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Nationalism and Patriotism: Precursors to Leadership Development and National Unity in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Nationalism and patriotism are twin concepts mostly used interchangeably by scholars and commentators to mean virtually the same thing, and nationalists are seen to be patriots and loyalists to the father-land, devoid of parochialism and ethnocentrism. The struggle for a common course (decolonization) by the nationalists was mutual irrespective of their ethnic and religious configurations. These patriots/nationalists transposed to become leaders after independence, but the issue of national unity expected to emerge and become consolidated by these leaders has been a herculean task for them many decades later. The paper examines the concepts of nationalism and patriotism as precursors to leadership development and unity in Nigeria. Adopting the explanatory research design, documentary source of data collection and qualitative method of analysis and anchoring our analysis on the elite theory which holds that the elite has always dominated and controlled the affairs of the polity to their own advantage and at the detriment of the masses, the paper argues that qualitative leadership in Nigeria that can command followership, cannot be attained if *ab initio* there is absence of patriotism/nationalism. In other words, nationalism/patriotism rather than ethnicism are the functional prerequisites for leadership development and national unity. Findings amongst others revealed that leaders in Nigeria, have always emerge from and across ethnic and religious groups which has turned out to be the bane of national unity in Nigeria as these leaders strive to dominate and consolidate their various ethnic or religious agenda, thereby endangering the pursuit of national unity of which nationalism and patriotism are precursors. The paper recommends that for leadership development and national unity to be achieved, there should be policy re-orientation by the government and civil society to the public on the importance of patriotism/nationalism as the basis for leadership and followership.

Keywords: Nationalism; Patriotism; Leadership Development; National Unity; and Followership.

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, the concepts of patriotism and nationalism are somewhat strange to Nigerians and leaders alike. Alas! Not practiced. Apart from the theoretical and conceptual meanings, which are however, taught in institutions of learning, the concepts depict practically much more than it portend theoretically, as they are precursors to the envisaged leadership style and nation-building, and national unity. Albeit, leadership, nation-building and/or national unity have consistently been

Nigeria's most constant priority agenda before and since independence. Unfortunately, in spite of all good intentions and spirited efforts of the nation's leaders before and some years after independence on 1st October 1960, these duo problems remain a national dilemma and concern. Throughout Nigeria's history, sub-national or ethnic nationalism and patriotism to same have in no small measure dominated and sabotaged all meaningful discussions and debates

about national integration, national unity and nation building.

Leadership in a multi-nation state like Nigeria, has meaning only when it emphasizes unity in diversity, and lifts up the citizens, investing them with hope and promise. It is so when it sets up purposeful action through the force of example and unalloyed love for the country and the prospect of the younger generations. The leadership style witnessed in Nigeria is a fallout of ethnicity and the absence of patriotic will to lead Nigerians to the next mile. Yet, leaders tolerate degenerative values that allow discriminatory practices to thrive; and cannot stamp out all forms of disintegration but affirming that an injury to one is an injury to all, and that violence and impunity will not be tolerated and will be met with overwhelming counter violence in the interest of the larger Nigerian community.

Albeit, "no prize is higher than patriotically ensuring the political stability in Nigeria because it is the bedrock of any possible growth and development". Stability has the rifling effect of sparking

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS AND THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF THE STUDY

Nationalism Reviewed

Nationalism is an ideology that, at its epicentre, holds that the nation, embodied in its agent, the sovereign nation-state, should be the only object of the political loyalty of individuals. Nationalism grows from the sense of community, in that it feeds on cultural differences and turns them into a principle of national political loyalty and social identity [1]. In tandem with the above, nationalism merges the concepts of state, nation and nation-state in a way that is personally related to citizens and how these citizens act or feel about their nation-state. In the words of [2] the following takes place when citizens:

- i. Become sentimentally attached to the homeland;
- ii. Gain a sense of identity and self-esteem through their national identification
- iii. Are motivated to help their country.

