

FEDERALISM AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION: THE INDIGENE/SETTLER DICHOTOMY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper examined the causes, sources and factors responsible for indigene/settler dilemma and its impact on federalism and national integration in Nigeria. The paper utilized secondary source of data collection. In terms of methodology, the paper used content analysis. The findings of the paper revealed that colonialism and colonial policies are the cradle of the indigene/settler problem akin to ethnicity in Nigeria as in other countries in Africa. The results and discussions of this paper revealed that there are many negative implications of indigene/settler rift on federalism and national integration in Nigeria. The paper concludes that for smooth practice of federalism to thrive in Nigeria, all citizens of Nigeria should have equal rights, equal opportunities and equal benefits irrespective of creed, religion, affiliations, status and place of origin. Also, the government needs to bring all the stakeholders (in all the areas of communal conflicts) together with a view to reaching an understanding and a framework to which all can commit them in finding a lasting solution to peace in the country.

KEY WORDS: Citizenship, Dichotomy, Equality, Federalism, Indigene/Settler, National Integration

Introduction

The indigene/settler dichotomy is a burning and controversial issue in recent years in Nigeria. The issue today is highly volatile and threatens national integration and unity of the country. It is one of the major factors that affect the operation of federalism and the attainment of national cohesion in the multi-ethnic state called Nigeria. It was institutionalized by the way and manner in which the Nigerian-state had been nurtured based on ethnicity and religious affiliations through colonial legacies. The issue of

indigene/settler dichotomy in Nigeria has now become a national question. It is in view of this, that this paper examined the causes, sources and factors responsible for the indigene/settler rift and their implications on federalism and national integration in Nigeria. Through the introduction and objectives, the paper also discussed the conceptual/theoretical framework, the effects of indigene/settler dichotomy on Nigerian federalism and national integration, and reached a conclusion with recommendations made.

The Root of Indigene/Settler Dilemma in Nigeria

The root of indigene/settler dichotomy in Nigeria can be traced to colonialism. Nnoli (1980:3) revealed that during colonialism *"The colonialists began to categorize African linguistic groups as tribes and attribute to them differences in culture, environment and abode based on artificial partition of boundaries"*. By virtue of this early colonial categorization therefore, we would agree with Osadolar (2003:35) that *"...Colonial conquest had altered the pattern of inter-group relations"* (that had existed between the diverse cultures and people) *in the Nigerian geographical area..."* (Emphasis added). However, colonialism began with the reorganization and fusion of territories known as amalgamation between 1861 and 1914. Under the system of indirect rule, the territories were regrouped into native authorities and provinces. From provinces to regions, and from regions to states (after independence); this continued unabated. This transformation from one stage to another was forced by the hues and cries of perceived domination and marginalization of one ethnic group against another, leading sometimes to inter-ethnic violence and threat of secession. These transformations go hand in hand with, and triggered by a sense of ethno-geographic sentiment and ethnic bias (indigene/settler dichotomy); an issue which stems out of colonial policy. For instance, in 1920, Sir Hugh Clifford, the former colonial Governor, made it clear that his administration would seek to secure:

To each separate people the right to maintain its identity, its individuality and its nationality, its chosen form of government, and the peculiar political and social institutions which have been evolved for it

by the wisdom and the accumulated experiences of generations of its forbearers (Okorie, 2003:14).

The three regions created by Britain in the 1930's as part of its colonial policy was purely to encourage regionalism and ethnic bigotries. Okorie similarly observed that:

The three regions which it (Britain) created later in the 1930's were to toe the ethnic line as the result was that of distrust, lack of cooperation and rivalry among the three dominant ethnic groups that dominated the political scene. The Igbo, Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba led its geographical area as a basis for political support and nationalistic activism (2003:16).

The same system was applied in creating minority/majority dichotomy in each of the three created regions (North, West and East) all of which further heightened the issue of indigene/settler dichotomy in Nigeria. However, as it has been shown, these stem out of what Nnoli observed as British policy that:

Seized every opportunity to spread the myth and propaganda that they (people or natives that make up what is now Nigeria) were separated from one another by great distance, by difference of history and traditions, and by ethnological, tribal, racial, political, social and religious barriers (1980:112;emphasis ours).

The colonialists separated these linguistic groups from one another, particularly in residential areas (Nnoli, 1980:3). Giving example, Nnoli further clearly explained that:

In Nigeria it was the official British policy to separate the Hausa-Fulani from the Southerners. At first, Southern and Northern migrants cities lived together in harmony with their hosts in the native city.

This embarrassed the official view that only conflict characterized contact among African tribes. Hence, the migrants were forced to set up abode in Sabongaris. Initially, both the Southern and Northern migrants lived in the Sabongaris and got along well, to the embarrassment of the colonialists. Later, the Northern migrants were separated and compelled to live in another section of the city, (known as) Tudun Wada (1980:3).

