

A Historical Survey of Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria

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Abstract

This article focused on the historical survey of ethnic conflict in the Nigerian society and its scope is vast in a way that it stresses the country's ethnic conflicts beginning from the Pre-colonialism state down the post-colonialism. The main objective of this article is to explore deeper analyses on politics, ethnic conflict and its causes in the multi-cultural society like that of the giant of Africa and the consequences therefore. The approach used in this study is consistent with the general research question on the educational meaning of politics in comparison to the modern politics as experiencing among the political leaders and parties; in responding to the question, a data from a published author is quoted as sample report in answer to the situation in the country. Finally, the article also elaborates on how to manage ethnic conflict amidst of differences and plural society like in the case of the said nation.

Keywords: Ethnic conflict, Colonialism, Ethno-politics, Nigeria, Leadership

1. Introduction

The origin and history of ethnic conflict (societal wars and violence) can be traced from eternal (internal) state rivalry to external (physical). And its root cause is not very far from power competition and decision making over economic resources and other important human factor, like position. The implementation process has always involved more than one or two persons. In general concept, the author of this work traces conflict back to the first and early Patriarchal of human history and ever since then, there has been an increase (in various dimensions) of Conflict in the face of human world. Some are personal (internal) conflict, family, community, group, intellectual, state, national and international in nature, to mention but few.

In conforming to this idea, Badawi (2006) in his statement titled "World Apart" stated thus, "indeed the greatest discord today is among the descendants of Abraham. These are the people of the book, the followers of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, who had in fact shared a common beginning in the religion of Abraham". In shading more light in the above statement, Badawi statement goes far beyond religion, rather, he was tracing one of the earliest source of conflict which Badawi mentioned the off-springs of the said Abraham. Even before Abraham, there had been conflict, so it is as old as human history down to the Abrahamic period, to ancient kingdoms, Dukes, and Kings.

In about 88 B. C., King Mithriades VI of Pontus invaded Roman territory in Asian Minor. He advised Asian debtors to kill their Roman creditors. Happy to reduce their credit card bills, the Asians massacred 80,000 Romans. Ethno-political conflicts have greatly shaped our present world and of course have its structural phenomenon, (William Easterly, 2001). For instances, the conflict we now call Israeli and Palestinian war, has been an ever-lengthening sort. The Assyrian, Babylonian war, by King Nebuchadnezzar of the hanging Garden in history, the Persia war, Alexander the Great (the Macedonian mad man in history), the German war of Adolf's Hitler, the Roman wars, narrowing all these down, we came to the horn of African continent which seem to be an epidemic field of conflicts of diverse kinds till date. The giant-lion of African continent, just like the origin of conflict is said to have stated very old in human history, even so in the case of Nigeria, which can be traced to the colonial period of history. Conflict takes different sizes and shapes with diverse reasons and purposes. Majority of the conflicts takes time before their escalation and at such, could have been transformed right at their respective early stages.

The history of ethnicity and ethnic conflicts in Nigeria is also traced back to the colonial transgressions that forced the ethnic groups of the northern and southern provinces to become an entity called Nigeria in 1914. In the case of Nigeria situation, disturbing history of colonialism, this generated hatred and conflict among different ethnic groups. The task of addressing this seed of conflict planted by the British has been a complex one. After weakening the former diverse kingdoms, Emperors, etc now called Nigeria and reordering the groups' politics, the colonial powers failed in nation building and providing for the people's basic needs. Hence, unemployment, poverty increased and with these, conflict over scarce resources. The Southern and Northern protectorates were also being amalgamated into a nation. Thereafter, the merging of different colonies into one country called Nigeria was forcefully done without the people's consent. This was a major seed of conflict that is still troubling Nigeria today.

This article is focused on the historical incidents of ethnic conflicts in within Nigeria societies, the cause of the conflicts and perhaps, the government actions towards ethnic conflict in the country. In conclusion, this paper will explore into decision-making (by the elites and those in authority) process has contributed immensely in generating the syndromes of conflict in the said state.

2. Colonialism and Ethnic Conflict

The then British colonial policy was autocratic and it denied the people's participation, basic needs, equality and social well-being and thus led to conflict. For instance, the separation of governments which Colonial administration introduced in the North and the South were designed to lead to growing ethnocentrism. This era of provincial development, though were relatively peaceful, and yet their built on the future foundation of an unending conflict, which has been experiencing in the country till present. Notwithstanding, the "indirect rule" administration in Nigeria by Lord Fredrick Lugard, the chief administrator, was inappropriate decision-making tool for managing tribal tensions and hatredness in the colony. According to some scholars' views, the system not only reinforced ethnic divisions, "it has complicated the task of welding diverse elements into a Nigerian nation" (Coleman, 1958:194; Nnoli, Okwudiba 1980:113). This implementation and method governance distanced ethnic groups from each other by the way Lugard gave power to the traditional rulers who corruptly abused and misused it in the villages to amass wealth, land and establish patronage networks, which, seconded and encouraged in the long run, tribalism and nepotism. The segregation of the Nigerian colony was also reinforced by the colonial laws that limited the mobility (Afigbo, A.E., 1989; Okonjo, I.M., 1974) of Christian Southerners to the Muslim North, created a separate settlement for non-indigenous citizens in the North, and even limited the purchase of land outside one's own region. Prejudice and hatred became the order of the day in the provinces as different ethnic groups started looking at each other suspiciously in all spheres of contact. Unequal and differential treatment of ethnic groups was responsible for the intense competition in the society. It created disparity in educational achievement and widened the political and economic gaps between northern and southern Nigeria. This was as a result of decision making implemented wrongly by the authorized power in the then leadership.

