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Full Length Research Paper

The impact of Plan Ghana's microfinance scheme on poverty reduction among women in Lower Manya Krobo

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The main purpose of the study was to assess the impact of Plan Ghana's Microfinance Scheme on the livelihoods of female beneficiaries in the Lower Manya Krobo Municipality of the Eastern Region of Ghana. A descriptive survey design was adopted and 180 sample size was used. The study showed that the scheme had improved beneficiaries' lives tremendously in areas of health, child education, personal development, and business sustainability. The study also recommended that Plan Ghana intensifies the training programme for its clients.

Key words: Lower Manya- Krobo, microfinance, Plan Ghana, poverty reduction.

INTRODUCTION

Poverty reduction has been a major concern for successive governments in Ghana over the years because it is believed to be the universally accepted way of achieving economic growth in the country. The intended purpose is to raise the living standards of the people and improve upon their quality of life. As a result, different economic policy reforms are pursued to achieve reduction, but the impact has not been felt by all, especially those in the rural areas (Obeng, 2011). The United Nations (2004) declared the year 2005 as the "Year of Microcredit." Since the mid 1990s microfinance or microcredit operations have been embraced as a cure for alleviating poverty in the world particularly for women and specifically women in rural areas. Microcredit seems to promise three things, that is to reduce poverty, empower women, and to enhance family planning knowledge and practices

(Giersing, 1999). The delivery of micro credits to entrepreneurs of small and micro enterprises (SMEs) in developing countries is increasingly being viewed as a strategic means of assisting the so-called "working poor" (ILO, 1998). For this reason, a lot of multilateral and bilateral aids have been channeled into microfinance programmes in the developing countries with varying degrees of success (Afrane, 1997).

The Microcredit Summit Campaign (2002) indicates that microcredit is a proven way to help families move out of poverty. In buttressing the above point, Shylendra (2007) concluded microcredit programmes attack poverty at its very core by increasing the household consumption expenditure of participants.

The principal idea behind micro-lending is the availability of capital to traditionally vulnerable populations.

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These populations are usually poor persons, rural individuals and women who are not customarily considered for standardized banking loans and lending assistance. In this regard, microcredit groups are often promoted as a solution or panacea to Third World poverty because it presumes to increase income of individual borrowers and thereby reduce poverty for the poor in developing countries (Hanak, 2000). In addition, Hanak indicates that microcredit venture being a viable anti-poverty strategy is viewed as “an instrument to change gender relations to women’s advantage and also promising scheme to create employment and income to a significant scale”.

In the past, several African countries including Ghana, Guinea, Tanzania and Uganda have relied on state-owned banks to extend rural credit and microfinance service. In most cases, these countries have incurred large losses and have had to be restructured (Microcredit Summit Campaign Report, 2002). This experience of failed state-owned banks has led African governments to focus on financially viable approaches to providing microfinance and on developing regulatory and supervisory frameworks that will be adapted to supporting such efforts. This partly explains why in Ghana, there are a lot of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working extensively in the northern part of the country where licensed microfinance institutions are relatively scarce (IMF, 2004). Again, the IMF reports that, various development approaches have been devised by policy makers, international development agencies, non-governmental organizations and others, which aim at reducing poverty in developing countries. One of these strategies, which have become increasingly popular since the early 1990s, involve microfinance scheme, which provide financial services in the form of savings and credit opportunities to the working poor (Johnson and Rogaly, 1997).

The Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS I, 2003) document indicates that farmers are the poorest among a category of workforce and traders. This makes it clear that majority of farmers are not able to support upkeep of their families in terms of better education for their children, quality health care, clothing, adequate housing and better nutrition among other things. According to the Microcredit Summit Campaign Report (2002), one of the major pillars of the GPRS II is to “reduce poverty and therefore using microfinance schemes particularly focused on the vulnerable especially women as strategy is likely to help the country achieve its economic growth and poverty reduction by 2015 as indicated in the policy document”

The contributions of SMEs to the growth of most countries in Africa are crucial since they are the backbone of their economies. However, the role of the SMEs in these economies has not been given official support, particularly credit as the so-called “work poor” finds it difficult to access credit from financial institutions and organizations.

According to the IMF (2004), only 50% of the population

has access to the formal banking sector. Thus, accessing credits may be a problem. In the Lower Manya Krobo Municipality, women are engaged in various small-scale enterprises like petty trading, food vending or “chop bars” and farming which make significant contributions to the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In spite of their contributions, their desire to expand their businesses is always challenged by the stringent requirements of formal banking institutions to obtain credits. The aim of this paper is to examine the impact of Plan Ghana’s Microfinance Scheme on the livelihoods of small-scale female entrepreneurs in the Lower Manya Krobo Municipality in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The rest of this paper is structured as follows. Section 2 briefly presents literatures related to the work. Section 3 presents the methodology and data of the study. Section 4 presents and discusses the empirical results. Finally, section 5 supplies some concluding remarks.

RELATED WORKS

Microfinance and poverty reduction

Poverty continues to be a major problem facing both advanced and less-advanced countries. The main objective of microfinance is to reduce poverty (Ledgerwood, 2000). In doing this, microfinance provides the opportunity for clients to create wealth. Targeting women in the society who constitute the majority of the poor, microfinance helps to reduce poverty by creating wealth which leads to an increase in the levels of incomes of the vulnerable (Scully, 2004). Savings services lead to capital accumulation for investment in the short and long terms. With high levels of income, women are empowered. They are to cater for themselves and children, make decisions that affect their household, educate their children and engage in income generating activities. The extent at which rural financial services contribute to poverty reduction largely depends on access to these services by the poor. It also depends on promising investment opportunities and on capacity of the poor to tap into these investment opportunities. If investment opportunities in rural areas are not expanding simultaneously with rural financial services, not much can be achieved (Robinson, 2003).

In Bangladesh, where about one third of the world’s estimated 30-40 million micro borrowers reside, the growth has come from specialised microfinance NGOs and Grameen Bank. What began with a few small grants and loans from international donors has now provided over 100 million dollars in loans (Khandker, 1998). The most distinctive feature of the credit delivery system is the absence of middle men between the credit supplier and end user. The bank’s cumulative recovery rate is an astounding 98%. Grameen Bank has its own special legal structure, and does not fall under regulatory oversight of the central bank. The bank also aims to raise health and environmental consciousness. Each of its members must

plant at least one sapling a year as part of forestation programme. Grameen is perhaps the only bank in the world that encourages birth control, sanitation and a clean environment as part of its lending policy (Yunus, 2003). In Bolivia, the microfinance revolution emerged in the 1990s. Large-scale commercial credit is provided there by BancoSol, a privately owned bank for micro-entrepreneurs and by a number of competitors following hotly on BancoSol's heels (and profits). By 1997, BancoSol, financed by a combination of domestic and international commercial debt and investment and locally, mobilized voluntary savings, provided loans profitably to more than one quarter of Bolivia's clients (Robinson, 2003). The wall Street Journal (1997) notes, "the real measure of its success is that BancoSol has spawned a slew of competitions." Thus Bancosol has been able to cope with the competitive finance industry in Bolivia.

In India, despite the large size and depth of its financial system, the majority of the rural poor do not have access to formal finance and financial services. For this reason, innovative microfinance initiatives pioneered by non-governmental organizations strove to create links between commercial banks, NGOs, and informal local groups to create the "SHG Bank Linkage" (Development Gateway, 2004). India's approach to microfinance makes it profitable and widely available, helping the country to reduce the incidence of poverty from about 40 per cent of the population in the mid-1970s to about 11 percent in 1996 (Robinson, 2003). Members of SHG recognize that "several challenges lie ahead," but still believe it has "the right ingredients to be scaled-up into offering mass access to finance for the rural poor while improving sustainability" (World Bank, 2005).

The World Development Report (World Bank, 1997) found that poverty can be reduced most effectively by a strategy with two equally important elements. The first element is to promote the productive use of the most abundant asset of the poor, labour. Broad-based economic growth through appropriate macroeconomic and microeconomic policies is critical in this respect. There is also an important role for policies targeted at promoting infrastructure development and encouraging income generation activities for the poor. The second element is to provide basic social services to the poor. The World Bank found that primary health care, family planning, nutrition and primary education are especially important in this regard. Todaro (2000) reports that women's participation in the labour force of developing countries has increased dramatically in the 1990s, rising up to 43% in East Asia, 32% in Latin America and 13% in the Arab world. Again most women are employed in a very narrow range of low-productive jobs where many hours of work are rewarded by low wages. Furthermore most economically active women work in the informal sector, either as agricultural workers who make up 78% in Africa and 80% in Asia or the urban informal sector which accounts for between 25 and 40% in Latin America.

In most developing countries, including Ghana, opportunities for wage employment in the formal sector of the economy are extremely limited, and the vast majority of the poor rely on self-employment for their livelihood. Better access to financial services enables the poor to establish and expand micro-enterprises and thereby improve their income levels and create employment. Even in middle income countries such as Botswana and Egypt, where opportunities for wage employment are greater, many poor households rely on self-employment in micro-enterprises for their livelihood.

Impact of microcredit on small and medium enterprises

The impacts of microcredit on SME's are enormous. This is because every business entity, SMEs included needs some amount of capital injection and microcredit institutions to fill the gap created by the big financial institutions. Because of the need to fill the financing gap for SMEs, this section reviews some ideas espoused on the issue by scholars.

According to Guerin (2006), microcredit has had positive and significant effect on poverty reduction and women empowerment. Findings presented in studies such as Khandker (1998) and Derbile (2003) have provided evidence on microcredit's ability in alleviating households' poverty. They enabled women to be gainfully employed. Income from such non-farm enterprise is used for household provisioning and other essential basic services. This leads to improvement in the family livelihood. Women acting as breadwinners of the family gives them the opportunity in taking part in household decision-making, which changed their positions relative to men's in Nandom. However, in the case of women in Nandom, the credits given to them are inadequate to support any viable venture. Due to the small amount of credit given to them, such monies end up been used to support the family's routine subsistence instead of investment in business (Aasoglenang, 2000).

