

Ethnic Politics as a Challenge to the Development of Federalism in Nigeria: The Case of Ebonyi State

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ABSTRACT

Federalism as a system of government has been adopted as a way of ensuring peaceful coexistence in heterogeneous societies like Nigeria. Regrettably, the Nigerian Federalism has continued to be threatened by inter-ethnic rivalry which splits Nigeria along ethnic line tearing the unity of Nigeria. This study was however on ethnicity and political development in Nigeria and its challenges to Nigerian federalism with focus on Ezza South Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. With regards to methodology, this study adopted descriptive design and made use of probability sampling technique as well as Taro Yamani formula to determine the sample size of the study from the general population. In its method of analysis, the study used simple percentage and chi-square statistical tool for test of hypotheses. The group theory was adopted as a framework of analysis to this study. The hypotheses of the study include; (i) There is a nexus between ethnicity and political development in Nigeria, (ii) Ethnicity has a significant relationship with politics and nation-building of Nigeria. (Hi) There is a link between ethnic politics and party politics in Nigeria, (iv) Ethnic conflicts have significant impact on Nigerian federalism. The findings of this study showed that there is a nexus between ethnicity and political development in Nigeria. The study also established that ethnicity has a significant relationship with politics and nation-building of Nigeria. The study further established that there is a link between ethnic politics and party politics in Nigeria. Also established is that ethnic conflict has significant impact on Nigerian federalism. This study however recommended that Nigeria should operate a truly federal system in which every section or even ethnic group is autonomous in regard to its internal affairs. There is need to ensure that the distribution of the revenue encourage each state and local government to improve internal revenue generation, not to constantly and wholly depend on the fund coming from the federation account. There should be adequate compensation for those who provide the common wealth and all stakeholders must be committed to fine-tuning the process in the overall interest of the country. Government also should embark on mass enlightenment to discourage the idea of choosing a leader based on ethnic group, religion and political affinity.

KEYWORDS: *Ethnicity, Political development, Federalism and Nigeria.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a country with diverse ethnic groups existing side-by-side, struggling for survival, identification and recognition in the country. Feelings of suspicion of one ethnic group's domination over another become inevitable [1,2]. The incessant agitation and struggle to have control of the nation's resources remain the bone of contention and sources of threat to peaceful co-existence, national unity and national integration in the country [3]. Thus, federalism as a system of government has been adopted as a way of ensuring peaceful coexistence in heterogeneous societies and Nigeria is no exception. Being federal implies having a system of government in which the individual states of a country have control over their own affairs, and are not controlled by the central government for state decisions [4]. Unfortunately, the peaceful coexistence as one of the fundamental factors for adopting federal system of government in Nigeria has always been confronted by a lot of challenges since the inception of the country and most of these challenges are products of ethnic politics and sentiments. Since the amalgamation of Southern and Northern provinces in 1914, Nigeria has existed as a country only on paper. It is still far from being united. Nigeria's unity is only a British inheritance for the country [5]. Coupled with this disillusionment on the legitimacy of the Nigerian state was the bare faced ethnic antagonism between notable political leaders of the major ethnic groups. Of note was the brinkmanship between Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe and Chief Obafemi Awolowo following the former's highly sectional rhetoric recorded in the West Africa Pilot edition of 1947 [6]. According to Azikiwe;

"It would appear that the God of Africa has created the Igbo nation to lead the children of Africa from the bondage of the ages... the martial prowess of the Igbo nation at all ages of human history has enabled them the role of preservers... The Igbo nation cannot shift its responsibility from its manifest destiny," [7]. Chief Obafemi Awolowo responded to what he felt was Azikiwe's ethnic chauvinism by saying, "It seems clear to me

that (Azikiwe's) policy was to corrode the self respect of the Yoruba people as a group and to build up the Ibo as a master race" [8]. Inter ethnic rivalry was indeed rife and pervasive especially between the three major ethnic groups; Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo. There is therefore the need to design a political arrangement to douse this unhealthy ethnic rivalry cocooned in embedded economic interest. Thus, federalism became that political arrangement through which fear of domination of one ethnic group by the other could be allayed. As a political arrangement that makes room for the division of power within a state between the component regions and the central government, federalism could not have been more apt for a plural society like Nigeria, hence, its acceptance by the British colonialist and the Nigerian political elites [9].

