ETHNICITY, ETHNOCENTRISM, PRIMORDIALISM AND STEREOTYPES IN NIGERIA'S NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT; PSYCHO-POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS.

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ABSTRACT

Unfortunately, Nigeria has remained one of the most controversial plural societies in the world today. Pre and post-independence in 1960, the annals of Nigeria's history is replete with ethnic oriented disturbances. Ethnicity has now become a plague in Nigeria. Characterized by its ethnocentric chauvinism creating multiples of ethical crises. Many forces work together and continue to pose a threat to Nigeria's national development. The "one Nigeria" mantra has become nothing but a pure sarcasm, just as unity and peace in Nigeria appears dead. Ethnic politics and polarization along primordial cleavages is not new in Nigeria, but the dilemma is the momentum with which it is unfolding in the country now. Fairness, equity and meritocracy have been banished on the altar of faulty federalism. All these have bequeathed on the nation incongruous and inept leadership with myriads of negative implications. This study is apt to succinctly analyze this problem through the aid of Hobbesian theory of Natural Anarchy and Structural theories. Only when this is done can the problem be identified easily for better solutions.
Keyword: Ethnocentrism, Politics, Economy, Development.

INTRODUCTION
This is not about "Racism" but "Ethnicity', which revolves on the abstract concepts such as language, religion, belief, culture and traditions. These elements work and depend on one another to shape ways of life, perceptions, aspirations, ideologies and creativity. Ethnicity refers to the differentiation of groups of people who have shared cultural meanings, memories and descent,

produced through social interaction. In classical Greek, the terms "ethnos" and "ethnikos" were used in a number of ways to refer to a collectivity that shares similar cultural or biological characteristics. This distinction between ethnicity marked "others" and non-ethnically marked "us" persists in modem popular usage. Onyia and Aniche (2001), defines ethnicity as a situation when an ethnic group sees itself as "we" and sees others as "they'" and psychologically consider themselves as pitched in a perpetual battle of survival against all these others". Nnoli (1978:5) at the same time see ethnicity as a social phenomenon associated with the identity of members of the largest possible competing communal groups (ethnic group), seeking to protect and advance their interest in a political system. The relevant communal factor may be language, culture, race, religion and history. It is one of the phenomenons associated with interactions among communal groups (ethnic groups). Others include trade, diplomacy, friendship, enemity, corporation, self-abnegation and self-extension. What is peculiar to ethnicity is that it includes demands by one group or other competing groups. Ethnicity is the common characteristics of a category of people identified with each other based on the society in which one lives that is, based on what people know you as; ancestry, culture and language. Many scholars agree that Nigeria of today comprises of over 250 ethnic groups. Subsequently, it may seem like many people embrace ethnic diversity, the reverse is the case.

Nigeria since independence, up to the present is faced with the problems and challenges of ethnocentrism; outright discrimination and prejudice. It may not be an overstatement to say that there is practically faulty implementation of federalism in Nigeria.

Ethnocentrism, according to the New Word Encyclopedia is the tendency to look at the world primarily from the perspective of one's ethnic culture, the feeling of superiority in one's personal ethnic group (New World Encyclopedia: 2014). Grading and appraising the diverse ethnic groups in Nigeria through the prism of perception of ethnocentrism is not only myopic, but lacks equitable justification and assessment. This is so because one is bound to be self-centered or egocentric, hence seeing nothing good at all in other ethnic groups. Any society that is ethnically polarized along culture lines (language, race), efficiency and productivity may end up being marginalized Nigeria as a nation post-independence in 1960, created veritable opportunities for the growth of democratic governance. However, since democracy cannot just fall from the sky, but evolve through popular awareness, participation and the political engineering and activities of both elites and political parties, it pre-supposes that a level playing ground should be available to give birth to favorable political atmosphere, whose end product can only be democracy. Nigeria as a

plural society, is blessed with its ethnic diversity, though it appears to be facing multiple challenges both in the leadership arena and body politic. Historical annals have continued to lay credence to the fact that the many ethnic groups inhabiting the Nigerian environment in the pre-colonial period were engaged in diverse communications and relationships, *vis-a-vis* extensive inter-group relationship, regardless of their differences.

