ETHNIC POLITICS AND THE FUTURE OF NIGERIA FEDERALISM

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Abstract  
Nigeria is a multi-ethnic nation with cultural differences between its component ethnicity groups. From the north to the coasts. The range in type of social system, minority allocation Federal character and Revenue allocation. This diversity has resulted into major problems namely: Problem arising between the larger ethnic groups and the hostility that derives from competition between peoples for heath and power. This project examines the political implication of the diversity and the problems created by it for the survival of Federalism in Nigeria.

Introduction  
Ethnicism in Nigeria Politics according to analysis dates back to the colonials policy of “divide and rule”. This later reinforced by the 1954 Macpherson Constitution which has regionalism as its operation model. Emphasizing Emeghi, C.E (1997); wrote:  
“The Politicization of ethnicity in Nigerians Politics had its services in British Colonial Polices, which through the obnoxious divide and rule Policy encourage the use of different application of colonials Polices on the Traditional Institutions and Structures of the various ethnic groups in Nigeria”

With its over 140,000,000 people (2006 Population Census) and Over 250 tribe, Nigeria as a land of great climatic, territorial and ethnic variety, from the four hundred miles long coast of tangled Swamp and mangrove, a belt of dense rain-forest ran in hand to a depth of between a hundred and a hundred and fifty miles.

This land later became Southern Nigeria and was split in to two (Eastern and Western) by the power Niger Flowing South from its confluence with the River Benue at Lokoja.

On the other hand, North of the Niger River lay the forest line and Woodland, varying into Savannah grass and prairie (wide area of Land with grass but no tress) and finally to semi desert and Scrub. Along the Southern fringed of this enormous area runs the middle Belt inhabited by numerous non-Hausa peoples mainly Regan and in the Words of Fredrick Forsyth “animist in religion” mere believed to the vassals of the Hausa/Fulani Empire. The North Proper was the land of the Hausa, the Kanuri and the Fulani, the later having originally come South from the share in Conquest bring with them Islamic religion. The alone mentioned three ethnic groups (Hausa/Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba) found in the East, Western and North respectively from the biggest and major ethnic groups in Nigeria. The British colonial Policy of divide and rule which was father reinforced by Macphersms regionalism agenda saw Nigerians being governed by the
same government but with different administrative Framework (North as a whole and South Partitioned to East and West) The result of this observes Emezi (199:28) is unequal impact of colonial polices in the perpetration and dynamism of the forces of modernization. The consequences according to him have been the distrust, revalry and lack of cooperaton that have characterized the relationship between these ethnic groups the country. Inevitably, this Phenomenon has been used by each ethnic group its geographical size and numerical strength as the basis for political activit i sm and support. The military came and repeatedly vowed to dominate this social malady called ethnicity and establish a strong, united and prosperous country Nigeria with freedom from fear of domination and to redress tribal priority and inferiority syndrome. But regrettably, the army usually end up leaving the body polity worse than it met it. Olelewe (2000:91) said “Despite these edifying Sentiments of the army, ethnicity has persisted and deepened” It would be recalled that Since Nigeria gained her independence from Britain in 1960, ethnic politics manifest arts impacts in concert way by which it affects citizenship and the interests of persons and groups who are usually neglected, manipulated and discriminated against because of their relative Amid the hue and cry from individuals corporate bodies and international, communities on the decorticating potentials of ethnic based polities on any federal structure, therefore the statement of the problem which the researcher intends to solve come as follows:

i. What is the impact of ethnicity on Nigerian body polities?

ii. What are the causes of ethnic politics in Nigeria?

iii. How does revenue allocation impact on ethnic politics in Nigeria?

iv. Powerlessness in relation to other persons and groups due to their handicap in social and biological uniformity and scant population.

Hence the conflicts among the various ethnic groups in the country for the promotion and advancement of ethnic interests at the expense of those the nations has posed more questions than answers to Nigerian dream of achieving a united strong and self reliant federation.