Broadly speaking Nationalism is a range of political, social, and economic systems characterized by promoting the interests of a particular nation or ethnic group, particularly with the aim of gaining

development and addressing challenges of struggle over resources and even the corruption bug. Nigerian nationalism has been negatively affected by multiple historical episodes of ethno-religious violence and repression of certain ethnic groups by the Nigerian government has resulted in multiple secessionist movements demanding independence from Nigeria at the expense of national unity. The question thus remains: how can Nigeria be salvaged from this hotchpotch of ethnic, cultural, religious and political sentiments so as to build a Nigeria that is driven with a unified vision? Deriving from the above, this paper is divided into six sections, viz: Introduction, conceptual review, theoretical framework, reflections on nationalism and patriotism in Nigeria: the old and new styles, nationalism and patriotism as precursors to leadership development and conclusion and recommendations. The methodology of this paper is based on exploratory research design; documentary method of data collection and qualitative descriptive methods as tool of analysis.

and maintaining self-governance, or full sovereignty, over the group's homeland [3]. This definition is somewhat all encompassing, as it covers a broad spectrum of economics, politics and social lives vis-à-vis state building. Nationalism as a political ideology therefore holds that a nation should govern itself, free from unwanted outside interference, and is linked to the concept of self-determination, especially as a decolonization process. Nationalism is further oriented towards developing and maintaining a national identity in line with shared characteristics like culture, language, race, religion, political goals or a belief in a common ancestry [4].

For [5] Nationalism is all about to preserve the nation's culture. He went further to say that it involves a sense of pride in the nation's achievements, and is closely connected to the concept of patriotism. In the light of the above, nationalism could be seen from two folds, viz.; positive and/or negative. In some instances, nationalism could be seen to the belief that a nation should be able to control the government

and all means of production [6].

In the light of the aforesaid, nationalism from its political or sociological perspectives, have three main paradigms, according to [7] for understanding the origins and basis of nationalism. The first is known as primordialism or perennialism, it avers that nationalism is a natural phenomenon. It surmises that, although the concept of nationhood may be recent, nations have hitherto always existed. The second paradigm is ethno-symbolism, which holds that there exists complex perspective seeking to explain nationalism by contextualizing it throughout history as a dynamic, evolutionary phenomenon and by further examining the strength of nationalism as a result of the nation's subjective ties to national symbols imbued with historical meaning. The third paradigm which is seemingly the most dominant paradigm is modernism, which sees nationalism as a recent phenomenon that needs the structural conditions of modern society in order to exist [8].

As a corollary to the above vis-à-vis the subject matter of study, modern Nationalism in Nigeria, started when the likes of Herbert Macaulay, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and Chief Obafemi Awolowo, for example, in demonstration of their strong devotion, feeling, love to Nigeria, struggled through decades for the freedom of Nigeria. Encapsulated with the spirit of nationalism the nationalists, amidst all the oppositions and odds, formed political parties from which delegations were sent to London to constantly and relentlessly pressure the British government with demands for self-determination and/or independence.

Types of Nationalism

- i. Civic-Nationalism: In this case, state usually derives political legitimacy from active participation of the citizenry. It also represents the will of the people. This type of nationalism is compatible with democratic values, tolerance, individual rights, equality, equity, and social justice.
- ii. Ethnic or Sub-Nationalism: This type defines the whole nation in terms of ethnicity and ethnocentrism. It means that the members of such society share affinity, values, culture, language, customs, and

ideal. Political legitimacy of the state comes from its status as homeland of particular group. Its main obligation is the protection of the group and their interests.

iii. Left-wing/Socialist Nationalism: It is based upon social equality, national self-determination, along with the popular sovereignty. It promotes anti-imperialism as well.

iv. Proto-nationalism: It is the earlier notion, which refers to the sense of belonging to a particular or specific interest group.

v. Ultra-nationalism: It is connected with extremist support of nationalist ideas. It includes authoritarianism, efforts to stop immigration, to support expulsion / oppression of non-native populations on the territory of nation, etc. through segregation and xenophobic attacks.

vi. Diaspora Nationalism: It refers to nationalistic feeling among the people of one diaspora (for example, Jews in diaspora or Nigerians (Igbos) in diaspora). It involves those, who are beyond the ethnic territory.

vii. Anti-Colonial Nationalism: It is experienced during decolonization. This very type was seen in Nigeria during the colonial rule

(<https://ask.naij.com/politics/5-nigerian-nationalists-i23694.html>).

