

To Be and How Not To Be: The Challenges Of Nation-Building in Nigeria

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Abstract

The work is the analysis of both the various nation-building challenges that have confronted Nigeria since independence and the possible ways the country can overcome them. The dream of Nigeria since independence in 1960 is to turn itself into a viable and cohesive nation. This has become an impossible dream however due to a myriad of challenges. Nigeria is a multi-ethnic society with over 250 ethnic groups. Each of these ethnic groups also have religious and economic issues that separates them from one another. Nigeria's diversity has been a major obstacle in its drive to become a global and responsible player in the international community. By using the qualitative research methodology, the work identified various challenges, such as corruption, autarky, governance and distribution that have been the major barriers to the creation of a viable polity. The style used in the study is also historical, descriptive and analytical. Crucially, the study also used the concept of nation-building as its Theoretical Framework. This has made it possible for the work to highlight and posit specific pragmatic and logical ways Nigeria can overcome its nation-building challenges and emerge a viable, cohesive and functional polity in the 21st century.

Keyword: *Nigeria, Nation-Building, Nation, Challenges, Independence*

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Introduction

In 1914, Britain amalgamated the different and disparate people around the Rivers Niger and Benue confluence to form what was to become the nucleus of modern day Nigeria. In 1960, the entity called Nigeria became an independent state. At independence, Nigeria consisted of over 250 ethnic groups with a variety of languages and sub-dialects that runs into hundreds. Right from the period of the Amalgamation in 1914, Britain tried to forge the disparate ethnic groups into a unified force in order to make her job of exploiting the country's natural resources

easier. This is the rationale for the Amalgamation. When the country became independent in 1960, the founding fathers, just as the British tried to do with the Amalgamation, also tried to fuse the country together with the hope of turning Nigeria into a viable, cohesive and functional polity. This has become an impossible dream, however. Right from the first civilian administration of Sir Tafawa Balewa, the country's prime minister in the First Republic, the different Nigerian rulers have tried, unsuccessfully, to overcome the various nation-building challenges that has confronted the country. Such nation-building challenges that has stymied Nigeria since independence include: corruption, religion, ethnicity, democracy and of late, terrorism. Between 1960 and 1998, an admixture of civilian and military leaders ruled Nigeria. The First Republic was abruptly terminated by the Major Kaduna Ezeogwu-led coup d'état in 1967 (Falode, 2011).

This was to be the beginning of a long line of military rulers in the country's history that eventually came to an end in 1998. The inability of the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) to tackle the challenges of corruption and ethnicity destroyed the First Republic. Nigeria's Second Republic that started in 1979 did not fare any better under Shehu Shagari. The inability of Shagari to tackle challenges of corruption, governance and ethnicity were factors the military used for their incursion into the Nigerian political scene for a second time in 1983. The various military rulers in Nigeria from 1967 to 1979; and 1983 to 1999 also failed to resolve the nation-building challenges that has dogged the country since independence in 1960. With the dawn of the Fourth Republic in 1999, a new dangerous challenge, terrorism, was added to the mix of those problems Nigeria will have to tackle before it can emerge as a strong, cohesive and viable nation. This work analysis the various nation-building challenges that has made it impossible for Nigeria to emerge as a functional polity. The emphasis of the work will be to show the pragmatic steps that Nigeria can take to overcome these challenges.

How Not to Be: Motion Sans Movement

Nigeria has expended considerable energy into the project of turning itself into a viable and functional nation since independence in 1960, the different rulers have deployed various initiatives, programmes and measures to resolve what is now known as the Nigerian Question.' Largely based on the advise of politicians and scholars, the country has tinkered with its constitution and federalism; and introduced measures to promote religious and social harmony.

During the military era, the various rulers have used decrees and draconian laws to try to forge a nation out of the disparate groups living within the country. All these efforts failed because the government have approached the nation-building issue from the wrong theoretical and practical perspective. Scholars who have written the challenge of nation-building in Nigeria have also tackled the issue from a perspective that has not yielded any noticeable positive returns. John Campbell's (2011) *Nigeria: Dancing on the Brink* is an interesting work on contemporary Nigerian history. Although, essentially a work on political development in Nigeria since independence, the book analyzes some of the challenges that has made it impossible for the country to realize its full potential. The work uses Nigeria's Fourth Republic to highlights the problems of corruption, democracy and governance. Campbell concludes that the key to Nigeria's success as a nation is for it to strengthen its institutions and entrench democracy. Using the centenary celebration of Nigeria's amalgamation in 1914 as a backdrop, Chidume et al. carried out a historical analysis of the nationhood challenges that has confronted the country since 1960 (Chidume, Chukwu, Ukaegbu, & Agudiegwu, 2014). The authors identified electoral violence, ethnic nationalism, identity politics and political corruption as the greatest threats to Nigeria's emergence as a functional state. The paper argues that in order for the country to be able to move forward, its leaders must use constitutional means to correct the asymmetry in Nigeria's federalism.

