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Integration policies as structures of disintegration: the political economy of nationhood and resource control in Nigeria.

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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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