Nationalism and Patriotism: The Nexus

The concepts of nationalism and patriotism are mutually inclusive rather than exclusive. Patriotism is an emotional journey of loyalty, allegiance, impartial love and total obedience to one's country or one's chosen country other than one's country of birth, which bestows all the rights and privileges accorded to him/her by the constitution [9]. Patriotism portrays a less localized and temporally attachment on how individuals feel concerning a state or nation. Yet, it is tilted towards the effect on conceptions that are more related to people's feelings and acts as consociates regardless of the type of political systems and practices, which may be: the city-state, the nation-state, a region, and the like. Thus, it may at times coincide with nationalist concerns, but it does not always overlap with nationalism as it signifies a more broadly conceived allegiance than the allegiance towards a nation-state.

Patriotism according to [10]

: ...is not the specific allegiance to a nation-state, as we may reserve this for nationalism. But patriotism may concern attachment to an ethnos regardless of whether the latter has the status of the nation-state, or belongs to a multi-national state or (in more historical applications) to city-states [11].

In the same vein, [12] avers that patriotism could be a form of jealous and exclusive loyalty or love of one's own locality without a professed corresponding antagonism towards others. Similarly, [13] submitted that patriotism is conceptually distinct from nationalism does not mean that it is not practically conflated with the latter. This often results in patriotism being accused for pathologies usually occasioned with nationalist excesses. From the various conceptual underpinnings of nationalism, an element that remains constant is the idea of jealously protecting a nation against foreign domination and interference. This achievable when there is a driving force that gives sentiment/passion to this endeavour [14]. Put simply, patriotism as love for one's country, requires giving utmost and special consideration that guarantees it.

More so, patriotism and nationalism are not mutually exclusive because there can be nationalism without patriotism and vice versa. Albeit, "sincere patriotic concerns should be nationalistic". Thus, Nationalism is akin to geographical concerns, while patriotism appeals to humanitarian feelings [15]. In the words of [16]:

Patriotism needs not be hostile to foreigners, yet nationalism, being group egoism, too often is. As nationalism is often used to incite to war, it is then not patriotic, since the love of country should lead to the love of peace [17].

Consequently, patriotism is more likely to harmonize with the siblinghood of humanity. This is because defending the

democratic order could be a propelling force on individuals to make remarkable sacrifice [18]. Making the above clearer, [19] submits that it is attainable if "citizens have a strong sense of fellow feeling for each other." Thus, [20] highlighted some striking dissimilarity between nationalism and patriotism. "Patriotism is closely linked to political virtues of individuals. It is not necessarily a corporate affair like in nationalism. The meeting point between both concepts is commitment to the common good." However, this commitment could either be all-encompassing or take an exclusively limited approach based on issues of applicability at any point in time.

Leadership and Leadership Development Reviewed

The concept of leadership is essentially embraced from a personality perspective which proposes, for example, that leadership is a combination of special traits or characteristics, which individuals ought to possess, so that they can persuade others to accomplish tasks through effective governance practices [21]; [22]. None the less, [23] defines leadership as the actions of a person who, whether elected, appointed, or emerging by group consensus, directs, coordinates, and supervises the work of others for the purpose of accomplishing a given task.

Leadership is also a willingness to take the blame. Therefore, it is imperative state that leadership is to be regarded as a relationship or a partnership between leaders and followers. Based on that, people who engage in leadership are referred to as 'leaders', whereas individuals, toward whom leadership is directed, are referred to as 'followers'. Consequently, leadership can be described as a transactional event that occurs between the leader and his or her followers within a particular context to promote or achieve an outcome through effective governance practices [24]. [25] stress that leadership is the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations. In this perspective, leadership is about inspiring and guiding the efforts of others by creating an environment in which they can become motivated. From this perspective, the foundation of good

leadership lies in understanding what motivates people and appealing to these criteria and prerequisites. However, the importance of leadership is self-evident no matter what the setting and thus, cannot be overemphasized. In organizations, states or societies, effective leadership facilitates higher-quality governance, production and development with more efficient service delivery; it provides a sense of cohesiveness and inclusiveness, personal development, and higher levels of satisfaction amongst the citizens and leaders too; it provides an overarching sense of direction and

vision, an alignment with the environment, a healthy mechanism for innovation and creativity, and a resource for invigorating the organizational culture [26]. Leadership development has emerged as an important theoretical and practical stream of government and administration. It therefore requires integration of knowledge with experience, as a functional prerequisite. There is an implicit assumption that leadership is important, that leaders make a difference, and that positive group and organizational effects are produced by leaders and the leadership process [27].