To elucidating the popular concepts and theory of some scholars of decision making theory, in comparison to the above dramatic experience of leadership, which the primary approach is associated with such scholarly authorities as Richard Snyder (1960), Herbert Simon (1967), Joseph Frankel (1974), Carl Bindblom (1988) and Aaron Wildersky (1985). This argues that all human activities are founded on decisions. In other words, behind or underlying every human endeavor is a decision or some decisions taken by concrete person or persons. Thus, understanding human activities would generally demand the determination of underlying decision or decisions that triggered off the activity or activities. Decision, therefore, constitutes the basic unit in the analysis of human actions. A critical survey into the primary settings of what is called and known as present Nigeria will in no doubt, observe decision making process and implementation as the core root of evil seed sown among and in the heart of Nigerians which of a truth has kept germinating deaths, lost and destructions of properties, displacements, etc in the said Society. Lion of Africa, devouring her preys. The giant lion of Africa against her preys! During this period, there was significant scarcity of all goods, "evident in the economic social and political areas of life. It affected employment, education, political participation and the provision of social services to the population." (Nnoli, 1980:87) The lack of such "basic needs" always gives elites the ability to mobilize groups for intense competition, employing ethnocentrism to achieve their goals. In 1947, a colonial constitution divided Nigeria into three political regions: East, West and North. The North, which was predominately Hausa-Fulani, was the largest and eventually the most populous region. The Igbos dominated the East and Yorubas the West. With the three major ethnic groups in dominance, the minority groups (Osaghae, Eghosa 1991; Rotimi Subaru, 1996) rebelled and Nigerians started fighting for ethnic dominance as the nation marched towards independence. The creation of the three ethnic regions did not take into account the needs of

the ethnic minority groups for autonomy and self-determination. Instead, they were lost within the majority. This development was based on the "bogus theory of regionalism...That one should be loyal to and protect the interest of one's region to the exclusion of the others," (Osaghae, Eghosa, 1989:443). An administration that endorses segregation for its people does not have the unity of the country at heart.

In conclusion, many analysts have contended that understanding the factors behind the spate of ethnic conflicts in Nigeria must begin with the appreciation of how the country involved in line with this perspective Coleman (1995:41) had noted that the unity and disunity experienced in independent Nigeria is a reflection of the form and character of the common government imposed over the collection of cultures that made up Nigeria by the colonial power. Extending his contributions, Coleman observed that stable countries are born from similarity of culture, language or a sentiment or desire of the people concerned to come together as one under a common authority, alternately, a single powerful group cultures. According to the authors, in the case of formation of Nigeria,, the British colonial power forced various ethnic groups together without establishing conditions for the emergence of common value among the people. The implication of the loose integration was that the various cultures, Igbos, Yorubas and Hausa-Fulanis saw themselves as competitors instead of one people. And without such partial and wrong decision making implementation, there wouldn't have arise such negative feeling and tensions among the ethic groups. So decision making process has a greater hands in the prevailing condition of the present Nigerian's ethnic conflict which had been causing the lost of uncountable lives and deaths, not to talk of displacements, destructions of properties and valuable substances, etc in the mentioned country.

2.1 Ethnic Conflict since Independence

The years between 1952 and 1966 brought change in the political culture of the country, transforming the three regions into three political entities. Thus, the struggle for independence was reduced to the quest for ethnic dominance. At this time, ethnic and sub-ethnic loyalties threatened the survival of both East and West, while the North was divided religiously between Christianity and Islam. It was a period of politicized ethnicity and competition for resources, which worsened the relationships between ethnic groups. There was a high degree of corruption, nepotism and tribalism. The national interest was put aside while politicians used public money to build and maintain patronage networks. Since independence, the situation in Nigeria has been fraught with ethnic politics whereby the elite from different ethnic groups schemed to attract as many federal resources to their regions as possible, neglecting issues that could have united the country. The anarchy, competition, and insecurity led to the demise of the first republic. Military intervention culminated in the gruesome ethnic war from 1967 to 1970, when the mistreated Igbos of eastern Nigeria, called Biafrans, threatened to secede from the federation. The Igbos' grievances were because they were denied of their basic human needs of equality, citizenship, autonomy and freedom, (Burton, 1992). Wherever such basic needs are denied, conflict often follows as the aggrieved groups use violent means to fight for their human rights.

Ethnocentrism in the country and evidenced corruption of the electoral and political process led in 1966 to a number of revengeful military coups in the country. The first military coup was in January when a collection of young leftists under Major Emmanuel Ifeajuna and Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu led a coup, it was partially successful; the coup brought about the death of some notable figures such as the former Prime Minister, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Premier Ahmadu Bello of the Northern Region and Premier Ladoke Akintola of the Western Region. Though they could not set up a central government, therefore, President Nwafor Orizu was then pressured to hand over government to the Nigeria Army under the command of General JTU Aguiyi-Ironsi. Later, another counter coup by another successful plot, which were primarily supported by the Northern military officers and those Northerners who in favor with the NPC. This time, it was planned and carried out by the Northern officers and gave Lt. Colonel Yakubu Gowon to become head of state. This series of coups led to an increase in ethnic tension and violence. The Northern coup, which was mostly motivated by ethnic and religious reasons, the result was a bloodbath of both military officers and civilians, especially those of Igbo extraction. The violence against the Igbo increased their desire for a demand of their own autonomy and protection from the military's wrath. By May 1967, the Eastern Region had declared itself an independent state calling themselves "Republic of Biafra" with Lt. Colonel Chukwuemeka Odumekwu Ojukwu as the leader, (Murray, 2007).