Between the 1930's and 1960's was a period of mass inter-migration movements and exchange of goods and services of people between the South and the North. However, if these actions were maintained, they could have consolidated and foster unity in diversity in the context of national cohesion in Nigeria. The migration trend constituted semi-skilled/skilled labor from the South to the North, as well as semi/unskilled labor from the North to the South between the major ethnic groups (Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo). The Southern labor consists of Civil/public servants in government organizations, commercial firms and industries etc, while the Northern migrant to the South engaged mainly in cattle trading and kola nut business, even though, they were later displaced by the natives in the South (Nnoli, 1980:72). As independence approached between the 1950's and 1960's, the number of migrants from the South to the North heightened to catastrophic dimensions. According to Nnoli (1980:64) *"In the years before and after 1950, about 35, 000 persons left the South to the North each year to find employment in administration, commercial firms and industries.... Around 1960, the majority of the workers in the factories of the North were Southerners, mostly Igbo-speaking"*. This action was perceived by the Northerners as domination. A situation which attracted the

Northern Regional Government led by Sir, Ahmadu Bello, to adopt and implement, what looks like a colonial policy under a neo-colonial method known as Northernization Policy. As a result of this policy, several Southern Nigerians employed in the North were retrenched from their jobs and replaced with Northerners (Albert, 2003:50). The Northernization policy led to a situation where *"between January 1954 and August 1958, a total of 2,148 southerners were dismissed from the northern public service and encouraged to seek employment in the south where they belong"* (Amuwo, 2003:57). The Northernization policy was therefore, the actualization into reality of the myth and propaganda spread by the British policy of the 1920's as earlier stated. The effects of this policy started to show their ugly head in the form of clashes between the Hausa-Fulani and Igbo indigenes in Jos in 1932, and in 1945 leading to loss of lives and properties (Elaiwu and Akindele, 1996:226). In 1953, it was the Hausa-Fulani violence against the Igbo's in Kano (Nnoli, 1980:67). Indeed, the January 15, 1966 Coup was an outcome of this problem. To buttress this fact, Rodney pointed out that:

Civil war in Nigeria is generally regarded as having been a tribal affair... But, quite apart from that, it must be pointed out that nowhere in the history of pre-colonial independent Nigeria can anyone point to the massacre of Igbo's by Hausa or any incident which suggests that people up to the 19th Century were fighting each other because of ethnic origin. Of course, there were wars, but they had a rational basis in trade rivalry, religious contentions, and the clashes of political expansion. What came to be tribalism at the beginning of the new epoch of political independence in Nigeria was itself a product of the way that people

were brought together under colonialism so as to be exploited. It was a product of administrative devices, of differential access by particular ethnic groups into the colonial economy and culture (1976:250).

All of these tell much about the effects of the colonial policy of divide and rule in Nigeria. According to Ohiare (1994:27) "the essence of the colonial state administration in Nigeria was the desire to exploit the colonized people and their resources with minimum cost". Ohiare further buttressed that:

The division of the new state into administrative units, districts, divisions, provinces, etc, was guided by the above objective. The same consideration was paramount in the appointment of British officials (District Officers, Divisional Officers, Residents, Provisional Commissioners, Chief Commissioners, etc). Similarly, the structures of governance introduced between 1900 and 1960, were meant to serve specific colonial purposes in the overall goal of economic exploitation. The introduction of indirect rule system was to facilitate colonial exploitation without serious opposition at the grassroots. That is why it integrated those pre-colonial indigenous institutions that could be used for the benefit of the colonial objective (1994:27).

This also suggests that colonialism is the source of all or partly the cause of the problems of the Nigerian state. The Nigerian state at inception was not aimed at fostering unity in diversity, neither was it meant to be a cohesive state. As contained in Lord Lugard's proposal report for political restructuring known as "amalgamation of 1914" submitted to the Colonial Office in London, on 9th May, 1913 cited in Amuwo (2003:36) shows that:

Sir F. Lugard's proposals contemplate a state which is impossible to classify. It is not a unitary

state with local government areas but with one Central Executive and Legislature. It is not a personal union of separate colonies under the same Governor like the Windwards; it is not a confederation of states. If adopted his proposals can hardly be a permanent solution and I gather that Sir, F. Lugard only regard them as temporary – at any rate in part....