Between the periods of 1947 to 1953 the Nigeria state witnessed a lot of debates midwifed by the British colonialist as regards the formation and adoption of federalism in the country [10]. The Macpherson constitution of 1951 was shunted because of what the nationalists felt was its undue rigidity. Consequently conferences were held in London and Lagos in 1953 that eventually ushered in the Lyttleton constitution of 1954 which adopted full federalism for the country [11]. The amalgamation of Nigeria which came about for administrative convenience by the colonialists was followed by protest from different people who were forced to live together without taking into consideration their differences in languages, cultures, beliefs and traditions. Among various ethnic groups that were fused together as Nigeria incongruously were the Kanuri, Hausa, Fulani, Nupe, Ijaw, Igala, Idoma, Jukun, Yoruba, Igbo, Tiv, Edo, etc. The Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo established their domination in the Northern, Western and Eastern regions of Nigeria respectively. At independence in 1960, these three dominant groups in their regions led to minority ethnic groups' agitation for the creation of more states. The country which had only three regions at independence in 1960 has now metamorphosed into thirty-six States and separate Federal Capital Territory [12]. The polarization of ethos amongst the Nigerian peoples meant a political arrangement that would effectively manage the ethno-religious fault lines that mushroomed during colonial rule. Hence, the clamour for such a political arrangement as deduced from the statement of the British colonial representative in Nigeria - Sir Arthur Richard in 1946 during the deliberations on the 1946 constitution: "*It is only by the accident of British suzerainty which has made Nigeria one country. It is still far from being one country or one nation socially or even economically; socially and politically there are deep differences between the major tribal groups. They do not speak the same language and they have highly divergent customs and ways of life and they represent different stages of culture*" [13].

This line of thought was also at different times echoed by Nigeria's nationalists notably Chief Obafemi Awolowo and Sir Tafawa Balewa. In the opinion of Awolowo, a strong advocate of federalism - Nigeria is not a nation, it is a mere geographical expression, there are no Nigerians in the same sense that there are English or Welsh or French. The word Nigeria is merely a distinctive appellation to distinguish those who live within the boundaries of Nigeria from those who do not [14]. However, the adoption of federalism in 1954 was not without acrimony as the federal system adopted was seen as defective because one region (north), was bigger than the other two regions (west and East) combined. This made Chief Obafemi Awolowo a strong advocate of Federalism to label it "an abominable disrupting and divisive British heritage" [15]. Chief Awolowo's vituperations may not be out of place, because a defective federal arrangement can actually create more problems than the solutions it was intended to create as the political philosopher John Stuart Mill pointed out: There should not be any one state so much more powerful than the rest as to be capable of vying in strength with many of them combined. If there be such a one and only one, it will insist on being master of the joint deliberations, if there be two they will be irresistible when they agree and whenever they differ, everything will be decided by a struggle for ascendancy between the rivals [16]. Beyond this structural imbalance that characterised Nigeria's federalism from the outset, the thorny issue of minority groups' cry of marginalization and unbridled domination by the major ethnic groups equally flared up which prompted the setting up of the Willinks Commission of 1957 to address the grievances of the minority groups. It is a truism that ethnic virus has been a dangerous cancer causing social crisis, political instability and threat to the peaceful coexistence, unity and national integration of Nigeria as a nation. Ethnic politics and regional sentiments are responsible for Nigeria's slow pace and pace of political advancement and democratic process. It is against this background that the paper examines the heterogeneous composition of Nigerian state with respect to ethnic politics vis-a-vis its challenges to national integration in Nigeria.

II. RESEARCH PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES

The Nigerian state is a British colonial contraption that was formed with the merger of the Northern arid and Southern rainy protectorates in 1914. Prior to British colonial forage into the area now called Nigeria, the diverse ethnic nationalities operated largely as distinct autonomous groups [4, 5, 7]. Nigeria's heterogeneous groups were never consulted before a union was foisted on them. British colonial forceful integration of the

Nigerian peoples was further exacerbated by the colonialists egregious policy of divide and rule. The British colonial policy of divide and rule pitted one ethnic group against the other and the subsequent cataclysmic effects of that egregious policy on the Nigeria state is that it laid a fertile ground for ethno-religious disharmony to fester [5,7]. Unfortunately, economic scarcity occasioned by the British colonialist disarticulated economic practices also deepened on the manipulation or primordial fault lines for sectional interest especially amongst the emerging indigenous ruling class from the fold of the nationalist [8,9].

Nigerian federalism was also confronted by the military incursion in the politics of the nation. It must be said that discussion on the evolution of Nigeria's federalism cannot be complete without highlighting the impact of military rule. The inability of the political class who succeeded the British Colonialists on October 1, 1960, to manage their differences for the harmonious co-existence of the Nigerian state, eventually led to a coup d'etat on Jan 15, 1966; counter coup in July 1966 and eventually a bloody civil war from 1967-1970. The military who retained power after the war ended in 1970 were to later reconstruct Nigeria's federalism from the appreciable autonomy its gave the regions from 1954 to 1966 into a largely centralized system with less autonomy for the component units. The military as an institution typifies an ideal Weberian bureaucratic model that would not just fit into the practice of true federalism. According to [7]: Basically Military federalism in Nigeria has two conspicuous features. The first is the military superstructure: military regime in which institutions of popular participation were suspended. The military hierarchy of autonomy, the head of the federal military government appoints all state governors who are responsible to him. This negates the traditional principle of federalism and fits the Apter's model of mobilization with chain of command and minimum accountability to the people.