Elaigwu in the *Challenges of Nation-Building in the Twenty-First Century: The Nigerian Experience* argues that the key to resolving the different nationhood challenges that Nigeria has faced since independence is the creation of a viable and equitable federal system (2004). Acutely aware of the deep-seated problems issues of religion, ethnicity and corruption have created for the country, the author proposes the use of federalism and the tools available therein to correct the country's many ills. Adetoro in *his Issues in Social Studies and Problems of Nation-building in Nigeria* takes a different approach in the analysis of nationhood in Nigeria (2000). The author identifies corruption, ethnicity and religion as major barriers to the aspiration of nationhood in Nigeria. Adetoro advocates for compulsory citizen enlightenment and participation in the political and social processes in the country.

From the foregoing, it can be seen that the reviewed works did not carry out any systemic analysis of the nation-building challenges in Nigeria. Although, one should acknowledge the fact that these is not a review of all the relevant literature of nation-building in Nigeria, the reviewed

works are broad representation of the breadth of research on the subject. None of the reviewed works made use of the theories and concepts of nation-building to interrogate and proffer possible solutions to Nigeria's nation-building challenges. It is this important lacunae that this work hopes to fill.

Theoretical

Theoretical Framework: Nation-Building

Nation-building refers to a process whereby people transfer their commitment and loyalty from smaller ethnic groups, villages or petty principalities to the larger central political system (Almond, Powell, Storm, & Dalton, 2014). The process of nation-building is the cultivation of a people of political attitudes, beliefs and values (Smith, 1971, pp.30-33). Its emphasis is on the congruity of cultural and political identities (Rokkan, 1973, p.26). Within the Nigerian context, it is the progressive acceptance by members of the polity of the legitimacy and the necessity for a central government, and the identification with the central government as the symbol of the nation (Elaigwu, 1985, p.462). This is the vertical dimension to nation-building. The horizontal dimension involves the acceptance of the other members of the civic body as equal members of a corporate nation. The term 'nation-building' came into vogue among historically oriented political scientist in the 1950s and 1960s. Its main proponents included such leaders of the American academic community such as Karl Deutsch, Charles Tilly and Richard Bendix (*Nation-building*, 2018).

Nation-building theory was primarily used to describe the processes of national integration and consolidation that led up to the establishment of the modern nation-state. This is distinct from the various form of traditional states such as feudal and dynastic states, church states and empires. The term covers conscious strategies initiated by state leaders, as well as, unplanned societal change (Friedrich, 2010, p.28). It has also been described as an indispensable tool for detecting, describing and analyzing the "macrohistorical and sociological dynamics" that have produced the modern states. Nation-building is, on the one hand, a process of socio-political development which allows loosely knitted communities to become a common society with a nation-state corresponding to it (Hippler, 2005, p.6). It also connotes the different dimensions through which diverse segment of the society is fused into a functional whole. It has

within it economic integration, cultural integration, political centralisation, bureaucratic control and democratisation, and establishment of common citizenship (Hippler, 2005, p.7).

Theories of Nation-building

Since the attainment of independence in 1960, the different Nigerian governments have tried to turn the heterogeneous and multiethnic Nigerian state into a functional and integrated polity. The process that is involved in becoming a nation is what is referred to as nation-building. The theory of nation-building will be the theoretical bedrock of this research work. Specially, Ernest Gellner's Modernisation theory and Benedict Anderson's Imagined Communities theory of nation-building are relevant to this thesis. The theories are especially suited to the processes of nation-building in a society that had experienced colonial rule like Nigeria. Besides, the theories also capture the essence of the nation-building process in Nigeria since 1960. At this point, it is important to define and explain the term 'nation'. This is because of its significance to the analysis of nation-building. Peter B. Harris asserts that a nation is usually a product of the emotions of tribal or family feeling, to which "we give our loyalty, while a state is a political and administrative body" (1986, p.277). James Danziger defines a nation as a set of people with a deeply shared fundamental identification (2015). Burgess defines a nation as a population with ethnic unity, inhabiting a territory with geographic unity (Appadorai, 2001, p.15). In a similar vein, Leacock says that a nation is a body of people united by common descent and common language. Bryce and Smith defines a nation from the political perspective. To Bryce, a nation is a nationality which has organized itself into a political body (Appadorai, 2001, p. 15). Moreover, Smith's nation is that of a single inclusive group whose members share common traditions, history, institutions and ethnic identity (Smith, 1971, pp.30-33). Gabriel Almond's definition of a nation is quite illuminating. The definition captures the essence of nation-building in a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural state like Nigeria trying to create ethno-cultural unity. According to Almond et al, a nation simply refers to "a group of people with a common identity" (2014, p.16). This common identity, according to him, could be a common language, history, race, culture or simply upon the fact that these groups had occupied the same territory.

In the course of this study, the researcher has been able to identify six theories of nation-building. They are Deutsch's Systems Theory (1966); Hechter's Internal Colonialism Theory (1985); Rokkan's Theory of Regionalism (1982); Gellner's Modernization Theory (2006);

Anderson's Imagined Communities Theory (2016); and Anthony Smith's Ethnie Theory (1991). Out of all these theories, Gellner's Modernization Theory and Anderson's Imagined Communities theory are of particular relevance to the nation-building process in Nigeria. The theories cogently capture and explain the processes of nation-building in not just a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society but a colonized state like Nigeria.