New head of state Lt. Col. Odumegwu Ojukwu in Enugu shortly after the declaration of independence and formation of the new state of Biafra, June 10 1967 takes the oath of office.



Biafran Flag

The Civil war started when Nigerian, both Western and the Northern joined in attacking Biafra, the South eastern on 6 July, 1967 at Garkem signaling the beginning of the 30 month war that ended in January 1970, (Murray, 2007). Estimates in the former Eastern Region of the number of dead from hostilities, disease, and starvation during the 30 month civil war are estimated at between 1 million and 3 million, (Metz, H. C. 1991).



A child suffering the effects of severe hunger and malnutrition as a result of the blockade. Pictures of the famine caused by Nigerian blockade garnered sympathy for the Biafrans worldwide



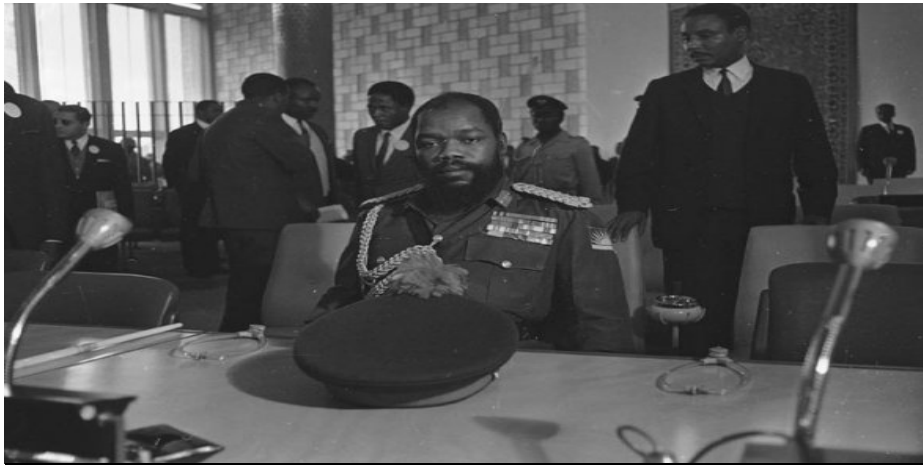
A Biafran doctor hands out cups containing the daily ration of powdered milk to a line of children at a refugee camp in Anwa, Biafra, Aug. 5, 1968.



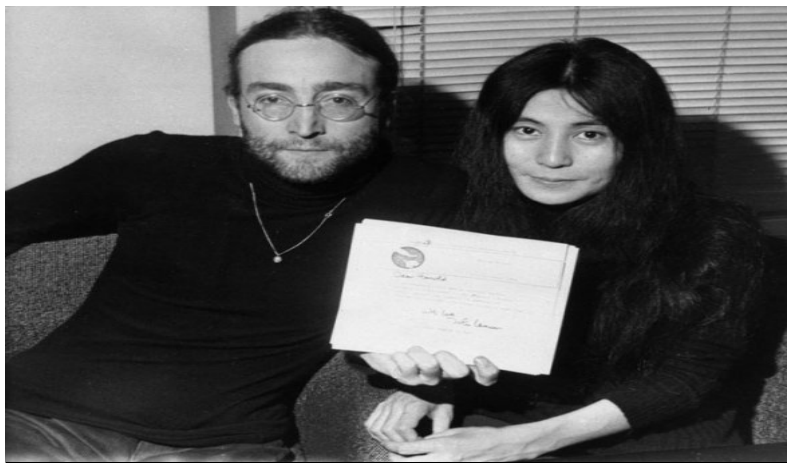
A young mother bosom feeds her five-month-old baby boy while holding her starving four-year-old daughter, near Anwa, Biafra, Aug. 5, 1968. The daughter died a few hours later



Biafra Declaration 30th may 1967



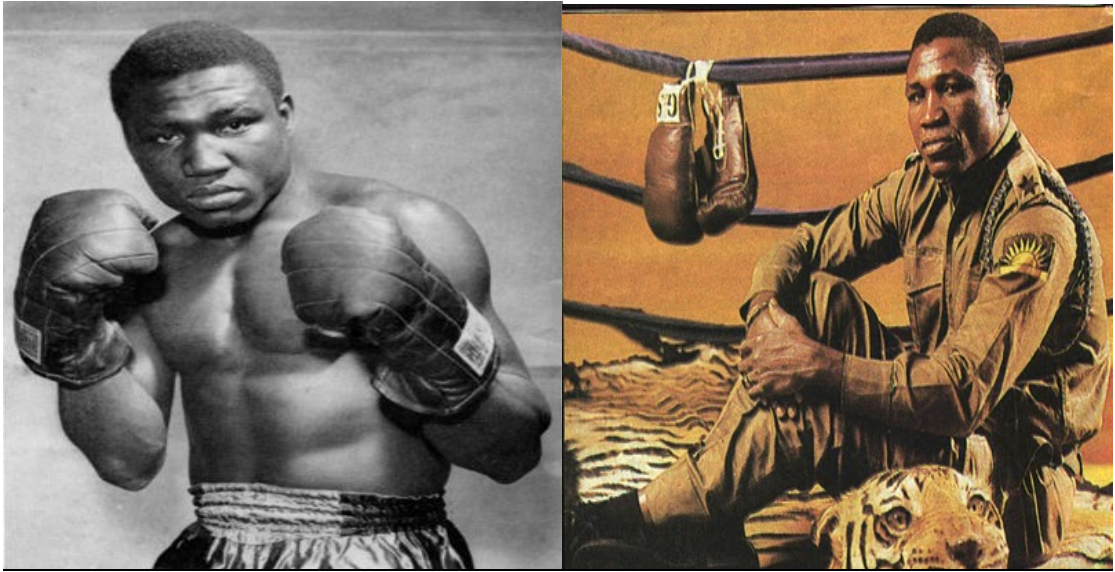
Col. Odumegwu Ojukwu at Nigerian-Biafran peace talks in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia where the Emperor Haile Selassie is chairman of the committee Aug 5 1968