The military tinkered with Nigeria's federalism with little or no accountability to the people and consequently to the detriment of preserving diversity and at the same time maintaining unity which federalism was intended to create in the first place, which made [6,8] to corroborate Elaigwu's earlier assertion. The instability of Nigeria's federalism has also been promoted by the trial and error approach of the governmental system under the military rule. Military rule by its very nature does not favour an ideal federalism since the unified command of the army has not been trained for such a system of government. The military incursion into governance only led to the entrenchment of a structure with a very strong centre and weak component units that eventually became subservient to the central government. The impact of the Nigerian military on the practice of Federalism in the country can indeed not be over emphasized, the thirty six states of the federation, quota system federal character principle and the 1999 constitution that ushered in our nascent democracy are some of the legacies of military rule in the Nigerian state [9].

It has been a century since the emergence of Nigeria as an entity and over fifty four years of which Nigeria has been in its post colonial governance. However, the country continues to grapple with the recurrent issue of ethno-religious antagonism and disharmony. While it is not misplaced for plural societies to be confronted with the issue of unity in diversity, Nigeria's narrative continues to be so intractable and perennial. The preponderance of centrifugal forces in the Nigerian polity cannot be overemphasized as evident in the rise of ethno-religious militia groups; wide spread display of narrow and parochial political sentiments; abuse of office for sectional gain, widespread corruption and official graft etc. The design of Nigeria's political architecture on the template of federalism was intended to create unity in the midst of diversity that would in turn galvanise and promote development in the socio-political and economic landscape of the country. This study however, will be guided by the following research questions:

- i. Is there a nexus between ethnicity and political development in Nigeria?
 - ii. Does ethnicity have any significant relationship with politics and nation-building of Nigeria?
 - iii. Is there any link between ethnic politics and party politics in Nigeria?
 - iv. To what extent do ethnic conflicts impact on Nigerian federalism?
- The broad objective of this study is to examine ethnicity and political development in Nigeria and its challenges to Nigerian federalism.

III. METHOD AND SAMPLING

The research design adopted in this study is descriptive design. The research dwelt on ethnicity and political development in Nigeria with focus on the challenges of Nigerian federalism. Documentary materials like text books, journals, magazines, internet, government gazettes and other relevant written literatures were used to generate data in this study.

This study was conducted in Ezza South Local Government in Ebonyi State. Ezza South is a Local Government Area of Ebonyi State, Nigeria. Its headquarter is in the town of Onueke. It has an area of 324 km² and a population of 133,625 as at the 2006 census. The postal code of the area is 482.

Population is the aggregate or totality of the units in the universe of a study. It defines the limit within which the research findings are applicable. The population of this study is accordingly based on information gotten from the 2006 National Population Commission (NPC) Census concerning the population of Nigeria. Ezza South Local Government population according to the National Population Commission Census Report,

2006 Gazette No.2 vol.96 (2009) Abuja, is one hundred and thirty-three thousand, six hundred and twenty five (133,625). This is the general population out of which samples were taken for this research paper.

The sampling technique used here is the probability sampling technique. This gives each member of the population equal chance as representative of the entire population. The technique guided the researcher in taking a sample that is representative enough to arrive at reliable research or outcome. In determining the sample size, the formula of Taro Yamani (1964:280) was adopted. This statistical formula was used to calculate the sample of the entire Ezza South population of 133,625 citizens of both sexes and all ages of 2006 census year. The formula state thus:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n - Expected sample size

N = Total population

e = Margin of error 5% $(0.05)^2$ or (0.0025) .

Therefore, the sample size was gotten out of the 2006 total population census of Ebonyi State which is 133,625.

Thus;

$$n = \frac{133,625}{1 + 133,625 (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{133,625}{1 + 133,625 (0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{133,625}{1 + 133,625 \times 0.0025}$$

$n =$

$$\frac{133,625}{1 + 334.0625}$$

$n = 335.0625$ approximately 335

Since there is no fraction of a human being in the population figure, the sample size is approximated to 335. Hence, the sample size used in this study is 335.

Validity and Reliability Tests

The instrument's (questionnaire) coefficient of validity was 0.75.

Reliability implies the ability of an instrument to produce the same consistent results over time. However, the test-retest reliability was adopted to determine the reliability of the instrument. So, the reliability of this study was enhanced due to the use of test-retest method, with a coefficient of 0.70.

Data Collection and Analysis

This study employed both the primary and secondary methods of data collection. The primary method provided the quantitative data that were analyzed statistically, while the secondary method provided the qualitative data that were sourced from already existing relevant literatures as presented in the chapter two this work. The researcher used questionnaire as the principal instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was designed to cover all the criteria that were necessary variables among the subjects under study. Here, issues of age, gender, occupation, education, and the major variables of ethnicity and political development in Nigeria with focus on the challenges to Nigerian federalism were structured into questionnaire items used for the study.