Ernest Gellner's Modernization Theory

Gellner's modernization theory centres on the way in which the role of culture in society changed with modernization (Canovan, 1998, p.60). The theory stresses the primacy of material conditions in shaping political thought and social change (Kellas, 1998, p.41). It argues that economic reasons are responsible for the rise of nations in most industrial societies. One of these is the development of the industrial society that took place in certain parts of Europe at the end of the eighteenth century. It also occurred throughout most parts of the world during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; and of course in Nigeria during the colonial period. The strength of Gellner's theory is in its analysis of the transition of traditional societies to industrial societies. The latter, described as 'agro-literate' societies, witnessed a strict division between the categories of those who were educated and governed, and who, by reason of their power and their literacy, had access to a great tradition; and the former, who were those who worked on the land and who bore a 'little tradition' (Gellner, 2006, pp.9-12).

In addition to the horizontal divide formed by this cultural dichotomy between the agro-literate culture and the mass culture, there were many vertical ones in rural society that were particularly strong on account of the independent way of life in peasant communities. Customs and dialects are two good examples of these. This cultural heterogeneity constituted the main obstacle to the formation of the nation, according to Ernest Gellner. The emergence of the industrial society goes on to promote cultural homogenization at the end of a long process inherent in the economic logic of this society: based on an evolutionary technology and idea of progress. It involves a permanent growth of productivity; this results for the working population the necessity for extreme professional mobility, and a versatility which implies a solid genetic training (Gellner, 2006). For this industrial society to sustain itself, it will necessarily require two basic innovations. The first is literacy on a large scale among its population. And, the second is a high level of technical competence. This can only be provided, it should be noted, by something

resembling a modern ‘national’ educational system; a pyramid at whose base there are primary schools, staffed by teachers, led by the product of advanced graduates schools (Gellner, 2006, p.35).

Such a pyramid provides the criterion for the minimum size for a viable political unit. The process of national construction thereafter progresses in accordance with the rate of the entry into the educational system of populations living more and more in outlying areas. It is then impressed on them that learning the dominant languages and possessing a basic education are the prerequisites to their social ascent and their ability to defend their rights vis-à-vis the administration of the nation-state in the making. Beyond this, education confers a moral equilibrium by putting the people in step with the values of the society of which they are de facto members as the limits of the culture within which they were educated are also those of the world within which they can morally and professionally breathe. The education that is necessary to produce modern employees must be conducted in one or another official language, according to Gellner. This, for example, was English Language for colonial and post colonial Nigeria (Canovan, 1998, p.60). Besides, the emergence of a nation involves the destruction of most of the myriad traditional folk cultures as they are absorbed into a new version suitable to be the official culture of a state (Gellner, 2006, p.49). This breakdown is important because it will allow for the emergence of a centralized authority which is necessary for the development of a nation. It will provide a strong state structure from which a viable and cohesive nation could be shaped. Control by a central political authority will sweep away many local cultures or ethnicities and replace them with one large nation. In this way nation-states will emerge (Kellas, 1998, p.43).

Gellner’s theory cogently captures and explains the nation-building process in Nigeria. Nigeria at one point or the other has gone through the phases of this theory in her nation-building process. The urge for nation-building came with the advent of colonial rule in the nineteenth century. This drive was given a fillip with the amalgamation of 1914 and received concrete expression with the active participation of the early Nigerian nationalists in the Lagos legislative election of 1923. Colonial rule turned the economy of the different ethnic units living in the River Niger and River Benue area from that of an agrarian and feudal state to a modern industrial economy. With the introduction of the legitimate commerce and commodities, such as cocoa and palm oil introduced by the British, the focus of the economy shifted from its intra-ethnic character, to inter-ethnic and finally to trading relationships that traverse regions. Moreover, it

was colonial rule, with the attendant integration of Nigeria's economy into the world economy, which engendered the feeling of nascent nationalism among Nigerians. It gave Nigeria a single official language, the English language. The same colonial rule introduced Nigerians to the benefit of formal and structured education. It also awoke within the Nigerian psyche that feeling of 'belonging' and tied to a particular geographical environment. The feeling that colonialism stirred later transformed itself into nationalism in 1953 with the subsequent motion by that foremost Nigerian nationalist, Chief Anthony Enahoro, for the independence of Nigeria in 1957. This feeling morphed from self-identification to self-determination and eventually culminated in independence.

By the time of independence in 1960, the Nigerian economy had already been integrated into the world economy. Her agrarian and labour-intensive economy was being gradually replaced by a modern industrial base. Political authority from the centre nominally controls the economy, education and there is a law code that governs the country. The powers of the regional 'sovereigns' have been subsumed within the larger Nigerian state. Nigeria introduced such 'unifying' programmes like Universal Basic Education (UBE), federal character principle and National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) to create a cohesive and functional polity. Hence, all these point to the fact that a critical understanding of the nation-building process in Nigeria between 1967 and 2007 will be incomplete without Gellner's Modernization Theory of nation-building.

