesty programmes; poverty eradication programmes; state creations; and so on. Extant literature in this study has identified that these recommendations and policies have instigated disintegrative tendencies rather national integration. Respondents in this study have revealed that most politicians are greedy and regarded public office as personal gains after elections. Politicians see political offices as business empires to regain expenses spent during elections. This has created diversion of public funds to private use. Public offices have given birth to patron-client politics; patronage; neopatrimonialism and rendering the masses empty and destitute against their electoral mandates. This has been the thrust of disintegrative tendencies in the Nigerian political system.

### **Recommendation**

Best practices in the context of African values and culture that buttressed selfless services to the entire citizens should be encouraged in the act of party politics in the country. There is a need for active political engagement and

aggressive political education to sensitise the masses the essence of national integration as a means for national building. Institutions should be reorganised for active performance towards national integration.

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