Kogi State University

From the SelectedWorks of Ali Simon Yusufu Bagaji

Winter December, 2008


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Available at: https://works.bepress.com/alibagaji/10/

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Abstract
Nigeria is ethnically a diverse nation-state. Its ethnic diversity, like that of the United State of America ideally is a source of strength. However on the contrary, analysis of post independence inter-ethnic relations in Nigeria indicates surge from ‘ethnic accommodation to ethnic agitation’. Consequently, due to frequent inter-ethnic conflict, the task ‘to keep Nigeria one’ is therefore more than ever becoming an uphill task. This article explores the root causes of the growing inter-ethnic conflicts in contemporary Nigeria from the perspective of the ethnic security dilemma prism and concludes that it is a relevant explanatory tool for understanding it.

Introduction
Throughout the period of Nigerian nationalism and struggle against colonial administration, Nigerian citizens irrespective of the ethnic group and or region they belong considered themselves as a member of a one geographical entity called Nigeria. The ‘One Nigeria’ unity was well embraced by all and sundry. However, the ‘One Nigeria’ unity did not to last long in the new Nigeria, because as early as 1966, when Nigeria was only six years old, Chukwumeka Odumegwu Ojukwu (1966), an Ibo ethnic Leader categorically declared that, the people of Eastern Nigeria could no longer be protected in (their) lives and in (their) property by any Government based outside Eastern Nigeria. As a result of this statement, Nigeria was between 1966 and 1970 involved in a war of attrition with the Ibos of eastern Nigeria then known as Republic of Biafra. Ever since Chukwumeka Odumegwu Ojukwu made the above statement, there have been uncountable comments that are undermining the unity of Nigeria. For instance, Gani Adam (2003), a Yoruba ethnic militia Leader also said, life and property could no longer be guaranteed because the security network of Nigeria is currently under the control of Hausa/Fulani and they have been using it to dominate and oppress other ethnic
nationalities. To be specific, apart from the Nigeria/Biafra war, Nigeria has witnessed numerous other ferocious ethnic conflicts among which are: Ijaw-Ishekiri, Urhobo-Ishekiri, Jukun-Tiv, kuteb-Jukun, Ogoni-Andoni, Chamba-Kuteb, and Hausa-Kataf among others.

The above ethnic based sentimental statements and actual brinkmanship are all pointer to the effect that, as opposed to the task to ‘keep Nigeria one’, ethnic leaders are agitating for ethnic self determination, and also that inter-ethnic relation among the diverse ethnic groups in Nigeria is that of mutual suspicion. Given the notion of ethnic insecurity, the mindset of many ethnic groups in Nigeria today is that of perceiving neighbouring ethnic groups as a threat. To mitigate marginalisation and consequently attain self determination, most of the ethnic groups in contemporary Nigeria have considered two options. First, the formation and proliferation of ethnic militias is considered as an indispensable organ of ethnic security. It is for this reason for example that, the Yoruba and the minority ethnic groups of the south-west Nigeria formed the Odu’a Peoples Congress (OPC), the Ibo and the minority ethnic groups of the south-east Nigeria formed the Bakassi Boys (BB), The Ijaw minority ethnic group of the Niger Delta in the south-south Nigeria formed the Egbesu Boys of Africa (EBA), Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and finally, the Hausa-Fulani and the minority ethnic groups in the north, formed the Arewa Peoples’ Congress (APC). The second option is that, membership of ethnic based association and taking instructions from it for ethnic security purposes is considered more important than membership of national political parties. It is thus this clandestine notion that led to the formation and proliferation of ethnic based associations such as, the Afenifere and Yoruba Council of Elders for the Yoruba, Ohaneze N’digbo for the Ibo and Arewa Consultative Forum for the Hausa/Fulani. These ethnic based associations to mention a few are today the political mouthpiece of the respective ethnic groups that they represent.

From the foregoing therefore, while it does appear reasonable to say that Nigeria’s ethnic diversity and pluralism, just like that in the United States of America should also have made it a great nation-state, due to ‘ethnic security dilemma’ and worse still, ‘twisted’ public policies for the management of diversity, Nigeria is still grappling with how to keep its territorial integrity together after many years of attaining political
independence. Given the above background, one of the tasks of this article is therefore to draw attention to the wave and consequences of the growing inter-ethnic conflicts in Nigeria. The central task however is to explain the root cause of the inter-ethnic conflicts and its associated dynamics and pervasiveness. To explain the root cause of the growing inter-ethnic conflicts in Nigeria, this article employs the ethnic security dilemma prism as a framework for understanding it.