Consequently, one could assert that issues concerning political homogeneity and classifications came with the colonial government, in their attempts to make governance and political administration easier, they ended up carelessly lumping culture groups together under the same umbrella even without seeking their consent. This they did in various ways even before the 1914 official amalgamation of Northern and Southern Protectorates. It could be recalled that by law, the British Colonial Government had in place the 1910 Land Native Ordinance Law, which discouraged Southern Nigerians from migrating and settling in the North. This created unimaginable divisiveness, while promoting ethnicity, rather than national unity and integration. From this stage, the journey to nationhood took the slippery road, just as ethnocentrism pervaded the psyche of the Nigerian citizenry. Ethnic cleavages appeared generally on almost every sector of the national life, Politics, the Federal Civil Service and even the security agencies. Before long, several ethno-based organizations came up into the lime light. The Igbo Union in the East, Arewa group in the North, Omo Oduduwa in the West, among others. The sad sequel was that the existing political parties in the 1960's either by design or coincidence ended up towing these ethnic colorations. Such parties include National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC), Action Group (AG), Northern People's Congress (NPC). Before long, emergent developments created an atmosphere of utter distrust and an eclipse of fraternal confidence, hence cascading the country to a painful 3 years civil War (1967-1970), after the nefarious Igbo (Pogrom) of the 1960s.

Nigeria's quest for progressive nationhood and democratic growth post-1970 has remained chequered. Attempts towards ameliorating the problems and challenges emanating from ethnicity in Nigeria's body politic has submerged the country into going through the depredations of more than 30 years military rule. The challenges from Nigerian's political angle has continued to grow in leaps and bounds by the day, so much so that emergent political parties post 1979 continued to tow the ethnic angles. Worthy of mention is the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN, West), Nigerian People's Party (NPP, East), National Party of Nigeria (NPN, North). Rather than influence and sway people's support and

opinion through balanced and prospective ideologies, and poignant issues, these ethnically oriented political parties preferred to adopt and apply the ethnic mantra, hereby deepening the depth of the political divide.

By all intents and purposes, from the first republic to the contemporary fourth republic, it does appear that Nigeria's exercise in Nation building has largely remained a futile project. The political class, the elite and the leadership steering the Nigerian state have remained inept, disoriented, and their actions and representations have largely appeared antithetical to normal global standards and etiquette.

The need to understudy these developments, the causes and the course, coupled with the challenge of proffering solutions to identified psycho-political implications, is the objective of this study; hence the following sections have been adopted to achieve these: introduction, conceptual clarifications, literature review, theoretical framework, psycho-political implications, conclusion and recommendations.

CONCEPTUALCLARIFICATIONS
(1) Primordialism

Primordialism holds that since nations are ancient natural phenomena synonymous with thought pattern, language and laid down values including biological affinity; suffice it then to say that ethnicity often hinges on it. In the concept of kinship where members of an ethnic group feel they share characteristics, origins, even blood relationship, primordialism assumes ethnic identity as fixed, once it is constructed. To a large extent, belief in the accounts of several ethnic groups not only encourages, but creates an enduring strength and lasting commitment to an ethnic identity, hence it is more endearing the ethnic theories of constructivism and instrumentalism. Primordialism goes a long way in establishing the irreconcilable cultural differences between 'us' and 'them'.

(2) Stereotypes

The term 'stereotype' was first introduced by a journalist, Waller Lippmann who referred to it as the picture in the head' that you have of a particular group of people (Smith: 1998). Once aware that a person belongs to a particular group, one tends to ascribe to him behaviors considered in the common group.

A stereotype is a set of characteristics attributed to all members of same group, which characteristics that departs from 'reality' through restraining, curtailing and deforming it. (Preiswerk et al:. 1978) The user of the stereotype often believes he is giving a straight forward description; in fact, he places mold over

a reality which that mold cannot contain. There are both negative and positive stereotypes. It helps people predict the behavior of the person they are observing. The importance of predicting someone's behaviour could be one of the reasons why a stereotype may be maintained despite evidence of its inaccuracy. Whether positive or negative, stereotypes are considered to be very harmful, because it takes away one's ability to treat each member of a group as a distinct individual. Whereas historians are of the opinion that stereotypes spring from past events, from the political point of view, it could be a means by which groups in power come to rationalize war, religious intolerance and economic oppression. (Sharon et al: 1979)