Table 1: Combination of Dimensions for Leadership Development

Leadership Development		
Spirituality (Vision-Charisma)	Emotional Intelligence (Intellectual Stimulation)	Morality {Individualized consideration}
Vision	Competence	Ethics
Will	Creativity	Integrity
Self-belief	Objectivity	Mutual
Loyalty	Empathy	Respect
Respect	Engagement	Self-esteem
Agreeableness	Development	Honesty
Conscientiousness	Mentoring	
	Coaching	
	Character	

Source: Tshiyoyo, (2012), Modified by Authors.

In order to become an effective leader, [28] opined that:

...it is essential to have a mixture of the above mentioned dimensions. In other words, a good leader must have a combination of spirituality, emotional intelligence and morality. This is because change is a process that is driven by multiple forces [29].

One needs to realize that if we seek lasting change, it has to be from within. But also externally influenced, and rooted from amongst individuals, citizens, organizations,

states/societies.

These values according to [30] include such things as: love of other, one's commitment and responsibility to family, clan, community and state; self-worth; one's sense of dignity, honour and respect; relationships, etc. These values can allow leaders to be the prime mover of events and assist the change they want to see within the state or society. By and large, it could be insisted that the combination of the above-mentioned dimensions can assist in developing leaders that are able to address the multifaceted crises that bedevilled the Nigerian body-politic in recent times.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The beacon of analysis of the study is

anchored on Elite Theory. The theory is

mostly concerned or associated with the disciplines of political science and sociology. The theory could be traced to the works of Vilfredo Pareto; Gaetano Mosca; Robert Michels in the 1950s [31]. Elite are those in political, economic, and military circles, which as an intricate set of overlapping small but dominant groups share decisions having at least national consequences. Insofar as national events are decided, the elite are those who decide them at the expense of the vast masses [4]. Elite theory is a theory of the state which seeks to describe and explain the power relationships in contemporary society. Proponents of the theory are: Elmer Eric Schattschneider; Wright Mills C.; Floyd Hunter; William Domhoff G.; James Burnham; Robert D. Putnam; Thomas R. Dye and a host of others [7].

The theory posits that a small minority, consisting of members of the political/military elite; economic elite, religious elite, socio-cultural elite and policy-planning networks, hold enormous power and that this power is independent of a state's democratic elections process and/or national rules or even what the constitution stipulates. Thus, the basic characteristics of this theory are that: power is concentrated or revolved around the elites; the elites are unified; the non-elites are diverse and powerless; elites' interests are unified due to common backgrounds and positions and the defining characteristic of power is institutional position [9].

The theory as applied in this study is apt in explaining the question of nationalism/patriotism and leadership; and how the pockets of minority whose decisions, attitudes, actions and inactions, idiosyncrasies rub-off on the vast masses or majority, who seemingly are hypnotized to sheepishly following the dictates of the elites rippling continuously without recourse to nationalism. In the Nigerian body-politic, the elite or leaders in circles like politics, religion, economic, education, etc. call the shots for others (vast masses) to follow irrespective of the malignant nature of their decisions and body languages. The theory tends to explain why a Nigerian prefers to follow the preaching and teachings of a

religious leader at the expense of a nationalist/nationalism, national unity and what the grand norm says. In the same vein, political leaders and socio-cultural leaders are ethno-nationalists or subnationalists who constantly preach parochialism, ethnicity instead of nationalism. Whereas, the former also portrays negative characters that constantly mar the image of the nation and by implication, mirror and/or bequeath negative ripples and tendencies for the vast majority, especially the youths to learn and follow. Hence, everything (whether good or bad) rises and falls on the shoulders of the leadership (the elite).

Reflections on Nationalism and Patriotism in Nigeria

The Old and New Styles Nigerian traditional nationalist movement started before 1900. Hence, there was a struggle against the colonization by British Empire. There were several wars and, finally, few colonies were created. During those times, there were several prominent individuals, who wanted to preserve their ancestors' culture and traditions. They are often called the heroes of Nigeria (<https://ask.naij.com/politics/5-nigerian-nationalists-i23694.html>).