The method of data analyses used in this study was the simple percentage. This is re-presented by the formular:

$$\frac{X}{N} \times 100\%$$

N

Where:

X = The percentage sought for

N = Total number of population

This method (technique) was found most convenient for this study by this paper and was thus adopted here in. The study was conducted using a close ended questionnaires which allowed the respondents to choose from the listed answers in the questionnaire which he/she thought was the best answer in the question by ticking (V) in the box against the answer. This is aimed at capturing the relevant information on ethnicity and political development in Nigeria with a focus on its challenges to Nigerian federalism. To test the hypothesis, the chi-square statistical tool was used. This section deals with the presentation of data collected from the questionnaire administered, the analysis of data obtained for the purpose of this research and presentation of the findings and observations thereof. The major source of data collected was from the primary source. That is, the use of questionnaire administered to respondents. The questionnaire items were analyzed individually to give credence to the paper. Out of three hundred and thirty five (335) copies of questionnaire distributed, three hundred (300) representing 89.6% were filled and returned, while thirty five (35) copies representing 10.4%, were unreturned. The data collected for this paper were arranged in tables, containing the frequency of respondents and their respective percentages. The analysis of this paper was also based on the tables. However, the hypotheses of this study were tested using tables and the percentages.

Bio Data of the Respondents Table 1

| Questionnaire | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Returned | 300 | 89.6 |
| Not Returned | 35 | 10.4 |
| Total | 335 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey, 2020

From the table, it is observed that a total of 300 (89.6%) were returned while 35 (10%) were not returned. This shows that a workable percentage of the questionnaires were well field and returned.

Table 2: Gender Distribution

| S/N | Gender | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|--------------|---------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Male | 230 | 77 |
| 2 | Female | 70 | 23 |
| Total | 300 | 100% | |

Source: Field Survey, 2020

This table shows that 230 of the respondents representing 77% were males while 70 respondents representing 23% were females. This shows that the number of males outnumbered their female counterpart.

Table 3: Distribution on Age Bracket

| Years | Frequency(No) | Percentage (%) |
|--------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 18-30 | 180 | 60 |
| 31-40 | 60 | 20 |
| 41-50 | 45 | 15 |
| 51 and above | 15 | 5 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey, 2020

This table indicated that 180 respondents representing (60%) of the population were people between 18-30 years, 60 (20%) were between 31-40 years, 45 respondents representing 15% were between the ages of 41-50, and 15 respondents representing 5% were people of 51 years and above.

Table 3: Distribution on Marital Status

| Marital Status | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Single | 270 | 90 |
| Married | 30 | 10 |
| Divorced | Nil | Nil |
| Widowed | Nil | Nil |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The table showed that 270 respondents representing 90% were single, 30 respondents representing 10% were married, there was no respondent divorced or widowed.

Table 4: Educational Qualification

| Qualification | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| FSLC | 80 | 26 |
| SSCE/WAEC | 115 | 38.3 |
| OND/HND | 30 | 10 |
| B.Sc/M.Sc | 60 | 20 |
| Others | 15 | 5 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey, 2020

This table shows that 80 respondents representing 26.7% were FSLC holders, 115 respondents representing 38.3% are SSCE/WAEC holders, 30 respondents representing 10% are OND/HND holders, 60 representing 20% are B.Sc/M.Sc holders, while 15 respondents representing 5% are those holding other degrees.

Data Presentation

Question 1: Are there cases of ethnic conflicts in (Ezza South)Ebonyi State

Table 6:

| Alternatives | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Agree | 45 | 15 |
| Strongly Agree | 162 | 54 |
| Disagree | 36 | 12 |
| Strongly Disagree | 42 | 14 |
| Undecided | 15 | 5 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The table showed that 45 respondents amounting to 15% of the total response agreed that there are cases of ethnic conflicts in Ezza South, 162 respondents representing 54% strongly agreed, 36 respondents amounting to 12% disagree, 42 (14%) of the respondents strongly disagreed, while 15 respondents amounting to 5% were undecided or neutral.

Question 2: Does Ethnicity hinder political development in Nigeria?

Table 7:

| Alternatives | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Agree | 42 | 14 |
| Strongly Agree | 165 | 55 |
| Disagree | 34 | 11 |
| Strongly Disagree | 45 | 15 |
| Undecided | 15 | 5 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey, 2020

This table indicated that 42 respondents representing 14% of the total response agreed that ethnicity hinders political development in Nigeria, 165 respondents amounting to 55% strongly agreed, 34 respondents representing 11% disagreed, 45 respondents amounting to 15% strongly disagreed, while 15 respondents representing 5% of the total responses are undecided.

Question 3: Is Ethnic conflict a major challenge confronting politics in Nigeria?

Table 8:

| Alternatives | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Agree | 15 | 5 |
| Strongly Agree | 161 | 54 |
| Disagree | 42 | 14 |
| Strongly Disagree | 48 | 16 |
| Undecided | 34 | 11 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The table indicated that 15 respondents representing 5% of the total responses agreed that ethnic conflict is a major challenge confronting politics in Nigeria, 161 respondents amounting to 54% strongly agreed, 42 respondents representing 14% disagreed, 48 (16%) of the respondents strongly disagreed while 34 (11%) of the respondents are uncertain.

Question 4: Is Ethnicity is the bane of nation-building in Nigeria?