Going by the process of amalgamation, we would suggest that, there was no morality in the process and no consideration of how much Nigerians would gain or lose from it. In this regard, the steps and the process taken to implement the amalgamation by the British were not intended to help the people of Nigeria to be one, foster unity in diversity and to be one indivisible united nation-state, because there was no bond of integration that would forge such strong and formidable entity. Buttressing this point, Joseph Garba emphatically stressed that:

Lugard had no intention of revolutionizing the social, political, and economic institutions of the territory where he reigned, but he was determined primarily to conserve and tighten British hold on the area known as Nigeria. Lugard had similarly no desire to forge unity between diverse peoples of Nigeria and wield them into a common people (with one destiny) (The Guardian, February 29, 2000; emphasis added).

In a similar vein, Madeibo observed that:

Under normal circumstances the amalgamation ought to have brought the various peoples closer together, and provided a firm basis for the arduous task of establishing closer cultural, social, religious and linguistic ties among the people-ties which are vital for true unity. The prevailing circumstances were far from normal. For the colonial master, such a union, if allowed to develop, would have amounted to a

major threat to the very economic interests he was striving to protect. It was to remove this unwelcome threat that Britain introduced the Divide and Rule system of government for the country (1980:3).

Indirect rule was first introduced in Northern Nigeria by Lord Lugard before extending it to other parts of the country. In Northern Nigeria it was introduced between 1900 and 1913, in which the colonial masters used the traditional rulers as administrative tools and avenue through which people were governed. The North had a well centralized system which gave the colonial masters easy access for the administration of people contrary to what was obtained in Southern part of Nigeria. Indirect rule was later extended to Benin and Yoruba lands between 1916 and 1919 (Nnoli, 1980:113). By 1927 it was adopted in the Eastern part of Nigeria, but later abolished by the Eastern Region Local Government Ordinance of 1950. By 1937, all parts of Nigeria with exception of the municipalities of Lagos, Port Harcourt, Enugu, Kaduna, Kano and Zaria, the system of government was the indirect rule (Nnoli, 1980:113). Initially, the Eastern part of Nigeria was not familiar with indirect rule, but acephalous/non-centralized pre-colonial administrative system, which did not favor the colonialist system of indirect rule. This necessitated the introduction of the Warrant Chiefs known as the Chief-and-Council. According to Obi (1995:21) "the Chief had a council that shared decision-making powers. It is mandatory... for the Chief to consult his council on crucial matters such as appointment of staff, allocation of lands and spending of public funds. The Chief-and-Council was provided for the acephalous states, since it suited their social conditions". In the Western part,

the Chief-in-Council was introduced. The Chief shared decision-making powers with his council, but it is not mandatory on him to accept all their advice (Obi, 1995:21). In this regard, according to Madeibo:

The important aspect of the colonial system of Divide and Rule is that it laid emphasis on the differences among the peoples, while encouraging social apartheid. As a result, there was division, hatred, unhealthy rivalry and pronounced disparity in development among the various peoples of the country (1980:3).

This has affected the foundation of Nigeria's independence struggle and the stability of Nigerian government and politics after independence. In a nutshell, the nature, process and the structure of the colonial administration encouraged division and created disunity between the amalgamated units. It also altered the pattern of socio-economic and political relations that existed in and between each of the empires, kingdoms and caliphate. Similarly, the inter-group relations were replaced by enmity, divisions and hatred with a sense of sectionalism, ethno-tribal chauvinism and geographical polarizations.

Other challenges of Nigeria's federalism are constitutional, ambiguity of indigeneship, federal character and creation of states and local government areas. Even though, they were designed to solve problems such as the minority issues, ethnic and regional issues, indigene/settler dichotomy, but they are now a paradox. The introduction of Federal Character and Quota System for instance, was aimed at fair distribution and sharing of political appointments and resources (natural resources) in accordance with the number of states and local Governments in the federation. Okorie was of the view that:

Really the consciousness of Federal Character demonstrates itself in practically every aspect of the political, social, cultural and economic lives of the nation. The rationale behind this policy as informed by the government was to implement a Federal Character, which by proper application all ethnic, regional areas will be given opportunities to the socio-economic and political life of the country (2003:21).

It is the constitutional obligation of every Nigerian to enjoy his or her fundamental human rights in every part of the country. Such rights include the right to vote and to be voted for, the right to employment, the right to education, property rights, freedom of religion and conscience, and freedom of speech, etc. It is in clear demonstration of these rights that one can recall many instances for example, as Al-Bashir cited in Mazrui asserted that:

...Late Sabo Bakinzuwo, who was one time a Governor of (Kano) State, was of Nupe origin from now Niger State...Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau, who served two tenures as Governor of Kano State, was of Bura origin from Borno State... And during the First Republic, one Alhaji Altine, a Northerner from Sokoto was a onetime mayor of Enugu in Eastern Nigeria, where Igbo's are in predominance. History has also told us how a Kanuri man, from Borno State, and a Muslim, won election in the Christian dominated Tiv land. It is also worthy of note that a Christian Igbo, who however later became a Muslim, late Alhaji Okonkwo, remained the confidant of late Sultan Abubakar II of Sokoto for a period of fifty years (1995:18).