Expounding further on the effect of microcredit, Mayoux (2002) makes the assertion that microcredit programmes are currently being promoted as a key strategy for both poverty alleviation and women's empowerment on the basis that these programmes have impact of increasing women's income levels and control over income which ultimately results in greater economic independence. Another factor is that microcredit programmes provide women in Africa with the access to networks and markets which equips them with a wider experience of the world outside the home. In this process, access to information and possibilities of other social and political roles are enhanced (Hashemi et al., 1996; Jellema and Hernandez, 2002).

Akyeampong (2002) recognises that the establishment of microcredit programmes enhances the perception of

women's contribution to household income and family welfare and this increases women's participation in household decision-making about expenditure and invariably creates a greater expenditure on women's welfare. Finally, these programmes tend to help greatly in changing the attitudes of men to the role of women in the household and the community in general. Microcredit, microfinancing and microenterprises are terms that have been used to describe and define the situation in which small loans are extended to people for the purposes of setting up small and usually self-employment projects that generate income.

In the opinion of Berger (1989), microcredit programmes and services offered are usually established for the purpose of creating and developing self-employment opportunities. Thus, a microenterprise based on the application of these terms, would refer to a sole proprietorship that has fewer than five employees, does not have access to the commercial banking sector and can initially utilize a loan of under \$15,000. These "small" loans are utilized through microenterprise development programmes, which are usually run by non-profit organizations that provide a combination of credit, technical assistance, training and other business and personal assistance services to microenterprises such as those offered by CIAD .

According to Clark and Kays (1995), the microcredit loans are loans facilities with an average size of \$5,640, and a terms ranging from one year to 4.8 years. Normally, the loan facilities attract a market rate of interest rate between 8 and 16%, and these loans are generally secured by non-traditional collateral, flexible collateral requirements or group guarantees. The unique characteristics of microcredit programmes in Africa is that credits are given on premise that borrowers are the best judges of their own circumstances and as a result, they know best how to organize credit facilities when it is available. This gives the individual borrowers has the opportunity to choose the income-generating activity appropriate to her peculiar situation. Based on this notion of peculiarity of situation, if a borrower is involved in group lending, she enjoys the benefit of constructive criticism from the members of her lending group. In this situation, the programmes have the benefit of both individual creativity and participatory planning initiatives by group peers.

In conclusion, it is estimated that for African economies to achieve growth rates comparable to other developing countries in Southeast Asia, their economies need to grow at a rate of 4.7 percent per annum to achieve a reduction in the number of poor people in Africa. Despite the efforts of African governments and the donor communities, the countries are far from achieving the necessary level of growth although there have been indications of an upturn in recent years (World Bank, 2005). In view of these developments, the current signals that stress on an intensification and support for poverty

alleviation efforts must be sustained. Specifically, the enormous potential can be exploited by providing greater opportunities for the poor in the African societies through microcredit programmes, which adopts a "bottom-up" approach instead.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey type was employed in conducting this study. This design was used because of the nature of the study. Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) and Best and Kahn (1995) indicate that descriptive research is concerned with the condition or relationship that exists, such as determining the nature of prevailing conditions, practices and attitudes, opinions that are held, processes that are going on, or trends that are developed. Again, Eriksson and Weidersheim-Paul (1997) stated that descriptive research aims to describe phenomena of different kinds: conditions, events, courses of events or actions.

Sample and sampling techniques

A sample size of 180 was used for the study. This was because according to Nwana (1995), "if the population is few hundred, a 40% sample size will do, and if several hundred a 20% sample size will do, if a few thousands, 5% or less of sample will do". Therefore, a sample size of 180 representing 2.3% of the total population of 7,933 was used for the study. Also, out of the five women groups in the area, three (3), namely, Boafoyena, Kakepem Kpe and Nyemisuom were randomly selected and 60 samples were drawn from each group.

In the selection of the 60 respondents each from the three working groups, the lists/registers for all the groups were compiled and a systematic sampling technique was used to randomly select 60 respondents from each group. This sampling technique was employed to eliminate all biases from the selection process and also to ensure representativeness.

To get the total respondent for the study and interview, the respondents were properly informed of the intended purpose of the research. Those who were consulted included the president and patrons of this association for an introduction to their group member. Similarly, ethical issues were highly considered. The sensitivity relating to profit and income was dealt with cautiously. In cases, where the respondent was reluctant in responding to some question, the researcher did not false such responses. This was done in an attempt to reduce the influence of the researcher on the responses of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study sought to assess the impact of the micro-finance scheme of Plan Ghana on the livelihoods of the female beneficiaries in the Lower Manya Krobo Municipality. Here, variables such as contribution to family health needs, children's education, personal development, participation in local governance business sustainability and income levels were considered.

It is shown in Table 1 that about 94.4% of the small-scale female entrepreneurs claimed to have used their microcredit funds to buy soap and other detergents for their families. Also, as much as 157 (87.2%) of them said

Table 1. Contributions of microfinance scheme to beneficiaries' family health issues.

Education issues	F	%
Buying soap and other detergents	170	94.4***
Purchase of first aid drugs	157	87.2***
<i>Buying food and other ingredients</i>	140	77.8***
Payment of hospital bills	134	74.4***

Source: Field Data, 2013 **Note: Frequency is out of 180 respondents.

Table 2. Contributions of microfinance scheme to beneficiaries' children's education.

Education issues	Frequency	Percentage
Provision of pocket money	178	98.9***
Buying stationery (e.g. books, pens.etc)	172	95.6***
Buying school uniform	164	91.1***
Paying school fees	102	56.7***

Source: Field Data, 2012 **Note: Frequency is out of 180 respondents.

that they used their monies in purchasing of first aid drugs. Relatively, small amounts went into paying hospital bills. This apparently may be due to the patronage of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS). Again, these responses could also be attributed to the credit with Education programmes of Plan Ghana from which respondents benefited. Also, Sherpa (2001) noted that combining credit with education put women in a stronger position to ensure equal access for female children to food, schooling and medical care.

On contribution to children's education, Table 2 shows that majority (98.9%) of respondents agreed that the loan scheme helped them to provide their wards with pocket money for school. A large number (95.6) of them also claimed that the proceeds from their businesses enabled them to buy stationery for their schooling wards. It was observed that 56.7% of them were using gains to pay school fees. This corroborates the conclusion of Boomgard and Angell (1994)'s assertion that supporting women enterprises with credit enables the core poor to save, and cater for most social services.

Also, on personal development, all the respondents were in agreement that their self-confidences and self-respects had been boosted by Plan Ghana's interventions. This finding confirms the work by URWEGO (1999) in Rwanda. URWEGO study noted that greatest impact of its programme on empowerment had been on self-esteem, increased self esteem, an increase in their level of knowledge about issues that affect themselves and their families and an increase in business knowledge. The findings could be attributed to the fact that the infusion of capital through micro-financing enabled

businesses of respondents to grow and make profits so they could now meet some of their basic needs.

Basic development suggests that, development consists of provision of essential services. The study found that about 97% claimed they acquired household items from their proceeds (Table 3). Generally, all respondents accepted that the microfinance scheme had positively contributed to their personal development. The African Development Bank (2000) states that helping poor women earn incomes means removing the barrier to political, legal and social constraints that work against them and that the benefits tend to spread among families, most particularly in the procurement of basic needs for the home.

From Table 4, it is evident that the training provided by Plan Ghana to the female entrepreneurs through the microfinance scheme empowered them to participate more in community activities ranging from politics to fighting for human right freedoms. Specifically, about 83% indicated that they participated in community level elections, 76% participated in communal labour, and 121 (67.2%) had fought for respect of human rights. This finding is consistent with MKNelly and McCord's (2001) conclusion from the study of the 'Freedom From Hunger' credit with Education that "clients in Bolivia, were significantly more likely to have been a candidate for public office or been a member of the community's *sindicato* (meaning trade union) than non-clients" (p.61)

Also, women clients of Opportunity Microfinance Bank in the Philippines have gained leadership experience and confidence as leaders of their Trust Banks and have gone on to be elected as leader within their *barangays*

Table 3. Contributions of microfinance scheme to beneficiaries' development.

Statement	SA		A		D		SD		(N = 180) Mean
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Self-confidence	174	96.7	6	3.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	3.97
Self-respect	174	96.7	6	3.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	3.97
Acquisition of household items	164	91.1	11	6.1	5	2.8	0	0.0	3.88
Ability to pay Social levies	137	76.1	23	12.8	12	6.7	8	4.4	3.61
Leadership skills	133	73.9	21	11.7	15	8.3	11	6.1	3.53
Assistance to parents	115	63.9	32	17.8	18	10.0	15	8.3	3.37
Sense of autonomy	111	61.7	31	17.2	20	11.1	18	10.0	3.31
Acquisition of clothes/footwear	111	61.7	31	17.2	20	11.1	18	10.0	3.31
Social networks	108	60.0	30	16.7	22	12.2	20	11.1	3.26

Means were calculated from scale: SA (4); A (3); D (2); and SD (1). Source: Field Data, 2012.

Table 4. Contributions of microfinance scheme to beneficiaries' local governance participation.

Statement	SA		A		D		SD		Mean (N-180)
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Participation in community level elections	65	36.1	85	47.2	25	13.9	5	2.8	3.17
Participation in communal labour	53	29.4	83	46.1	32	17.8	12	6.7	2.98
Participation in meetings	56	31.1	69	38.3	38	21.1	17	9.5	2.91
Fighting for human rights	49	27.2	72	40.0	37	20.6	22	12.2	2.82

Means were calculated from scale: SA (4); A (3); D (2); and SD (1). Source: Field Data, 2012.

(community level political unit in the Philippines) (Cheston and Kuhn, 2002, p. 24). Similarly, Mayoux (1997) postulated that microcredit programmes provide women in Africa with access to networks and markets which equip them with a wider experience of the world outside the home. In this process, access to information and possibilities of other social and political roles are enhanced.