(3) Ethnicity
Ethnicity has a common meaning, though various analysts and writers on the subject have been divided into various schools of thought: Instrumentalism, essentialism, constructivism and institutionalism (Varshey 2002). The instrumentalists are of the view that ethnic differences are manipulated by the ambition of individuals to attain their selfish interests. Essentialism refers to the principle of primodialism, which implies that ethnic identities are unchanging. The third intends on having knowledge of the origins of ethnic groups and has linked this identity "constructs" or invent" to the activities of colonialists, missionaries, among others. Institutionalists, states the pivotal role of political institutions and policies in the shaping of ethnic relations. In defining the concept of "ethnicity", one could see it as a social phenomenon associated with (communal) competition among members of different ethnic groups. An ethnic group, however is not necessarily linguistically, or culturally homogenous, in so far as it often subsumes sub-cultural, linguistic, dialectic, occupational and class differences, depending on the prevailing level of socio-economic development and cultural differentiation (Eteng 2004:45). However, ethnicity does not exist outside the group that embodies it, that is why Enloe (1978:33) postulated that "ethnicity is looked upon as unreal, an artificial basis of identification and collective organization, conjured up by outsiders. Looking for an efficient instrument of political and economic control", It is hence considered as a strategic weapon chosen by a unit who consider themselves superior or otherwise, to gain advantages in whatever area; economic, political and so on. Cox (1970:317) sees ethnicity or ethnic group generally as a socio-cultural entity, though inhabiting the same country or state, consider themselves linguistically, biologically, culturally different from each other and view their relation in actual or potentially antagonistic terms. (See also Barth 1970:10). Many writers are agreed that ethnicity is a recent phenomenon in Africa (Otile 1990; Nnoli 1978, 1995). Nnoli (1995) largely driven and inspired by the

Marxian class dependency movement, insists that ethnicity was orchestrated largely by the antics of colonialism and had noted this in 'Ethnic Politics in Nigeria (1978): the first detailed attempt in trying to understand the dynamics of ethnicity in all spheres of Nigerian social life. In reality, ethnicity is a very complex phenomenon, coupled with the fact that Nigeria is comprised of diverse ethnic groups. Tracing ones identity has become the major priority among Nigerians. the unity and elasticity of nationhood, has been burned, long gone and forgotten: Ethnicity is now bent on creating acrimonious division which has given rise to "Ethnocentrism.

(4) Ethnocentrism
This is one of the fundamental concepts in Psychology and the Social Sciences. The phenomenon of ethnocentrism often referring to the concept of ethnocentrism itself, and more recently using the concept of in-group bias, which is the laboratory analogue of real-world ethnocentrism. (Jajel & Turnerm 1986 p 13). William Graham Summer in his highly important book, Folkways (Summer (1906), introduced 3 fundamental concepts of ethnocentrism, in group and the group

First introduced and used descriptively by Summer in 1906, the term had the general meaning of provincialism or cultural narrowness; it meant a tendency in the individual to be "ethnicity centered", to be invalid in his acceptance of the culturally "alike" and in his rejection of the "unlike" (Adornno, Tienkel Brunswik, Levinson & Santird, 1950, p 102). Gumplowiez, saw ethnocentrism as a similar phenomenon or more correctly a delusion", to geocentrism (the belief that the Earth has the central position in the universe and anthropocentrism (the belief that humans have the central position on Earth), but focusing on one's own ethnic group. This belief on the contrary is faced with the perception that one group is superior and better than the other existing groups. For instance in 1883, Gumplowiez wrote "so far most writing or history is dominated by limited ethnocentric view points; one can comfortably say that the largest part of histories written so far actually has only sprung from this subjective need of human beings to glorify their own interest and the same time humiliate and sully what is foreign and distant". He pointed out ethnocentrism among the ancient Greeks who believed that all other groups are barbarian, (Glumplowicz, 1887). Gumplowicz pointed out ethnocentrism among the French, who believed themselves to be more civilized men than other groups (Gumplowicz, 1887), among the Chinese who saw their country to be in the middle of the world (Gumplowicz, 1885 and among the Jews who believed themselves to be God's chosen people (Gumplowicz, 1893)