The exercise of this constitutional power in some states in Nigeria has become the other way round. In Plateau State where the case of indigene/settler dilemma was apparent, for example, the then State Governor

officially remarked in an interview session with the Correspondent of the Weekly Trust Newspaper that:

From on-set, let me say it again, as I have before that Jos, Capital of Plateau State is owned by the natives. Simple, every Hausa man in Jos is a Settler whether he likes it or not. In the past, we might not have told them the home truth, but now we have. Some of these people came from Kazaure, some from Hadejia, some from Kano. They are here with us, we are in one state but that does not change landlord/settler equation, no matter how much we cherish peace (Weekly Trust, May 15-21, 2004:4).

As an answer to the above and many similar questions in relation to indigene/settler dichotomy in Nigeria, Yusuf Bala Usman observed that *"it is quite difficult in Nigeria to decide what exactly constitutes a community indigenous to a state"*. As he said *"it is not clear the number of generations a family is expected to stay in a state before its members become indigenous"* (Nnoli, 1980:270). Yusufu Bala Usman further asked:

Who are the indigenes of Gongola state (now comprised Adamawa and Taraba States), for example? Is it the Bachama (now in Adamawa State) who somebody will say claim to come from Gobir? Or Jukun (now in Taraba State) who somebody will claim to come from Egypt? Or the Fulani (found in both Adamawa and Taraba states) who somebody will say claim to come from Senegal? (Nnoli, 1980:270).

The same goes when one asks a similar question on who are the indigenes of Plateau State? Is it the Angas who somebody will say claim descent from Yemen via Borno? Or Birom who somebody will say come from the forest area in Wukari? Or Jarawa, Amo, Rukaba, Miango

and Fakara who somebody will say claimed descent to the Semi-bantu origin via Bauchi? (Analysis, August, 2004:8 and 9). This inter-migration of people began and continued from the pre-colonial period to date. For instance, in the 1950's and 1960's in Nigeria, the provinces with the highest number of "non-indigenous" populations as Nnoli (1980:64) shows, "*proportionately were not those of the coast, except Lagos, but Plateau consisted of 20%, Niger 18%, Kabba 10%, Benue, Rivers and Ilorin 9% each, and Zaria, Borno, Adamawa and Calabar consisted of 7% each*". Most of these provinces which now have become states are fond of cases of indigene/settler dichotomy resulting sometimes in violent inter-ethnic and religious conflicts and wars. In recent years, conflicts due to the dichotomy abound. There had been Hausa "Settlers" and Kataf "indigenes" conflict in Kaduna State in May, 1992; Hausa "Indigenes" and Igbo "Settlers" riot in Kano State in May, 1995; Yoruba "Indigenes" and Hausa-Fulani "Settlers" uproar in Shagamu, Lagos State in 2000; Birom and other "indigenes" in Plateau State and Hausa "Settlers" mayhem in 2000, 2002, 2004 and 2009 respectively; Hausa "Settlers" and Bachama "indigenes" dispute in Numan, Adamawa State. Most of these "indigene" and "settler" dichotomies within the context of ethnic conflicts resulted in religious ones. Even though, most of these ethnic and religious hostilities have a remote cause, and have their root in the colonial policy of divide-and-rule, the idea of amalgamation of Southern and Northern protectorates as well as the minority and majority dichotomy intensified in the country and became a tool for political and economic struggle. Nnoli, (1980:1) is of the view that "*In (Nigeria as part of) Africa the concept (of ethnicity or tribalism) has a*

colonial origin and its function was tied to the nature and purpose of colonialism". The recent cases of ethno-religious hostilities in the North have both remote and immediate causes (colonial and neo-colonial causes). Nnoli is of the view that:

In Jos (one of the areas where the question of indigene/settler dichotomy is on) significant relevant contact existed between the Hausa migrants from the areas to the North and linguistic groups such as the Birom and Tiv more immediately located near to the city. Hence, the near riot of Jos in 1932 involved Birom hostility against Hausa. And in 1960 and 1964 the Tiv rose against the Hausa all over Tiv land (more especially the Plateau/Benue province) (1980:68).

The agitation (hues and cries) for Middle-belt Region is a child of this ethnic hostility confined geographically to the Benue-Plateau area. The Benue-Plateau ethnic groups cried, and are still crying of domination and marginalization by the Hausa – majority. This was what led to the idea of the formation of the Middle-belt Region. The idea started since the colonial days about 1945 in Jos, Benue-Plateau Province (Hembe, 2005:48). Later, it became a strong and controversial political issue under the United Middle-Belt Congress (UMBC) led by J. S. Tarka. It became a strong weapon used with the support of the Action Congress (AG) from the Western part of Nigeria led by Chief Obafemi Awolowo, who became the major opposition to the Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC) led by Sir, Ahmadu Bello to break the North. To the extent that in 1959, as Hembe revealed:

While the Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC) was mobilizing the whole North for a united struggle against southern

domination, Tarka and the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) were busy mobilizing Tiv and to some extent other Middle-Belt groups to fight for a breakup of the North (2005:51).