Hypothesis

1. The colonialist encourage ethnic polities on Nigeria.

2. The Colonialist did not encourage ethnic politics in Nigeria.

3. Ethnics Politics is caused by the need to Nigerians to increase their capacity for socio-economic competition.

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Group Theory

The group theory is a classical theory used in explaining the concept “Ethnicity and Federalism in Nigeria”. Group theory mainly deals with the group rather than the individual. The aim of group theorists was to relate social groupings and social power to the political process and decision making. Group theories regard groups or the larger society, rather than individuals, as the basic unit of analysis on the study of politics. Federalism in Nigeria context, is seen as comprising different ethnic groups which is pursing of or promoting their interest make competing claims against one another which is the major thesis of group theory of politics. The study of group competition for positions and advantage in a political system allow us to gain insight into the distribution of power in that society. Group analysis will also enable us to know the manner with which interest are organized and expressed. According to David B. Truman: Any society is composed of group the habitual interaction of men any society-even one employing the simplest and most primitive techniques – is a mosaic of Overlapping groups of various specialized sorts”. Colonialist introduced and engendered racism on the line of ethnic sentiments and consequently consciousness, Ibejianya (2000:16) pointed out the colonial racism served as an instrument in the struggle of the colonialist within the Nigeria for scare local resources.
Origin and Cause of Ethnicity in Nigeria

An ethnic group according to David Sills as Olelewe (2000:20) “is a district category of the population in a larger society whose culture as usually different from it own. The members of such group are, or fed themselves or, are thought to be bound together by common ties of race or nationality or culture”.

Naturally, in order to understand any phenomenon, including ethnicity it is usually imperative to trace the historical circumstances under which it emerges. In other words, one cannot vividly understand the issues of ethnicity in Nigeria without an adequate compression of its historical, origin and objective socio-economic basis. This mean that the issue of ethnicity would vary from one country to another dependency on their histories and class structure that is why Nnoli (1978:49) wrote, “…Different Africa countries display historical patterns and class struggle and cohesion of their ruling class, the encourage, determination and leadership of the under privileged. The degree of foreign influence the pervasiveness and the power of the dominant, ideology, social custom and form of government.

Olelewe (2000:29)argues that ethnicity in Nigerian can best understood through the analysis of its colonial background. His argument reinforced by Nnoli’s assertion that ethnic Consciousness in Africa was the “OFF Spring of colonial racism who objective basis was the alienation of the Nigeria for easy foreign exploitation. He agreed with Nnoli that it was in the colonial enslave that the colonized Nigerian made contact with the colonialist environment and inflict other Nigerians from different communal groups. Adding that it was the effect of this unholy intercourse that gave rise to ethnicity in colonial and part independent argued that in the nature of administration tactics adopted by colonialist made it very difficult for the colonialist. Migrant Nigerian to relate meaningfully on the conquer his physical and biological environments. The discrepancy between the resources used in the enclaves and traditional consumption habits rendered him unable to adopt to and manipulate the new environment.

In a similar, Nnoli (1978:42) pointed out that the migrant Nigerians aside other colonial generated uncertainties was victim of a complex international, national, and local division of labour which thoroughly alienated him from the products of the work. “Worse still, the victimized Nigeria receive in the words of Nnoli barely subsistence wages for his labour and artificially law prices for his products” Under the hopeless labour conditions, Nnoli lamented that labour cased to be a cherished means of good livelihood and liberating force but rather became repressive instrument. Consequently, this humiliating relationship between the Nigeria and his colonial master gave birth to anguish, disorientation and hopelessness.

In a similar vein the colonialist gingered the categorization for Nigeria people into tribe. As posited by Nnoli as a Obelewa (1999) “… the colonialists categorized Nigerians into tribes, their emphasis on what was different among them and not what they shared in common…” Obele added that the pervasive colonial bureaucratic requirements that the official documents and form of must contain information about the tribal origin helped in small measure to stimulate and galvanize ethnic sentiment in Nigeria. Lameting Obele (1999) emphasized; “…The colonial reminder by official forms and documents of his communal homeland’s constantly reinforced ethnocentric sentiments and the parochial loyalty of the colonized… the Nigerian is aware of the fact that since he is regarded as a member of an ethnic group by other’s he would likely be discriminated against by them and would be lost in the struggle for social-economic gain if the fails to identify with tribal homeland…