Anderson's Imagined Communities Theory

In his theory, Anderson gave some set of conditions that are necessary to any nation-building process. The first is what he calls "print capitalism" (Kellas, 1998, p.43). This means commercial printing on a large scale. Print capitalism is the medium through which the idea of the nation and the ideology of nationalism are propagated. The assumption is that print capitalism will strengthen the publishing of dictionaries, vernacular languages and indigenous literature. Printing standardizes languages and aids the development of capitalism. A sense of nationality flows from the common language and education which printing facilitates (Kellas, 1998, p.45). This first condition was true for Nigeria. Colonial rule gave Nigeria her print capitalism in 1847 at Calabar (Nwagbara, 2010, p.13). From this period onward, indigenous efforts were then made to publish and translate books into the vernacular. Reverend Samuel Ajayi

Crowther translated the Holy Bible into Yoruba and revised his Yoruba Grammar and Vocabulary in 1852 (Akinwunmi, 2002). During the heyday of colonial rule, Nnamdi Azikiwe and Herbert Macauley, both frontline nationalists, established indigenous newspapers in the 1930s to trumpet Nigeria's nationalist aspirations (Nwagbara, 2010, p.13).

The second precondition for a successful nation-building endeavour is what Anderson has termed "modernisation". This point has been adequately covered under Gellner's Modernisation theory of nation-building. There is a convergence in both Gellner's and Anderson's theories on the role of modernisation in the nation-building process. And as such, this need not delay one here. The final condition necessary to the nation-building process is what Anderson has called the "notion of pilgrimages" (Kellas, 1998, p.45). Pilgrimages are essentially the pattern of social communication and "life chances" of different people. This may be a matter of sharing a common language, or of being the object of differential treatment by the state. It is this pilgrimages which define the boundaries of the nation, and lead people to identify with it and not with another social or political entity. Such pilgrimages may thus be taken to be the sufficient condition for particular nations to be "imagined" (*Nation-building*, 2018). This particular point was obtainable, it must be remarked, in the multinational empires of Europe, and in the European colonies in Asia, America And Africa. The imperial system, in these areas, confined the life chances or pilgrimages of natives to the colonies. Eventually, these natives saw themselves as members of a nation in rebellion against the imperial country. This phase of the nation-building process in Nigeria has been captured by James Coleman in his *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism* (1986). It should be pointed out here that Anderson's theory captures the beginning of the nation-building process in Nigeria. It vividly explains the significance of such things as print capitalism and indigenous newspapers to the nation-building process in colonial and post-colonial Nigeria.

Why it Could Not Be: Nigeria and its Challenges

Nigeria has found it difficult to become a viable and functional nation since independence in 1960. A lot of factors have been responsible for this. This section analyzes some of the major factors responsible for Nigeria's inability to create a cohesive state. These challenges are those of federalism, distribution, democracy, governance, aggressive ethno-regionalism, religion, corruption, ideology and distribution.

Challenge of Federalism

Nigeria is a country of extraordinary diversity and complexity. This complexity is as a result of its ethno-cultural heterogeneity. The amalgamation of 1914 and the Richards constitution of 1946 integrated these diverse political units into three regions. It was this complexity that informed the desire to look for a political system that can accommodate the divergences. This desire eventually found expression in the adoption of the federal system of government. This suggests that federalism was adopted in Nigeria because it was seen as a diversity management technique (Muhammad, 2007, p.188). Federalism in the classical sense, as represented by K.C. Wheare and A.V. Dicey is defined in terms of constitutional law as a system in which powers are divided between the central and regional authorities (Janda, Berry, Goldman, Schildkraut, Manna, 2018, p.113). Each authority govern directly and independently within its own defined sphere and cannot modify the division of power unilaterally. However, in its modern sense, federalism is seen as a mechanism for the identification of the social and economic forces and factors which contribute to integration in a variety of ways (Olling & Westmacott, 1988, p.3).

Nigeria's federalism has been a mixture of the two. And herein lies the crux of the matter. The challenge has been either for a 'military' or 'central' federalism with a strong and powerful centre, or for a loose federalism with a strong and powerful periphery. These two traits were noticeable throughout the period. Nigeria's adoption of the federal system dates back to the 1954 Lyttleton Constitution. Since, then, the federal system has been a leitmotiv in Nigeria's constitutional developments. Nigeria sees federalism as a form of governmental arrangement. The state's sees it as a mechanism to promote unity while at the same time preserving existing diversities within an overarching desire for national unity (Muhammad, 2007, p.190). To this extent, the relationship between federalism and political stability is axiomatic. The restiveness of the ethnic minorities in the Niger Delta during the Fourth Republic is another good example. State creation, which is an integral part of Nigeria's federalism, rather than being a tool that provides a sense of security for ethnic minorities, also became a debilitating factor in the country's federalism (Odojin, 2005, pp.14-15). For example, Gowon created twelve states in 1967, Murtala/Obasanjo increased the number to nineteen states in 1976, and Abacha created six in 1996 to make it thirty-six. In this process of state creation, the federation was 'skewed' into smaller units and thus, the autonomy of the constituent units was lost and power gravitated to the

center. The military virtually turned the federal state into unitary one as the other levels could no longer exercise or share power with the central government (Elaigwu, 2012, pp.257-258). This trend was carried over into the Fourth Republic and engendered calls from various groups for a Sovereign National Conference (SNC), a conference of ethnic nationalities; national conference, devolution of powers and restructuring of the Federation. Thus, the challenge is for Nigeria to evolve a 'true federalism' that will take into consideration the aspirations of the different ethnic groups and that will at the same time preserve, in a functional way, the country's federal structure.