However, the ethno-religious hostility including indigene/settler issue as Nnoli observed, is associated with narrowing of the socio-economic gaps between the relevant ethnic groups. Giving example with the Hausa and Kataf violence of 1992, just like others in some places, Nnoli suggests that:

During the colonial period, the Hausa settlers had achieved a higher level of socio-economic life than their hosts because of their participation in long distance trade (Elaigwu and Akindele, 1995:227).

The same thing applies to the Igbo's. In Lagos for instance, the Igbo's constituted the minority who dominated business and commercial activities, while the dominant Yoruba formed the significant majority. In Lagos metropolitan area, the indigene/settler dichotomy do rise between the Yoruba "indigenes" and the Igbo "settlers" on one hand and between the Yoruba "indigenes" and Hausa "settlers" on the other hand.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

The concepts of federalism and national integration have numerous and multifaceted definitions. According to Tamuno, "Federalism is that form of government where the component units of a political organization participate in sharing powers and functions in a co-operative manner through the combined forces of ethnic pluralism and cultural diversity, among others" (Amuwo, 2003:13). Dicey conceived Federalism "as a political invention which is intended to reconcile

national unity and power, with the maintenance of the rights of the separate member states" (Elaigwu and Akindele, 1996). Jega (1996:38) in his own view said federalism is "essentially about the distribution of political and economic decision-making power among constituent units or levels of government". According to Appadorai (1974:495) "a federal state is the one in which there is a central authority that represents the whole and acts on behalf of the whole in external affairs and on such internal affairs as are held to be of common interest and in which there are also provincial or state authorities with powers of legislation and administration within the sphere allotted to them by the constitution". Federalism is hence a system of sharing power and authority in a democratic way based on constitutional provisions. According to Malemi:

A federal system of government is an association of free states where power is constitutionally shared by the federal, state and local councils, and with each tier of government exercising its constitutionally assigned powers and functions. A federal constitution or federal system of government is one that provides for separate structures of government at the national, state and local councils and with each tier having its own constitutional assigned powers or duties. The powers of the different tiers of government are usually spelt out in legislative lists in the constitution of the country (2006:26).

According to Elaigwu (1996:166) "Federalism is essentially a mechanism for managing conflicts in a multicultural state between two types of self determination and natural self determination which guarantee security for all in the nation-state, on the one hand, and the self determination of component groups to retain their identities on the other hand". This means that Federalism is a mechanism

aimed at welding people of differing societies, ethno-tribal, geographic and nationalities so that they can live together to achieve some common purpose by fair sharing and control of human and material resources in the economic, political and social realms in order that peace and stability can prevail within the context of national integration.

The concept of national integration, just like federalism, is defined by various scholars according to their orientations and fields of studies. According to Ogunjenite cited in Ojo (2009:18) national integration implies the building of nation-states out of the disparate socio-economic, religious, ethnic and geographical elements. This, according to him, entails the translation of diffuse and unorganized sentiments of nationalism into the spirit of citizenship through the creation of state institutions that can translate into policy and programmes in line with the aspirations of the citizenry. In this sense, national integration means conscious efforts to weld together a plural society to enhance development without necessarily jeopardizing ethnic identity (Ojo, 2009:18). The adoption of federal system in Nigeria is aimed at welding, intermeshing and integrating the multi-ethnic societies with the hope of attaining a nation-state through the spirit of unity in diversity. Indigene/settler dichotomy remains a burning and contentious issue in Nigeria and affects federalism and national cohesion.

The major framework used in analyzing the underlying problems of federalism in Nigeria within the context of this paper is Pluralism Theory propounded by G. Yoroms and supported by different scholars view points. Nigeria is a heterogeneous state with diverse multi-ethnic and religious backgrounds of people who agreed to live together as one indivisible entity. Despite this agreement, a

clash of interest does arise between them, leading to rise in doubt. According to Ojo:

The reason for the doubt is descriptive of the true existence of Nigeria on grounds of pluralism. It is for this reason, therefore, that the amalgamation effort could not go far especially when it also had more economic undertones than a genuine nationalistic posture. Suffice it to say that it is a miracle that the Nigerian experiment has lasted this far (2009:73).