Again, the colonial masters encouraged the emergent competitive grouping to run along linguistic and communalizes. This is indisputable because the colonialist chose administrative units which coincided with the communal homeland developed socio-economically than others. The seeming high development rate in areas of industrialization commercial activities and education etc. in the southern part of Nigerian vis-avis its
Northern counter pact is a particular reference point. Obele (1999) stressed that his imbalance galvanized and depend “antipathies” and bigotry between ethnic groups in the country. Incidentally, the modernization which follows industrialization saw the various tribal homelands converging in the centers of excellence leaving his tribal homeland where urbanization process in the cities has made his stay in the tribal homeland significantly irrelevant. Capitalizing on the sheer desperation to eke out a living in the Urban Center. The colonialist exploits the migrant Nigerian through poor wage and other hostile work conditions. Compulsorily, the migrant must survive to do this, he does not stand along since it is aptly impossible. Therefore, he has to fund his brothers. This supports Ibejianya’s assertion pointed out earlier. Illuminating further Nnoli (1978:39) emphasized.

“Therefore, the new urban dweller remained closely linked emotionally, culturally, socially and economically to their communal homeland.”

This link according to Nnoli continually and progressively reinforced the parochial components of ethnicity.

To further strength his postulation that ethnicity was of colonial decent in the country, Nnoli argue that the British administrative system of divide and rule encourage communal estimates among Nigerians. He contended that the British administrative system sized very available opportunity to spread the “myth and propaganda” that were separated from one another by great distance, by difference of history and transitions and by ethnological, racial, tribal, political, social and religions barriers. Continuing, Nnoli drawing inference. From sir Hugh Clifford… mode it abundantly clear that his administration would seek to secure to each separate people the right to maintain its identity its individuality its nationality, and its chosen form of government and the peculiar political, social, institution which have be evolved for it by the Western and the accumulated experiences of generation of its forbears

One of such administrative systems adopted by the colonialist was the “Indirect Rule” policy. Indirect rule as a British administration system was introduced in Nigeria in 1960 in the Northern region. After about sixteen years of experimentation in the North, it was extended to the Each and by 1937, all parts of Nigerian was governed by it except Lagos municipalities, Port Harcourt, Enugu, Kaduna, Kano and Azaria (Nnoli 1978). The different time frame at which indirect rule was introduced in different parts of the country has some atoms of tribal ethnic undertone. One wonders what stopped Britain from introducing the system simultaneously in all part of the country has son atoms of tribal ethnic simultaneously in all part of the country. The above claim is further strengthened by Nnoli as in Obele (2000) “this encouragement ethnicity was reflected structurally by British administrative system of indirect rule And regionalization. Indirect rule started out as an instrument for overcoming the pervasive financial, personal and communications problems of the colonial administration in Northern Nigeria, worse still, its introduction in the country at different times in the North West and East ended up as a means for reinforcing communal identity where none existed and providing a new symbolic and ethnocentric factor in the emergency of ethnicity”.

“the Southerners…were forced to live in housing areas segregated from indigenous population… the colonial policy Id to several different settlements viz, a walled city housing the indigenous populationTodun Wada Created by the British to house Northerners who were Not indigenous to the town and Sabin Garis “for what the colonialist call native foreigners” and there were mainly “southerners” it is widely believed analyst that this type of segregation served as the cradle of ethnicity in Nigeria ethnicity. Again, the segregative British colonial policies of divide and rule, indirect rule policy further reinforced ethnicity in Nigeria

**Federalism in Nigeria**

According to David (1927) “Federalism, is conceived in the broadcast social sense to be the linkage of people and institutions by mutual consent, without sacrificed to their individual identify as the ideal form of social organization”. The term was first formulated in the covenant theories of the Bible. This Conception of Federalism was revised by the Bible Centre Federal theologians of 17th Century Britain and New England. It was coined from a Latin world foedus “covenant” which describes the system of Holy and enduring covenant between god and man which lay at the foundation of their world view (Miller 1939). But this
conception of federalism was given a new theoretical form by 19th Century German and French Social Theorists is characterized by the desire to build a society on the basis of coordinative rather than sub-coordinative relationships and by the emphasis on partnership among parties with equal claim of to legitimacy who seek to cultivate their diverse integrities within a common social order. Sills (1972) in a bid to define Federalism wrote.