Unfortunately, it is apparently clear that the 21 century Nigeria is suffering from the dilemma called ethno-chauvinism, characterized by a high level of ethnocentrism, creating multiple of ethnical, political and development crises. Distinctively, this study is apt to succinctly analyze the implications of ethnicity in Nigeria, through similar theories like that of the Hobbesian Anarchy. Only when the problem is identified, necessary steps for solution would be taken.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Issues concerning politics in Nigeria are no more classified as new, more so the largely ethnic coloration accompanying it. Nigeria is presently in the fourth Republic, but one could say without mincing words that all along its turbulent political history, ethnicity has wholesomely played a pivotal role. In support of this assertion, Nnoli (1978) has through his book alluded to the impact of ethnicity in the Nigerian political equation. He was bare when he pointed out that Nigerian political parties were fashioned and driven through the polarized lines of group and ethnic chauvinism. However, Otite, (1990) while agreeing to this assertion went on rather to point and enumerate the various challenges evident in the Nigerian polity, sequel to the dominating influence of political discrimination and cultural sentiments, *vis a vis*, the demands of Nigeria as a nation. He cautioned that Nigeria's development would always be challenged, so long as ethnicity continues to block people's thought and vision. However, Suberu R. T. (1996) tersely observed that so long as the Nigerian political environment is organized and controlled through ethnic sentiments, the minorities would always suffer and be left as under dogs, because political democracy has to do with the majority. Apart from the three dominant ethnic groups in Nigeria, the parameter of measuring and asserting the strength of purpose embedded in the other minority groups remain questionable.

Moreover, Olusanya, G. (2004) took some time out to evaluate and succinctly actually underscore the many political parties operating in the Nigerian environment with a view of creating an insight into their foundational and structural objectives. Though registered as national political parties, it came to be observed that they harbored ethnic inclinations, hence were inicimal to Nigeria's faulty growth and development. It is disheartening to observe that Nigerian federalist government by all intents and purposes, appears not to operate and pivot on thorough and proper federalism. Dudley B. (1982), went a long way in trying to explain this phenomenon. He went through details in trying to examine, unveil and evaluate the evolutionary structural components of the political parties operating within the Nigeria environment.

In doing so, he was able to detect enormous defect, traceable to cultural alignments. These, according to him, stimulate and inject political prejudice and choice among the populace, hence blurring proper judgment. On the other hand, Nwankwo A. (2001) and Thomson A. (2000) appears to agree on the delicate interface emergent in an ethnically, plural society, most especially in the area of political party, political foundation, growth and operation. Political ethnocentrism, appears to be the bedrock of African political culture, considering the fact that most African colonized societies, underwent forced colonial homogeneity, bequeathed on the pre-colonial indigenous disparate cultural entities.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Though one may be tempted to prefer adopting the Hobbesian state of anarchy theory, considering the level of political decay Nigeria is apparently in, be that as it may, this paper is anchored on the Marxian class dependency theory, which favors some countries to the detriment of others and limits the development possibilities of the subordinate economies. Meanwhile in the case of Nigeria; it is an issue of ethnicity where one particular ethnic group feels superior to the other, when the wealth of the other region is used to develop a preferred ethnic group, where one ethnic group; feels that the political leadership is automatically theirs.

Nnoli (1995) largely inspired by the Marxian class dependency theory, posit that ethnicity was brought or orchestrated largely by the antics of colonialism. For Nnoli, colonialism is one of the earliest problems in Nigeria and Africa as whole. The implications of colonialism in the social, political and economic life of African societies cannot be overlooked. Before the advent of these colonial masters, there was not a case of divide and rule, regionalization had not been taken to a greater height, than where it is now in Nigeria. In the days preceding colonialism, each of the sub units of an ethnic group had an organized political system on its own. However, with the appearance of the colonial masters who while exercising their power, the disparate groups were considered under a single political authority such as "Pax Britannica". This dependency created a huge effect in today's Nigeria and the only way forward is to come out of this spell of dependency.

REFLECTIONS: PSYCHO-POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

It is a pity that conflict has permeated into Nigeria as a result of ethnicity ethnocentrism, primordialism and stereotyping, hence punctuating seriously the country's drive towards achieving democracy, attaining a high level of

neutrality in its polity, and at the same time a fluctuation in her development. Beginning from the colonial period, Nigeria has been an item of display in ethnic rivalries; mainly between the Hausa-Fulani in the North against the Yoruba in the West, and the Igbo in the East. These ethnic discrimination have led to the creation of political parties which inevitably was dominated by one ethnic group. Just as political parties got polarized along stereotype culture lines, divisiveness got entrenched in the country.