The Challenge of Distribution

This challenge has to do with the issue of fiscal federalism. Fiscal federalism can be viewed as a set of fiscal activities, relations and interactions among the various governments in a federation (Olowonini, 1999, p.192). It is a general normative framework for assignment of functions to the different levels of government and appropriate fiscal instruments for carrying out these function (Oates, 1999, pp.120-149). Fiscal federalism essentially has to do with the equitable distribution of the resources in a federal polity to all the federating units. It covers two interconnected areas. The first is the division of competence in decision making about public expenditures and public revenue between the different levels of government. The second is the degree of freedom of decision-making enjoyed by regional and local authorities in the assessment of local taxes as well as in the determination of their expenditures (Kesner-Skreb, 2009, pp.235-237).Fiscal federalism is a dominant and contentious theme in the nation-building efforts of the state. It has crystallized and remained dynamic because of the country's multiplicity in terms of ethnic composition and pluralism (Arowolo, 2011, p.3). It dates back to 1946 when the Richards Constitution was introduced into Nigeria (Odoko & Nnanna, 2011).

Fiscal commissions were then set up by the state to work out fiscal and financial arrangements that were consistent with the assignment of powers and responsibilities to each level of government. The idea was that each level of government should have adequate funds to effectively and efficiently discharge its responsibilities. However, this is in theory. In Nigeria, this has not always been the case. The centralized hierarchical nature of the military regimes that ruled Nigeria between 1969-1979 and 1983-1999; and the overly centralized nature of the successive civilian administrations placed the state at an advantage when its comes to resources

distribution within the federation. Invariably, the financial hegemony enjoyed by the federal government over the thirty six states and seven hundred and seventy four local government created disaffection in Nigeria federalism (Arowolo, 2011, p.3). It reinforces the structural vulnerability of the components units while simultaneously intensifying the pressures for better federal economic patronage. Thus, for Nigeria, the challenge is how to evolve a fiscal formula that will ensure that the resources were discharged equitably. The failure of the state to get this right has been the factor responsible for changes in the fiscal regimes of the country between 1967 and 2017 that has negatively affected the nation-building process. The state evolved different innovations in trying to tackle this challenge. This, for example, was the rationale behind the formation of the Dina Committee by the Gowon's administration in 1968 (Oyovbaire, 1978, pp.238-239); Danjuma commission in 1987 by the General Babangida's regime (Arowolo, 2011, pp.9-10); and the Obasanjo's administration, 1999-2007, created the Revenue Mobilization, Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) in 1999 to tackle the same challenge (Arowolo, 2011, p.11).

The inability of the state to resolve this challenge is the factor responsible for strident calls for 'derivation formula' and 'resource control' in the country.

Challenge of Democracy

In Nigeria, as well as in Africa, Larry Diamond has observed that democracy and governance are in a state of transition and suspension (2008, pp.138-149). Democracy is adjudged to be the most civilized form of governance. Minimal definition of democracy sees it as a system of government in which the leaders are elected in periodic, free and fair elections. Nigeria is best classified as a competitive authoritarian or a pseudo-democracy because there are some areas of contestation (The Economist, 2002). Areas of contestation are electoral, media, judicial and legislature. There are three major areas in democratization. These are democratic transition, democratic consolidation and democratic quality (Ajetumobi, 2010, p.3). Nigeria has not progressed beyond the democratic transition phase. The Second Republic, that was supposed to be Nigeria's second attempt at democratic rule, was cut short by the military in 1983. The third democratic experiment was short lived in 1993 due to the military coup d' etat of General Sani Abacha. In the same vein, the fourth democratic experiment is yet to deliver on the dividends of democracy. Widespread electoral fraud characterized the 2003, 2007 and 2015 elections in the

country; rule of law was flagrantly and blatantly abused; lives and property could not be guaranteed as evidenced by the growth of ethnic militias and terrorists such as the OPC in the southwest, MEND in the south-south and Boko Haram in the northeast. Added to this is the fact that there was no real democratic culture prior to the dawn of the Fourth Republic. The country's long exposure to military rule has created that situation in which "seventy percent of eligible voters in Nigeria are citizens born during the praetorian order" (Saliu & Lipede, 2008, p.134). This meant in essence that the condition for democratization had a short gestation period. And thus, the statement of Larry Diamond could be seen to have been validated. Hence, the challenge of for the country is how to inculcate a culture that values the precepts of democracy and its values.

Challenge of Governance

Governance has been conceptualized as the conscious management of regime structures with a view to enhancing the legitimacy of the public realm (Hyden & Brathon, 1991). It is the process of organizing and managing legitimate power structures entrusted by the people to the ruling elites (Galadima, 1998, pp.116-117). A good governance system is defined by its relationship to some key perquisites: accountability, transparency, participation and predictability. The military regimes that ruled Nigeria were highly unpredictable. The unpredictability not only stemmed from the constant threat of coup d'état, but also from the nature of the military itself. A good example was the coup of August 1985 that removed the Buhari/Idiagbon regime. This factor does not allow for continuity in governance. Citizen participation was a scarce commodity during the Sani Abacha's regime from 1993 to 1998. Indeed, of course, during the Obasanjo and Buhari administrations in the Fourth Republic, issues of accountability, transparency and the rule of law were constantly relegated to the background.