The next part of the study sought to find out how sustainable the small-scale enterprises of the women entrepreneurs were, by asking them questions on some indications of sustainability. Responses are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5 reveals that there was a strong ability to sustain the business enterprise as indicated by majority of the respondents on each indicator with the exception of training of employees under them (45.0%). This attests to the fact that the idea of micro-enterprise involves ready credit, financial services, related education and training to needy entrepreneurs to engage in business and create employment and income for themselves, their families and communities. Also, Edusei (2008) concludes that with microfinance programme, women's businesses became more successful in terms of increased working capital, improved relationship with suppliers and customers, undertaking strategic planning and pricing and diversification and expansion into more profitable product lines.

Finally, one of the often articulated rationale for supporting microfinance and the targeting of women by microfinance programmes is that "microfinance is an effective means or entry point for empowering women, that is, by putting financial resources in the hands of women, microfinance institutions help level the playing field and promote gender equality" (Mayoux, 2002,). For this reason, the study sought to compare the income levels of small-scale female entrepreneurs before and after the Plan Ghana's Microfinance Scheme. This is represented in Table 6.

As shown in Table 6, all 180 Plan Ghana's Microfinance Scheme beneficiaries were earning not more than 100 Ghana Cedis. The average monthly income before the intervention was only GH¢ 52.78. However, with the inception of an intervention by Plan Ghana (microfinance scheme), majority (67.8%) of the beneficiaries began to earn relatively higher incomes, with some earning GH¢ 201 or more per month. The mean income of the respondents increased to GH¢ 130.43. It appears that there is a substantial difference in their 'before' and 'after' average income levels per month. This is an indication that Plan Ghana's microfinance scheme contributed to an increase in the financial base of small-scale female entrepreneurs. They, therefore, could now save money to expand their businesses. This finding is in line with Adam's (1984) conclusion that once given the opportunity,

Table 5. Contribution of microfinance scheme to beneficiaries' business sustainability.

Statement	F	Percentage
Control over business enterprise	163	90.6
Saving money to expand business	155	86.1
Acquisition of training in the business	158	87.8
Keeping records on business transaction	144	80.0
Training of employees	81	45.0
Total	180	100.0

Source: Field Data 2012.

Table 6. Monthly income levels of female entrepreneurs before and after the scheme.

Income Level (GH¢)	Before		After	
	F	%	F	%
50 or less	81	45.0	25	13.9
51 – 100	99	55.00	33	18.3
101 – 150	0	0.0	45	25.0
151 – 200	0	0.0	53	29.5
201 and above	0	0.0	24	13.3
Total	180	100.0	180	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2012.

not only did clients of microfinance providers expand their businesses and increase their incomes, but their high repayment rates demonstrated that the poor are capable of transforming their own lives given the chance. Also, Mayoux (1997) asserts that microcredit programmes have the impact of increasing women's income levels and control over income which ultimately results in greater economic independences.

Buttressing the above point, Akyeampong (2002) agrees that the establishment of microcredit programmes enhances the perception of women's contribution to household income and family welfare and this increases women's participation in household decision-making about expenditure and invariably creates a greater expenditure on women's welfare. Helmes (2006) also agrees that microfinance must be useful to poor households. It helps them raise income, build up assets and as cushion against unexpected shocks.

Conclusion

The main purpose of the study was to assess the impact of Plan Ghana's Microfinance Scheme on the livelihoods of female beneficiaries in the Lower Manya Krobo Municipality of the Eastern Region of Ghana. A descriptive survey design was adopted and sample size of 180 was determined out of a population of 8,217 female

beneficiaries of Plan Ghana's credit Schemes. The study revealed that beneficiaries benefited in the form of improving their family health needs, meeting educational needs of their children, improved self esteem to participate in governance, increased their income level and built self confidence. The study recommends expansions of the scheme activities to also include training in the areas of management, simple bookkeeping and records management to ensure its sustainability. Despite this findings, the study used simple descriptive analysis and gathered information based on self report. This however does not affect the result of the study. Therefore, rigorous analysis may be required unearthing the effect of Plan Ghana's intervention on development and poverty.

Conflict of Interests

The author have not declared any conflict of interests.

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Full Length Research Paper

Nigeria and the crisis of cultural identity in the era of globalization.

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This paper examines the crisis in the Nigerian cultural environment as a result of globalization. Globalization, referred to as the inter-dependence of countries, peoples, races and institutions in politics, economics, arts, science and technology, is equally responsible for inter-cultural exchanges and the coming together of people of diverse persuasions. In place of previous prejudices, biases and misunderstandings, globalization has led to greater appreciation of peoples, the breaking down of barriers and the building of bridges of understanding and communication among nations. People no longer see each other as strange bedfellows, but as individuals with common feelings, common understanding and common worldview. This has resulted in increase in human knowledge, better education and advancement in science and technology. Nigeria as part of this process also shares in the benefits of globalization as well as its negative effects. The paper takes a cursory look at various influences of globalization on Nigeria, particularly in the area of culture, and concludes that with adoption of appropriate strategies, the country can reap the full benefits of this phenomenon.

Key words: Culture, colonialism, globalization, Nigerian cultural identity.

INTRODUCTION

Before the advent of Western colonialism, Nigeria had consisted of over 450 linguistic or ethnic groups, each of which was independent of the other, having its own mores, culture, religion, politics and economic activity. None of these groups had anything to do with the others. It was the British colonialists that brought these disparate groups together under one political umbrella and called it "Nigeria" (Nnoli, 1978:35-105).

In order that these disparate groups could live together in harmony so as to enable the colonialists comfortably exploit the natural resources of the territory without disturbance, the British imposed on the people their mores, culture, education, art, language and religion. Nigerian cultural and social values were presented as

archaic and anachronistic, which must be discarded and replaced with European culture. This made the people to abandon their culture and replace it with Western culture.

The current phase of globalization has further alienated the people from their roots as a result of the impact of information and communication technology. Through the globalized media, people all over the world are being made to look the same, profess the same faith, speak the same language, wear the same type of dress, enjoy the same type of music, and eat the same type of food. To find out how Nigeria is coping with this cultural onslaught in the face of the high technology employed by the advanced countries of Europe and the United States of America has necessitated this study.

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METHODOLOGY

The methods adopted in this work are historical, analytical, expository and critical. Concepts related to culture, globalization, and Nigerian cultural identity were explained and analyzed in order to sharpen their meanings for better understanding. We also adopted historical and expository methods, which enabled us to look back, compare, evaluate and synthesize both the Nigerian and Western cultures. In the collection of data for the paper, we depended in the main, on relevant literatures. We thus consulted books, journals and other literary sources. We further sourced information via the internet in order to attend comprehensively to our research problem.

RESULTS

It was found out in the study that globalization has put many Nigerians in conflicting situation over what constitutes their real cultural identity. This was because since many of them were led to believe that their culture was inferior to that of the Europeans, they abandoned their culture to assume European culture. The result was the Nigerian who is neither wholly indigenous nor totally foreign. He is a split personality. With the growing cultural awareness among Nigerians, however, the people have begun to export Nigerian culture to Europe and America through the movie industry, the popular *Nollywood*.

Conceptual clarifications

For a better understanding and appreciation of our subject matter, it becomes necessary to clarify some key concepts in the study, like culture and globalization.

Culture

Culture means the totality of a people's way of life, which is expressed in their history, language, art, philosophy, religion, politics, economics, music, food and dressing. Culture involves knowledge, beliefs, values, customs, arrangements and skills that are available to members of a society. Culture is the summation of the way of life of a particular group of people. It is the totality of a group behavior derived from the whole range of human activity.

As distinct from mere social organization, culture is the "shared ways of thinking, perceiving and evaluation" (Broom and Selznich, 1977: 55-57). Fanon also sees it "...as a combination of motor and mental behavior patterns arising from the encounter of man with nature and with his fellow man" (Fanon, 1967:32). Culture is what makes a people unique or distinct from others. It is what distinguishes one group of people from other groups.

Since no two distinct groups of people are exactly the same, so also are no two cultures the same. Culture acquires the meaning of a tradition. It creates frontiers

and boundaries, since through cultural practices one human society differs from others and insists on its unique identity and autonomy over and against others. Culture is not static. It is dynamic. Culture changes in time and circumstance and from age to age.

Culture has two focal dimensions. These are enculturation and acculturation. Enculturation is the process by which a person is introduced into the culture of his birth. It is a process by which the values, norms, beliefs and attitudes shared by members of one's society are transmitted from one person to another and from one generation to another.

Acculturation, on the other hand, is the coming into contact of different cultures. It is the process by which cultural elements pass over from one culture to another and which gives rise to new cultural traits in the cultures that meet. The coming into contact of European cultural values with traditional African cultures during the colonial era, for example, had led to the emergence of new cultural behavior in the erstwhile colonial territories.

Acculturation, or cultural pluralism, cultivates a global vision without losing sight of local differences or complexities. It holds that global thought and local action as well as local thought and global action can be harmonized giving rise to the local assimilation of global trends (Madison, 1998a:75). Acculturation is further interpreted to mean inter-cultural association or cross-cultural penetration. It is a marriage of distinct cultures. Proponents of acculturation see it as an elixir for global peace and unity, since it is capable of "leveling cultural differences" (Madison, 1998b:63).

Acculturation is capable of bridging the wall of misunderstanding between peoples, nationalities, races, cultures, tribes and religious beliefs. Through acculturation, ethnic and tribal prejudices, biases and misunderstandings, built over the years, which created barriers among them, were broken down, thus making for harmonious relationships.

Majority of the other ethnic groups in Nigeria, for instance, see the Igbo people as imperialistic and domineering and detest having anything to do with them. It was this ethnic hate, the fear or suspicion that the Igbo would somehow dominate the rest of the country, that led to the Biafran war of 1967 -1970, when these other ethnic groups joined hands to fight the Igbo. The suspicion was given credence by the fact that majority of the ringleaders of the January 1966 military uprising were from the Igbo ethnic group, which was interpreted to mean that the coup was aimed by the Igbo to lord it over the rest of the country. The need to put the Igbo in check and prevent them from attaining their "set goal," led to the Hausa/Fulani counter coup of July 1966 (Eze, 2008:170-204).