Table 9:

| Alternatives | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Agree | 41 | 14 |
| Strongly Agree | 170 | 57 |
| Disagree | 45 | 15 |
| Strongly Disagree | 34 | 11 |
| Undecided | 10 | 3 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The table indicated that 41 respondents representing 14% of the total response agreed that ethnicity is the bane of nation-building in Nigeria, 170 respondents representing 57% strongly agreed, 45 respondents, amounting to 15% disagreed, 34 respondents representing 11% strongly disagreed, while 10 respondents amounting to 3% were undecided.

Question 5: Does Ethnicity have a significant impact on the socio-political development in Nigeria?

Table 10:

| Alternatives | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Agree | 58 | 19 |
| Strongly Agree | 161 | 54 |
| Disagree | 32 | 11 |
| Strongly Disagree | 34 | 11 |
| Undecided | 15 | 5 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The table indicated that 58 respondents representing 19% the total responses agreed that ethnicity has significant impact on the socio-political development in Nigeria, 161 respondents representing (54%) strongly agreed, 32 (11 %) respondents disagreed, 34 (11%) respondents strongly disagreed, while 15 (5%) respondents were undecided.

Question 6: Is there evidence of tribalism in Ebonyi State?

Table 11:

| Alternatives | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Agree | 55 | 18 |
| Strongly Agree | 162 | 54 |
| Disagree | 36 | 12 |
| Strongly Disagree | 15 | 5 |
| Undecided | 32 | 11 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The table indicated that 55 respondents amounting to 18% of the total responses agreed that there is evidence of tribalism in Ebonyi State, 162 respondents representing 54% strongly agreed, 36 (12%) respondents disagreed, 15 (5%) respondents strongly disagreed, while 32 respondents representing 11% of the total responses were undecided.

Question 7: Is there a problem of indigeneship in Ebonyi State?

Table 12:

| Alternatives | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Agree | 42 | 14 |
| Strongly Agree | 162 | 54 |
| Disagree | 43 | 14 |
| Strongly Disagree | 32 | 11 |
| Undecided | 21 | 7 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey, 2020

This table shows that 42 respondents representing 14% of the total responses agreed that there is a problem of indigeneship in Ebonyi State, 162 respondents amounting to 54% strongly agreed, 43 respondents representing 14% disagreed, 32 (11%) respondents strongly disagreed, whereas, 21 (7%) were undecided response or responses

Question 8: Does Indigeneship syndrome limit political development in Ebonyi State?

Table 13:

| Alternatives | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Agree | 42 | 14 |
| Strongly Agree | 165 | 55 |
| Disagree | 45 | 15 |
| Strongly Disagree | 15 | 5 |
| Undecided | 11 | 4 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey, 2020

This table indicated that 42 respondents representing 14% of the total responses agreed that indigeneship syndrome limits political development in Ezza South, 165 respondents representing 55% strongly agreed, 45 (15%) respondents disagreed, 15 (5%) respondents strongly disagreed, while 34 (11%) respondents were undecided.

Question 9: Non-indigene has never been the chairman of Ezza South Local Government?

Table 14:

| Alternatives | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Agree | 57 | 19 |
| Strongly Agree | 162 | 54 |
| Disagree | 32 | 11 |
| Strongly Disagree | 37 | 12 |
| Undecided | 12 | 4 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The table indicated that 57 respondents representing 19% of the total responses agreed that non-indigene has never be the chairman of Ezza South Local Government, 162 respondents representing 54% strongly agreed, 32 respondents representing 11% disagreed, 37 respondents representing 12% strongly disagreed while 12 respondents representing 4% were undecided responses.

Question 10: Ethnic politics is linked with party politics in Ebonyi State?

Table 15:

| Alternatives | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Agree | 36 | 12 |
| Strongly Agree | 162 | 54 |
| Disagree | 45 | 15 |
| Strongly Disagree | 15 | 5 |
| Undecided | 42 | 14 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The table shows that 36 respondents representing 12% of the total responses agreed that ethnic politics is linked with party politics in Ebonyi State, 162 respondents representing 54% strongly agreed, 45(15%) disagreed, 15(5%) strongly disagreed, 42(14%) respondents were undecided.

Question 11: Do Ezza South citizens vote along ethnic lines during State elections?

Table 16:

| Alternatives | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Agree | 45 | 15 |
| Strongly Agree | 170 | 57 |
| Disagree | 34 | 11 |
| Strongly Disagree | 41 | 14 |
| Undecided | 10 | 3 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The above table indicated that 45 respondents amounting to 15% of the total responses agreed that Ezza South citizens vote along ethnic lines during elections, 170 respondents representing 57% strongly agreed, 34 respondents representing 11% disagreed, 41 (14%) respondents strongly disagreed, while 10 respondent representing 3% of the total response was undecided.

Question 12: Dominant clans have always been the leaders in Ezza South Local Government of Ebonyi State?

Table 17:

| Alternatives | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Agree | 43 | 14 |
| Strongly Agree | 162 | 54 |
| Disagree | 21 | 7 |
| Strongly Disagree | 42 | 14 |
| Undecided | 32 | 11 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The table shows that 43 respondents representing 14% of the total responses agreed that dominant clans have always been the leaders in Ezza South Local Government, 162 respondents representing 54% strongly agree, 21 respondents representing 7% disagreed, 42 respondents representing 14% strongly disagreed, while 32 respondents representing 11% were undecided.