The theory of pluralism came into being as a result of problems inherent in the practice of most federal systems. The major underlying argument of the theory is on the multiplicity of society and the dynamic social, economic and anthropological organizational process and structures, which inherently lead to conflicts of interest between social groups. Pluralism takes different dimensions; from religion, culture, creeds, tribes, clans, cults, traditions, norms and values, to demography, among others. In the process of regulating these differences, there arose two classes of interests; those in support of equal rights and those against equal rights. This is similar to the indigene and settler issue. In this connection, Elaigwu gave a vivid account of the scenario in Nigeria, thus:

In some parts of the country, especially in the Middle-Belt area, there has been substantial migration in the last twenty years. In the context of competition for scarce resources and the importance of the control of the state for the distribution of these resources, new lines of cleavages develop among groups as indigenes organize for the control of their polity and economy, so do the settlers press for their rights of participation in these processes. Beyond a threshold, settler communities threaten indigene position of hegemony and control. While the 'settler' gets defensively

aggressive in its relation with the indigenes, the indigenes get aggressively defensive, often resulting in violence with full mobilization of ethno-religious loyalty and commitment (2009:11).

In support of the above fact, pluralism is characterized into two models; the equilibrium and the conflict model (Amos and Istifanus, 2005:19). Among the two models, the conflict model is what forms the Nigerian situation, where the practice of federalism is characterized by conflict, which was a carry over from the colonial system. As Coleman in Elaigwu observed:

The present unity of Nigeria as well as its disunity, is in part a reflection of the form and character of colonial government –the British superstructure –and changes it had undergone since 1900 (2009:6).

Here pluralism is associated with conflict generated by the colonial policy of “divide-and- rule”. In that regard, Hembe in Lyam is of the view that:

In their attempt to justify colonial administration the British helped to articulate the so-called “ideology of tribalism” which placed undue emphasis on the things that divided rather than those that were common to the people they had brought together (2005: 44).

Conflicts such as the indigene-settler rift are inherent in the post-colonial period due to the way and manner Nigeria was nurtured by the British. In that regard, according to Yoroms:

The social basis is a medley of a people ‘Living side by side, but separately, within the same political unit’. It is in the strictest sense a medley of people, for they mix but do not combine. Each group holds by its

own religions, its own culture and language, its own ideas and ways. As individuals, they meet only in the market place, in buying and selling.

On this note therefore, pluralism theory as adopted in this work, affirms that in societies where there is lack of system reinforcement mechanism, conflicts are apparent in form of classes, economics, gender, social, communal, political, religious and environmental degradation. This is common in Nigerian post-colonial plural societies where the colonial concept of “divide-and-rule” 1914 amalgamation has been included into the administrative system that people have inherited. At the departure of colonial rule, this mentality or psychology that has been injected into the psyche of Nigerians became a trigger for ethno religious crisis, power conflict, economic conflict, and indigene/settlers dichotomy as the central theme of discussion in this study.

The implications of the Indigene–Settler Rift on Federalism and National Integration in Nigeria

There are many implications of indigene–settler rift on federalism and national integration in Nigeria. Indigene/settler rift threatens tolerance and peaceful co-existence among people. Most scholars agreed that where there is no peaceful co-existence, there is disintegration of people; and where there is disintegration of people, poverty and underdevelopment take place. In this case, conflicts such as indigene-settler affect the integration of the national economic development. President Olusegun Obasanjo buttressed this fact, when he said that:

Another destructive impact of this monstrous notion (referring to indigene-settler rift) is that

it (indigene-settler dichotomy) militates against the imperatives of the integration of national economy, which demands that men and capital must be allowed to move freely and grow wherever they choose (Ibrahim, 2004:72).

Closely related to the above implication is the issue of merit. Merit is one of the bane of national development; it brings sense of respect, discipline, tolerance, peaceful co-existence and success among people in any organization toward success. Where loyalty or indigenship criterion overruled the criterion of technical competence, there tends to be a failure due to lack of competency which affects efficiency and effectiveness in public service administration and other aspects of national development. This tendency is mostly encouraged by affiliation to one's local government or state of origin. The creation of regions and later states and local government areas were done with good intention to produce or enhance greater national cohesion, integration and unity in diversity. However, according to Pongri:

The creation of states did not necessarily produce greater national unity. At the national level, the three giant ethnic groups continued in varying degrees to dominate the scene. Indeed, on the balance, it can be argued that the politics of each state, based as it was on the same pattern as national politics created greater disunity than unity. Sometimes, the issue is not even necessarily a majority-minority one (1991: 127; also see Tyoden, 1995), (Nnoli, 1980:261, Suberu, 2003:280).