It was in order to address this ethnic hate, biases and prejudices, and build a better understanding among Nigerians, that the Yakubu Gowon administration established the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) scheme,

soon after the war in 1973, where young Nigerian graduates were made to serve the nation for one year in states other than their place of birth.

Acculturation is distinct from cultural isolationism or cultural relativism, a conservative or inward looking culture, which questions the possibility of meaningful dialogue or communication among cultures. Acculturation is equally distinct from cultural monism, the one-sided view by which cultures are considered to be fundamentally one, often identified with Western culture.

It was for this reason that some Europeans did not deem it fit to acknowledge that Nigeria, and indeed, Africa, had anything to offer to the outside world prior to Western colonization. That was why Mungo Park had to come all the way from Europe to “discover” the River Niger, because the people living there did not know that the river exists! Similarly, before Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* was published in 1958, Western scholars did not believe that there is an African literature, in the same way as African philosophy was merely seen as mysticism and irrational.

Globalization

Globalization refers to the convergence or the coming together of different peoples, races, cultures and institutions. It is a process through which peoples, races and cultures are connected, united, integrated and affected by events all over the world. Globalization is multi-faceted, with political, social, economic, environmental, philosophical and cultural dimensions. Through globalization, distances become drastically reduced as events that take place thousands of kilometers away are instantly brought to the door steps. Through it one can actively participate in events which take place far beyond one’s immediate vicinity or environment, such as meetings, seminars and conferences.

The main driving force of this phenomenon is communication, and in particular, information and communication technology. Satellite and fiber optic technologies have allowed the internet to provide access to communication and social networks such as email, facebook, twitter, cell phones, through which people and events are connected, united and integrated, making the world a global village. Since no country can live or survive in isolation, acculturation enables one country to learn and make full use of other countries’ achievements in order to enrich its own unique culture and values, without losing its cultural character and national identity. Globalization generally leads to acculturation or the harmonization of local and global cultures.

For Nigeria, globalization began with the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, during which, for over 200 years, between the 16th and 18th centuries, millions of able-bodied men and women were shipped to the United States of America as slaves. The consequence of slavery to Africa, and to

Nigeria in particular, was most devastating – the depopulation of the territory, thereby weakening it, and making it unable to withstand external aggression. This led to colonization and the milking of Nigeria’s mineral and natural resources, as well as the intrusion of foreign cultural values (Rodney, 1972:84-156).

Traditional Africa had allowed for the existence of different castes and secret societies, which led certain individuals, to be treated less like human beings, in the same way as women were hardly accorded equal recognition with their male counterparts. It is thus globalization that was responsible for the destruction of these “primitive cultural practices” and others such as, bigamy, the killing of twins and the use of human heads in burying notable personalities like kings and queens, which caused “blatant violation of human rights”. While globalization is therefore eulogized for bringing “universalism” or belief in the universal validity of the notion of human rights, the same globalization is also blamed for slavery and colonization, which caused the “violation” of the rights of Nigerians and Africans in general.

Acculturation, or cultural globalization, per se, is therefore, not bad since it leads to increase in human knowledge, improvement in science and technology, human development and harmonious relationship among people of diverse races and nationalities. What however is considered objectionable or reprehensible in acculturation is what many people see as the cultural domination of the world by the countries of Western Europe and the United States of America. This is known as “cultural monism,” which is the belief that Western culture is fundamentally superior to every other culture, and therefore, should be universally adopted. Critics refer to this view as the “McDonaldization”, or the “Cocalization” of the world, (Fukuda, 1995: 9-11).

Acculturation or cultural globalization thus becomes a problem when the crossing of cultural boundaries leads to an intrusion, trespassing on cultures rather than the friendly meeting of cultures. This is referred to as a cultural integration and uniformity that mesmerizes the world with Western culture – language, arts, religion, dressing code, fast food, music and computers.

Prior to the current phase of globalization, Africans had passed through slavery and colonialism, which made them to abandon their cultural values and take up the European way of life. They were told not to look back at their past, their history, and their religion, which were considered bad, ugly and nasty, while the Europeans possessed all that was good. X-raying the Western cultural onslaught on the Africa arising from colonization, Chibueze Udeani lamented that the system had succeeded in the “erosion of the foundation of the African cultural identity” (Udeani 2001:97). The result of this erosion, he explained, was the alienation of Africans from themselves and their world-view, which made them strangers in their own country.

What colonialism had accomplished mainly physically

was fully sealed psychologically and spiritually through missionary activities. Through missionary activities, every constitutive element of African cultural identity was attacked and almost completely destroyed. Such elements included the African world-view, politics, social arrangements, religions, economics, educational system, arts, music, literature, and languages of different African communities. This had affected the African individual who was attacked, oppressed, exploited, robbed of his/her self-worth and reduced to nobody and hence deformed by inferiority complex. Fanon put it thus: "In the man of color there is a constant effort to run away from his own individuality, to annihilate his own presence" (Fanon, 1967:60).

Globalization and African culture

If colonialism did not completely succeed in uprooting Africans from their roots through the imposition of foreign rule and missionary activities, this task is now being accomplished by globalization. Through the activities of the new media – the internet, email, facebook, twitter, cable and satellite televisions, African cultures are being systematically obliterated or erased from the face of the earth. As a result, Western social mores and values are transmitted to Africa and other third world countries and eulogized as models which Africans must copy and imitate.

While traditional African cultures, for instance, emphasize such values as communalism, the dignity of the human person, respect for elders, hospitality and brotherly love, Africans are being made to come into strong confrontation with values that are in conflict with their own way of life. That is why Nigeria is now being cajoled and blackmailed by the countries of Europe and the United States of America for legislating against gay or same sex marriage, which many Nigerians consider abhorrent. (Vanguard Newspapers, 01/21/2014).

Traditional Africa never recognized the individual as an isolated, self-existent being, who lived by and for himself. It appreciated him as a connecting link in the network of beings in existence so that what affects one equally affects the other. The African was his brother's keeper. As such, he never swam in the ocean of opulence in the midst of his poverty-stricken neighbors.

However, today, the African is a different person. He is made to appreciate and imbibe the values and norms of the European – his individualism, moral depravity and cut-throat competition in business and many other cultural positions introduced by Westerners. The pasting of pictures of half clad women in the social media, in newspapers, and on television screens, has led to increase in social vices such as prostitution, rape, cultism, ritual killings, kidnapping or abduction and armed robbery. Acculturation or cultural globalization thus creates conflicting situations, which trespasses on

cultures undermining acculturation and human relations.

For instance, many Nigerians who claim to profess Christianity also resort to some traditional methods of worship. While some of them may attend Church services in the morning, they will go in the night, or send their relations, to consult with native doctors. Similarly, while in Africa nothing happens without some individuals or malevolent spirits being responsible, the new faith, apart from the promised eternal bliss in heaven, makes much meaning since it equally provided opportunity for solving man's multifarious problems. This has accounted for the springing up of several miracle churches, healing centers, and prophetic ministries, which provide emotional relief to millions of Nigerians.

Some critics interpret globalization to mean "*homogenization*" (Mazrui 1999:4), a system, which leads to similarity in lifestyle, dressing code, social mores and intellectual practices, among peoples of diverse backgrounds. Globalization has equally led to the emergence of a "world culture", often identified with the "Western culture". To participate in this "banquet of the universal", Africans must do away with their historical past, which did not even exist. They must also throw away their customs and tradition, since they are ugly and nasty. They will imitate the European way of life, his culture, language, music and artistic creations.

Mazrui further pointed out that "globalization carries two interrelated consequences whose English words sound similar – *homogenization* (making all of us look similar), and *hegemonization* (making one of us the boss)" which, according to him, were all geared towards the cultural domination of Africans by the Europeans.

In Mazrui's words: "At the end of the 20th century people dress more the same all over the world than they did at the end of the 19th century, but such similarity in dressing code is overwhelmingly Western dress code." Similarly, "while at the end of the 20th century, the human race is closer to having world languages than it was in the 19th century; those world languages at the end of the 20th century were disproportionately European – English, and French".

Thus, while no African language enjoys a universal patronage or spoken at international conferences, European languages such as English, French, Spanish, German, Portuguese, and to some extent, Japanese, Chinese and Russian, are official languages used at international conferences. The globalized media have therefore made the Anglo-Saxon, (British and American culture), and by extension, the European culture in general, the most influential cultures in the world.

European sports, entertainment and relaxation techniques are now the toasts of African youths. They parrot European songs and dance European music. They know off hand all the football players and football clubs in Europe and belong to each of these clubs, like the Manchester United, Chelsea, Arsenal, Real Madrid, Barcelona and Bayern Munich, but know nothing about

their local football clubs.

On inter-faith relations, African Traditional Religions (ATRs) are regarded as “black magic”, sort of a mumbo jumbo, or voodoo, or the equivalent of the devil incarnate. African gods, always with a small ‘g’, had long been declared dead and buried. Similarly, Islam firmly entrenched in some northern parts of Nigeria long before the advent of Christianity, is now despised and being hunted as “the harbinger of violence and terrorism”. Islam is therefore to be touched with a very long spoon.

Christianity, the religion of the Europeans, is therefore acknowledged as the “world religion”. It is the only true religion ordained by God, which dogma and moral ethos are to be imposed on the people of Africa. Ironically, the West which brought Christianity to Nigeria has now developed cold feet, as many Nigerian evangelists currently carry the gospel message to countries of Europe and America to evangelize them!

The African is thus torn between the culture of his birth and the domineering influence of Western culture. He loses his personality and is therefore neither wholly African, nor wholly European. He is a split personality. In the midst of that confusion, the African despises his culture and feigns ignorance, or feels shy about his roots. He begins to openly identify with everything foreign. He wears foreign clothes, bears foreign names, watches foreign films and movies, and communicates in foreign languages. In the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, in particular, the popular medium of communication is the ‘pidgin’ language, a mixture of English and some local languages. People there hardly speak their local languages, while most of the indigenes bear foreign names. There was a prediction that in no distant time, most indigenous languages worldwide would go into extinct. That prediction may come true in Nigeria!