John Lennon & Yoko Ono displaying letter from Lennon to British PM Harold Wilson, Nov. 25, 1969. The letter explains John Lennon's reasons for returning his Order of the British Empire, OBE medal - British support of America in Vietnam & involvement/support of Nigeria against Biafra



Igbo Victim of the civil war, Biafra, Nigeria, July 1968



Dick Tiger developed a portfolio of investments before the outbreak of his homeland's civil war. Supporter of the Biafran secession, Tiger's propaganda and financial support of this cause cost him much. Tiger was appointed CBE by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, but he returned his insignia as a protest for what he perceived as a lack of support by Great Britain to the Biafran cause.



Refugees fleeing Federal troops



Biafra Refugee Camp



Aba General Hospital Massacre by Nigerian Forces with Nigerian Napalm Bomb on July 12, 1968.

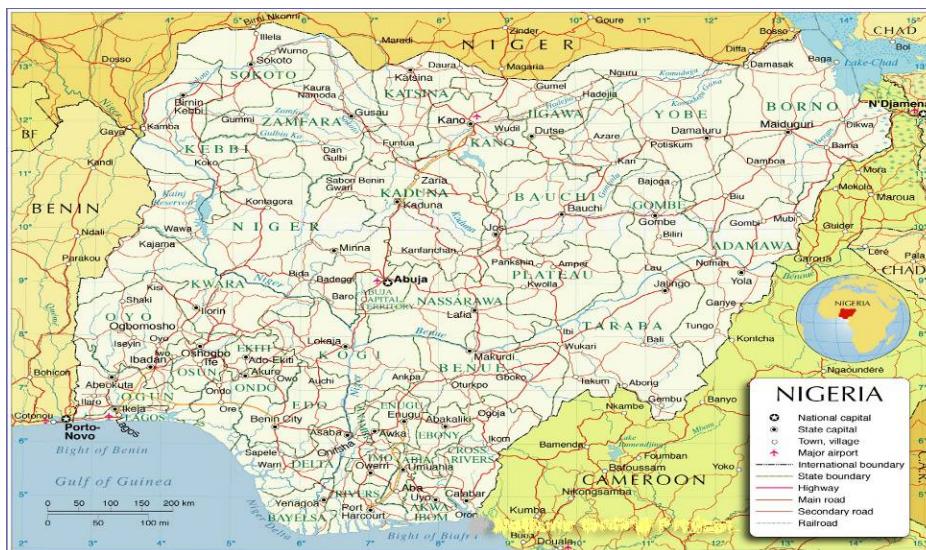


A victim of the war. The Hausa tribe (North Nigerians) massacred a great number of the Igbo tribe (East Nigerians) who were living in the north. The country suffered a severe civil war (1967 - 1970)

(Photos Sources): Biafra: The Nigerian Civil War in Pictures.

<http://www.nairaland.com/nigeria/topic-582396.0.html>

Nigeria is divided into 36 states and one Federal Capital Territory, which are further sub-divided into 774 Local Government Areas (LGAs).



Map of Nigeria with 36 States and Capital

(Sources): http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/map/nigeria_map2.htm

At the beginning there were only 3 States, of which there were only three at independence, reflect the country's tumultuous history and the difficulties of managing such a heterogeneous national entity at all levels of government. Because of its multitude of diverse, sometimes competing ethno-linguistic groups, Nigeria prior to independence has been faced with sectarian tensions and violence. This is particularly a major issue in the oil-producing Niger Delta region, where both state and civilian forces employ varying methods of coercion in attempts gain control over regional petroleum resources. Some of the ethnic groups like the Ogoni, have experienced severe environmental degradation due to petroleum extraction. Since the end of the civil war in 1970, some ethnic violence has persisted. There has subsequently been a period of relative harmony since the Federal Government introduced tough new measures against religious violence in all affected parts of the country. In 2002, organizers of the miss world pageant were forced to move the pageant from the Nigerian capital to London in the wake of violent protests in the Northern part of the country that left more than 100 people dead and over 500 injured. The rioting erupted after Muslims in the country reacted in anger to comments made by a newspaper reporter. Rioters killed an estimated 105 men, women, and children with a further 521 injured taken to hospital.

2.2 Politics, Politician's And Ethnic Conflict

While the politicians tried to cope with the colonial legacy that lumped incompatible ethnic groups together into one country, the military elites staged coups, making a mockery of democracy in Africa's most populous and promising country. The corruption, ineptitude and confusion that marked the military era plunged Nigeria into economic problems, poverty, and ethno-religious conflicts until the 1990s. In Nigeria, where politics still follow ethnic lines, there is always disagreement about the rules of the game. The military intervened because they viewed the civilian leaders as inept and indecisive. However, the southerners distrusted the military regime because they felt it was trying to maintain Hausa-Fulani hegemony in Nigeria. On June 12, 1993, Chief Moshood Abiola, a Yoruba from southwestern Nigeria, won Nigeria's presidential election, but his presidency was annulled by the military regime. In retaliation, southern Nigerians began to form militant organizations to protest unfair treatment and demand a democratically-elected government. During the authoritarian rule of General Sani Abacha, a Muslim from the North, Southerners increasingly feared political marginalization and demanded an end to the Hausa-Fulani domination of the political arena. This development signified the weakness of the government and their lack of effective mechanisms to manage ethnic conflict in Nigeria. Adding to the ethno-religious conflict in Nigeria was the Yorubas' boycott of the 1994 constitutional conference arranged by General Abacha's regime. The conference was meant to resolve the national debate over ethnicity.

