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STATE CREATION AND POLITICS OF BOUNDARY AND LAND DISPUTES AMONG IGBO STATES IN NIGERIA: FAILED APPROACH TO NATIONAL INTEGRATION, 1967-1996.

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Abstract

The issue of State creation was one of the military approaches adopted in 1967 during the eve of the Nigerian civil war to help prevent Nigeria from disintegrating. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that the various state creation exercises embarked by the military in Nigeria have failed to assuage the very forces that undermine Nigeria's progress toward political integration of the country. This paper seeks to demonstrate how the fissiparous tendencies bearing on the Nigerian national polity make the policy of using state creation to achieve national integration a failed strategy. The paper employs both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies and argues, with relevant primary and secondary sources, that the prospects for national integration depend on the emergence of a purposeful national leadership and proper political restructuring of the federation designed to generate a national image that has more appeal than the regional ones.

Keyword: Military, Government, State Creation, National integration, Strategy, Approach

INTRODUCTION

One of the issues that had affected the Africa nations since their attainment of independence had been lack of unity among the different nations that were fussed together as one country. The forces responsible for the prevailing fissiparous tendencies in most African states were activated long before they achieved their independence. For many formerly colonial African states, many of the people were haphazardly crammed into a territorial unit that formed a geographical entity called the state. For many of the

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populaces of these newly created entities, there was no identification with the state as a symbol of mutual identity.[37]

The primary locus of political identification and socialization of state formation in African countries has not been the nation-state. The identification has always been based on the subnational collective assemblages with considerably unique foundations, values, and history. Getting these divergent people together as a nation required the asphyxiating of primordial loyalties. This implies integration and the creation of a sense of nationality that overshadows or eliminates subordinate parochial loyal bonds where the state is placed first before the nation.[38]

National integration had received significant attention for African governments in the postcolonial era. Upon African decolonization in the 1950s and 1960s, scholars like Binder, Coleman & Rosberg, Zolberg were concerned with the need for "national integration" in African heterogeneous societies with numerous indigenous, religious and cultural affinities. This concern has been more recently resurrected by separatist agitations in Nigeria that led to the Nigerian civil war, and the attendant creation of states by the successive military regimes after the war.

Nigeria's efforts at achieving national integration have remained largely unrealistic because, the history of democratization in Nigeria has remained the history of national fragmentation.[39] Thus, the incorporation problems that our country has been grappling with is evident in the minority question, non secular fundamentalism, indigenous politics, indigene-settler opposition, resource control, youth agitation and belligerency and the demand for a (sovereign) national confab.

Nigeria is a deeply divided and plural society[40] with a figure of about 250 ethnic groups within the polity.[41] Nigeria has a unique problem of realizing cohesion in deed and determination amidst her multicultural configurations with the various groups wielding the centrifugal and centripetal powers on the fundamental concern of the country.[42] This had manifested more since the creation of states by the military where people of a particular extraction now sees themselves as separate entities, and have been engaged in several boundary and land disagreements. For instance, A number of communities in Igboland (Onitsha, Aba, Owerri and Enugu) exemplify the larger picture of Nigeria's

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[37] Alapiki, H. E. "State Creation in Nigeria: Failed Approaches to National Integration and Local Autonomy". *African Studies Review*, Vol. 48, No. 3, 2005, p. 50

[38] Alapiki, H. "Creation of More States and Political Integration in Nigeria". Ph.D. diss., University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria. 1995, p. 38

[39] Ifeanacho, M. I. & Nwagwu, J. "Democratisation and National Integration in Nigeria". *Research Journal of International Studies*, Issue 9, 2009, p. 41

[40] Ojo, E. "Federalism and the Search for National Integration in Nigeria". In *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*. Vol. 3 (9), 2009, pp. 384-395.

[41] Suberu, R. T. "Federalism and Political Instability in Nigeria" *Plural Society*. Vol.19 (23). 1998; Otite, O. *Ethnic Pluralism and Ethnicity in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Shanesco C. L. Limited.1990.

[42] Ojo, E. "Federalism and the Search for National Integration… pp. 384-395.