The Igbo people of Nigeria are equally entering into the same boat with the Niger Delta people. Unlike their Hausa or Yoruba compatriots, most Igbo people prefer to use the English language in their normal conversations. Some of them who could hardly make one correct sentence in English language would still choose to speak in English. They would speak with their children or wards in English, discuss with their fellow Igbo in English, while they would even beat their chests that their children could neither understand, nor speak the Igbo language! The tragedy of it all is that an average Igbo man can hardly complete one full sentence in the Igbo language without adulterating it with foreign words.

Even some Royal Fathers, the custodians of the people’s culture and tradition, are not left out in this malaise. Take the kola nut, a symbol of Igbo hospitality, for instance. Every Igbo man will tell you that the “kola nut does not understand any foreign language”. Yet, some royal fathers, in the course of breaking it, and starting with the accompanying prayers in Igbo language, with still end it with “... through Jesus Christ Our Lord”.

The United States of America and the countries of

Western Europe do not only seek to dominate the rest of the world with the whole gamut of their culture – language, art, dance, music, religion, dressing code and food. They also attempt to unscrupulously control the world population, by embarking on the propaganda that poverty in Africa and other third world countries was as a result of the growing population of these countries, which they claim is fast outstripping available resources.

So, instead of helping these poor countries find ways to overcome their poverty, a large number of wealthy multi-national organizations such as the Planned Parenthood, the Alan Guttmacher Institute, Family Health International, Pathfinder Foundation, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation, devote their resources to finance programs euphemistically termed “reproductive health”. They openly promote and sponsor abortion and sterilization methods as the best way of controlling the so-called “over-growing” population of these countries (Lopez, 2001:97). No wonder, these countries are now up in arms against African countries that legislated against the so-called gay marriage, whereby men are told to marry their fellow men and women told to marry their fellow women!

Cultural exchange between the developed and the developing countries of the world is therefore, overwhelmingly asymmetric. That is to say, it does not follow a model of dialogue and harmonization, but that of absorption. So, instead of promoting real globalization, it aggravates the distrust and the splits between cultures.

Towards a Nigerian cultural identity

How do we remedy this situation? Or, how do we rescue the Nigerian from this foreign cultural onslaught, which has debased him and made him a stranger in his own country? Are there specific traits or value systems peculiar to Nigeria, which could be found in every part of the country prior to the arrival of the Europeans, and for which Nigerians could aspire to? Is it possible to lift any of these traits or value systems, and graft them into the Nigerian situation and thus enable the people return to their cultural root? And what actually is the cultural identity of Nigeria?

Nigeria was a European creation. It was made up of about 450 disparate groups prior to European colonialism. Each of these groups, though semi autonomous had its linguistic setting, marriage system, pattern of giving names to its children and initiation into adulthood. They equally had their distinct burial rites, festivals, farming techniques, beliefs, status symbols and mode of religious worships.

Then came Islam, the religion of the Arabs, which through conquest, had entrenched itself in some northern parts of the country, and thereby displaced some local customs. European colonialism brought in Christianity to the country along with its social mores, beliefs and value

system and imposed them on the people.

In effect therefore, there are, at present, in Nigeria, three different strands of cultures struggling for the possession of the Nigerian mind. These are the traditional African communalism, which is now neither indigenous nor foreign; the theocratic Arab/Muslim culture, particularly in some northern parts of the country; and the abstract individualism of Christian Europe. Which of these cultural elements could be regarded as the authentic culture of Nigeria? Is it possible to lift any of them and adapt it to the current Nigerian situation, and thereby give the people an authentic cultural identity?

First, the abstract individualism of Christian Europe can hardly conform to Nigeria's socio-cultural arrangement due to inherent communal and kinship ties among the people. In the same way, it will be difficult for the theocratic political system of Arab-Muslim culture to fit into the secular and democratic institutions prevailing throughout the country.

Secondly, it will be extremely difficult to return Nigeria to its pre-colonial communal social setting since most of the elements that make up that society are no longer there, such as a close-knit social arrangement and human relations as well as a non-technical and industrial social and economic structure. Today, a human society comprises not just some few individuals within a specific geographical location, but also comprises millions of peoples from both far and near, who may be connected only by a network of optic fibers. This means that in place of the homogenous or mono-cultural system of the traditional society, we now have a diversity of peoples with different cultural backgrounds all affecting and influencing the others.

Thirdly, whereas the crude implements used in cultivation in pre-colonial era had placed serious limitations on the capacity of production, today's technological improvements and innovations have made production almost limitless, such that the emphasis now is no longer on production, but on consumption and distribution.

How then can the Nigerian come back to his original root? For some people, the only way is for the country to close all its doors and windows and not allow any air from outside to contaminate or foul it. In other words, it is for Nigeria to turn its back completely on everything foreign.

A former Nigerian Minister, Mazi Mbonu Ojike, was inclined to this thinking. Popularly known as the "Boycott King", Mbonu Ojike stood for the total rejection of foreign cultures – "boycott the *boycottables*". He campaigned against imitating the European way of life, the ubiquitous presence in Africa, and insisted that Africans should content themselves with what they have. As a practical demonstration of his commitment to indigenous culture, Ojike threw away his foreign name, refused to wear foreign cloths, and counseled against worshipping any foreign God.

In the former Congo Leopoldville, former Colonel Joseph Desire Mobutu, on assumption of office as

President, came up with his "*Authenticity*" campaign which he believed would return Congo to its cultural past. He replaced all places in the country bearing foreign names with African names, changed Congo's name to Zaire, changed his own name to "*Mobutu Sese Seko*," and ordered all Congolese bearing foreign names to do the same. In spite of this "authenticity" campaign, Mobutu however turned to the West, particularly, the United States and France, for all his needs.

The apostles of Negritude, Amie Cesaire and Leopold Senghor, through their literary outbursts, poems and scholarly articles, sought to recapture the lost identity of the black man by affirming that "Africans have a distinct culture and separate identity, which are in no way inferior to the colonizer". As students in far away Paris, who were uprooted from their roots and "planted" into the French society, culture and institutions through the French policy of assimilation, Cesaire and Senghor were pained that the blacks were portrayed as people without history or culture. The philosophy of Negritude was invented to debunk this negative attribution, and to assert that the blacks, indeed, had a history and culture. In Cesaire's words, "Africans have a history which contains certain cultural elements of great value" (Pinkhan, 1972:72).

The genuine intention of these proposals aimed at leading Africa to the Promised Land, their shortcomings notwithstanding, it may be pertinent to caution against attempts to imprison Africa in the past in the name of cultural revival. In other words, while rejecting foreign cultural impositions, Nigerians should, at the same time resist the temptation of throwing away the baby with the bath water. They should recognize the weaknesses or limitations of the communal society, its cleavages and differentiations, such as the multiplicity of castes, status, secret cults, professional and religious groups. Thus, while refusing to be sandwiched by foreign cultures, Nigerians should know that it is not everything that comes from inside that is good, while it is not everything that comes from outside that is bad. It is in their interest therefore, to be wise enough to make right judgment.

Way forward

What therefore is the way forward? First, Nigeria must come to terms with her own subjectivity by modifying traditional and foreign cultural values in conformity with the realities and exigencies of the day. The modification of these values will yield a system of cultural values that are peculiar to her, but open to all societies. Accordingly, the Nigerian must discard or kick against traditional norms or practices that could render him increasingly weak, or could imprison him in the past. He should however be able to draw strength from the tradition of his ancestors, provided he does so within the ambit of a new dynamism.

African traditions are community-centered, and they

have a moral tone in spite of their narrow scope. This narrowness notwithstanding, African communities can, through an organizing mind, still be receptive to European moral values, once these (European) values shelve off their ideological toga. It is through this reception that the passage from communal conscience to collective conscience occurs.

Thus, Nigerians should assimilate aspects of European cultural values which are progressive in nature. They should however avoid the rigidity associated with them as it is based on a social conservatism rooted in the exploitation of man by man. Nigeria, in the era of globalization, should not see herself as an island, nor a means, but an end.

Accommodation or openness to the other makes it possible to build a society of ends where only reasonable actors will have a respectable place. Nigeria therefore needs to strike a necessary balance between her indigenous cultures and foreign cultural influences to meet with the realities of current globalization. True globalization therefore, affirms mutual inter-exchange of cultures and not isolation, or the domination of one culture by another.

Africa needs not content herself with her glorious past and beautiful culture – that it was Egypt that gave Greece its philosophy through the Egyptian Mystery System, where many Greek philosophers like Thales, Pythagoras and Aristotle, had come to drink from its wisdom, or that a university had existed in Timbuktu, long before Europe came to “civilize” Africa. These were beautiful stories, but they are not enough to take Africa out of poverty and technological backwardness. What Africa, and indeed, Nigeria, need is the transformation of her culture to enable her meet the needs of current realities. In a critique of Negritude, Frantz Fanon contends that “... a national culture is not folklore, nor an abstract populism that believes it can discover the people’s true nature. A national culture is the whole body of efforts made by a people in the sphere of thought to describe, justify and praise the action through which that people has created itself and keeps itself in existence” (Fanon, 1965:188).

In other words, Nigeria, and by extension, Africa, was not conquered and later colonized because her history, language, religion, arts or music, were inferior to those of the Europeans. Africa was conquered and later colonized because she possessed inferior material means. It was with this superior material means, the possession of superior fire-power, that Europe was able to conquer Africa and later colonized her. The same superior material means was responsible for the present cultural domination of Africa by countries of Western Europe and the United States, through information and communication technology, even though Nigeria is coming up strongly in her movie industry, popularly known as the Nollywood, which is being showcased all over the world through the communication media.

To free her from this foreign domination, cultural and

material means, Nigeria needs not proclaim only flag independence. She needs to develop appropriate technology suited to her people and her environment. As Alexander Animalu affirmed, “it is in the knowledge of technological and scientific development that Europeans excel, and it is in the application that Europeans dominate us” (Animalu, 2001:6).

African traditional societies have for long operated a system of thought largely based on religious and mystical underpinnings. It was a system of thought where every causation, every occurrence, was linked to one malevolent spirit or the other. Nothing happened by chance or accident. There was no verifiable means, laws or hypothesis, establishing why certain events happened, one way or the other.