Inspired by the pan-Yoruba militant groups, the Afenifere and the Oduduwa Peoples Congress (OPC) in southwestern Nigeria threatened secession and intensified violent protests across the country.

Ethnic conflicts in Nigeria continued through the democratic transition. Olusegun Obasanjo, a civilian, has been president for several years. However, conflict continues to escalate, as various ethnic groups demand a political restructuring. The federal structure has developed deep cracks and demands urgent action to mend it. But what is most worrisome is the religious dimension of ethnic competition for power and oil wealth in Nigeria. The multiple ethno-religious conflicts in the northern cities of Kano, Kaduna, Jos and Zamfara spring from the introduction of Muslim Sharia courts, and the South's demands for autonomy. The continuing conflict is an indication that Nigeria lacks effective mechanisms to manage ethnic conflicts.

3. Causes of Ethnic Conflict among the Children of Giant Lion of Africa

Some scholars have suggested that competition for scarce resources is one of the common contributory factors to ethnic conflicts, especially in almost some parts of Africa. In multi-ethnic societies like Nigeria, ethnic groups violently compete for property, rights, jobs, education, language, social amenities and good health care facilities. Okwudibia Nnoli (1980) emphasized on the empirical instances linking socio-economic factors to ethnic conflict in Nigeria. Another scholar, J.S. Furnival, cited in Nnoli (1980:72-3), that "the working of economic forces warrants for tension between groups with competing interests." According to Gurr's (1970), relative deprivation theory offers an explanation based on an ethnic groups' access to power and economic resources. This is closely associated to Horowitz, (1985), that group worth is based on the results of economic and political competitions.

According to Lake and Rothschild, (1996) ethnic conflict is a sign of a weak state or a state embroiled in ancient loyalties. In this case, states act with bias to favor a particular ethnic group or region, and behaviors such as preferential treatment fuel ethnic conflicts. Therefore, in critical or difficult political situations, the effectiveness of governance is dependent on its ability to address social issues and human needs. A number of factors have conspired to induce and exacerbate conflict in Nigeria. Thus, from the theoretical expositions analyzed above, the causes of conflict in the country can be explained from many perspectives. These perspectives include, Poverty and unemployment, Failure of the government security intelligence and law enforcement agencies in bringing the culprits to book, Northern Nigeria's tradition for carrying out Jihadist Islam, The imposition of Sharia Law in some northern parts of the country, Lack of understanding of what the Islamic faith preaches and Indigene and Settler Controversy.

Emerging findings suggest that one of the reasons why religious violence persists in the country, mostly at the north, is the menace of poverty and unemployment among the teeming youths. Poverty is provoked by unemployment. Poverty also is a plague affecting most teeming youths in many parts of the country. Thus, in the midst of plenty, the phenomenon dehumanizes them as seen most in the Almajiri Institution as the only succor for survival. This group constitutes the vast majority that are always used to ignite fanaticism and in the end unleashing terror and mayhem on the other ethnic groups whom they see now as being the cause of their plight. This situation sometimes may be ignited because of the degree of frustration which may also determine the degree of aggression usually unleashed on the society, especially the Christians and others perceived to be non sympathetic to their plight.

Another factor that provokes conflict in the Nigeria is that the culprits that mastermind these dastardly and abominable acts in the regions go unpunished and escape unhurt. Successive administration, like military and civilian, since independence has always paid lip service and deaf ear to bringing the perpetrators to book. Moreover, numerous religious uprising, especially in the northern part of the country with its attendant consequences in the socio-economic and political development in the country has been appealing to the leaders of the country. This is premised on the fact that Nigeria has been ruled majorly by the north and the emerging leaders see the situation as a means of bridging the development gap between them and the more prosperous south. Emphasis are not lacking as there was no political will on the part of the leadership to bring to book the perpetrators of the Maitasine riots of the 1980s; Kano Riots of 1991, Sharia Riots of 2000, the Jos Mayhem of 2004 and 2010 respectively. As a result of government's insensitivity of the problem under reference, the culprits that were arrested were later released in the law court for lack of evidence.

Following closely on the problem of leaving the perpetrators of violence to go unpunished and the weak institutional mechanisms to check these abuses was apathy and failure of security and intelligence agencies to live up to expectation in confronting the challenge. From a survey conducted, most of the security agencies including the police and the army usually brought in to quell these crises have performed woefully to the disappointment of many Nigerians who had clamored and hoped on it to bring the culprits to book. It is

interesting to note that these security agents even collude and conspire with the culprits. As a result, they have been caught napping when these crises erupts.

Moreover, conflicts in the country, like for instances, the northern part of the are also caused by the religion's tradition for carrying out jihad in the course of one's life. Thus, the extent of fundamentalism and radicalism among the adherents of the faith in other countries has been appealing to those in northern part of the country. Under this arrangement, fighting and violence attracts much premium and becomes institutionalized. It is gratifying to note that the Islamic incursion into the country through the north by Uthman Danfodio left in its wake the consciousness of aggressive and militant radicalism unparalleled in the annals of history of the country. In its posturing, the faith dignifies and sanctifies violence as an act of faith, as a demonstration of sustaining devotion to its tenets and virtuous way of relating with infidels and people of other faiths in the country. The Islamic mentality views with dismay any other religion in the country and in order to enhance its relevance and reverence other religions must be conquered, subdued, and its adherents converted to the faith and if possible by force.