To understand the psycho- political implications of ethnicity in Nigeria's political and national development, a brief background of the history of Nigerian politics is required. Political party as is known today surfaced in the 18th century, but slowly and with time gathered pace with the electoral reforms in England in 1832 (Lapalombara and Weiner; 1972:71). The major aim of a political party is to gain access to political power. It is an organization, in which its members share similar ideologues. The present political parties in some parts of the world today are 'characterized by inept leadership and creating platforms for anarchy, with the aid of ardent adherence to ethnicism as a tool of state craft and ethnic mobilization towards the attainment of state power. Theories pertaining the origin of political parties include; the Historical Situation Memories, which insists that the systems may have encountered some certain issues during its development; the Institutional Meeting, which focuses on the inter relationship between early parliaments and the rise of political parties; and finally the development that links the parties to modernization (Ojo, 2006:65). The birth of political parties in Africa nay Nigeria began with congresses or organizations that were concerned with fighting for the rights and liberation of the African in all British colonies. The Peoples Union (PU) for instance was formed by Obasa and Randle, with the basic aim of protesting against the increase of water rates, and other costs of living (Olusanya, 2004:553). There was also an Aborigines Rights Protection Society (ARPS) consisting of important personalities like: Bishop James Johnson and J.P Jackson (Olusanya. 2004:553).

A major party during this period (after the amalgamation of 1914) was the National Congress of British West Africa (NCBWA), founded in 1918 by Joseph Casely Hayford and Sauage Akinwade. They agitated for a constitutional reforn in the Anglo-West-African territories in other to gun for African representation in the legislative council, (Oliuier and Fege, 1962:240). These early political parties laid a foothold of inspiration to men like Nnamdi Azikiwe, Emest Ikoli among others, who were equally inspired by Marcus Garvey.

In 1922, the Clifford Constitution was officially adapted in Nigeria, making Nigeria to be the first country to have elective principle in West Africa (Olusanya; 2004:5 19). Election into the Nigerian legislative council was based on voting franchise which was extended only to Lagos and Calabar (Ojo, 2006:65). Prior to the events that took place, in 1916 the Nigerian council was setup to legislate the whole century. The 1922 legislative council nearly returned the country to its status quo. Isolated politically, the North was removed from whatever influence which shaped the political attitude of southern politicians (Dudley. 1908:18). With time, under these colonial ideological actions, the North grew "more conservative, suspicious, and resistant to western ways of life, education, as well as other forms of universalistic religions", thus the British were responsible for the South/ North dichotomy that led to different modernization (Otite, 1990:10.96).

Subsequently, the development of modern political parties in Nigeria, began in the early 1920s, with the formation of the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) in 1923 to counter the elective principle of Clifford's Constitution of 1922. In 1934, the reign of NNDP was brought to an end by the National Youth Movement (NYM), metamorphosed from the Lagos Youth Movement (LYM) and managed by young intellectuals who were vibrant. The establishment of the NYM, marked the beginning of the second generation of political parties (Ujo 2000). It paved way for the formation of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) in August 1924. The groups included tribal unions, social and literary clubs, Professional associations (Turdoff, 1984:63; Olusanya, 2004: 560). Prior to the breakup of the Cameroon's in 1959, it was renamed to the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (Olusanya, 2004).

There, the first stage of divisiveness began; NNDP joined but the NYM refused as a result of the political quarrel (A.A Ujo, 2000). No one suspected, that the withdrawal marked the sowing of the first seed of ethnicity which had been consecrated and sown in Nigerian politics. Olusanya (2004) posits that this withdrawal provided lots of thought to other ethnic groups, who saw it as a plot by the Igbo to continually dominate the politics and affairs of the country. However, this helped create more regionalism in the NCNC, more so through the actions of the Action Group Party. (Olusanya, 2004). The Action Group (AG) emerged from the political wing of the cultural association of Yoruba elites, the Egbe Omo Oduduwa. The NCNC was seen as the Igbo Union, while the Northern peoples Congress (NPC) was founded by the Fulani aristocracy, whereby the smaller ethnic groups relied on the local political parties for their voice to be heard. More significantly, the division of the country into three