“Federalism and its Kindred terms “Federal” – are used most broadly to describe the mode of political Organization which unites separate polities within an over arching political system so as to allow each to maintain its fundamental political power among general and constituent government in a manner designed to protect the existence to protect the existence and authority of all the governments, by requiring that the basic policies be made and implemented through negotiation in some form, it enables all to share on the system’s decision making and decision executing Processes.

Ideally, Federal ideals have been systematically conceptualizing in two different ways. First, it has been conceived according to sills as a means to unite a people already linked by bonds of nationality through distribution of political power among the nations or constitute the federal system. In such cases sill continues, the Federal government is generally limited in its scope and powers, functioning through constituent governments which retain their plenary autonomy, and to a substantial degree is dependent upon them.

In a related, Grozen (1960:28) saw Federalism as a political device and a kind of Political order animated by political principles that emphasizes the primary of bargaining and negotiated coordination among several power centre as a means for safeguarding individual and local liberties. This according to Grozen as a Sills (1972) means in effect that political institutions common to different political systems when combined within a Federal system and animated by Federal Principles, are effectively endowed with distinctive characters. For instance he continued that while parties are common in Modern Political System Parties animated by the Federal, Principles show unique characteristic of Fragmentation and lack of central discipline that increase the power of the local groups within the system as a whole.

In the other hand Ozoemenarm as a Ndo and Emezie (1997) wrote that the Principles and Practice of Federalism has developed forma ancient through the middle age to the present. According to him, the federal systems was operative in seventeen countries used federal principles to incorporate some levels of decentralization in their systems of government. Defining Fedralim, Ndo and Emezi (1997) described it as the product of desire for local and state autonomy and the need for a strong national government. In an attempt to give Federalism a more elaborate definition Emezi and Ndo Wrote.

“…Federalism is a complex Partnership of national, state and local levels of government power is constitutionally allocated both to a central government and to government of the state making up the federation, within a complex and continually evolving set of constraints, the national and state government share some functions and exercise other autonomously”

Continuing, they wrote that the success and failure of Federalist system depends largely on how effectively it organizes relations amongst the three ties of government federal, State and Local. According, whereas in OWUNWA (1999) wrote “by federal principle, I mean the method of dividing powers so that the general and regional governments are each within a sphere coordinate and independent”. According to whereas, there are three (3) major elements of Federalism viz

i. The division of powers among level of government
ii. A written constitution showing this division
iii. Co-ordinate supremacy of the two level of government with respect to their respective functions

This definition has faced serious criticism on the ground that it is too legalistic i.e. at places much emphasis on legal dimension of federalism. Owunwa emphasis that there is no doubt that federalism involves a legal constitutional arrangement which spells out the political competence of the levels of government. This according to him necessitates for the existence of a supreme Court which
performs the tedious task of constitution interpretation. This is why Garman as in Ndo and Emezi (1997:24) defined federalism.

“…Federal Government may therefore be defined as a system of central and local government combined under a common sovereignty, both the central local organization being supreme with definite sphere, worked at for them by the general constitution or by act of parliament which creates the system

… federal government is not as often loosely said. The central government alone but it a system composed of central and local government are as such part of the federal system as central government is although they are not creation of or subject to the central of the central government.

Nature of Nigerian Federation
In the words of Owunwa (1999:41) there are two schools of thought on the coming into being of Nigerian Federalism. This first analysis posits that geographical and historical factors was the basis determinant of involution of Nigeria Federalism. This heterogeneous state could not have been governed for long form one centre.

The second school of thought contents that the British government could have de-emphasized the particularizing tendencies of the different ethnic groups by not giving a region a lager measure of political autonomy the proponents of this school upholds that the fleeing colonizers tactically fashioned the structural and organizational framework of Nigeria society in a manner that certain imperfections were left behind to sustain and perpetuate inter-ethnic competitions (conflict0 in the post independence era.