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multi-ethnic character with mixed population, where relations were believed to be cordial and where the early ruling elite came together to pursue the goal of imperial expansion with a clear vision of making their domain a home for all.[43]

However, since the creation of states, aborigine-boundary relations in these Igbo famous towns had constantly breed unhealthy upheavals. As such, the political tensions are naturally capable of igniting the embers of anarchy and dissensions in the attempt of groups within the group to satisfy their cravings for parochial interests' satisfaction. More of these disputes came about over ownership of land (farming, fishing, oil deposit, solid-mineral deposit etc.) and in defence of community pride and properties and even the people. Other factors responsible for boundary crises among the states and communities in Igboland include the urge to preserve, protect and enhance the ethnic identity of the groups concerned and the desire to secure and enhance socio-political-cum-economic advantages.[44] Some of such contemporary nasty occurrences have degenerated into bad blood, bitter bloodletting and carnage.

This paper therefore, examines the issue of military state creations and national integration in Nigeria, emphasizing the issues and essential factors that hampers the progression of incorporation amongst states in Nigeria. The scope of the paper is on Southeastern (Igbo) states who used to be one but have been disintegrated by state creations. This paper contends that various state creation exercises in Nigeria have failed to mitigate the very forces that prompt fresh state agitations, and more imperative, that establishment of more states in Nigeria has been accompanied by serious endemic problems that undermine progress toward political integration of the country.

History of State Creation in Nigeria.

Nigeria's political structure had undergone several balkanizations since the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorates in 1914, although administratively, politically, and culturally it remained two dichotomous entities.[45] The history of administrative reorganization started in the colonial days when the colonial office assumed control over the territories of the Royal Niger Company. As such, the issues of socio-political administrative restricting in Nigeria have their historical advent in the methods of the British colonization and colonial administration in which patterns of penetration, concentration and socio-economic activities and the practice of indirect rule discriminated between and among the composite ethnic and regional groups in the country.[46] Scholars are of the opinion that the amalgamation of 1914 was a creation of cost-effective need and political expediency. The Nigeria that emerged was and still is, a geographical expression, a conglomeration of indigenous nationalities, with varied

[43] Alapiki, H. E. "State Creation in Nigeria… p.51.
[44] Adejuyigbe, O. "Boundary Problems in Western Nigeria; A Geographical Analysis". Ile Ife: University of Ife Press, 1975, p.32
[45] Ojo, E. "Federalism and the Search for National Integration…
[46] Alapiki, H. E. "State Creation in Nigeria… p.51

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cultures and religions.[47] The attempt to associate all important units of the society with the country's management of the complex problem of balancing of conflicting claims invariably results in the frequent state reorganizations, among others.[48]

At Nigeria's independence in 1960, the country had three regions and later became four regions in 1963. However, the claim that the history of State creation in Nigeria started with the creation of defunct Midwest state and Yakubu Gowon creation of twelve states in 1967 at the eve of the Nigeria civil war cannot be true because before Nigeria's independent, the country has been practicing federalism and decentralization system of government which offered a genuine hope for successful integration in Nigeria. In other words, it appeared to be the solution to many actual or potential ethnic and other minority problems. It is for this reason that states and local government reorganization became a central issue and intractable problems in the Nigeria politics.[49]

The forgoing indicated that between 1946 and 1966, Nigeria could be described as practicing federalism premised on regionalism. However, the Gowon state creation laid the foundation for issues with integration. In creating the twelve-state structure, General Gowon made a conscious effort to balance the North and the South, by giving each region six states. Perhaps the 1967 state creation exercise came too late to prevent the Nigerian civil war. The common reasons given by the successive military governments for the creation of more states in Nigeria has been the so-called need to bring government closer to the people.[50] However the question of states creation have been associated with number of factors such as grievance, injustice, marginalization and unfairness particularly in relations to the minorities within Nigeria.

Effects of State Creation in Nigeria

Despite the reasons and intentions given for the creation of states in the country, the exercise is yet to accomplished its tenacity, because it was accompanied by attendant effects that actually exacerbated pre-existing interethnic and intergroup conflicts rather than relieving them. The issue of state creations exercise in Nigeria has undoubtedly accentuated ethnic minority consciousness in several significant respects. For instance,

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[47] Irikefe Panel, Nigeria Federal Republic Report of the Panel Appointed by the Federal Military Government to investigate the issue of the creation of more States and Boundary Adjustments in Nigeria, Lagos, Government Printer1975, p.43.

[48] Ajayi, A. S. "From Amalgamation to the Quest for National Integration in Nigeria: Issues, Challenges and Prospects". The 40th Anniversary Lecture of the Department of History and International Studies, University of Ilorin, Ilorin 2017, p. 9.