regions for administrative convenience by the Richard's Constitution of 1946 led to the development of strong regional feelings. The consequence of this was such that by 1953, the major political parties in Nigeria- NCNC, AG and NPC were associated with the major ethnic groups and the three regions, Western, Eastern and the Northern regions. To further reveal the tripartite ethnic stereotyped and primordial cleavages the party leaders were viz; Sarduana of Sokoto, Sir Ahmadu Bello led the NPC of the North: Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe led the Igbo NCNC, while Chief Obafemi Awolowo led the AG, Yoruba West, each representing the polarised ethnic groups. Thus, "while the AG and the NPC were born with ethno regionalist philosophy, the NCNC moved from its initial nationalist ideological position to full ethno-regionalist stance" (0rji 2009: 22).

The Action Group (AG), became a political party dedicated solely to Yoruba nationalism. According to Awolowo, the Action Group (AG) had been formed primarily to meet the political needs of the Yoruba's first, before attending to the rest of the country (Olusanya, 2004: 566). "Thus, the AG became the first party of Nigerian nationalism to be inspired by, founded on and nourished by ethnicity. For the first time, a nationalist desirous of wresting power from the colonialists, associated itself with the destiny of one ethnic group, considering itself to be merely the political wing of an ethnic group's cultural association (Nnoli; 1995:67). Awolowo considered that the performance of the Yoruba at the Regional and General Conferences to review the Richard's Constitution had shown that they were unorganized and lacked a concerted programme and effective leadership. The primary function of the AG was, therefore to provide that much needed leadership (Anifowose; 1982:176). The AG on the other hand was able to fully develop all manner of extremist ethnic tool; such as its call for political vigilance in the West so that region would not be excluded in the post-colonial scheme of things (Nnoli; 1993:67)

To worsen matters, in December 1949 at one Igbo state conference, Dr. Azikiwe burnt his boats forever when he openly declared that:

> *"....it would appear that the God of Africa has specifically added the Igbo nation to lead the children of Africa from the bondage of ages. The marital prowess of the Igbo nation at all stages of human history has enabled them not only to conquer others but also to adapt themselves to the role of preserver. The Igbo nation cannot shirk from its responsibility". (Coleman; 1958: 347)*

Though many of Azikiwe supporters and friends believe that he wasn't a conscious tribalist, "yet his objectives, his ambition and motives acted contrarily to his nationalistic inclination (Coleman; 1958: 343). Meanwhile with the advent of the Richards Constitution which was a token to the political life in the North, things however began to change. In the 1920s, with the appearance of such perceived challenge, many people became drawn from all parts of North with the slogan of "one north, one people, one destiny". Irrespective of religion, rank and tribe, the NPC was formed for Northerners and by Northerners to fulfill objectives and aim limited to the North (Nnoli, 1995:67). "The NPC was formed to ensure that the inevitable movement for self-government in the North would be led by moderate northerners rather than radical southerners, who were feared by the traditional and educated elites of the North as a potentially oppressive alien power (Anifowose, 1982;47), With all these settings, it was obvious that the politicization of ethnicity, which had been proved with the appearance of ethnic parties and the regionalization of politics was given a firm tooting with the promulgation of the Macpherson Constitution. By 1953, the three major political parties of the main major ethnic groups were entrenched in the once principal geographical regions of the country, (Nnoli, 1995:69) and the alignments that were to characterize Nigerian politics after independence had already solidified the North against the South, East against West, and the minority groups in each region against their respective dominant communities. These splits have shaped the history of modern Nigeria. (Rabushka and Sheple, 1972:192).

The regionalists in the three major ethnic groups, Yoruba, Igbo and the Hausa had successfully created the impression that they were champions of their people and carefully linked the struggles and travails of their respective parties to the ambitions and future of their ethnic groups (Nnoli, 1995:84).
Consequently, the first competitive elections among these ethnic groups made it clear that it was an ethnic game of "Win Win'" or "loose-loose". The First Republic was characterized by series of ethnic rivalries. Uwazurike in summarizing the first republic noted that

> *"....the Nigerian pattern of party politics has exhibited virtually the worst terms of an unstable democracy; most parties were narrowly based, tied to some "great and unassailable" leader who tended to stamp the organization not with any grand ideological vision but his personal biases. Besides, each was ethnically based, mass mobilizing, and confrontational in orientation" (Uwazurike 1990:65).*