Modern nationalism is said to have started in 1920s, by vibrant nationalists like Herbert Macaulay, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Obafemi Awolowo, Ahmedu Bello and the like, who instigated the need to respond to conquest and new policies of the colonial rule. The radical phase came during and after the Second World War, subsequently leading to independence. Nigerian nationalism radicalized and grew in popularity and power in the post-World War II period when Nigeria faced undesirable political and economic conditions under British rule [11]. The most prominent agitators for nationalism were Nigerian ex-soldiers who were veterans of World War II who had fought alongside British forces in the Middle East, Morocco, and Burma; another important movement that aided nationalism were trade union leaders [16].

Nationalism in the early years was expressed mainly as a feeling of national consciousness and an awareness that Nigerians were all members of one

race or nationality who came together to fight the common enemy [14]. As the colonial era began, an awareness of being residents of the same country became important, and a desire for freedom from colonial rule was a paramount expression of nationalism. Nationalists wanted to work within the new state of Nigeria rather than within their older indigenous nations, such as those of the Igbo, Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba, Efik, Bini, Idoma, Isoko, Ibibio and avalanche more.

Although the ultimate goal of nationalism was to secure the country's independence, it had other interrelated dimensions: the 'new Nigeria' would be governed by a westernized elite, working, through the agency of political parties and Western political ideas, to create a united and developed country. If the British took over power from a traditional elite, nationalism and modernization forced them to hand it over to an educated elite [23]; [24]; [25]. Nationalism was accelerated by colonial rule, whether those forces merely demanded corrections to abuses in the system or acted more radically, seeking self-rule and unification. Among the issues that displeased the nationalists were racism and outright discrimination, political and economic alienation, social segregation and the damage to traditional values during European rule. Nigerians in the civil/public service complained of racial discrimination in appointments, wages and promotions [31]. Colonial policies generated discontent among the people, especially the elite who originally demanded political reforms and/or restructuring, and later on, aspired for independence. After the much sought independence was achieved, the idea of fighting the common enemy was jettisoned by these nationalists and the later generations or crop of leaders, embracing sub-nationalism and in furtherance of divide and rule policy as instituted by the colonial masters.

Nationalism and Patriotism as Precursors to Leadership Development

The conceptions of nationalism and patriotism as reviewed above will help guide this section of the study. It is instructive to note that the notable changes

during the colonial era like urbanization, international organizations and exposure, Western education, and transportation, etc. contributed to the growth of nationalist activities in Nigeria. With cities acting as centres of interaction and acculturation, urbanization contributed to the development of national feelings. Newspapers, magazines, and other information circulated to influence opinions. Political and nationalist ideas grew and spread in the cities [5]. Urban dwellers carried many of these ideas to their villages and ethnic communities, thus connecting the city with the countryside (villages). The new infrastructure gave room for both the movement of people and the integration of different parts of the country. Thousands of Yoruba and Igbo moved to the north, with many of them becoming members of political parties outside their own home areas. The spread of Western education, especially in the south, created a population segment that could read and write and follow the discourse on nationalism and development. Education produced leaders with new ideas, patriotic views, visions, and ambitions [4]; [5].

A growing local media devoted space to nationalist issues, raising consciousness to a high level in editorials and special columns devoted to anti-colonial issues. One of the early heroes in this area was John Payne Jackson, originally a Liberian, who lived in Lagos from 1890 to 1918. His newspaper, the Lagos Weekly Record, supported demands for reforms and called for unity among Nigerians to fight the British. The press had an ally among the Nigerian students abroad who established organizations to unite and protest. The best known of these organizations was the West African Students' Union (WASU) founded in London in 1925 with the objectives of, among others, fostering national consciousness, racial pride, self-help, unity, and cooperation among Africans. WASU called for cooperation among the chiefs and elite, lobbied British politicians to initiate reforms, and used its monthly journal to serve the nationalist cause [8]; [9].

Political associations emerged very quickly and ultimately became the key platform

from which to express nationalism and contest elections. The early leaders sought changes in the system rather than independence. Nigerian leaders organized political associations and mobilized different constituencies to gain concessions. The leaders appealed to anti-colonial sentiments, and less to history, sub-national cultures, and languages. They exaggerated what independence would bring to everybody, contrasting this with the limitations of colonial accomplishments. Thus, younger, radical nationalist leaders emerged, who later became or constituted leadership after independence.