[49] Bach, D.C. "Managing a Plural Society: The Boomerang effects of Nigerian Federalism". *The Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*. Vol.27, No.2, 1989, pp. 218-245

[50] Oyeleye O. "*Nigerian Government and Politics under the Military Rule, 1966-79*". London: Macmillan, 1979, p.14

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Tiv who are minority in the larger national context constitute ethnic majority in Benue state. But then, the same charges of domination and marginalization which they level

against the dominant groups at the national level are hurled at them by the Idoma at the state level. The creation of states validates the squat glassy of political incorporation between the several societies in Nigeria. Also, the exercise was met with unnecessary boundary adjustments in Nigeria that had pitched those who were once brothers against themselves. Third, the displacement of "non-state indigenous persons" even among the same ethnic group, and the ensuing "asset sharing" hullabaloos between concern state governments was exceptional. The high level and intricacy of borderline skirmishes had led to formation of several Boundary Adjustment Commissions to examine boundary disputes in Nigeria. The development resulting from creation of states has been such that only insignificant number of states is able to raise enough resources to meet with states' responsibilities. In other words, most states of the federal are not economically viable, thereby resulting into what is now refer to as "feeding bottle federalism". The implication of this is the state are now very weak to the extent that they cannot challenge the overbearing attitude of the federal government.[51]

The state creation in some cases, instead of been a welcomed development that is aimed at consolidating and uniting brothers, had led to ferocity. In the South-East, there was discontent when Abia was created out of Imo state. The Uturu people who were brothers to Okigwe people saw themselves disintegrated from their original ties with the Okigwe clan who are in Imo State, while Uturu became part of newly created Abia State. The people protested against the action, but after sometime, they accepted their fate since the military government was rule with decrees and force. Meanwhile, the people for a long time find it very difficult to come to terms with the shocking reality of the sacking or disengagement of indigenes of the newly created States by their former State governments.

In Kano State, infuriated masses opposed the creation of Jigawa State as against the creation of the anticipated Hadeija State. Hadeija is the second major city in the old Kano State, after Kano City. The riot resulted to the damaging of the fire service building in Kano, the Magistrate and Area Court buildings, the National Population Commission office, and the Social Welfare office building. In addition, the National Republican Convention (NRC) Secretariat and the office of the Hadeija Development Project were razed.[52]

[51] Solomon, A. B. "State Creation and Inter-Group Relation: The Nigerian Experience". In The Dynamics of Inter-group Relations in Nigeria since 1960, *Essay in Honour of Obaro Ikimi @ 70*. 2012, pp.90-112

[52] Nwabueze, B. O. *Nigeria 93: The Political Crisis and solutions*, Ibadan, Spectrum Book. 1995, p.7.

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Furthermore, the elastic agitation for the creation of their own state was made more legitimate by the fact that all newly created states were given special treatment by the federal government through the diversion of resources to the new states in form of special allocations. There is always a fight over who controls these resources and allocations in the new states. It is against this background that one can argue that one of the achievements of states creation in Nigeria is the entrenchment of class formation and intra-class struggles within the locally dominant class.[53] The amount of "national cake" that Nigerians are expected to grab when their separate states are carved out for them have proved most significant in state creations in Nigeria. This appear to be the dominant factor especially in the later years when creating of new states and local governments had become one of the easiest sources for certain people in the society to achieve their life ambition, particularly in terms of power and wealth.[54]

Boundary Disputes, Assets Sharing and Displacement in South East States Creations

Boundary and land disputes have been recurring features of the socio-political landscape of Nigeria. Such disputes arise from various sources. In some cases, they arise from the fact that certain indigenous groups are divided by boundaries which they do not recognise; thus in seeking to ensure that their peoples remain united, they challenge the boundary dividing them. Boundary disputes have, sometimes, also arisen from government policies on domestic socio-political and economic issues, such as the decision to create states and additional administrative units as a means of curbing the agitation of the minorities.[55] Most of the time, however, boundary and land disputes have to do with sensitive issues of who owns, controls and utilizes what resources.

Like all other kinds of disputes, boundary and land disputes often involve some element of politics.[56] Indeed, the politics of boundary and land disputes has been with humanity since man moved from his primitive phase of development into settled life. As each community regarded its territory as its exclusive preserve with vital socio-political and economic interests that had to be protected, this created the necessity to define and demarcate the boundary separating one group from another. This process of demarcation, however, was often not acceptable to some of the communities in dispute, particularly if the dispute was over land of high economic value[57] as demonstrated in the Southeastern Nigeria, as well as other parts of the country. This make the creation of states and administrative units in Nigeria a tremendously discordant and troublesome exercise.