Question 13: Are there cases of ethnic conflicts in Ebonyi State? Table 18:

| Alternatives | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Agree | 55 | 18 |
| Strongly Agree | 162 | 54 |
| Disagree | 36 | 12 |
| Strongly Disagree | 15 | 5 |
| Undecided | 32 | 11 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Source: Field Work, 2020

The table indicated that 55 respondents amounting to 18% of the total responses agreed that there are cases of ethnic conflicts in Ebonyi State, 162 respondents representing 54% strongly agreed, 36 (12%) respondents disagreed, 15 (5%) respondents strongly disagreed, while 32 respondents representing 11% of the total responses were undecided.

Question 14: Do Ethnic conflicts have negative effects on the unity of Ebonyi State?

Table 19:

| Alternatives | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Agree | 42 | 14 |
| Strongly Agree | 162 | 54 |
| Disagree | 43 | 14 |
| Strongly Disagree | 32 | 11 |
| Undecided | 21 | 7 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey, 2020

This table shows that 42 respondents representing 14% of the total responses agreed that ethnic conflicts have negative effects on the unity of Ebonyians, 162 respondents amounting to 54% strongly agreed, 43 respondents representing 14% disagreed, 32 (11%) respondents strongly disagreed, whereas, 21 (7%) were undecided response or responses.

Question 15: Ethnic conflicts have significant impact on Nigerian federalism?

Table 20:

| Alternatives | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Agree | 15 | 5 |
| Strongly Agree | 161 | 54 |
| Disagree | 42 | 14 |
| Strongly Disagree | 48 | 16 |
| Undecided | 34 | 11 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The table indicated that 15 respondents representing 5% of the total responses agreed that ethnic conflicts have significant impact on Nigerian federalism, 161 respondents amounting to 54% strongly agreed, 42 respondents representing 14% disagreed, 48 (16%) of the respondents strongly disagreed while 34 (11%) of the respondents are uncertain.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypotheses I

H₁: There is a nexus between ethnicity and political development in Nigeria.

This hypothesis was tested with respect to table 7, question 2, of the interview question administered which states that there is a nexus between ethnicity and political development in Nigeria.

Contingency Table

| Alternatives | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Agree | 42 | 14 |
| Strongly Agree | 165 | 55 |
| Disagree | 34 | 11 |
| Strongly Disagree | 45 | 15 |
| Undecided | 15 | 5' |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

To restate the hypothesis, Chi-Square was used.

$$\text{Expected frequency (E)} = \frac{300}{5} = 60$$

Chi - Square Table

| Option (O) | Exp. Freq. (E) | fo-fe | (fo-fe) ² | (fo-fe) ² /fe |
|------------|----------------|-------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 42 | 60 | -18 | 324 | 5.4 |
| 165 | 60 | 105 | 11025 | 183.8 |
| 34 | 60 | -26. | 676 | 11.3 |
| 45 | 60 | -15 | 225 | 3.8 |
| 15 | 60 | -45 | 2025 | 33.8 |
| Total | | | | 238.1 |

Therefore, calculated frequency = 238.1 approximately 238

To compute the degree of freedom (DF) or critical value = DF = (R - 1) (C - 1)

Where R = number of rows which is 5

C = number of columns which is 2

$$\begin{aligned} \therefore \text{DF} &= (5-1)(2-1) \\ &= (4) (1) \\ &= 4 \times 1 = 4 \end{aligned}$$

The paper has 95% level of confidence and 5% level significance. At 95% level of confidence and 5% significance, the degree of freedom (DF) at 4 = 9.488

If the calculated Chi-Square (X^2) value is greater than the critical value, that is, degree of freedom at 4, the alternative hypothesis is accepted while the null hypothesis is rejected and vice versa. From the above computation, H_1 is hereby accepted since the calculated frequency value (X^2) = 238 is greater than the critical value (9.488). Therefore, the interview confirmed that there is a nexus between ethnicity and political development in Nigeria.

Hypothesis II

H₂: Ethnicity has a significant relationship with politics and nation-building in Nigeria.

This hypothesis was tested with respect to table 10 question 5 of the interview question administered which state that ethnicity has a significant relationship with politics and nation-building in Nigeria. The statistical tool used was the chi-square, using a contingency table previously calculated through the use of simple percentage.