Another major cause of conflicts in the northern part of the country which has remained a reoccurring decimal and a standard in Nigeria's body politic is the introduction and imposition of Sharia Law in some northern states in the country. From all intents and purposes, this imposition is a legality and against the secularity of the nation as enshrined in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. In Nigeria, this imposition was greeted with widespread violence, riots and clashes. This, has, however, created a situation of suspicion, hatred and antagonism between Muslims and non-Muslims in the country. The imposition of Sharia increased fanaticism and irredentism on the side of most Islamic adherents and gave legitimacy to Islamic fundamentalism. This was done ostensibly to create appeals and sustain devotion to Islamic tenets, as introduction of the Sharia Law became attractive to almost all the northern states in the country with its disastrous consequences.

Other reason why conflicts arise in Nigeria is because of the fact that most people lack understanding of what the Islamic faith preaches. The average Moslem faithful believes that he or she will have an easy passport to heaven if he succeeds in killing an unbeliever in the course of propagating the faith. This is premised on the firm belief of the Islamic code for sanctifying hatred, intolerance and bloodshed. As far as this belief system is still endemic in the life of the average Moslem in the country, and their leaders continue to preach these messages, institutionalizing violence will continue to be the order of the day in the northern parts of the country. Following the above as one among the causes of conflicts in the Nigeria is the controversial indigene and settler question in some states in the North-Central parts of the country, notably Plateau and Benue States respectively. The scenario pitched the Moslem Hausa and Fulani and there host communities into confrontation with each other. The former claims that it has a legitimate right to exist and graze its cattle and as a result can settle in any place in the country and claim ownership of it; the later claims that it must be in accordance with their dictates as the bonafide owners of the land. The result was the exchange of violence and mayhem unparalleled in the annals of history in the country. However, accusing fingers were pointed at the leadership of the two faiths and the insensitivity of government of the day was exposed.

3.1 Implications of ethnic Conflict

Ethnic conflict has its tragic constant in human history, and can be widely heard over the Medias. It has peaceful political dimension even more in publicized violent dimension. Its effect is great in the areas like, economic development. Its consequences affect the capital income of any country, growth, and economic policies and no wonder one can easily understand the explanation of that of African poor growth performance. Ethnic conflict also produces poor substantial government leadership and services. African is example of these mentioned factors, (William Easterly, 2001).

Indeed, the researcher observed that most residents expected the government to take sides with the perpetrators of ethnic conflicts so long as such persons identified with the Muslim cause. For a long time, the government could not, therefore, take appropriate steps that would stem the tide of ethnic conflicts. The appreciation of increasing negative impact of ethnic conflicts especially in the area of loss of political influence in relation to the South compelled the Northern elites to stamp their legs on the ground and adopt stiff measures against instigators of ethnic conflicts in the North. The government for the overall interest of the North overlooked the question of religion. The researcher observed that appeared that most of the ordinary persons in the North had gotten the awareness of the fact that ethnic conflict in the North was detrimental to the North. This is reflected in the high degree of support which most Muslim residents in the North gave to government measures against instigators of ethnic influence, notwithstanding any claim to religious motive. Indeed, there seemed to be a general agreement and the people that there was every need to avoid the occurrence of ethnic conflicts in the North thus; a year could

pass with ethnic conflict in the North. This contrasted with the situation in the past when there was not less six events of ethnic conflict registered in the North annually.

The war which pitched the Igbos against the rest of the country led to the loss of numerous lives and properties (Madiebo, 1984:77) largely speaking, ethnic conflicts in Nigeria have resulted in many negative consequences in the country. Basically, ethnic conflicts have resulted in political instability. As a phenomenon, political instability has itself connoted a number of implications for the country. For instances, there has been a state of un conducive atmosphere for taking and effecting viable decisions making and actions by the leaders. Under a condition of instability the people and the leadership are distracted by pursuing their self-fish ambitions and embezzlement of national cake and resources. Again, the existence of political instability arising from ethnic inclination and marginalization has been discontinuity in policies and programmes. The series of policy discontinuity registered in the country have successfully undermined the attainment of socio- economic advancement for the country. Analysts, generally, agree on the relevance of policy continually for the attainment of socio-economic development. At some point, newspaper reports, carried stories of abandoned programmes and projects all over the country. Each incoming regime tended to ignore ongoing programmes started by the previous regime. This results in wastage of resources. Official corruption has continued to the climax as a result of ethnicity and conflicts and each ethnic group have sought to cover up for their members who were involved in acts of official corruption. Indeed, many policies and programmes in Nigeria have fallen prey to embezzlement of public funds. Attempts at apprehending and prosecuting culprits have often intensified ethnic conflicts in the country. The various problems arising from persistent ethnic conflicts in Nigeria and the north in particular, have led to a number of pertinent questions. Why most of these brutal and bloody ethnic conflict always from the northern regions?