Then, the federal principle began to the formally rooted in Nigeria in 1951. It was however obvious by 1954 when parliamentary system of government was introduced that federalism was the best administrative option for Nigeria given its administration expressed by the various ethnic groups in the country. For instance, the North has long been afraid that the Southerners especially the Igbos would dominate and exploit them because of their intellectual and skill superiority vis-avis the North. In the other hand, the South feared that the educationally and intellectual interior North world over whelm them with their numerical strength. This analyst argued was one of the reason for the collapse that the imperial authority refused to allay the fears of ethnic domination in order to maintain and sustain the domination of the Southern by North (structurally), (Herbert 1974).

As earlier painted out, Nigeria federation formerly started with three (3) region which later increased to four (4) in 1964. In 1967, Gowon once again altered the internal structure and increases the number to twelve (12). In 1976 the General Murtala Led government increases the number of state to nineteen (19). However, following much agitation for creation of more state, the Babangida regime yielded to pressure and in 1983 following. Buhari/Idiagbon military patch. When Babangida the first Nigeria military President came
in power, the 1979 constitution was reviewed in 1989 on the excuse of ensuring the viability and practicability of presidential system in Nigeria. In the words of Eleazar as in Owunwa (1999:41), this was geared towards the securing of those needs for which the federal government was instituted. But as Babangida’s successor Ernest Shonekan was ousted in November 1993 by Abacha, Babangida’s 1989 constitution was reviewed to produce the 1995 constitution. As it were, circumstances could not permit the adoption of the 1995 constitution as it was replaced by 1999 constitution drafted under Gen Abdulsalam Abubakar’s administration. Presently, the 1999 constitution is undergoing yet another constitution review, a development which analysis say will definitely usher in another constitution. One thing to points out have is that all these constitutions has the basic attributes with institutes and legalizes federalism. Thus the various constitutions. Thus the various constitutions of federal Republic of Nigeria has three distinctive qualities as earlier illustrated by Owunwa,

i. The constitutions are written in form
ii. There is division of power between the central and component units and
iii. It has a Supreme Court (Judiciary) which moderates the actions of the various tiers and arms of government and ensures due observance of constitution, as has been pointed out earlier, the first Nigerian Republic hosted two indigenous constitution the sense that they were the first constitutions wholly and entirely drafted by Nigerians ideally, 1963 constitution allowed the two levels of government some degree of autonomy. Ozemena as a Ndo and Emezi (1997) pointed out that federal government is empowered to legislate for peace, order and good governance of the entire country in specific matters, these and all to the powers reversed for the central government are contained in the federal exclusive list which comprises areas which both the federal and state governments have legislative powers. The 1979 constitution, like 1954, 1960 and 1963 as pointed out by Akpan in Ndo and Emezi was a reflection of the federal and pluralistic nature of Nigeria political community. The 1979 constitution was not silent to this direction as it wrote, according in chapter II, Article, 14, Section 3, “The composition of the government of the federation or any of it agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such a manner as to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity and also to command national loyalty thereby ensuring that there shall be no predominance of person form few state or from of few ethnic and other sectional groups in the government or any of its agencies.

It would be recalled that the term federal character was first used by the constitutional drafting committee of 1978 chairman by Chief Rotimi Williams (SAN). The above declaration emphasis the imperativeness for Nigeria to take care of its multifarious nature on distribution and authoritative allocation of values in the Nigerian Federation necessitates the adoption of this phase “Federal character” it was on the debate on ensuring equity and national loyalty in a multifarious diversified society that the constitution drafting committee declared that there had in the past been inter ethnic revelry to secure the domination of government by one ethnic group to the exclusion of others. It is therefore essential to have provision to ensure that the predominance of person from a few states or from a few ethnic groups or other sections groups is avoided in the composition of government or the appointment are lection of persons to high offices in the state. Thus, given its Nobel intentions which is primarily the need to provide faster royally. National unity and giving all Nigerians a sense of we-feeling. The federal character become widely acceptable among various ethnic groups. That is why Ozemena as a Ndo and Emezie (1999:25) declared; Thus, was widely acceptable to most member that important bodies federal electoral commission should reflect federal character of Nigeria. This is not to means that all is well with federalism in Nigeria federalism. That is why Forsyth (1978) wrote that Nigeria federalism is a “marriage of irreconcilable”. Nkwobi (1999:29) equally observed this when he asserts that Nigerians experience with federalism is problematic areas include