In such a mystic-religious situation or interpretation of reality, it became extremely difficult, if not impossible, to develop a scientific thought or rational enterprise that is essential for today’s technological development or innovation. As such, Africa was consigned to the dustbin of history as an under-developed continent whose people were largely dependent on other nations for their own survival and existence.

But what type of technological innovation or development should Nigeria embark upon? Since no two cultural environments are exactly the same, Nigeria should develop her own indigenous technology or appropriate technology peculiar to her environment. That is to say, Nigeria should embark on technological development consistent or in line with her philosophical outlook. For instance, traditional Africa perceives itself not distinct or in contradiction with nature. It sees itself as part of the totality of nature that is in dynamic process of movement, though on a higher plane. In other words, technology in Africa must be used to serve man. It must be used to improve the welfare of man and his environment. Technology must be in harmony with nature, and so enhance, improve and develop man and his environment. As the creation of man, technology should be under the control of man, and not used to desecrate or destroy nature or the environment. It must not be used to conquer man and his environment.

Oronto Douglas while lamenting the destructive effects of technology in his Niger Delta region area claimed that “... they have not only caused social disintegration of our culture and our tradition, they have led to the introduction of foreign diseases and the destruction of our cultural ethos. They have led to the destabilization of our mainstream economy and livelihood”.

Apart from this, “appropriate technology” should recognize the corporate existence of Nigerians, the bond of filial relationship that ties them together, and ensure that no one is left behind in the enterprise. This means that the beneficial outcomes of technology, such as electricity, pipe borne water, health care facilities, communication and transportation systems, should not be limited to only one section of the community, while other sections are

left behind. In other words, the dichotomy in the existential relationship between those in the rural areas and their counterparts in the urban areas, and even among the same urban dwellers, would not be accepted. In essence, technological development for Nigeria should aim at benefiting all sections of the country.

For the African, the universe is never an outside phenomenon. It is "immanent", within, part and parcel of the system. Accordingly, technology must not be imposed from outside. A borrowed technology is like a borrowed garment. It will never fit the borrower. It will either be over-sized or under-sized. The technology appropriate to Nigeria will therefore take expression or develop out of the people's cultural milieu. It will spring from inside. It is a technology that is indigenous and which recognizes the realities of its environment. Thus, in the march towards globalization, Nigeria should develop a technology that is consistent with her cultural realities.

Conclusion

As already seen above, globalization has brought immense benefits to the world – greater unity and cooperation among the nations of the world, mutual exchange of cultures and social values, increase in human relations as well as better appreciation and understanding of peoples. Globalization has led to the leveling up of valleys, the pulling down of hills and barriers of communication and the construction of bridges of understanding among nations, races, cultures and institutions. The net effects there from, are better education, increase in human knowledge and improvement in scientific and technological advancements.

However, all countries of the world do not share equal benefits from globalization. While the developed countries of Europe and America are better placed, and indeed, have cornered most of the benefits of globalization, developing countries like Nigeria are only left to struggle for the crumbs that fell from the process. In some cases, these countries had come out even worse, pauperized, with most of their value systems and institutions virtually destroyed. Nigeria can free herself from this quagmire by adopting appropriate strategies not only to contain the menacing influence of globalization, but more importantly to reap the full benefits of the process.

Conflict of Interests

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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Full Length Research Paper

The political economy of mass transit programme in Nigeria: An evaluation of government post- petroleum subsidy intervention

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In its exploration of the sub-theme, 'Nigerian nation, Resource Control and National Integration', this paper attempts to explain the fundamental reason why all the previous efforts towards national integration failed. The paper observes that the prevailing Nigerian nation is an organizational framework established for purposes of economic exploitation and domination of multi - ethnic nationalities by foreign and national elites. Further, their method is located in the various integration policies Nigeria has pursued since British penetration, which have synthetically led to intra class struggle, fragility and failure in nation-building. Fundamentally, the paper argues that the failure of integration in Nigeria is predicated on the pursuit of elites' individual economic interests using integration policies as tools with their attendant intra-class struggle. Thus, it recommends the establishment of a special Integration Board to usher in genuine integration process; and Sovereign National Conference to restructure Nigerian federalism.

Key words: integration, disintegration, federal principles, nation, national elites, domination and exploitation, political economy.

INTRODUCTION

Integration as a phenomenon refers to the process of unifying a society in a manner that makes it harmonious, develop linkages and locations with boundaries that persist over time, with a disposition to be cohesive, to act together, and to be committed to mutual programmes under a legitimate order (Ojo, 2009). According to Etzioni (1965), such an order must have effective control over

the use of the means of violence, centre of decision making capable of effecting the allocation of resources and rewards, and be a dominant focus of political identification for a large majority of politically aware citizens. Characteristically, the citizens of such a state are united by a common vision, common identity and structure, culture and language (Ekanola, 2006). This

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type of state emerges as a synthesis of social division of labour, barter relations, and unequal property relations (Konstantinov, 1979:283). The emergence of Nigeria as a state in the international system validates this thesis.

Nigeria is the most plural society in the world with over 445 ethnic nationalities whose demographic profile, cultures, mores, values, traditions, religions, development and historical experiences varied (Bangura, n.d). Prior to the coming of European traders, these multi ethnic nationalities existed as independent states. They were engaged in trans-boarder relations in matters of trade/commerce, production, security and socio-cultural relations devoid of phobic activities. However, these ethnic nationalities were forcefully unified for the economic advantage of Britain thereby leading to engendered dimensions of pluralism, complexity and corporatism. This form of unification produced an inbuilt phobic competition and struggle for power, domination and exploitation among the nationalities. It elevated these nationalities to the level of being economic and political organizations or units with rivalry for political domination and control of the structures of wealth formation i.e. state structures. Therefore, the modality of relations and stability boiled down to who controls and dominates the structure of public policy making and implementation.

Through Nigeria's public policy, the fiscal system, land and natural resources wealth are managed and determined. That is why any member or group of the various ethnic elites who feel marginalized in the public policy process embarks on conscious mobilization and struggle to destabilize the political system. Alemazung (2010:66) summarized this in the following words;

Ethnic groups who feel marginalized often develop feelings of revenge and hatred against those who enjoy socio-economic well-being from the resources of their states because of their affiliation to the ruler (the "owner" or "controller" of the national cake): based on clientelist politicking. Since there are rarely any state guided structure and political arrangements or functional governance procedures for rational and appropriate distribution of state resources and power, there is usually a resort to conflict.

This generated pervasive ethno-nationalist pressures with negative consequences for Nigeria's unity and stability. Consequently, successive Nigerian governments introduced many policies that were intended to douse the pervasive trends of agitation between 1960 and 2012 (Akinteye et al., 1999). These policies hereafter known as integration policies include among others: constitutional reforms, state creation, federalism with principles such as quota system, zoning formula, and rotational presidency. Others include revenue sharing formula and derivation principle, federal character commission meant to promote equitable access to federal resources. The National Youths Service Corps (NYSC) scheme meant to integrate

Nigerian Youths after their school graduation, and National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM) that was established to promote cultural unity and establish cultural patrimony. These are meant to instil national consciousness. This paper investigates these integration policies with a view to finding out why they failed to forge a nation out of Nigeria.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

This work adopts the political economy paradigm as its framework of analysis. The paradigm views the economic conditions of a society as the propelling force behind any action or policy i.e. economic determinism (Marx, 1970). The core principle of the framework is that the kind of economic system, or dynamics of production i.e. the substructure, which stipulates the form of social relations, capital formation and mechanisms of exploitation determines the law and politics of any society. Accordingly, the root cause of conflict in every society lies in the relationships that exist in the process of production, distribution, exchange and consumption of material values. Thus, deprivation, marginalization, alienation and exploitation form the basis of such conflicts and pressures like ethno-nationalism, separatist tendencies etc.

This framework enables this work to explore or investigate the role of the state system and capital formation in Nigeria towards the failure of its integration policies. Its relevance lies in the fact that the Nigerian state is an instrument of capital formation and reproduction; and a synthesis of the contending interests of neo-colonial powers, and elites of its various nationalities. It enables us therefore to identify and comprehend the point and forms of exploitation that characterize state processes; the principles and laws that guide and safeguard them; and comprehend the synthesis of all these contradictions with a view to explaining the problem of integration or nation building in Nigeria.

The data for this research are secondary data collected from published materials, official documents and official gazettes that relate to the evolution and politics of statehood in Nigeria. The precise sources of these documents include the internet, public and private libraries, newspapers and magazines. With the aid of content analysis (i.e. the critical study, analysis and evaluation of opinions, data or information available in the materials) inferences were made. Consistency of opinion, physical prove, and earlier findings of other researchers that have stood the test of time and criticism of other scholars serve as the yard stick for such evaluation.

The historical perspectives of Nigeria's Integration process

The journey to Nigeria nation unintentionally began in

1807 when Britain abolished the Atlantic slave trade due to technological advancements and subsequent industrial revolution in the eighteenth century across Europe (Oduwobi, 2011: 19). First, Britain established a dominant sphere of interest in the West African region through gun-boat diplomacy that was adopted to protect their commercial interests against the interests and attacks of pre-colonial coastal states. Britain interfered and took control of the governments of these states later. For instance, it unilaterally intervened in a Lagos dynastic dispute in 1851 by removing King Kosoko and replaced him with his uncle, Akitoye, who promised to uphold British interests. However, Britain later took complete possession of the island as a colony in 1861. The same method was applied in the Niger Delta area using series of coercive manipulations to compel the pre-colonial Delta states to do their bidding (Biobaku, 1991: 23-27; Dike, 1956: 54-58; Anene, 1966: 121-123). Every success recorded in the intervention provided the ground for deeper penetration and spread of British business/trading interest and influence into the hinterland - the Niger-Benue basin.