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[53] Ekekwe, E. *Class and States in Nigeria.* Lagos: Longman 1986, p.1.

[54] Rilwanu, S. A. "Politics of Boundary and Land Disputes". M.A Project submitted to the Department of Peace and Conflict Department University of Ilorin, p. 45

[55] Ibid

[56] Ibid

[57] Ibeanu, O. "Aguleri-Umuleri Conflict in Anambra State in TA Imobighe ed, Civil Society and Ethnic Conflict Management in Nigeria, Ibadan: Spectrum Books Ltd, 2003, p. 57

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The history of state creation in Southeastern Nigeria shows that Imo State and Anambra were created on 3rd February, 1976; Abia and was created on 27th August, 1991 from old Imo state; Enugu State was carved out old Anambra State in 1991; whereas Ebonyi State emanated from Abia State and Enugu State in 1996. In other words, prior to February, 1976, the various states of Abia, Anambra, Enugu, Ebonyi and Imo states were not in existence. Before the advent of States creations, all the people occupying the entire geographical territory of south-east Nigeria were Igbo, and they were referred to as the Igbo and not as people from diverse entities. The Igbo were the same people that shared the same common values: the same style of dressing, the same rites or rituals in marriage and birth, one common language Igbo or *Igbo Izugbe*, among others.[58]

However, since the creation of states began in Nigeria, the Igbo have been divided along stateliness where everybody that sees himself as Abian, an Imo person, as Ebonyian, Anambra or Enugu person. Abians are claiming Abians are one, Anambra are of the opinion that Anambra is unique, same goes to Enugu, and other states of Ebonyi and Imo. Ndi Igbo now look at their affinity in relationships to States as against the unity of the Igbo. Most pathetic aspect is that you now see Igbo people saying our people don't marry from Abia or Imo because of one reason or the other; Enugu people usually behave like this or that, I have discontent for Anambra people because of blood money, Ebonyi is primitive.[59] In fact in some conversations, Ebonyi people are not considered true Igbo.[60]

In the South-East, just like other geopolitical zones in Nigeria, the policy of sharing assets and the subsequent dislodgment of several Nigerians from their domicile states had showed the disappointment of creation states which had not brought about the much-anticipated integration among the Igbo in Nigeria. These problems are by-products of the ideology of "statism", which makes it impossible for an Igbo person who is a non-native of a state in Southeast to hold administrative, teaching, political, or commercial positions of their state of residence.

Owing to the problem arising from Assets sharing resulting from state creation exercise, the federal government in 1991 established some Assets and Liabilities Sharing Committees with the aim of resolving cases between the states including South-eastern states. The acrimonious conflict over assets sharing among South-eastern states prevents political integration because it makes Igbo and other Nigerians perceive themselves as strangers in Nigeria leading to the loss of their fundament right of property ownership, house, and employment in states where they are considered non-indigenes.

Regarding the crisis that had arisen as a result of "assets shearing" in southeast, a good instance that comes to mind is the Anambra-Enugu assets sharing crisis. The Office of the Vice President then was accused of bias by the governor of Enugu State who sent a thirty-four-page petition to the then Head of State Gen. Babangida pleading that the some

[58] Okwudiri Anaeto. Oral interview at Awka. 67 years Politician. 22/07/2018

[59] Michael Irem. Oral Interview at Abakaliki, 59 years, Civil servant 18/05/2018

[60] Ibid

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decisions of the assets-sharing panel should be revoked.[61] While awaiting the president's response, the Enugu State governor made a radio broadcast relieving the civil servants of Anambra extraction working in Enugu State of their appointment and advised them to leave their official houses in forty-eight hours. As a show of revenge, the Anambra State government went ahead to take over the Nnamdi Azikiwe University mutually owned by the two states, the Colleges of Education at Awka and the State Polytechnic located at Oko. In the same vain the staff of the institutions who were from Enugu State were told to go back to their State of origin. This state of crisis prompted Babangida set up an Assets Review and Implementation Committee (to review the work of the Assets and Liabilities Sharing Committees) headed by Brigadier Adeniji Olanrewaju. Such displacement of staff and appropriation of existing joint assets have taken place in all instances of state creation.[62]