Clearly, our challenges of nationhood are linked to the inadequacies and lack of patriotism of our leaders at all levels. More so, another intriguing argument explaining our developmental backwardness is failure of citizens to take ownership of their country through nationalism patriotic displays. Therefore, addressing the leadership question without tackling the absence of this fundamental emotional attachment (i.e. nationalism and patriotism) and investments in the country would not be enough answer to the Nigerian challenges.

Nonetheless, the Nigerian leaders are not showing any reason for the world to respect them. Going very deep, you will find some dirty deals by some Nigerian Government officials. If leaders are polluted and un-patriotic, what do you expect from the followers? They will follow suit because Nigerian leaders do not see anything wrong with their actions.

Sub-Nationalism: A Bane to National Leadership Development and National Unity

Before and just after the attainment of political or flag independence, the Nigerian body-politic was relatively peaceful, and there was to a very large extent unity in diversity and national out-look in the social configurations of the entire polity. This relative peace was short-lived due to issues or conflicts arising from sub-national groups which culminated into coups, counter-coups and civil war. However, apart from instances of violent extremism, most Nigerians have continued to peacefully coexist with

each other, and a common Nigerian identity has been fostered amongst the more-educated and affluent Nigerians as well as amongst the many Nigerians who leave small homogeneous ethnic communities to seek economic opportunities in the cities where the population is ethnically mixed [4]. For instance many southerners (like the Igbos) migrate to the north to trade or work while a number of northerner seasonal workers and small-scale entrepreneurs go to the south [11]; [12].

The Nigerian nationalism has been adversely affected by multiple historical episodes of ethnic and religious violence and repression of certain ethnic/religious groups by the Nigerian government between the various peoples, has resulted in multiple secessionist movements demanding to break-away from Nigeria [4]. However Nigerian nationalism in the 1940s was already facing regional and ethnic problems to its goal of promoting a united, pan-Nigerian nationalism and patriotism [8]. Nigerian nationalism and its movements were geographically significant and important in southern Nigeria while a comparable Nigerian nationalist organization did not arrive in northern Nigeria until the 1940 [16]. This regional division in the development and significance of Nigerian nationalism also had political implications for ethnic divide, as southern Nigeria faced strong ethnic divisions between the Igbo and the Yoruba while northern Nigeria did not have strong internal divisions, this meant that northern Nigeria that is demographically dominated by the Hausa/Fulani was politically stronger due to its greater internal unity than that of southern Nigeria that was internally dis-unified [17]. The south that was ethnically divided between the Igbo and the Yoruba, though the region most in favour of Nigerian nationalism; faced the north that was suspicious of the politics of the south, creating the North-South regional cleavage that has remained an important issue in Nigerian politics, leadership tussle and national unity [25].

When Nigeria became an independent country, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe became the

first President of Nigeria. However ethnic tensions and power struggles soon emerged and became a crisis in 1966 when Nigerian military officers perceived by the northerners to be of Igbo descent overthrew the democratically elected government of Tafawa Balewa who along with the Northern Premier Ahmadu Bello and others were subsequently assassinated, which led to ethnic suspicion and mistrust, truncating the supposed national bond that was built during nationalist struggle/agitation for self-rule against the colonial rule [9].

From the above, we posit that the insurgence or uprising of sub-nationalist tendencies which eventually culminated to ethnic militia is a flow-out of the tension that has always been between civic-nationalism and ethnic-nationalism. According to [10], these conflicts of ethnic and civic-nationalisms in Nigeria constitute for the average Nigerian citizen, a conflict and dislocation of loyalties between the Nigerian state and the various ethnic nationalities in the state. When this conflict and dislocation manifest in the political class, elites, and/or leaders, the matter is further complicated for the result is no longer a case of feeling of personal loyalty, but of the practical privatisation, ethnicization, and misappropriation of state resources with unbridled rascality. This is however, viewed from the aspect of civic-nationalism as the ethnic-nationalist could tend to see and agree with such actions as just, appropriate and patriotic.