Britain legalized and personalized their control of these territories during the 1884/1885 Berlin conference, and thereafter entered into treaty-making with the local authorities to formalized their interests. The success of these treaties led to the establishment and proclamation of the Oil Rivers Protectorate in 1889. By 1890, the British government in Lagos had concluded such treaties with many Yoruba states. Those who refused to enter into such treaty were conquered by force of arms such as the Ijebu Kingdom [May 1892], and Benin Kingdom [1897] for obstructing free trade and communication with the interior; or they had their kings removed by force [for instance, King Jaja of Opobo was removed in 1887; Nana of Itsekiri in 1894; Push and control of Urhobo and Isoko country between 1894-1914; Efunrun in 1896; Orokpo in 1901; Etua in 1904; Ezeonum in 1905; Iyede in 1908; Owe, Oleh, Ozoro in 1910; Okrika in 1895; Aboh in 1896; Aro in 1901-2; Ezza in 1905] (Sagay, 2003). They alternatively applied the use of threat in some other cases [such as Ibadan in 1893], or demonstration of force [Alaafin and his town of Oyo, 1894]. All these pre-colonial independent states were integrated to form the Niger Coast Protectorate in 1893 and renamed the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria in 1900 to signify the imposition of colonial rule (Ikime, 1973).

Between 1894 and 1899, Britain concluded a number of agreements that made Sokoto Caliphate and the western part of Borno its territory. Thus, the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria was proclaimed on 1 January, 1900. Like in the Southern part, every caliph in the emirate that resisted British imposed interest was removed or killed in battle. Those who refused to enter into treaty were conquered by force of arms such as Bida in 1901, Adamawa in 1901, Bauchi and Gombe in 1902, Zaria in 1902, Kano in 1902, and Sokoto in 1903.

In 1900, Britain inaugurated the Colony and

Protectorate of Lagos, the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria, and the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria as three geo-political administrations. However, the British administrations in these areas had to contend with the problems of climatic, communication, personnel, and financial factors. Consequently, they resorted to indirect rule by utilising the various indigenous socio-political structures and systems as basis of local government (Bull, 1963). While this worked perfectly well in the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos, and the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria because of the pre-existence of centralized authorities, it did not work in the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria. Political headship became distorted in the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria through the substitution of the traditional republican and democratic practice by an autocratic genre with the appointment of those styled as Warrant Chiefs. Worse still was the fact that many of those appointed lacked the traditional qualification or eligibility for political headship (Oduwobi, 2011:22). Consequently, the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos and the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria were merged to form the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria in 1906.

The climax of the problem that led to the emergence of Nigeria in 1914 was purely financial. While the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria suffered serious financial deficit because it had only one source of revenue, which is the age long tradition of the imposition of taxes (Bull, 1963:52), the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria experienced budgetary surplus due to its multiple channels of revenue that were associated with trades in many commodities. It became plausible on the part of Britain to merge the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria with the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria in 1914 leading the emergence of Nigeria (Kirk-Greene, 1968). The amalgamation provided the British with the financial means to execute the projects of Railway construction as well as river dredging (Lugard, 1920:468).

It is therefore innocuous to argue here that the need to raise fund from the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria, and balance the budgetary provisions of the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria was the major reason why Nigeria came into existence. That is, Nigeria exists only to satisfy the financial needs of Northern Nigeria. A critical examination of all policies introduced since 1922 to keep Nigeria united and their associated crises validates this argument. Even when exigencies in the Southern Nigerian demand for policy changes or modification, Northern elites resist such changes. To moderate the pressures generated by this resistance, the Northern elites who by virtue of British skewed population and land mass dominated the political system, introduced modalities for their continued consolidation of power. Their pattern is to reproduce the British laid skewed structural formula of domination in new forms code-named integration policies. These policies have served to formalize the structures of disintegration laid down during the colonial era that was meant to deter and/or weaken

independence struggle, more than they have served genuine integration. It is therefore central to our argument that the pattern of British penetration and annexation of territories for economic advantage laid the foundation of;

- i. Surrogate leadership in Nigeria;
- ii. Internal and external elites conspiracy against the common interests of the citizenry as treaties served to protect British and Kings interests;
- iii. External imposition, influence, and determination of political leadership in Nigeria;
- iv. Machiavellian approach to the struggle for acquisition, use and consolidation of political power in Nigeria;
- v. The of pursuit of power for purposes of personal or group economic or material advantage in Nigeria; and
- vi. Intra elite struggle for personal interests at the detriment of the citizens and stability of the territory.

Integration as structure of disintegration in Nigeria

After the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorates in 1914, the imperial administration ensured that the various ethnic nationalities that make up Nigeria remained disunited through its policy of divide and rule (Ekanola, 2006; Ajayi, 1992). In this disunity, Britain entered into alliance and treaty with Northern elites whose fear of domination by the Southern elites (due to educational advantage) made them amenable to manipulation and good candidates for favoured political appointment/power handover as long as they protect British economic interests. The Northern elites became managers and/ or proprietors of Nigeria's mineral wealth. This rendered politics and acquisition of state power the primary source of capital accumulation, class formation and domination in Nigeria. Salami (2009:135) summarized it in the following manner;

The dependent character of the bourgeoisie restricts them to competing among themselves for the limited resources available within a neo-colonial political-economy. This competition tends to take the form of a zero-sum game, modified by cartel-type arrangements where the competitors (defining themselves in regional, ethnic, and state terms) all seek to protect their own areas of activity.

Those who lose out in the competition resort to ethnic mobilization against others, which consequently led to suspicion, crisis and conflict. Their method of resolving such conflict since Nigeria's return to civil rule in 1999 boiled down to concessional agreements and sharing of positions/ appointments among themselves under the principles of rotation and quota. To implement this, Nigeria was unconstitutionally divided into six geopolitical zones, wherein all political appointments and influential positions are made on the basis of these

zones. Like every other integrative policies, the implementation of this unconstitutional policy has equally turned out to threaten Nigeria's corporate existence. First, the elites from each of these zones particularly the governors, senators, members of House or Representatives, party chieftains, ministers and other highly placed political appointees compete for national posts from the limelight of differential ethnicity. This preserves and heightens ethnicity and its associated phobism that is tearing Nigeria apart. Secondly, these ethnically based politicians hijack zonal quotas, sell them out or allocate them to their clients/supporters, or sit on them without allocation to anybody. This made Nigeria and its systems of rewards and development to become the personal rights of these individuals who use such for capital accumulation and consolidation. This has continued to cause rift between them and the citizens of their locals on one hand, and between them and opposition on the other. Thirdly, the Northern elites who think they possess domineering control of the public processes decided to ignore the six zonal structures when it comes to who occupies the presidency. They argue that Nigeria is divided into North-South zonal structure only. The fundamental disagreement among the elites over this and the emergence of President Goodluck Jonathan from the South-South as president after the 2011 plunged Nigeria into bloodbath and terror from the Northern sponsored Boko Haram sect.

Other policies include ethnic balancing (Olopoenia, 1998), federal character, quota and rotational political appointments/elections into key political positions. These policies synthetically led to perceived and real marginalization, agitation for resource control, continual revision of fiscal federalism (Enahoro, 2002), agitation for more states creation, emergence of ethnic militant groups and secession attempts [such as the Isaac Adaka Boro and Biafra declarations of independence] that have set all the ethnic nationalities far apart from each other. There is no pursuit of a national identity, loyalty, unity of purpose and convergence of the interests of various nationalities that make up Nigeria.

The political economy of Nigeria's integration projects

It is pertinent to recall that the primary aim of this paper is the appraisal of various integration measures that successive administration have implemented with a view to find out why they failed. Constrained by space/volume, this paper discusses five key policies of such policy measures as follows:

Revenue Allocation: The main principle and reason for revenue allocation in development economics is to bridge inequality gap among component units (Akpan and

Umodong, 2003). Ikeji (2011:126) captured it thus;

The use of the government revenue allocation principle to engender development in resource poor region is based on the theory of balanced growth, which emphasizes the need to provide the basic minimum developmental conditions (infrastructures) necessary for each region to rise above the low-level equilibrium trap and accumulate the preconditions for the take off. Planned development therefore calls for inter-regional transfer of resources through some fiscal processes.

This gap, which is a consequence of unequal endowment of natural resources, inevitably leads to imbalance in the physical development of various areas, and is always filled using a constitutionally or legally defined formula (Umukoro and Okon, 2008). Nigeria calls it revenue sharing formula. This strikes at the very foundation and basis of existence of the Nigerian federation, and the rules of entry and exit from the ruling class (Obi, 1998). First, revenue allocation led to the amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigeria in 1914. This is because revenue generated by Northern was highly insufficient to finance administration and development there, while that of the South was surplus. After independence, the Dina Commission of 1968 invented revenue sharing formula as an official policy.

However, for politically motivated reasons and disagreements over the sharing formula particularly for such irregular funds accruing to the federation such as oil windfall, thirteen different attempts were made to review the formula through the establishment of different Commissions (Agbebaku, 1995; Ikeji, 2011). These attempts led to the emergence of the principles of revenue derivation formula as a legitimate compliment of revenue allocation in Nigeria. Ikeji (2011:127) captured this in the following manner;

The use of derivation as a criterion for revenue allocation is associated with changes in the social state of welfare that results from production activities and the compensation of losers by gainers in production activities. As production takes place in any society, value is created for some members of the society while some members suffer losses due to externalities. A production activity is said to enhance the society's level of welfare, in Pareto optimality sense, if it is possible for those who gain value (and attain higher welfare level) to compensate those who made losses (and incur a reduction in welfare level) such that the latter is at least left at the level of welfare as before the production with the former group still better off after the redistribution.

However, its introduction in Nigeria was subjected again to political manipulation as the percentage at which it is calculated kept on fluctuating at the wills and caprices of the ruling Northern military elites. The ruling Northern

elites ignored specific socio-environmental and developmental requirements of the natural resources bearing states/communities and plunged federal revenues into the development of the Northern region that do not generate the revenue. These scenario generated pervasive regional cleavages and agitations for resources control as the elites in the resources bearing states began to sensitize and mobilize their citizenry against it. The mobilisation resulted to serious resentment, agitations, struggle for relative autonomy and or secession on the part of resources bearing communities. The Niger Delta conflicts which claimed hundreds of lives and damaged millions of property, caused serious national economic instability, and threatened the corporate existence of Nigeria is a case in point.