i. Power sharing
ii. Revenue allocation
iii. Minority issues, just to maintain but three, (Nkwobi 1999). As earlier emphasized power sharing is always enshrined in the constitution. The legislative list are three viz the exclusive, the concurrent and residual lists. (in most federal states Nigeria inclusive such power as that of defense. Printing and minting
of currency. Foreign affairs etc.) are contained in the exclusive list. This is the legislative list in which the federal government has exclusive power to legislate upon. These includes issues of common and strategic important to the survival of the nation (Owuna 1999:85) as a sovereign entity. On the other hand, there is the residual list which are more or less oversight functions of power of legislation (Owunwa: 87) According to him, these are items not contained in both exclusive and concurrent list. In Nigeria, and some Western Federations. Residual Function are assigned to the component units (states). In the concurrent list are items which both the state and federal government have power to legislation. These according to Illage (2000:41) are mainly matters of less or secondary importance to the nation. Containing Ulaga persists that in situation where there is conflict in legislation any item contained in the concurrent list that the legislation of the powers and the federal government prevails at least to extent of its contradiction on inconsistency. The supreme court plays important role to this direction. As earlier posited, issues contained in the concurrent list have been an areas of conflict and disagreement between the centre and the units (state).

The system also creates lack of uniformity in legislation as the legislation on a particular item differs from one state to the other. This issue of power sharing gives the central government the constitutional right to exercise emergency powers in any part of the federation where there is break down of law and order will take over temporarily, the administration of the area involved. Regrettably, the right to evoke emergency powers could and have been abused in several occasions in Nigeria. Owunwa (1999:41) notice this and wrote, “The problem with emergency powers in that it could be abuse. It could be used to settle scores with state that did not give support to the ruling party at the centre’

Revenue Allocation
Closely related to the issue of power sharing is the problem of revenue allocation. The allocation of revenue earned from productive enterprises in the federation has been a bone of contention among the component states of the federation Owunwn (1999:21). This problem is not such pronounced in a nation that depend on taxation is her major sources of revenue. Some of the criteria used for allocation and haring of revenue includes.
First the principle of need. This is hinged on the numerical strength (population). In other words, the state with very large population have more need for money and as such gets falter allocation.
Second, the principle, according to Udele stresses the equality sameness of states irrespective of landmass need, derivation etc, in terms of distribution of fund.
Third, the principle of even development. This principle of states encourage even development amongst the various component units that made up the federation. This principles makes sense in a situation whereby the states do not get equal allocation because of the application of principle of derivation.
Fourth, is the principle of national interest which has to do with resources transfers which may be made in the interest of the nation as a whole. It is a formula that is not easily explicable unless one has access to working of the mind of the policy maker or the disbursers of the revenue (Owunwa 1999:48). In fact, it is a vague term that admits of just and unjust appropriation to the federal central government or to the state.
Fifth is the principle of derivation which sees the reasonableness in giving those regions from where the revenue is derived some proportion of their contribution to the national wealth. Suffice is to stress at the juncture that the determination of formula for sharing of national collected revenue is a difficult exercise. The primary objective according to Ulega (2000:15). Is no doubt the need to ensure that each level of government gets enough money for discharging the responsibilities that have been assigned to it, but this needs were the only determinant factor, the formula would have been arrived at without much difficulties Okelewe (2000:27). This posits to the issue of unhealthy competition for the national cake.

Conclusively, Udele as an Olelewe Wrote:
“Indeed the Criteria for Revenue distribution are numerous, they are limited only by the imaginative ability of the human mind. A state can evoke a formula today and revoke at the following day depending on the objective pursued by an administration”
Minority Agitation