Contingency Table

| Alternatives | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Agree | 58 | 19 |
| Strongly Agree | 161 | 54 |
| Disagree | 32 | 11 |
| Strongly Disagree | 34 | 11 |
| Undecided | 15 | 15 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

To restate the hypothesis, Chi-Square was used. Expected frequency (E) - 300 - 60

Chi - Square Table

| Option (O) | Exp. Freq. (E) | fo-fe | (fo-fe) ² | (fo-fe) ² /fe |
|------------|----------------|-------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 58 | 60 | -2 | 4 | 0.1 |
| 161 | 60 | 101 | 10201 | 170 |
| 32 | 60 | -28 | 784 | 13.1 |
| 34 | 60 | -26 | 676 | 11.3 |
| 15 | 60 | -45 | 2025 | 33.8 |
| Total | | | | 228,3 |

Therefore, calculated frequency = 228.3

To compute the degree of freedom (DF) or critical value = $DF = (R - 1) (C - 1)$

Where R = number of rows which is 5

C = number of columns which is 2

$\therefore DF = (5-1)(2-1)$

$= (4) (1)$

$= 4 \times 1 = 4$

The paper assumed 95% level of confidence and 5% level significance. At 95% level of confidence and 5% significance, the degree of freedom (DF) at 4 = 9.488. If the calculated Chi-square value is greater than the critical value, that is degree of freedom (DF) at 4, the alternative hypothesis is accepted while the null hypothesis is rejected and vice versa. From the above computation, the H_1 is hereby accepted since the calculated value (X^2) (228.3) is greater than the critical value (9.488). So, the interview confirmed that ethnicity has a significant relationship with politics and nation-building in Nigeria.

Hypothesis III

H₃: There is a link between ethnic politics and party politics in Nigeria.

This hypothesis was tested with respect to table 15, question 10 of the interview question administered which states that there is a link between ethnic politics and party politics in Nigeria. The statistical tool used was the chi-square, using a contingency table previously calculated through the use of simple percentage.

Contingency Table

| Alternatives | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|--------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Agree | 36 Strongly Agree | 12 |
| Disagree | 45 Strongly Disagree | 15 |
| Undecided | 42 | 14 |
| | | 5 |
| | | 14 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

To restate the hypothesis, Chi-Square was used. Expected frequency (E) = 300 = 60

Chi - Square Table

| Option (O) | Exp.Freq. (E) | fo-fe | (fo-fe) ² | (fo-fe) ² /fe |
|--------------|---------------|-------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 36 | 60 | -24 | 576 | 9.6 |
| 162 | 60 | 102 | 10404 | 173.4 |
| 45 | 60 | -15 | 225 | 3.8 |
| 15 | 60 | -45 | 2025 | 33.8 |
| 42 | 60 | -18 | 324 | 5.4 |
| Total | | | | 226 |

Therefore, calculated frequency = 226

To compute the degree of freedom (DF) or critical value = $DF = (R - 1) (C - 1)$

Where R = number of rows which is 5

C = number of columns which is 2

$$\therefore DF = (5-1) (2-1)$$

$$= (4) (1)$$

$$= 4 \times 1 = 4$$

The paper assumed 95% level of confidence and 5% level significance. At 95% level of confidence and 5% significance, the degree of freedom (DF) at 4 = 9.488.

If the calculated Chi-square value is greater than the critical value, that is degree of freedom (DF) at 4, the alternative hypothesis is accepted while the null hypothesis is rejected and vice versa. From the above computation, the HA is hereby accepted since the calculated value (X²) (226) is greater than the critical value (9.488). So, the interview confirmed that there is a link between ethnic politics and party politics in Nigeria.

Hypothesis IV

H₄: Ethnic conflicts have significant negative impact on Nigerian federalism.

This hypothesis was tested with respect to table 20, question 15 of the interview question administered which states that ethnic conflicts have significant impact on Nigerian federalism. The statistical tool used was the chi-square, using a contingency table previously calculated through the use of simple percentage.

Contingency Table

| Alternatives | Frequency (No) | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Agree | 15 | 5 |
| Strongly Agree Disagree | 161 | 54 |
| Strongly Disagree | 42 | 14 |
| Undecided | 48 | 16 |
| | 34 | 11 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

To restate the hypothesis, Chi-Square was used.

$$\text{Expected frequency (E)} = \frac{300}{5} = 60$$

Chi - Square Table

| Option (O) | Exp. Freq. (E) | fo-fe | (fo-fe) ² | (fo-fe) ² /fe |
|--------------|----------------|-------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 15 | 60 | -45 | 2025 | 33.8 |
| 161 | 60 | 101 | 10201 | 170 |
| 42 | 60 | -18 | 324 | 5.4 |
| 48 | 60 | -12 | 144 | 2.4 |
| 34 | 60 | -26 | 676 | 11.3 |
| Total | | | | 222.9 |

Therefore, calculated frequency = 222.9 approximately 223

To compute the degree of freedom (DF) or critical value = $DF = (R - 1) (C - 1)$

Where R = number of rows which is 5

C = number of columns which is 2

$$\therefore DF = (5 - 1) (2 - 1)$$

$$= (4) (1)$$

$$= 4 \times 1 = 4$$

The paper assumed 95% level of confidence and 5% level significance. At 95% level of confidence and 5% significance, the degree of freedom (DF) at 4 = 9.488.