In the same vein, in Imo State, staffs of the state-owned media enterprise the Imo Broadcasting Corporation (IBC) who were of Abia State origin were lock out from their offices and were asked to go back to their state of origin. These affected staff later staged a peaceful demonstration against the "forced lock out" from their offices. In an inexplicable move, the Abia State indigenes in Imo state were also locked out of their office as their office locks were changed as part of Imo State retaliation against what their Abia state counterpart did to their indigenes in Abia state. Subsequently, the employees from Abia State were asked to relocate to Umuahia, the capital of the newly created Abia State as their services were no longer needed in Imo state.[63]

Besides the foregoing, the issues of border conflicts and land disputes have been perennial among the southeast states (Imo vs Anambra in 1976) and their neighbouring states (Imo vs Rivers, Anambra vs Bendel in 1978). The scale and complexity of boundary conflicts witnessed over the years as result of state creations and boundary adjustments had led to the establishment of various boundary commissions, beginning with the appoint of the Justice Nasir Boundary Adjustment Commission in 1976 by the Murtala-Obansanjo administration to examine boundary disputes across the states in Nigeria.

The politicization of these disputes in south-east in particular and Nigeria at large had often aggravated such problems resulting to the loss of many lives and property within the areas of the conflicts. This phenomenon which have not properly managed, had impede national integration and development and seriously threaten national security. Although many efforts have been made to address these problems, including the

[61] *African Guardian*, March, 2, 1992, p.29; Alapiki, H. E. "State Creation in Nigeria: Failed Approaches…p.52

[62] Onwuku, I. "Political Stability and Boundary Crisis in Nigeria". in B.M Barkindo (ed) *Management of Nigeria's Internal Boundary Questions*, Lagos: Joe-Tolalu and Associates, 1993, p.65

[63] Ekoko, A. Administrative Boundaries, Ethnic Nationalities and the Nigerian Nation State paper presented at National Workshop on Internal Boundaries by NBC 2000 and published in *NBC Boundary Bulletin* vol. 4, No. 1. Jan.– March 2001

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constitution of ad-hoc boundary adjustment commissions and the National Boundary Commission (NBC), some old boundary disputes still endure while new ones emerge.

Table 1: Inter-State Boundaries in Nigeria

North-East	South-East	North-West	South-West	North-Central	South-South
Adamawa/ Bornu	Abia/Anambra	Jigawa/Kano	Ekiti/Ondo	Benue/Kogi	Akwa-Ibom/Cross-River
Adamawa/Gombe	Abia/Ebonyi	Jigawa/Katsina	Ekiti/Osun	Benue/Nasarawa	Akwa-Ibom/Rivers
Adamawa/Taraba	Abia/Enugu	Kaduna/Kano	Lagos/Ogun	FCT/Kogi	Bayelsa/Delta
Bauchi/Gombe	Abia/Imo	Kaduna/Katsina	Ogun/Ondo	FCT/Nasarawa	Bayelsa/Rivers
Bauchi/Taraba	Anambra/Enugu	Kaduna/Zamfara	Ogun/Osun	FCT/Niger	Delta/Edo
Bauchi/Yobe	Anambra/Imo	Kano/Katsina	Ogun/Oyo	Kogi/Kwara	Delta/Rivers
Bornu/Gombe	Ebonyi/Enugu	Katsina/Zamfara	Ondo/Osun	Kogi/Nasarawa	Cross-River/Benue
Bornu/Yobe	Anambra/Kogi	Kebbi/Sokoto	Osun/Oyo	Kogi/Niger	Cross-River/Ebonyi
Gombe/Taraba	Abia/Akwa-Ibom	Kebbi/Zamfara	Ekiti/Kogi	Nasarawa/Plateau	Delta/Ondo
Gombe/Yobe	Abia/Cross-River	Sokoto/Zamfara	Ekiti/Kwara	Kwara/Niger	Edo/Kogi
Bauchi/Plateau	Ebonyi/Benue	Jigawa/Yobe	Ondo/Kogi	Benue/Taraba	Rivers/Abia
Bauchi/Jigawa	Enugu/Benue	Kebbi/Niger	Osun/Kwara	Nasarawa/Taraba	Rivers/Anambra
Bauchi/Kano	Enugu/Kogi	Kaduna/Plateau	Oyo/Kwara	Plateau/Taraba	Rivers/Imo
Bauchi/Kaduna	Anambra/Delta	Zamfara/Niger	Ondo/Edo	FCT/Kaduna	Edo/Anambra
		Kaduna/Niger		Nasarawa/Kaduna	