Wilmot as cited by [20] traced the challenge of ethnic nationalism to the earlier days of Nigerian state. He opines that when the leaders of Nigerian nationalist struggles graduated into the leaders of post-independence Nigerian government, they seemed also to have transformed instantaneously from Nigerian nationalist freedom fighters to ethnic nationalist leaders and champions of same at the expense of civic-nationalism. Thus, in the first republic Nigerian political experience, the leaders of the three major ethnic groups, viz.: Nnamdi Azikiwe (Igbo), Ahmadu Bello (Hausa) and Obafemi Awolowo (Yoruba) showed themselves, in moment of personal crisis

to be more of ethnic champions than nationalist leaders [30]. While Obafemi Awolowo and Ahmedu Bello were more open and direct, the indecision of Azikiwe did not help the Nigerian people or the Igbo people as it were [4].

In the words of [5] this trend of sub-nationalism, historically prepared the grounds for the agitations that we experience these days in the name of ethnic loyalties that abound in different forms. This development has been observed across the country. For instance, the Movement for the Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) founded in 1999, and Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) founded in 2012, are Igbo dominated ethnic movement. Similarly, in the North, various ethnic movements were established; among these organizations in the North are the Arewa People's Congress (APC) which emerged to counter the OPC, the 'hambada' and 'hisbah' to enforce sharia compliance in northern states. In recent years, there has been renewed rush to join in the race through the militant Islamic body (boko haram) that pervades the area and these developments stem from the perception of marginalization and non-accommodation of pure Islamic principles/way of life by the Nigerian political system. In the West, there exist Oodua People's Congress (OPC) is dominated by the Yoruba extracts and could be traced to the return of democracy in 1999, but became more visible later on, in their pursuit for a transposed Yoruba nation in the government and politics of Nigeria. Akin to the above is the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) in the Niger Delta, founded in the 1990s, which necessitated the formation of ethnic militia and armed groups that are based in that region such as the Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF) and the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) and most recently the Niger Delta Avengers (NDA). These organizations are not only struggling to call attention to the plundering of the environment of the delta due to oil exploration, but are also demanding that a good proportion of the resources exploited from their region be retained there, so as to right the wrongs of

years of conspicuous deprivation and marginalization [17] [18].

The reason for these acts perpetrated by different sub-groups to gain recognition is essentially because Nigerian political workers/office holders have made little remarkable difference compared with the struggles, which our foremost nationalists undertook to make Nigeria a reality. This dialectical reversal according to [21] paves way for people to vent anger on the government. Those who on many occasions dare to take positive steps are daunted by the political elites, which make them enemies of the government. Paradoxically, the government by her actions has overtime projects itself as an enemy of democracy. According to [8] patriotism is possible under any form of government, but it is only under democratic governance that it is felt "because only there is it possible for citizens to identify themselves with the whole community." Since democracy has not been built, there is no opportunity for continuity, as we can only properly conceive the idea of continuity on existing structures. Love of country can therefore not be futuristic under such conditions, as leaders of tomorrow may not but build on some of the foundations of yesteryears. [9] noted some points based on the aforesaid that: It is not young people who degenerate, they are ruined only when grown men have already been corrupted... Today's young will corrupt tomorrow's, even as they were corrupted by yesterdays. And where in this chain of generations will virtue be found? [13].

In an era of enlightenment, according to [23] it is very clear that

...behind the various agitations for ethnic liberation/emancipation, are political elites who primarily start with the quest for national liberation and constantly limit their struggle to smaller groups when there is perceived freedom from former captors; the more the limitation of the quest, the higher the chances of national disintegration [18].

Hence, patriotism which traditionally begins as a love for one's country, which transposes to love for a person simply because they share the same ethnic empathy. Rather because the history of Nigerian government and politics is that of plunder, leaders are basically interested in making fellow citizens better tools for their own selfish gains. It is however imperative to say that the various hitherto struggles for recognition at the end the 19th century are not unconnected to conceived ideologies by politicians to lure various groups toward violent agitations all for the good of the political elite, yet with little or no benefit to the greater majority who are the victims of misery and rejection [1]; [2]; [3]; [4]. By and large, [8] stressed that nationalism is but a projection of the will of a few unto the whole; subsuming the masses to the extent that they have no individuality of their own; yet "constitutional democracy exists in order to give people a chance to be individuals" [10]. He went to make this striking statement that

...the purpose of the nationalism we seek is not the consciousness against external domination that leads to fundamental rights of the human person. We seek freedom not because we feel deprived as a result of domination, but because of our selfish quest to put fellow nationals in bondage [12].