Challenge of Aggressive Ethno-Regionalism

Nigeria is an amalgam of rival ethnic groups pitted against each other in a contest for power and resources. This contest is reflected in the political process in the country (Meturama, 2010, p.92). The return of Nigeria to democracy in 1999 opened up a Pandora's box of suppressed ethnic demands bottled up by years of repressive military rule. These demands sometimes took violent forms as could be seen in the activities of MEND in the Niger Delta,

Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) in the East and the OPC in the west and lately, Fulani cattle herders and the people in the Middle Belt. Nigeria has over 250 ethnic groups and they can be broadly divided into ethnic majorities and ethnic minorities. The ethnic majorities are the Hausa-Fulani of the north, the Yoruba of the southwest and the Igbo of the southeast. These major ethnic groups has within them substantial ‘minorities’ of different ethnicities. There are large minorities like the Ijaw, Kanuri, Edo, Ibibio and Nupe. The Nigerian state had struggled with the multiplicity of nations within it for the loyalty and allegiance of the citizens (Nkolika, 2007, p.1). At each point of this struggle, she has always lost to the primordial instincts of the groups that composed it. The country’s heterogeneity and the state’s inability to effectively manage the diverse interest of the different groups was a major barrier to nation-building since 1960.

Nigeria experienced both intra and inter-ethnic conflicts. Different factors were responsible for these ethnic tensions. Some of the major ones are: the land-space resources question; the disputed jurisdiction of traditional rulers and chiefs; the creation of local government councils and the locations of their headquarters; the imperatives of culture bound occupations; settlers-indigene syndrome and the micro and macro structures in Nigeria (Akpomovie & Forae, 2005, pp.144-146). Each and every of these diverse factors had played out in the outbreak of ethnic conflicts in Nigeria between 1960 and 2017. For example, Ife-Modakeke crisis of 1981, 1983 and 1997 is a good example of a conflict whose source is rooted in settler-indigene syndrome and the creation of local government council and its headquarters. That of the Jos crisis that was particularly virulent during the Fourth Republic was as a result of the settlers-indigene syndrome, culture-bound occupations and land-space resources question. The same can be said for the violent frictions between the fulanis and the people living in the Middle Belt. Additionally, scholars have identified seven ethnic and political cleavages in Nigeria: between the north and the south; between the three majority ethnic groups; between the major ethnic groups and the minorities; inter-state rivalry between states, which sometimes cuts across ethnic groups; inter-ethnic rivalry in a mixed state; inter-clan and intra-clan rivalries; and intra-ethnic rivalry within each majority ethnic group. Thus, the challenge of ethnic-nationalism that faces Nigeria is how to accommodate the differing interests of the different groups and channel the energies of the various groups into creating a cohesive, functional and stable political entity.

Challenge of Religion

Ethno-religious conflict is a form of conflict that is generated on the basis of real or imagined difference rooted in ethnic and religious identities (Egwu, 2011, p.49). It derives from the congruence and the mutually reinforcing relationships between ethnic and religious identities in the social and political process. Religious identity sometimes becomes part of the ethnic groups' identity and presents a volatile social mixture (Salomone, 1991). This hybridization of the two identities has been the norm rather than the exception in Nigeria. And this is the crux of the religious challenge. Religious identities in Nigeria are usually classified into three: Christian, Muslim and Traditional (Osaghae & Suberu, 2005, p.11). Religion is meant to support the social norms; meant to reassure the people that their ways are right and their cause is just. In Nigeria, however, religion became an impediment to the attainment of a cohesive, functional and democratic polity. The Nigerian experience, as regards religious tensions and crisis since independence can be broadly divided into three: intra-religious disturbances between different denominations or sects; inter-religious conflicts between adherents of different religious beliefs capable of assuming socio-ethnic dimensions; and inter-religious conflicts which has socio-economic origin but ends up as religious conflicts (Ikengah-Metuh, 1994).

The Nigerian socio-political terrain is replete with these three types of religious conflicts. A good example is the Maitatsine uprising during the Second Republic that claimed hundreds of lives in Kano, in 1980; and in Borno state in 1982. Moreover, the issue of the adoption of the Sharia in some states in the north also generated serious socio-religious tensions across the federation. In 1999, the governor of Zamfara state proclaimed and launched Sharia in the state. This action generated serious controversy in the Fourth Republic. Not only did it brought to the fore the question of Nigeria's secularity, it also created a constitutional controversy. Thus, the challenge of religion has been the inability of the state to devise appropriate mechanisms that can turn religious zeal into an important tool of nation-building in Nigeria.