State Creation: The original purpose of the policy of state and local government creation, which emanated during General Gowon regime is to break the independence of different regions from the federal government, which the Arewa or North is controlling. Gowon declared;

....The regions were so powerful as to consider themselves self - sufficient and almost entirely independent. The federal government which ought to give lead to the whole country was relegated to the background. The people were not made to realize that the federal government was the real government of Nigeria? (Ikeji, 2011:123).

This, which would have been instrument of equitable development and administration was purposely used initially as instrument for destroying the unity and strength of powerful ethnic nationalities that threaten Northern domination. For instance, the creation of Mid-Western Region in 1963 was a vindictive campaign by the Northern People Congress (NPC) and National Council of Nigerian Citizen (NCNC) to destroy the main federal opposition party, the Action Group (AG) (Suberu, 1998; Adejugbe, 2002). Equally, the creation of 12 states at the verge of Nigeria-Biafra civil war was to weaken the strength and secession plot of the Eastern region (Odinkalu, 2011). General Yakubu Gowon, the then Head of State stated in a broadcast on May 27, 1967 declared;

As you all are aware Nigeria has been immersed in an extremely grave crisis for almost eighteen months. We have now reached a most critical phase where what is at stake is the very survival of Nigeria as one political and economic unit. We must rise to the challenge and what we do in the next few days will be decisive...As I have warned before, my duty is clear-faced with this final choice between action to save Nigeria and acquiescence in secession and disintegration... I have assume full powers as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and Head of the Federal Military Government for the short period necessary to carry through the measures which

are now urgently required... To this end, therefore, I am promulgating a Decree which will divide the Federal republic into Twelve States (Omoigui, 2011:3).

However, when state and local government became the legal yard stick for distributing federal fund, the Northern military elites that controlled power embarked on lopsided or skewed state creation to their advantage. Current, it is only in the North that one geopolitical zone has 7 states against others with 6, while the East has only 5 states. This is gross marginalization that is currently breeding tension and agitation for more states and local governments. Instead of being a development strategy, state creation is seen as ethno-political and economic strategy for equitable and/or advantageous share of national resources (Omotoso, 2004). Thus, Ukiwo noted;

...in fact there is clear evidence that the creation of local government has been for reasons that not only negate the objectives and principles of the 1976 reform, but, in some cases, are clear expression of patronage by revenue distribution to favour areas or interest group (2007:23).

In addition to the above, the real conflict associated with state and local government creation has been in the location of their headquarters. Because of the level of development such attracts to the environment, it has caused blood bath particularly in the South – South geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The improper choice of State capital such as Asaba, Dutse, Akwa etc has equally caused discord among ethnic nationalities within each of the regions. Consequently, state and local government creation has failed to resolve the problem of ethnic discord rather it has aggravated inter and intra ethnic discord.

Federal Character: This policy was introduced through the 1979 constitution to promote national unity, foster national loyalty and give every citizen of Nigeria a sense of belonging to the nation [see Section 14 (3) and (4) of 1979 constitution]. It is a policy that was introduced for purposes of equity representation of all ethnic nationalities in the federal government bureaucracies. This representation cuts across federal appointments, promotions, retrenchment, admissions, scholarships, contracts award, citing of projects, agricultural, industrial academic and research institutions, the armed forces, sports and games, etc (Omo-Omoruyi, 1995). This allays the perceived or real fears of domination and marginalisation of one ethnic group over others in public matters. However, federal character created the conflict or problem of merit versus quota.

In addition, the policy has failed woefully to achieve its objectives. Instead, it widened the inequality gap among the various ethnic groups in Nigeria. Deliberate actions like forced retirement were pursued to correct this inequity

while vacancies or adverts were created specifically for specific regions. The pursuit of this policy unintentionally but systematically led to ethnic-cleansing in the federal public service thereby aggravating the existing ethnic agitation and phobia in the country (Ayoade, 1982, 1997). Further, the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) in its survey report on the impact of the 'federal character' policy on citizenship noted that it has created three types of Nigerian citizens as against one, which it intended to create. The consequences of such multiple system of citizenship has been discrimination in jobs, land purchases, housing, admission to educational institutions, marriages, business transactions and the distribution of social welfare services (IDEA, 2001).

Constitutional Reforms: The policy of constitutional reform is the best instrument to coalesce the interests and aspirations of the multi-ethnic nationalities towards a common identity, aspiration and goal. However, it has been the most divisive tool that exists within the Nigerian nation. The Clifford's Constitution of 1922 constituted the Nigerian Legislative Council with its jurisdiction limited to the Colony of Lagos and the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria alone, while the Governor-General continued to be the legislative authority for Northern Nigeria. In 1951, Constitutional reforms introduced federalism and created a central legislature with 136 elected representatives out of which the Northern region alone had 68 members, Eastern and Western Nigeria shared the remaining 68 seats. This made it possible for the North to perpetually dominate other regions put together in governance and politics (Awolowo, 1986). Ojo (2009: 390) concretized this thus:

In terms of landmass, Northern region then had 77.0%; Eastern Region, 8.3%; Western region, 8.5% and the Midwestern region, 4.2%. With the 1963 census figures, the northern region accounted for 53.5% of the total population of Nigeria; the Eastern Nigeria, 22.3%; the Western Region, 18.4% and the Mid-Western region, 4.6%. Thus, for three Southern regions, the federal structure as existed made it virtually impossible for the South to control political power at the centre, given the ethno-regional politics in the country.

As these factors noted by Ojo (2009) are instruments for material distribution in the Nigerian federation, the skewed percentage distribution noted above laid the foundation for an unending conflict, tussle and instability in the Nigerian nation. They form the basis for persistent and increasing agitation for resource control, state and local government creation, secessionist tendencies, insurgencies, and emergence of ethnic militias across many ethnic nationalities. Major Gideon Orka who led the coup against former Northern military head of state, General Ibrahim Babangida, noted:

...the need to stop intrigues, domination and internal colonization of the Nigerian State by the so-called chosen few (who are responsible) for 90 percent of the major clog in our wheel of progress. This cliques has an unabated penchant for domination and unrivalled fostering of mediocrity and outright detest for accountability, all put together have been our undoing as a nation (Ihonvbere, 1991:620).

Attempts made to correct this through constitutional reforms have tended to consolidate this skewed federal structure and the financial interest that underlines its emergence. This made the contest for political power at the federal level internecine among the elites of different federating units and laid the foundation of many years of crisis and instability. For instance, the North's inability to win the 2011 presidential election led to the on-going security scourge called Boko Haram that has claimed the lives of hundreds of people and destroyed property worth trillions of naira. The only major attempt at correcting this anomaly through 2005 constitutional reforms failed because of the self-centred interest of the then president Obasanjo who wanted to introduce political third tenure, which would enable him contest for the third times.

National Youth Service Corps Scheme (NYSC): This is a policy that was introduced after the Nigerian civil war in May 22, 1973 to enhance inter-ethnic interaction among the emerging elites from universities and higher institutions outside their ethnic geo-space and environment. The multiple nature of citizenship in the country together with phobic apprehensions most of these graduates encounter where they are posted, made it frustrating rather than integrating for them (Ojo, 2009:393). Generally, none of these youths secure government job either through competitive application or in appreciation of services rendered after the service year in any of the states outside once ethnic nationality. Even when adverts are placed on the media, they do not apply because of the mistreatments offered to non natives and the accompanying discriminatory practices.

The failure of this policy manifested clearly during the last 2011 general elections. The Youth Corps members from the Southern party of Nigeria particularly from the South East conscripted as INEC adhoc staff in the Northern Nigeria were targets of political vandalism and killings by irate Northern political mobs. They were protesting the failure of General Muhammadu Buhari [Rtd] of the CPC and a Northerner to win the presidency. Consequently, South East corps members now make concerted efforts to avert their postings to the North, and even when posted, they apply for re-posting back to any of the Southern states after camping.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The emergence of Nigeria through amalgamation of

multiple independent nationalities by the British was purely for economic advantage. The colonial power united the North and South in 1914 purposely to source fund from Southern economy to administer and develop the North. To foster or maintain this interest, they systematically integrated structural schism with inbuilt antagonism among the tribes skewed in favour of the North. Although scholars have argued that factors like education and westernisation necessitated such structures and policies, it has been dominantly explicated in this paper that economic advantage is the fundamental factor behind the unification.

Consequently, Nigeria became an instrument of capital formation and consolidation thereby rendering it a contested commodity. Tribes that feel marginalised by the British imposed structures and policies struggle for, protest, and threatened to quit the union if the injustice was not redressed. This generated new forms of structural subordinations known as integration policies that tend to elongate both the imbalance and the instability that is associated with it. History has equally shown that the dominant ruling elites have equally frustrated, sabotaged, and threatened or have actually used force (such as military coups) to undermine genuine efforts at balancing the federal structure. Many researchers and pro neo-liberal interests have incorrectly blamed corruption for the failure of these policies. It is the author's contention that preserving the dominant ethnic or regional interest subordinates the corruption thesis because Nigeria has a paraphernalia of anti-corruption agencies who ought to try and punish offenders. They are politically and socio-ethnically incapacitated from investigating and prosecuting such offenders. Thus, every national policy aimed at minimising the phobic tribal rivalry end-up re-enforcing the divisive factors in the union.

It is therefore pertinent for this paper to recommend that Nigeria should review its federal system of government and introduce a conventional federal system with limited autonomy to the federating units. Or in the alternative introduce a parliamentary system of government with limited regional autonomy. Any of these will reduce power concentration at the centre and reduce the battle for its control as a source ethnic domination and capital formation. Secondly, Nigeria should adopt rotational presidency in an alphabetical order among the current six geopolitical zones. Thirdly, merit and skills should be introduced as the yardsticks for appointments and contracts as all the ethnic groups are now technically and educationally equipped. Fourthly, state and local of origin should be expunged and replaced with place of residence in peoples curriculum vitae and public profiles. Finally, a Need Assessment Commission should be established with the responsibility to continuously evaluate the problems and needs of states in Nigeria, and through there provide the legal ratio for revenue sharing on annual basis.

Conflict of Interests

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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