If the calculated Chi-square value is greater than the critical value, that is degree of freedom (DF) at 4, the alternative hypothesis is accepted while the null hypothesis is rejected and vice versa. From the above computation, the HA is hereby accepted since the calculated value (X^2) (223) is greater than the critical value (9.488). So, the interview confirmed that ethnic conflicts have significant impact on Nigerian federalism.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the survey study above, the four hypotheses were tested using the statistical tool Chi-Square and tables with simple percentages. To compute the degree of freedom (DF) or critical value = $DF = (R - 1) (C - 1)$; where the number of rows which is 5, C = number of columns which is 2. Thus, $DF = (5-1)(2-1)$, this equals 4. The first hypothesis was tested with respect to table 7, question 2, of the interview question administered which states that there is a nexus between ethnicity and political development in Nigeria. In doing this, 95% level of confidence and 5% level significance was assumed. At 95% level of confidence and 5% significance, the degree of freedom (DF) at 4 = 9.488. From the computation, alternate hypothesis was accepted because the calculated frequency value (X^2) = 238 is greater than the critical value (9.488). This is premised on the decision rule which states that, if the calculated Chi-Square (X^2) value is greater than the critical value, that is, degree of freedom at 4, the alternative hypothesis is accepted while the null hypothesis is rejected and vice versa. The interview therefore confirmed that there is a nexus between ethnicity and political development in Nigeria.

The second hypothesis was tested with respect to table 10, question 5 of the interview question administered which state that ethnicity has a significant relationship with politics and nation-building in Nigeria. The statistical tool used was the chi-square, using a contingency table previously calculated through the use of simple percentage. The researcher assumed 95% level of confidence and 5% level significance. At 95% level of confidence and 5% significance, the degree of freedom (DF) at 4 = 9.488. From the computation, the alternate hypothesis was accepted since the calculated value (X^2) (228) is greater than the critical value (9.488). The study therefore confirmed that ethnicity has a significant relationship with politics and nation-building in Nigeria.

The third hypothesis was tested with respect to table 15, question 10 of the interview question administered which states that there is a link between ethnic politics and party politics in Nigeria. The statistical tool used was the chi-square, using a contingency table previously calculated through the use of simple percentage. The researcher assumed 90% level of confidence and 10% level significance. At 95% level of confidence and 5% significance, the degree of freedom (DF) at 4 = 9.488. From the computation, the alternate hypothesis was accepted since the calculated value (X^2) (226) is greater than the critical value (9.488). The study therefore confirmed that there is a link between ethnic politics and party politics in Nigeria. The fourth hypothesis was tested with respect to table 15, question 10 of the interview question administered which states that ethnic conflicts have significant impact on Nigerian federalism. The statistical tool used was the chi-square, using a contingency table previously calculated through the use of simple percentage. The researcher assumed

90% level of confidence and 10% level significance. At 95% level of confidence and 5% significance, the degree of freedom (DF) at 4 = 9.488. From the computation, the alternate hypothesis was accepted since the calculated value (X^2)(223) is greater than the critical value (9.488). The study therefore confirmed that ethnic conflicts have significant impact on Nigerian federalism. Ethnicity in Nigeria, no doubt, has been a significant challenge to the sociopolitical development of the country with its resultant negative impact on Nigeria federalism; not because the phenomenon is in itself dangerous but that the tendency is for political leaders to manipulate it. The functionality of ethnicity is in two ways. First, ethnicity can be problematic if not managed properly. Secondly, it can be a highly rewarding phenomenon if well managed, which means that ethnicity will continue to remain a force to be reckoned with notwithstanding the strategic mechanisms adopted to diffuse its flame. It is therefore the responsibility of the political leaders to work out and mobilize the strength of each ethnic group in the polity for the socio-political and economic development of the country. Nigeria's fiscal system over the years has been characterized by misplaced expenditure priorities; inequitable appropriation of the nation's revenue and excessive fiscal centralization. This fiscal lapse has equally posed negative impact on Nigerian federalism. This study however offered a critical examination on the nexus between ethnicity and political development in Nigeria, establishing that ethnicity has a significant relationship with politics and nation-building of Nigeria. As such, there is a strong link between ethnic politics and party politics in Nigeria. Further analyses were based on the implication of ethnic politics on the national development and integration in Nigeria; ethnic incompatibility of states in Nigeria; Nigeria fiscal policy or revenue allocation; challenges of fiscal federalism in Nigeria, and a critical analysis of the current state of Nigerian federalism. The study therefore concludes that ethnic conflict has significant impact on Nigerian federalism.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Having conducted a critical study on ethnicity and political development in Nigeria with focus on its challenges to Nigerian federalism, the following policy recommendations suffice:

- Nigeria should operate a truly federal system in which every section or even ethnic group is autonomous with regard to its internal affairs. This in turn would resolve the problem of unhealthy rivalry among ethnic groups in Nigeria.
- There is need to ensure that the distribution of the revenue encourage each state and local government to improve internal revenue generation, not to constantly and wholly depend on the fund coming from the federation account.
- There should be adequate compensation for those who provide the common wealth and all stakeholders must be committed to fine-tuning the process in the overall interest of the country.
- Government should to embark on mass enlightenment to discourage the idea of choosing a leader based on ethnic group, religion and political affinity.

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