Challenge of Corruption

Corruption is a multi-dimensional phenomenon. It has been variously described to be: a behaviour that deviates from the formal duties of a public role for private gains (Nye, 1967); the abuse of public roles or resources for private benefit (Bello-Imam, 2005); the pervasion of integrity or state of affairs through bribery, favour or moral depravity (Oтите, 1986); and

according to Transparency International (TI), a behaviour on the part of officials in the public sector through which they improperly or unlawfully enrich themselves (Igbuzor, 2008, p.6). Based on the above definitions corruption ranges from the acceptance of money or other rewards for awarding contracts, violations of procedures to advance personal interest, the diversion of public resources, overlooking illegal and unconstitutional activities, to intervening in the justice process, nepotism, influence peddling and misappropriation. All the listed formats or facets of corruption are manifestly present in Nigeria. The failure of Nigeria to effectively manage and tackle the different manifestations of corruption impeded the country's nation-building efforts. Between 1966 and 1975, during Gowon's military leadership, corruption was a serious issue (Audu, p.212). Indeed, part of the reason for the coup that ousted Gowon in 1975 was the endemic corruption in his administration. Alhaji Shehu Shagari's administration witnessed in 1980 an unprecedented level of corruption. There were about eighty-seven point five percent of undetected incidents of corruption in the administration (Ifamose, 2004).

Interestingly, in spite of the anti-corruption stance of the Obasanjo administration during the Fourth Republic, 1999-2007, and that administration's creation of the ICPC and EFCC to battle corruption, the corruption genie could not be contained. Political corruption festered during the Fourth Republic under successive administrations. It took on a life of its own during the Goodluck Jonathan administration between 2010 to 2015. For example, the former Inspector General of Police, Tafa Balogun was indicted for corrupt practices; and Adolphus Wabara, the fourth senate president in the Fourth Republic was also disgraced out of office because of official corruption. Thus, the state's inability to adequately tackle the challenge of corruption, in all its various affected negatively the nation-building efforts of the state.

Challenge of Ideology

David Apter defined ideology as a system of political and social belief that embodies values and ideals about man, society and the state (Michael, 2006, p.55). Anson Morse has argued that it is the durable convictions held in common by party members in respect to the most desirable form of action of the state towards every public question. It has also been taken to be the single issue statements that defines orientation of a political party (Strickler, 1996, p.1025). Looking at ideology from this non-doctrinaire perspective, it could then be seen that it is existentially lacking in Nigeria's socio-political milieu. For example, the state had no coherent

ideology in the Second Republic. When Buhari's regime took over from Shagari, the state had no coherent and systemic ideology. Actually, Buhari mistook its operational premise of wiping-out corruption for a state's ideology (Michael, 2006, p.63). Since WAI could not cope with the basic contradictions in the social order, it left the citizenry dislocated and marginalized from the state. The country is not faring any better in the Fourth Republic, as per ideology. Omoruyi has asserted that political parties in the Fourth Republic, especially Obasanjo's PDP, were all ideologically barren (Shola, 2009, pp.612-634). The state had no coherent policy towards governance. This paucity of ideology has translated to poverty of ideas on meaningful governance. Thus, the challenge of ideology is an important factor that has affected nation-building efforts in the country. Since the central government is bereft of coherent ideology, it could not evolve strategies that could have contributed to the building of a cohesive, viable and functional Nigeria. This created a communication disjoint between the rulers and the ruled.

Challenge of Autarky

Autarky here refers to economic self-sufficiency. It is the ability of a state to provide those resources necessary for the sustenance of both the economy of the state and the citizenry. Nigeria has not been able to adequately tackle this challenge. Some of the factors responsible for these are: mono-cultural nature of the Nigerian economy, discontinuity in economic policies, rentierism, infrastructural decay, administrative bottlenecks, opaque tax regime, technological incapability, lack of innovation and market challenges (Dike, 2010, pp.96-104). Collectively these factors constitute the challenge of autarky. Mono-commoditism is a recurring theme on the Nigerian economic landscape. The Nigerian economy is highly dependent on oil earnings. There is no diversification of the economy. As a result of this, the economy is susceptible to the vagaries of the international economic system. This was brought home in stark detail to Nigeria during the oil glut of the 1980's (Oritsejafor, 2000). During the Fourth Republic, government's economic policies vacillated with the twin pull of the international economic system and the insurgency in the Niger Delta. Furthermore, economic policy discontinuity negatively affected the nation-building efforts of the state. When Abacha became the military ruler of Nigeria in 1993, he ended Babangida's SAP without putting any major economic policy in its place. During the Fourth Republic, Obasanjo made a clean break with the economic policies of his military predecessors and introduced such economic measures as

SEEDS, NEEDS and LEEDS. Thus, the state's inability to proactively tackle the challenge of self-sufficiency made it impossible for her to create a functional and viable Nigeria.

How to Be: Recommendation.