Some people claim to be indigene of an area attaching state or local governments of origin against other Nigerians who by virtue of migration or birth are discriminated and regarded as non-indigenes or "settlers" in

their fatherland. Pongri further observed that:

The existence of these states has also raised the issue of statism and the meaning of Nigerian citizenship. Since the beginning of colonial rule, Nigerians have felt free to move around and work and live wherever they find the right opportunities. Every state has a population of persons who have come to it from other states. It is in their states of residence that they pay tax and whatever other levies imposed on them by successive governments. In recent years these kinds of people have been discriminated against (against their right) across the country. They are regarded as non-indigenes. This raises the whole issue of definition of Nigerian citizenship (1991:127).

Chapter III, Section 25 subsection (1) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria states that the following persons are citizens of Nigeria by birth, namely:

- (a) Every person born in Nigeria before the date of independence, either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents belong or belonged to a community indigenous to Nigeria; provided that a person shall not become a citizen of Nigeria by virtue of this section if neither of his parents nor any of his grandparents were born in Nigeria;
- (b) Every person born in Nigeria after the date of independence either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents is a citizen of Nigeria;
- (c) Every person born outside Nigeria either of whose parents is a citizen of Nigeria (*Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*, 1999:15).

Other forms of citizenship in Nigeria include citizenship by registration and citizenship by naturalization. By virtue of this, a citizen of Nigeria must enjoy all the rights and privileges of citizenship everywhere in Nigeria (Pongri, 1991:127). However, tribalism, ethnicity and indigene/settler dilemma negate the provision of the Nigerian Constitution in many states in Nigeria. Indigene/settler dichotomy is therefore a negation of the nation's federal arrangement. According to Usman:

Any attempt to carve out the territories of Nigerian ethnic nationalities, or even sub-ethnic groups, to create new sovereign states, or, ethnically based confederating units, will lead to violent conflicts and sustained civil wars, because there is no basis for these boundaries at the ethnic level (and based on indigene-settler), given the mosaic nature of the ethnic and cultural geography of Nigeria and, of most of Africa (2004:21).

Indigene/settler dichotomy also hinders the existence of unity in diversity, thereby affecting the sense of regard for one another through love, sincerity and understanding among Nigerians. Some people under the syndrome of 'indigene', 'native' or 'son-of-the-soil' look down upon the others as 'settlers' or 'strangers' having no regard for history that the present or contemporary arrangements of ethnic nationalities or tribes have no boundaries but as a result of colonialism were modified and transformed. According to President Olusegun Obasanjo in Ibrahim (2004:72):

Many citizens are threatened and denied their God-given and constitutionally guaranteed rights to live and earn their living anywhere in the nation by such monstrosities as 'non-indigenes', 'stranger', 'native' or 'settler' constructions which

creates huge barriers between our people. Very often, the irony is lost to our people that every Nigerian is both an "indigene" and a "settler", and we pay a huge price when we ignore this fact, for, amongst others, it exposes all of us, and all our primordial loyalties to the evils which it generates.

Again, Ibezute, is of the view that:

This togetherness of different (but interrelated and interdependent) people should have been of a good advantage towards making the nation great and formidable. The only way to achieve greatness in diversity is for the people to have regard for one another through love, sincerity and understanding the fact that the federation is an amalgamation of many nations (1999:14).

Indigene/settler rift in Nigeria is used as a divide-and-rule tactics by the power elites to divert public funds and hold grip to power in the name of democracy. Most of these power elites breed and sponsor youths as political thugs, who due to failure of leadership are trapped in the cage of poverty, unemployment, and illiteracy among others, which also serve as easy means of recruiting them into the monstrous acts. Ojo in Hassan and Musa observed that:

The current excruciating poverty is creating a large pool of millions of hungry and angry youths from where armed robbers, assassins, and other violent criminals are being recruited. They can also serve as sources of guerrilla fighters in the future. That was why insecurity was in an increasing rate in Nigeria especially between the period 1999 and 2007 (and even beyond). Many surveys carried out by different international bodies and the National Office of Statistics in Nigeria all confirmed that seventy to eighty percent of Nigerians were living in

abject poverty. Despite all measures taken through different programmes and strategies to alleviate and reduce poverty within the stipulated time period but the reverse was the case (2012:167).

Indigene/settler dichotomy is also an impediment to democratic ideals more especially in the aspect of fundamental human rights. In that regard, Mbachu in Ibezute observed that:

Democracy ruins itself of excesses. Its basic principle is the equal right of all to hold office and determine public policy. This is at first glance a delightful arrangement. It becomes disastrous when people are not properly equipped by education to select the best rulers in the wisest courses (1999:102).