In the Second Republic, the legislation in the 1979 elections, gave room for only five parties which were accredited by the Federal Electoral Commission. (FEDECO): NPN,NPP, GNPP.UPN and PRP (Oyediran, 1981), and all these parties had ethnic configurations (Joseph, 1981:17). The NPN had its followers majorly from the Hausa-Fulani, the NPP constituted of the Igbo, the UPP that of the Yoruba while the PRP and the GNPP were offshoot of the radical NEPU with a base in Kano state, and among the Kanuri ethnic group (Joseph, 1981:92,93:otite, 1990:97). After the untimely end of the Second Republic, attributable more to corruption than ethnic rivalry, the federal military government saw it necessary to aid, through the National Political Bureau to collate the views of Nigerians on the political future of the country. Meanwhile, some prominent Nigerians had advocated the urgent adoption of zoning as a panacea to ethnic rivalry (Suberu, 1991).

The Third Republic which was punctuated by series of military rules, saw a Constitution drafted in l989 by General Ibrahim Bademasi Babangida (IBB), the military Head of State, promised to end military rule in 1990. It was in this period that the National Republican Convention (NRC) and the Social Democratic Parties (SDP), came on board.

The advent of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), which can be traced to a civil society organization, geminated in late 1997 with the aim of enlightening the citizens about their rights. Unfortunately, the PDP equally got polarized and became unfocussed. This separation and in-harmony however led to the emergence of a single authority that produced Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as the President.

Starting from 1999 (Fourth Republic), the political parties include: the Peoples Democratic Party, which zoned the Senate Presidency to the South-East, the post of Speaker of House of Representatives to the North-West, the Deputy Senate Presidency to the North-East and the post of Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives to the South-south. The AD chose Obasanjo instead of Olu Falae, despite his apparent incompetence, and extravagant lifestyle. His ethnicity was the advantage he had- "Yoruba man'" (Tell, August 12, 2002 p.18). Bola Tinubu, the Governor in Lagos and member of the AD, promised to give 5 million votes to the PDP to aid him in the election (Tel1, Jan, 20, 2003 p.19). Ultimately, the People's Democratic Party zoned the presidency to the South and this thereby led to a fight between the two southern rivals - Alex Ekwueme and Olusegun Obasanjo, and at the same time, two northern. "Outsiders" (Tell,

Jan. 13 2003) Obasanjo easily sailed through. This scenario of intra party political chess game continued even into the Presidency of Umaru Yar'adua. Prior to the illness suffered by the late President Umaru Yar'adua in the middle of his administration on November 2009, the principle of zoning was not just awakened, but it revitalized a sense of ethnic variations, increased the intensity of ethnicity within the political party structure in not only the local but also in the international sphere. The North, South, East, and West got into political turbulence and out of control. There was a sudden split into two major groups in North/South, and this was as a result of the conflict for succession. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan who by right should be the successor was dragged into the ethnic dilemma (The News, May 17; Nov; 15 2010). The Northerners who were in control both in the Executive and in the Legislative even verbally played and challenged all ethnically-variant interests with dangerous primordial and stereotyped interpretations. They personalized the term and offices, and were anxious to take over the mantle of leadership; which they saw as "their turn". While the vice-president being denied of power, a motely group which consisted of majority of the Northerners, usurped power and the country began to drift dangerously towards ethnocentrism. (The News, Jan 18 2018). This infamous group of people were led by the wife of the President, Hajia Turai (the News, Jan 18 2000 p.21). While the country faced all these chaos, it didn't just end there, there was the portent hatching of the Boko Haram insurgency which began in 2011; the late National Security Adviser Patrick Aziza saw this Crisis as a power struggle in the ruling PDP between the North and the South. Rather than espousing the national ideal into prominence the country continued to pride itself in the idea of party zoning. This portrayed how debased the political terrain has become. Adamu Ciroma the former Minister and Central Bank Governor, insisted that zoning was far more than "a gentle manly agreement, as its spirit was captured in Article 6 section 2(3) of the PDP constitution. Till today, the national caucus of the party has not met to review the decision on zoning of public offices within the party. Even if they have met, nobody can change the decision because it is in the party's constitution (The News, Sept. 20 2010 p.22).