Similarly speaking, [15] surmised that:

...the various struggles we engage ourselves shrouded in the spirit of nationalism are but wars that ironically prepares us for our own bondage. Nigeria is therefore a country because of its territorial distinctiveness, a nation because of its capability of having an independent mind of her own, yet a nation in disguise, because what is presented as national ideologies/practices is not an extension of the general will of the people [19].

From the foregoing the ultimate victim is the Nigerian state, she grieves practically in all areas; ranging from the aspects of services designated to be rendered to her citizens; yet she fails because she is debilitated as a result the actions and inactions of ethnic-nationalist who benefits from the current challenges facing her, but his loyalty is tilted to his ethnic nationality and not to the Nigerian state. From the perspective of the ethnic-nationalist who is not gaining at the

interim, there exist two possible attitudes which are: to claim to be a Nigerian nationalist and blame others of ethnicism; or to accuse Nigeria of being a failed state and to call for dissolution of the Nigerian state. All these point to how we have nurtured the seed of discord that was sown by the colonial masters to their own advantage, hence, creating more tendencies to further divide and rule which has marred leadership development and national unity.

CONCLUSION

Nigeria since independence in 1960 is still bedevilled with plethora of issues internal and external to governance and leadership, but these were swept under the carpet; most notable among these were ethnicity, minority complaints, violence, and growing corruption. There exist mutual suspicion and ethnic jingoism that has that have also deprived us of all sense of reasoning as a people, sense of justice and fairness are have also been traded to the wind as a result of non-patriotic and un-nationalistic eccentricities. Yet we laugh and hug in public and plot against each other when we retire to our ethno-religious enclaves. Once in a while, this mistrust finds ludicrous expression among our people as we witness bloodbaths ethno-religious contempt for each other. By implication, development is impeded in virtually all parts of our country and there appears to be nothing to be proud of in almost all spheres, apart from cases of personal achievements of spirited citizens. Basic amenities are lacking in all areas. Issues that other nations have long taken care of are still

hard for us to crack. Nigeria still ranks poor in many development indices while the menace of corruption is threatening to choke the country to death due to the excessive stealing of our resources by some handlers of our affairs.

However, patriotism being one of the best qualities that any well-thinking Nigerian can possess, does not simply entail loving Nigeria; patriotism also entails that each Nigerian, young and old, make active, healthy and positive contributions to the development of the country. It entails having enough passion for this country on the issues that affect the country and to demand for the policies that would alleviate the challenges facing the country. Whenever one speaks about these challenges, one must not do it solely for the sake of sounding intelligent, or to signal any political ambitions or intentions, but as a testament of one's passion for national leadership development and national unity, which are the resultant end of nationalism and patriotism.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The paper suggests the following recommendations.

- There should be policy re-orientation by the government and the civil society to the public on the importance of patriotism/nationalism as the basis for leadership and followership, which will in turn bring about the much desired national unity.
- It is germane to say that what the country is in dire need of is

honest and modern leadership that would be a uniting point for citizens, one that can tame the consuming tides of corruption and evolve creative solutions to our innumerable issues and challenges. It is therefore our firm resolve that virile and sincere leadership is the precursor for industrious and patriotic followership.

- Managing Nigeria's diversity in the context of justice, equity, equality

and fairness is a pathway to progress. If we address these existential and leadership challenges, we are more than half-way into addressing all our problems.

- There should be a deliberate policy and campaign for the love of Nigeria and patriotism in various ways, including promotion of religious and cultural tolerance. To achieve this, we should build more bridges and strengthen the existing ones like the NYSC and Unity Schools.
- We should de-emphasise factors that accentuate our fault lines such as regional socio-cultural cum political associations within institutions and schools.
- We should look into our common bonds as basis of our shared humanity and associations, not as

an Arewa bloodline, or as members of the Ohaneze Ndi Igbo, or as the Afenifere Pan Yoruba group, or any other tribe or religious groups.

- The cliché that says: united we stand, divided we fall, should be continuously preached, especially to upcoming generations. Because it is in unity that we can find strength and ability to conquer the dangers that bedevil our polity. If we are not united, we cannot fight corruption, insecurity, or any other societal malaise.
- Issues based discourses that can enhance national development and bring an end to current mutual mistrust that is shaking the very foundation of our nation should be regularly stressed and encouraged.

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