In order for Nigeria to become a functional, viable and cohesive policy, the following recommendations will have to be implemented:

1. The theories of Ernest Geller and Anthony Anderson must be integrated into the nation-building process. The two theories, Gellner's Modernization theory and Anderson's Imagined Community theory essentially stress the same important prerequisites for any state trying to carry out a successful nation-building process. The theories emphasize the significance of education, printing press and technological innovation to the nation-building process. The theories have shown that for any society to carry out a successful nation-building process, education is a key factor. Education serves a dual function. The first function is that it allows the society to 'reproduce' or re-engineer itself. This reproduction is done through the technological innovations and revolutions that education facilitates. The second function that education serves is that it makes it possible and easier for the state to inculcate the idea of 'oneness' and 'indivisibility' of the nation into the citizenry right from childhood. Education makes it easier for the citizenry to be susceptible to the ideology of the state and this makes the process of integration in a heterogeneous society a lot easier. One can even say that education is the important plank that the other nation-building requirements stand. Print capitalism requires a literate majority. Likewise, technological innovations. For both of these factors to be successful, education is a *sine-qua-non*. Thus, Nigeria must devote considerable resources to the mass education of the citizenry. The UPE and UBE educational initiatives are laudable programmes. However, the vacillation and discontinuity in the state's educational policy make it impossible for the initiatives to realize their potentials. Since nation-building is a continuous process, the education that is required to achieve this for Nigeria must also be made to be continuous.
2. Federalism as is it practiced in the country will have to be rejiggered to reflect Nigeria's particularity. Nigeria's federal structure is highly flawed. Federalism is meant, in principle, to adjudicate and regulate the interactions that take place in a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural

society. The basis of this is to ensure that conflict and hostility are relegated to the barest minimum in such heterogeneous society. In Nigeria, this is not the case. Nigeria's federalism has taken different dimensions. Under Shehu Shagari, 1979-1983, Nigeria's federal structure assumed the garb of con-federalism. This led to a conflictual relationship between the centre and the states in the federation. During the Obasanjo administration, 1999-2007, Nigeria's federalism became overtly centralized and is even more concentrated in Buhari's administration. The power of the federal government far outstripped those of all the states put together. This situation creates tension and lead to unhealthy competition for resources accruing to the centre. The structural imbalances that has been highlighted were the main features of Nigeria's federal structure between 1960 and 2017. Thus, for Nigeria to carry-out a successful nation-building process, the state must correct the anomaly in the country's federal structure. Based on Nigeria's historical antecedent and the country's multi-ethnic and multi-cultural structure, federalism is still the best political structure for the country. However, the federalism that is advocated here is not going to be based on the classic K.C. Wheare's federalism but a variant. This variant form connotes cooperation, collaboration, competition and interdependence by all the federating units. Karl Deutsch, William Livingstone and Carl Frederick are the major proponents of this alternative federal structure. This modern federalism will use socio-political dynamics of the Nigerian society to create a federal structure that will meet the aspirations of the different ethnic groups within the country. This is where the idea of a SNC will become relevant. The SNC will create an informal avenue for the ventilation and distillation of critical issues affecting the Nigerian state. Through the dialogue and discourse of its proceeding, it will then become easier for the state to have a clearer picture of the kind of federal structure that will be best suited to Nigeria.

3. The civil society groups (GSGs) must be recognized by the state as an important adjunct in the country's nation-building process. The CSGs played critical roles in Nigeria's democratic process between 1985 and 1999. Now that Nigeria is a democratic state, the CSGs must actively engage in strengthening the institutional democratic structures in the country. The CSGs must ensure that institutions are not 'personalized' and 'individualized'. The Chief Olusegun Obasanjo administration, for example, personalized or individualized some of the

important institutions it established to tackle the country's nation-building challenges. The corruption-fighting organization, EFCC is a good example. The Muhammadu Buhari administration has also personalized governance in the country. Moreover, CSGs must ensure that concepts such as democracy, transparency, accountability, due process and rule of law are key planks of its complementary efforts in the nation-building process. The CSGs must further act as the watchdog of the society and ensure that the state's nation-building programs are well articulated and implemented.

4. Finally, a solid, sound, ideological and philosophical bedrock must be established for Nigeria's nation-building process. The significance of ideology in the nation-building process cannot be overemphasized. Ideology is the important missing link in Nigeria's nation-building process. Indeed, in this researcher's analysis of the concept of nation-building, ideology is identified as one of the key elements of nation-building. The provision of ideology will serve two critical functions in Nigeria's nation-building process. The first one is that at the societal level, ideology will bring the people in steps with the country's ideals. If properly utilized, it will create feelings of patriotism, loyalty and nationalism in the people for the nation. This, for instance, is the function the Nigerian national anthem and pledge are meant to serve. At the political level, ideology will make it easier for the citizen to collaborate with the political elites in advancing the state's nation-building programs. This is why the provision of a sound ideology must be made an integral part of political parties' manifestoes in Nigeria. From the ideologies of the different political parties, the state can then distill a national ideology for Nigeria. This point is important. The national ideology must not be imposed from the top if it is to be generally acceptable. It must be culled from the shared consciousness and aspirations of the different Nigerian ethnic groups.

Conclusion

Nationhood is what every multi-ethnic and multi-cultural states aspire for in the 21st century and Nigeria is no exception. The concept of nationhood in the 21st century connotes integration, cohesion, viability and functionality. This is the concepts of nationhood that Nigeria has aspired for since independence. This is the 'to be.' This is what Nigeria has been trying and failed to achieve since 1960. Nigeria failed, not for the lack of trying, but for going about it the

wrong way. This is the 'how not to be.' Multi-ethnic and multi-cultural states like Russia, China and France have successfully navigated the challenges of nation-building. They did so by following clearly stated objectives, plans and programmes. Nigeria will have to borrow from the experiences of such states in order to be able to turn the country into a viable, functional and cohesive polity.

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