The 'son of the soil syndrome' is one of the excesses to democracy. The son of the soil syndrome by "indigenes" against those whom they termed as "settlers" within the Nigerian state deny people the democratic and equal right to be voted for. However, with reference to the 2001 indigene/settler violence in Plateau State, according to WikiLeaks:

Alhaji Mukhtar Mohammed was in mid-August appointed to head the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) for the Jos North Local Government Area. (**Note:** Jos is divided into two Local Government Areas, North and South. Jos North contains most of the Hausa/Muslim population of the city, roughly 40%). Mukhtar appointment was strongly opposed by the non-Hausa-Fulani residents of Jos North. This appointment sparked a battle of increasingly strident ethnic and religious rhetoric between two youth organizations, the Jasawa Development Association for the predominantly Muslim Hausa-Fulani, and the predominantly Christian

other indigenous ethnic groups (Daily Trust, Friday, September 16, 2011:49).

The discriminatory treatment by the son of the soil against the "non-indigenes" or "settlers" is contributing to the cycle of violence in most states in Nigeria. Such cases in Nigeria occurred in Kaduna State between the Hausa "Settlers" and Kataf "indigenes"; in Kano State between the Hausa "Indigenes" and Igbo "Settlers"; in Lagos State between the Yoruba "Indigenes" and Hausa-Fulani "Settlers"; in Plateau State, between Birom, other indigenous tribes and other "non indigenes"; in Adamawa State between the Hausa "Settlers" and the Bachama "indigenes", among others. As earlier mentioned, most of these "indigenes" and "settlers" dichotomy within the context of ethnic conflicts resulted in religious ones.

Indigene/settler dichotomy also impedes on intergovernmental relations between the federal, state and local government areas in Nigeria. For instance, it degenerated into sour relationship between the Federal Government of Nigeria and the Plateau State Government. The late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua inaugurated a Panel of Inquiry to investigate the cause of the crisis in Plateau State, while the Plateau State Governor, David Jonah Jang refused to allow the panel to conduct investigation into the matter, with the excuse that the Federal Government has no constitutional right in a state matter. The issue attracted different interpretations through debates by legal luminaries, scholars and observers. As such, indigene/settler dichotomy impedes cordial relationship between the Federal, State and Local Government (Intergovernmental Relations) in Nigeria.

Results and Discussions

The results of this paper reveal that there are many negative implications of indigene–settler rift on federalism and national integration in Nigeria. These include:

- i. Indigene/settler rift threatens tolerance and peaceful co-existence among people in Nigeria.
- ii. Indigene/settler rift affects the realization of national development since loyalty or indigenship criterion prevails over the criterion of technical competence in Nigeria.
- iii. Indigene/settler rift negatively affects citizenship rights based on Chapter III, Section 25 Sub-section (1) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- iv. Indigene/settler dichotomy also hinders the existence of unity in diversity, thereby affecting the sense of regard for one another through love, sincerity and understanding among Nigerians.
- v. Indigene/settler rift in Nigeria is used as a means through which violent criminals are being recruited.
- vi. Indigene/settler dichotomy is an impediment to democratic ideals in Nigeria.
- vii. Indigene/settler dichotomy infringes on the fundamental human rights of Nigerians.
- viii. The discriminatory treatment by the "son of the soil" against the "non-indigenes" or "settlers" is contributing to the cycle of violence in most states in Nigeria.
- ix. Indigene/settler dichotomy impedes on intergovernmental relations between the federal, state and local government areas in Nigeria.

Conclusion

This paper examined the causes and sources of indigene/settler dilemma and their impact on national integration within the context of Nigeria's federalism. The results of this paper reveal that there are many negative implications of indigene–settler rift on federalism and national integration in Nigeria. The government needs to bring all the stakeholders in the areas of communal conflicts with a view to establishing an understanding and a framework to which all can commit them in finding lasting solutions to peace. In this direction, we would agree with Ibezute, who observed that:

It is a fact that for peace, unity and tranquility to thrive in our dear country, all Nigerian citizens should have equal rights and equal opportunities, irrespective of their place of origin and religion. Any leadership that is short-sighted of this is not doing the Nigerian nation any good and does not worth its position (1999:3).

It is our view therefore that, for smooth practice of federalism to thrive in Nigeria all Nigerian citizens should have equal rights, equal opportunities and equal benefits irrespective of creeds, religion, affiliations, status and place of origin.

Recommendations

In respect of the findings, the following are hereby recommended for implementation by the Federal Government and other stakeholders:

- i. The issue of tribal, ethnic and regional affiliations should be abrogated as prerequisite to indigene certificate. It should be replaced by the criteria of birth, primary and secondary school certificates and national identity card.

- ii. Similarly, good governance, discipline, accountability, transparency in social, political and economic development and prosperity for all Nigerians should be the first priority of the leaders, in order to foster integration, cohesion and unity of Nigerian-state.
- iii. Finally, there should be a provision in the Nigerian constitution that conspicuously prohibit indigene/settler dichotomy. At the same time, those who propagate it at any level should be prosecuted.

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