Another strong log on the wheel of progress of Nigerian federalism is the issue of minority ethnic groups in a federating state one can establish two level of minority groups which on their respective states are the majority but which in the larger context of the federal structure are minorities Onwunwe (1999:32). The other level according to him, at units where population also comprises elements of both the major and minor ethnic groups. Owunwa asserts that one would have thought that on a federalism of disaggregation, the problem of minority element at the level of federating units should have been adequately taken care of. He regrets that it is not possible to constitute every Linguistic or cultural grouping unto an autonomous state as agitated by minority groups if such an exercise were attempted in any federation there would be a myriad of enviable state. The crafty colonial government was very cautious in handling this issue, Olelewe (2000:43) observed this when he wrote: “unfortunately the colonial administration instead of allaying minority fears cleverly avoided carrying out new states from the old ones so as to maintain the status quo in favor of the north” Furthermore, he maintained that British colonial policy accentuated the North South divide and set the stage for the secession of political crisis which attended the direct confrontation of the divergent cultures and values after the attainment of independence in October 14th, 1960. The problem which is common to minority elements at both state and federal levels in the fear of abomination and discrimination by the major ethnic groups. It is an attempt to arrest this fear that Udele asserts that certain fundamental human right are entrenched in the constitution of federal state some of these fundamental human rights as codified in the constitution. Amid complexities surrounding its definitions, polities, on this content it is used on this research project is examined max Weber and Nnoli analysis that parties as consistence with activities, action and in action that revolve around power in the state system. In other words, all activities which are directly or indirectly associated with the seizure of the state power, it use and consolidation (macro analysis) is what politics is all about.

Consequently, I argue that ethnicity is a social phenomenon associates with interactions amongst members of different ethnic groups. In the same vein, it is explained here, that an ethnic group is a distinct category of population in a larger society whose culture is usually different from its own, and the members of such groups are, or feel themselves to be bound together by common ties of race, or nationality or culture. It equally explains groups are social formation, distinguished by the communal character of their boundaries, the relevant factors may be language, culture or both. In the process of explanation I was able to differentiate though not exhaustibly the relationship between ethnicity and ethnocentricism, ethnic group for itself and ethnic group in itself. While doing this, we of out that relation within ethnic group within the same political system produces ethnicity. In my analysis, I was able to strongly establish mu earlier asserting in chapter one that the various colonial politics adopted in government Nigeria by Britain encouraged and enforced ethnic, politics in Nigeria it was found out that encouragement and accentuations of ethnicity was reflected structurally by British administration systems of indirect rule, divide and rule, regionalism, land native Right Ordinance of 1910 etc and various ungraded statement by colonialist easily the one made by high Clifford in 1920 when national congress of British West African demanded a reform in British West African colonies. In addition of strangile hold a Nigeria through exploitative and repressive work conditions, the colonialist categorized Nigerians into tribes, their emphasis was what was different amongst them and not what they should in common.

Furthermore, information gathered revealed that following the humiliation subjugation, tension, anxiety and insecurity occasioned by colonialist retrogressive capitalism that the average Nigerian direct his aggressive impulses on his fellow countrymen with whom he completed on the basis of equality and to effectively achieve this aim, he must align with his fellow tribe men. This boils down to my second claim that ethnic politics in Nigeria is among other things stimulated by the fact that Nigerian use ethnicity to strengthen their competition for scarce resources. That was why I wrote in chapter two that the colonial master encourage the emergent competitive groupings to run along linguistic and communal lines, as it were, available data as presented here that all is not well with Nigerian Federalism since its formation was accordingly to the interest of colonial occupation rather than aspiration of ethnic group, similarly, I
highlighted the nature of Nigerian federalism, as an exercise that presented Nigerian Federation has been confronted with a myriad of problem and uncertainties such issues as minority agitation for more states out of fear of domination by the major ethnic groups top sidedness in the structure of Nigeria Federation reflected in state and local government creation, incessant military incursion into the body polity and continuous review and amendment of its constitution, revenue allocation problem and various other foundry problem.

Consequently, I succinctly presented some of the principles adopted to federal government to allay fears of demolition expressed by minorities using militancy and amnesty as a classical illustration for instance the quota system, feral character, entrenchment of fundamental human rights in the constitution were mentioned. In all available data revealed that all the sundry problem beleaguering the Nigeria federation was as a result of ethnic politics which has eaten deep into the polity-military and civilian government alike finally Nigerian federation, is in a state of flux. It is however hoped that as time goes on it would come up stronger.