The PDP still stock with their zoning policy, meanwhile it gave room for Jonathan to contest"" (The News, Sept. 20 2010p 20) and his major opposition was a northerner, Muhammudu Buhari. The 2015 general elections experienced a bazaar of hate campaign detailed on ethno religious divide. Mumammudu Buhari was castigated by the PDP as an ethnic warlord, a hater of southern culture and lifestyle, While on the other hand, the sitting President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan was said to have turned himself into an ethnic leader of the

Ijaws, thereby leading to the marginalization of the North and other regions of the country. The spread of these ethnic diatribes by the opposing parties did permeate into the News media for instance. The PDP produced an advert which was displayed in several newspapers, calling on the INEC Chairman Attahiru Jega as "General Bulhari Jega' signaling ethnic connections (Guardian, Wednesday Feb. 18: 2015). This little display or action brought about a high level of suspicion and triggered the Human Rights Commission in the post-election period to call for an investigation and possible prosecution.

The 2015 election was characterized by outright indication of ethnic, primordial and stereotyped cleavages. The country's peace and security was disturbed, the campaigns were violent in many ways, some persons got abused and a campaign ground got bombed (Guardian Thursday 122015). The unpredicted failure of President Goodluck Jonathan's re-election bid had many ethnic-oriented articles written emphasizing on why he failed woefully. With the unprecedented defeat, despite the outcome of the elections, the two contestants conducted themselves in such a way that the nation was put to awe. The predictions of global crisis and wars that were to take place were proved wrong and this made a remarkable event in the history of Nigeria.

The upcoming 2019 election is near, and yet many Nigerians still do not have their PVC (voters card), there lies the feeling of apathy .Political apathy in Nigeria which needs to be readdressed. The elections in Nigeria have witnessed ethnicism being expressed fully and robustly through electioneering. With the crave for growth and development in Nigeria, the political system needs to be readjusted, hence the ethnic antagonism within her political system needs restructuring.

ethnicity in Nigeria has solidified corruption, impunity and nepotism from the high quarters. Professionalism is daily being sacrificed on the alter of ethnic mediocrity and inefficiency, hence the purely educated have continued to relegate the political terrain to the untutored and disorganized political thugs and pundits, who are largely psychopaths. The cumulative effect is that proper democratic process remains a mirage in a consistently stereotyped Nigeria, where old age, ill health, illiteracy and inefficiency are easily over-looked in all aspects of developmental strides, so long as one is from a preferred culture group.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

Literatures abound both in Nigeria and abroad centered on ethno religious altercations in Nigeria starting from the colonial period till date. Regardless of

this, this study has ventured into side lining and understudying the psycho-political implications of an ethnically polarized Nigeria before and after independence, up to the contemporary time. It is quite important to do this and carry out this research succinctly, since Nigeria "is" and continue to claim to be a democratic federalist state. In most developed countries, the political culture follows internationally-acclaimed and established ethics and norms, hence creating a psychologically balanced atmosphere, which is not only citizen oriented, but progressively developmental in approach. As a democratic nation, Nigeria is simply bereft of equitable leadership; the political platform serviced by ethnic cleavages and chauvinism; the citizenry wallowing in suspicion-culture bound discrimination, disunity and disorganization. Political ideologies with regards to political party in Nigeria, have continued to be sacrificed on the altar of ethnocentrism. This political polarization has created widespread political apathy and disenchantment among the citizenry; it has equally in most aspects allowed unqualified and indolent loafers to make it with effortless ease. When mediocrity is honored, meritocracy is sacrificed, underdevelopment, widespread corruption and ingenuity remain unwelcome. Today, Nigeria could boast of having the greatest number of political parties in the world. This simply shows disharmony, dishonesty, disorderliness, and political anarchy. The political psyche of Nigerians appears all the more weakened, and seriously challenged, since positive prospect on the horizon appear vague.

may seem like the whole country needs to be re-started from the scratch, the myriad of economic and social problems cannot just go away. The 21" century Nigeria is in dire need of "'restructuring". With regards to Federalism, powers are meant to be shared between the government and the regions equally, at least this will reduce the rate of campaign for secession, and at the same time, the political parties should be less zoned. There is no doubt that Nigeria is destined to be a great nation, let's not say it but rather act on it.

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