There have been many penned write-ups by various scholars who look ethnicity as a cause of many conflicts in Nigeria. Handelman (2000) stated, intertribal conflict has on a number of occasion's sparked great violence in Africa. Countries such as Nigeria, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Sudan and Zaire have been torn apart by civil wars that have been largely of particularly ethnic based. McCormick (2001) notes that, ethnic divisions are more important to understanding Nigerian society than social or labor divisions because Nigerians differentiate themselves less by class or occupation than by ethnic group. This phenomenon (variously labeled ethnicity, ethno nationalism or tribalism) involves adherence or loyalty to a particular region or tribe, a sense of exclusivity and discrimination against people from other regions or tribes.

According to Then and Wilson (1996), the source of ethnic conflict, weather it is between a major groups, or between larger groups and smaller minority groups, is not found in bigotry and prejudice The real heart of ethnics conflict in Nigeria is that hostility derived not from ethnic differences but from competition between different peoples for wealth and power. Politicians from each group seek to obtain greater political power and economic benefits for their own people rather than seeking the good of united Nigeria. In this contact, the most important to Nigerian development is the linkage between ethnic groups and political parties. Ethnic based interest groups and parties impeded political development and national unity by engendering mutual mistrust, but, on the other hand, the affiliation of ethnic groups with political parties tended to transfer ethnic conflict into nonviolent arena of political interaction (Roth and Wilson 1976).

4. Managing Ethnic Conflict And Differences in Nigeria

A number of suggestions are quite pertinent in managing ethnic conflict in the said society one among the practical steps to abating the matter is to see the need for a constitutional conference in the country under civilian rule. Though last time it ended reaching no consensus, but in the case of another meeting, the best would be to hold it regionally by each region. At the end of the whole regional meetings, the decisions will be gathered together for special but few nice and responsible selected personalities to finally draw conclusion based on the submitted decisions from each region, having in mind to favor all the regions instead of partiality against over others. In doing so, it would give the citizens the opportunity of rebuilding Nigeria with a view to formulating rules that would remove such biases that encourage ethnic inclination in the people. The conference would remove the negative impacts of colonialism, thus establishing or instituting a genuinely stable Nigerian, where each ethnic group would receive equitable share of resources from the Nigerian polity. This is the core area where our early independence fathers' failed; instead they were after their respective and united ethnocentrism and visions.

The national institutions like the NYSC, among other integrating institutions should be encouraged. People from different ethnic groups should be encouraged to get together or mix-up as frequently as possible. Exchanging programmes in education and, other areas should be encouraged by the Federal government, in any concrete action in implementing such things it would go a long way in reducing ethnic bias and tension, creating an understanding

that will abate ethnic conflict among the people. The federal government should work very hard towards enthroning equity in distribution and sharing of national resources. If this is done, bickering would be reduced and ethnic conflicts would be minimal, see Parties to the conflict table below.

5. Conclusion

Nigeria from 1960 until now has been experiencing, ethnic divisions, confrontations, re-occurring conflicts both in politics, economy, leadership, religious, and class and so on. Nigeria's political crisis keeps degenerates the more (Bradshaw York and Wallace Michael, 1996; 86). The table below shows few major conflict statuses, the parties involved, place, date, cause and the result effects, from 1963 to 2008 in Nigeria.

Ethnicity emergence of Nigeria federalism has without measure caused feelings of ethnic identity and as a result; rejection became the basis of distinguishing individuals in the cities and at the national level (Nnoli, 1976: 14). It is phenomenon that each ethnic groups in Nigeria belief is that they can only receive help from members of their ethnic group alone (Sillo, 1999: 1). The recent bloody conflict that was named "*Christians and Muslims*" conflict at Jos, take for instance is a repeated evidences of what I called fact or colour, which resemble the truth, but not really the root (truth) of the escalation of the action (the war). The truth behind the action was that some cow reared men took their cows into the farms of another group which destroyed the crops in those other people's farm, and when the owners of the farms came and was both angry, being hurtled because of their labored farms and crops been selfishly destroyed by other groups cows, in return against such unreasoning malpractices was the conflict. By reasoning, who will not agree that cows can destroy crops sown in any particular farm?

Critically, if view in the right perspective, could such minor incident cause so many blood shedding and finally lost of lives to such an extent, the whole world can noticed? Why and how should such unusual trespass and individual wicked behavior be taken to be "*Christians' and Muslims*" conflict? In education and it's ramification, does politics means injustice, assassinations, killing, violent actions, corruptions, etc., as it is being experiencing in the modern politics among the political leaders' and parties so called? In view of the above questions, let us take a look on the report below:

"A new journey begins for Nigeria after incumbent President, Goodluck Jonathan was re-elected and sworn in as President over the weekend. However, from the trappings of the recent past, that journey seems to be on the same path of corruption, government ineptitude, official sleaze and waste and general hopelessness. Virtually everywhere you look on the Nigerian polity, all you see is how governance should not be done. If you expect that the new administration of President Goodluck Jonathan will usher in the much needed drive towards fast paced development and economic liberalization, then you expect too much. We see no reason how a man who has been at the helm for the better part of the last one year will suddenly do things differently now, simply because this term is his "personal mandate". It does appear so though, as given the fact he said he would not be seeking a second term, then you'd expect an all out style of governance without fear and prejudice. There would be no need to satisfy the powers that be as he wouldn't be in need of them again for any re-election purposes. If there is any man who owes Nigerians a huge debt, it is Goodluck Jonathan. Despite the PDP's notoriety, they came out in their numbers to vote for him. Most of these voters said something in the line of "I am not voting for PDP, I am voting for Jonathan", this despite the fact that Jonathan on the ballot paper was the symbol of an umbrella and the acronym PDP. In Nigeria, reason is always beyond reasoning. Words are bandied and used as if Nigerians were its creator. Well, they voted PDP and Jonathan won in a free and fair election. The question is whether Jonathan will stand by the masses now he has what he asked for. He has a lot to do. Outgoing Governors have handed over some 48 hours or so early. The two term Governor of the South Western State of Ogun, Gbenga Daniel is as we speak somewhere in the United Kingdom having handed over to the new government well ahead of schedule. Fully cognizant of his imminent arrest for corruption and his immunity, he chose to outrun justice early while justice cannot yet run after him. A man whom the people of Ogun state trusted with their future eight years ago as he promised them an agenda for a secured future, would not even wait to be cheered (or booed) out of office as he chose to leave in the cloud of suspicion and the fear of his own demons. Jonathan has the responsibility of making sure people like Gbenga Daniel, Alao Akala of Oyo state, Ikedi Ohakim of Imo state, Alhaji Ibrahim Shekarau of Kano state and their ilk face the wrath of the law. The fact that some eight or so past Governors of previous regimes still walk around as free men does not encourage one's optimism on this front. Chief Olusegun Obasanjo whom many will credit for Jonathan's rise to power spent some \$16 billion in his bid to help make electric power outages history in Nigeria, but the history about that is how much of the money went into private pockets (including his) and how he left the problem of electricity generation far worse than he met it. Jonathan has promised to ensure Nigerians enjoy more electricity. In the run up to the elections, this looked a believable promise as the supply of power rose to unprecedented levels

-something which the president was quick to refer to in his bid for the people's mandate, only for that to suddenly change soon after the elections. He needs peace in his home town region of the Niger Delta to achieve anything meaningful with Nigeria's chaotic power supply and he has been able to achieve something close to that so far. The short term will determine how far that pregnant peace will hold. I had told sitting Nigerian ministers in Abuja at a World Bank organized Nigerian village square meeting on the need for a total overhaul of the educational sector. They agreed, but things have gone from worst to disastrous since then. Institutional strikes that keep University students at home for long stretch of months remain the norm. This along with the National Youth Service Corps top the mess that is the educational sector Goodluck Jonathan will need to tidy up. To understate how much the government valued the life of a Nigerian graduate, they gave a whopping \$32,500 (N5,000,000) to the families of deceased Corps members killed in the aftermath of the president's electoral victory. It was easier for the government to gather some young Nigerians together at a Lunch with the president worth N70,000,000 to discuss issues the president knows too well having been a University lecturer. Much has been written about that ill-fated Lunch, so there would be no need to highlight that mess here. However, a ray of hope exists. The success story of Lagos is a pointer to the fact that Nigeria can change. President Jonathan does not inspire confidence when he speaks, but that will not matter if his works as president inspire Nigeria to its rightful place of greatness. He sees God in his rise from sheer poverty to the presidency; President Goodluck Jonathan will certainly call for the divine in his quest to tidy up Nigeria. His story inspired Nigerians to vote for him, one can only wish his works will inspire Nigeria to greater good" (Japheth J. Omojuwa, 2011).

In summary to the context of this paper, another question is what would be the achievement of the present government or leadership in terms of making living favorable to his fellow citizens, especially, in the area of ethnic conflict management and over the daily needs of his people? Eyes are watching, knees are praying and, hearts are discerning and observing actions.

Parties To The Conflict

Date	Place	Element	Cause	Effect
1963 - 1964	Kano and Kaduna	The Elites	Secession from the elites against traditional rulers/Kings	Bloody death of both the elites, traditional rulers/King etc
1966 - 1970	Nigeria Civil War	Igbo and Hausa	Biafra demanding self-determination in a state which could protect the lives and properties of its Citizens. The <i>secession</i> of the former eastern region of Nigeria as a sovereign state, "Biafra."	Military casualties estimated over 100,000; Death as a result of starvation from Half a million to 2 million, (John P. Mackintosh et al. 1966:498-501, John de St. Jorre, 1972).
1992 & 1999	Ketu & Mile 12	Yorubas & Hausas	Traditional Market Union leadership tussle, (Sillo, 1999: 1)	Mayhem lives and many Properties lost.
June 1999	Bodija Market in Ibadan	Hausa & Yoruba	Hausa man who was a cattle rarer and a Yoruba man who was allegedly knocked down by Hausa man's cattle – became an intense quarrel between Hausa-Fulani cattle rarer & the Yoruba traders.	Eye Witness Stated: Casualties of 10 people lost their lives; 24 vehicles burnt & 130 shops were burnt.
July 1999	Shagamu Lagos	Yorubas & Hausas	Long standing political rivalry; Land ownership & Observance of the rituals of a traditional Oro festival of Yoruba people	

1999	Kano	Hausa - Fulani	Planned revenge for the losses incurred at the Sagamu Violence. One Kano ethnic indigene, Alhaji Dangote, a prominent Lagos businessman who brought the Sagamu survivors in trailers back to Kano, on getting to Kano, the returnees reportedly recounted a glory picture of their Kiths and Kin. This was said to have caused anger and bitterness to the people of Kano who descended on the Yoruba's who dwell in Kano.	Lives and countless of Properties were destroyed.
2002 - 2003	Kano & Kaduna	Muslim & Christian	Ethnic tension, etc. over the introduction of the Sharia Law which provides for corporal punishment, amputation of limbs, and decapitation.	In 1999 to 2004, a total Estimation of over 50,000 people killed in violence, while a total of 800,000 others displaced.

Sources: (a) Globe and Mail, 23 February 2000, BBC News, October 7, 2004),

(b) Amnesty International, 23 November 2004,

© IRINnews.org, October 11th, 2000. * The table only shows the major conflicts.

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