Source: National Boundary Commission, 2015

The above table reveals that as at 2015, there were about eighty-six (86) inter-state boundaries across Nigeria, out of which the south-east which have just five states had 14 inter-state boundaries disputes. Although some have been successfully demarcated using

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different mechanisms. This implies that all the inter-state boundaries in the region are disputed. Some of the conflicts in the south-east region are the crises between Amagu (Ebonyi State) and Adadama (Cross River state); Aguleri/Umuleri both in Anambra state; Edda (Ebonyi State) and Ohafia and Nkporo (abia State); Ezza (Ebonyi State) and Nkanu (Enugu State); Ukwa East, precisely Ndoki (Abia State) and their Akwa-Ibom neighbours; among several others which are pointers. As it is at the interstate level, so it is at the intrastate level between hitherto corporative peaceful communities.

Certainly, border skirmishes have resulted to damaging of lives and belongings, with many people abruptly becoming IDPs in their land, farmlands and subsistent community businesses have been abandoned, and entire villages dislocated. Boundary conflicts in Nigeria have become disastrous to the extent that those that died as a result of the crisis are not permitted to repose peacefully. It is so bad that as a matter of fact, living in a border village in Nigeria is like living in a war front.[64] Social, economic and political lives that drive development in most boundary communities are in a state of suspended animation consequent on boundary conflicts.

With the way the issue of boundary conflicts keeps reoccurring, it appears the solution is not yet in sight owing to the handling styles of the institutions saddled with boundary management. Few specialist surveyors have contributed also to the management of internal boundary crisis as their survey results were entirely unempirical and technically condemned.[65] Federal and some State governments have set up "commissions of inquiry" to resolve the boundary issues. However, on several occasions, no communique was delivered, while in some cases the communique ends up compounding the initial issues. Several Nigerians are either not capable or reluctant to discern and extricate between traditional frontiers and contemporary administrative borders or land ownership.

Conclusion

The politics of state creations and boundary disputes in south east and Nigeria at large is a complex phenomenon involving the interplay of many actors comprising of individuals, institutions and interest groups. The key players include governments and their agencies, the elites, youths and ethnic groups among others. These groups had under-mind the aim of the military at uniting the nation from possible disintegration through the state creation exercises which had not leaved much to be desired. This is because the repeated creation or proliferation of new constituent units had compounded the problems of national integration. The nature and dimension of the politics of state creations which eventually leads to boundary crisis had obstructed destructively on national security and integration. This situation has a great potential for destabilizing the

[64] Ekoko, A. Administrative Boundaries, Ethnic Nationalities and the Nigerian Nation State paper presented at National Workshop on Internal Boundaries by NBC 2000 and published in *NBC Boundary Bulletin* vol. 4, No. 1. Jan.– March 2001

[65] Ugoh, S. C. and Ukpere, W. I. "Policy of the Federal Character Principle and Conflict Management in Nigerian Federalism." In *African Journal of Business Management*, Vol. 6 (23), 2012, pp. 6771-6780

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country. From the above narratives, it has become clear that Nigeria has not substantially move beyond the concept of a "mere geographical expression" as her quest for integration has been buffeted by ethnicity, regionalism, religious bigotry and communal

hostilities as a result of creation of states. Primordial identities have continued to take precedence over nation building and integrations.

The study found that central to the problem of the politics of state creation and boundary disputes in the country is the nation's weak economy, manifesting in such issues as the high level of poverty particularly in rural areas, unemployment and poor rural development. Other contributory factors are lack of national integration, a low degree of social harmony and, most importantly, poor governance.

Besides, the federal government active involvement in altering of the boundaries and redefining the arrangement of areas, the creation of states have in no small measure altered the relationship between the federal and the existing states government on one hand, and the various socio-cultural groups on the other. There is therefore, the need to re-examine the functionality and sustainability of Nigeria's state creation and boundary lines so as to reduce their conflict potentials. There is also need to build the capacity and empower the Nigerian Boundary Commission and other agencies saddled with mapping and demarcation of boundaries in Nigeria, and containing/transforming of boundary conflicts to be able to deal with the issues. The creation of states by fiat by successive military governments in Nigeria had created more problems in a bid to redo and adjust state boundaries resulting in destructions of lives and property. Efforts should be expedited to save people boundary areas by ensuring that boundary issues are amicably resolved. This has become expedient because sustainable development can only thrive in peaceful communities.

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