The first and second Nigeria Republics experimental a multi party system but during Gen. Babangida’s inconclusive transition to civil rule programme, two party system was introduced. Gen. Sani Abacha inglorious regime reverted to multipartism so did Gen Abdisalami in which three political parties were imposed on the electorate. In the interim, Nigeria has about (30) registered political parties contesting in the 4th Republic. From the fact of history Nigerian political parties have shown no serious commitment to any particular ideology, hence the pre-election and post election coalition in the first and second Republic between progressives and conservation. One can rightly write off political parties in Nigeria has never played any integrative role in the polity since they had strong ethnic followship and were organized around personality is rather than issues and as such posed great establishing agent to Nigeria Federalism. Party discipline is very weak and flagrant electoral malpractices continued even when open ballot was introduced. It was equally gathered that because of ethnic politics, national cohesion is weak as thereby frustrating all irrigative of foster real integrating. The various ethnic groups still see themselves as strange wild beasts praying from a fight necked feed through (Olelewe 2002).

Observable instance also show that Nigerians would rather engage the service of an expatriate rather than that of their fellow country man. Nzeribe observed this and wrote that “that is why when other regions were engaged in Nigerianization policy the North embarked on Northernization policy agenda one would have excepted that the name of political parties in a state that craves for national integration would have been fashionable to reflect that aspiration. Regrettably what we had in the first republic as northern people congress instead, of (Nigerian people congress). This could equally be seen in some cynical remarks credited to some eminent politician in Nigerian. For instance Awo was known to have lamented in one of his speech that “Nigeria is a men geographical” Similarly overwhelmed by the spate of ethnically in Nigeria Alhaji Shehu Shagari remarked that “… there are no basis for Nigerian unity” In all it was believe that because of the three region structure and the dominant party phenomenon in the regions, that competition for power at the center became a tripod affair, with the per suit of regional interest having better consideration than poltical instability and national integration.

**Conclusion**

I have in this expose attempted to demonstrate in concert terms that there are symbiotic relationship between the British colonial administration and contemporary ethic politics in Nigeria. In other words the various colonial policies accentuated ethno-cultural dichotomy which reinforce north/south divide and set a stage for the succession of political crisis with attendant the direct confrontation of the divergent cultures and values after the attendant of independence in 1960 (Oganna et al 1995). In a similar vein, it is convincingly clear, that ethnic politics is further reinforced by the desperate need for Nigeria to increase their capacity for socio-economic competition. I made it abundantly clear in this write up that the ethnic diversity in Nigeria does not itself constitute any threat to national integration but are convinced that the threat to Nigeria federation has been unpatriotic politicians who manipulate ethnic plurality and sub-culturally differences in their competition for power at the centre. Our former president Olusegun Obasanjo confirmed this in his...
speech during a political rally making the kick off Obasanjo –Atiku 2003 presidential campaign held in Kogi State. He said in his usual slow pace that “… ethnic diversity in Nigeria, is in itself a source of power and pride, but the problem is that our leaders use it to destabilize the country”.

In essence, I therefore conclude based on veritable data, that given a myriad of obstacles to national integration and development such as antagonism between the various ethnic groups structural imbalance of the federation the dissatisfaction of the minority on Nigeria polity, and the die-hard approach of the political class to rules of political kind and the attendant political crisis in the country, the future of Nigeria federation is in complete jeopardy, that unless Nigeria adopts “true federation” as advocated by well meaning Nigeria, its federation may some day collapse like a pack of cards.

**Recommendation**

For a virile and progressive federal republic, theme should be a change on our value system that is, there should be firm believe in the unity and indivisibility of the Nigerian state not because we have been compelled to accept it but because of our genuine convention after national analysis that it is our collective interest to remain united and therefore strong.

I equally suggest that a sovereign national conference rather than constitutional conference be convened since the later has successively failed to produce lasting solution. In this regard dialogue becomes indispensable and compromise unavoidable.

Whatever might be the reason for reference to ethnic and state origin official document, I alive that government should not disuse it for negative manipulation.

Finally, there should be aggressive national re-orientation aimed at obliterating negative colonial influences having conceded that our federation is a marriage of irreconcilable and a “colonial mistake”.

Nigerian leaders and press alike should shun revenue politics and junk journalism. Our school curriculum should be fashioned to extricate our youths out of the present ethnic quagmire by de-emphasizing ethnic sentiment and loyalty, in essence I advocate for issue oriented politic king.

**References**

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