The Nature of the Nigerian Society

Given the above background, to understand the nature of the growing ethnicity and inter-ethnic conflict in Nigeria, one must necessarily begin with a review of the major socio-political and geo-cultural environment in which Nigerian people live. The justification for this approach is that ‘ethnicity is a historically cumulative phenomenon’ (Osaghae, 2003). The above view also means that, no matter how new ethnicity may be, current patterns of ethnicity cannot be properly understood if it is considered in isolation of the past (Otite, 1983).

As is well known, geographically, Nigeria has a large in territory. It has a land area of 923,768 square kilometres and it is situated within the tropical zone. Nigeria has the largest population in Africa, the ninth largest country in the world with the combined size of Belgium, France, and the United Kingdom (Awolowo 1968:295). By 1996, the population of Nigeria was estimated at between 100 and 120 million people (Otite, 2000:1). It is not quite certain how many nationalities or ethnic groups are found in Nigeria, but it is estimated at between a minimum of 250 and a maximum of 400 (Political Bureau Report, 1987:13). There are three geo-political regions in Nigeria, which consists of the North, South and East. The Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba and Ibo ethnic groups are numerically dominant and are to be found in the northern, south western and south-eastern section of Nigeria respectively. The three ethnic groups that are named above are usually considered as the majority ethnic groups while all other smaller ethnic groups are lumped together as minority ethnic groups. Most of the ethnic groups, generally speaking, occupy definite territories, although some, like the Hausa/Fulani are widely dispersed.
As a result of the geo-political regions, there exists wide range of ‘structural and subjective differences. These structural and subjective differences in turn produce what is regarded as predictable personality differences (Levine, 1960:190). The first noticeable differences between these regions are their physical sizes. The North constitutes about two-thirds of the entire landmass of Nigeria as well as half of the total population. The East and West are almost equal in population and geographical size. Given these geographical disparities in favour of the North, there is the assumption in the North that political control of the nation is its own right...because Northerners (always) express fears that the better educated westerners and easterners might jeopardize their interests if political power leaves their grip (Njoku, 1999:8). The fears of the Northerners may not be out of place because presumably, both human and natural resources more available in both the east and west than in the North. The northerners having taken note of this are in a perpetual state of fear that, if a combination of a well-educated human resources, natural resources and political power are all allowed to reside in either the east or west, it may be a problem for the Northerners especially where improper sensitivity on the part of either of the eastern or western politician is exhibited.

Apart from the above obvious differences, the three regions in terms of religious beliefs are different. The people of the northern part are predominantly Moslem; where as the people of the eastern and western parts are predominantly Christian. What this means is that, the people of the north, east and west altogether have different value systems. For instance, ‘Islamic doctrines’ (Ayubi, 1997:345) strongly condemns the leadership of Moslems by non-Moslems, generally referred to as infidels. This being so, the tendency for conflict is therefore (very) high in a multicultural polity like Nigeria where there is a plurality of religions (Mbabuike, 1996:401-13). In Nigeria today, intra and inter-religious conflicts are common issues among different religious groups and indeed, has occasionally escalated to large-scale inter-ethnic conflicts. As a result of the above circumstance, at any particular point in time, the religious affiliation that controls the centre has also remained a serious source of ethnic conflict for fear that the others’ religious interests might be undermined. Further more, the traditional political systems of the ethnic groups can be classified into two broad categories as either, centralised governmental systems and the non-centralised political systems.
The above among many other socio-economic and political issues, posing a serious concern for the people and Government of Nigeria, most especially as it undermines its legitimacy, set up in 1986 a Political Bureau to, among other things review Nigeria’s political history and identify the basic problems. In a comprehensive report submitted by the Political Bureau in 1987, the report confirmed that ‘there have being differences in the perspectives of the various peoples, (in Nigeria) resulting in what has being described as ethnicity’. The inference one can make out of the confirmation of the Political Bureau is that, some degree of ethnicity exists among the ethnic groups in modern day Nigeria. This is more so that contemporary socio-political and geo-cultural differences among the ethnic groups in Nigeria in the recent time has to a large extent revealed that the elements of ethnicity as interpreted above has further crystallized over time.

Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria: Origin and Transformation

In order to properly comprehend why ethnicity and inter-ethnic conflict has crystallised in contemporary Nigeria, it is important to begin in pre-colonial Nigeria. This is because, the colonial period, though relatively brief in Nigeria, ethnic groups in Nigeria and the identities claimed for them had attained such a tremendous transformation and reconstruction in the context of the colonial and post colonial Nigerian state. It is in the above vein that many contemporary writers on ethnic conflicts in Africa generally, such as (Azarya, 2003; Otite, 2000; Osaghae 2003; Ake, 1976 and Imobighe, 2003) etc are in agreement to the effect that, the crystallization of ethnicity that metamorphosed to inter-ethnic conflict that are now so rampant in Africa and many third world countries took its roots from the colonial period. Inspite of the above, one should not undermine the fact that some forms of ethnicity existed in Nigeria even before the arrival of the British colonial administration. It is however also important to make it clear at this juncture that, the context within which the ethnic groups in pre-colonial Nigeria related to one another was not that of using ethnic identity to enhance ethnic position over other ethnic groups. But rather, ethnicity existed on the basis that one belongs to one ethnic group or the other. Specifically, during the pre-colonial Nigeria, very few ethnic groups like the Hausas, Ibos and Yorubas to name but a few attributed much importance to the ethnic group which they belong, but rather, the crystallization of the current configuration of ethnic entities
and the political use made of them was as a result of colonial contact. With the above at the back of our mind, what are the high points in the colonial and postcolonial Nigeria that encouraged the pervasiveness of ethnicity and inter-ethnic conflict?

To facilitate effective political administration of Nigeria, the British used the system of indirect rule. The implication of indirect rule is that, for a period of about four hundred years, and especially from 1900, the British colonial administration was felt in Nigeria with different effects. For instance, whereas the southern parts were more effectively colonised particularly through western education and Christian missionary activities, the Islamic religion and way of life made northerners conservative, suspicious, and resistant to western forms of education as well as to other forms of universalistic religions. The inference one can derive from the above is that, the colonial regime created the Nigerian-nation state, but decided to hold onto the country through a policy of divide and rule. In the process, it encouraged the separate development of the constituent ethnic units that make up Nigeria without encouraging the “Nigerianess” of the whole (Imobighe, 2003:1). All of the above are confirmation of a comment made by a one time Governor General of Nigeria, Arthur Richard, who was quoted by (Uroh 1998:191) that, ‘it is only the accident of British suzerainty which has made Nigeria one country’ and that, ‘it is still far from being one country or one nation, socially or even economically’. The above observation is correct because as earlier stated, 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 (Uroh, 1998:191). Even with the obvious differences, throughout the colonial period, the British colonial administration never bothered to encourage maximum interaction between the various ethnic groups. Hence, at independence, Nigeria was a conglomerate of numerous ethnic groups devoid of any organic unity. Instead of cultivating the feeling of national consciousness, the constituent ethnic groups remained the primary units or entities with which the Nigerian people identified. By ethnic groups, one is referring to the various distinct socio-cultural and linguistic groups within Nigeria, each with a common set of characteristics that sets it apart from the other ethnic groups. Over all, the implication of the colonial policy of indirect rule that allowed the separate development of all the constituent ethnic units in
contemporary Nigeria is that, it encouraged and heightened a circumstance in which the major ethnic groups on one side and the major ethnic groups and the minor ethnic groups on the other side see one another from the perspective of ‘other and us’ in the scheme of things. Thus, this emergent and eventful categorization of northerners and southerners, or the north-south dichotomy is one of the issues that have plagued Nigeria up to the present time (Otite, 2000:3).

In a similar vein, the north-south dichotomy was also compounded by the construction of ‘a tri-regional colonial federalism’. This system secured autonomy for the three dominant ethnic groups. Within each of the three regions are found different minority ethnic groups that are gobbled up by the various large ethnic groups. Even then, while the dominating presence of the major ethnic groups left the smaller ethnic groups in the respective regions unsatisfied, no consensus exists among the major ethnic groups either. It should be borne in mind that, it is a mutually held belief among the three dominant ethnic groups that, overall domination of political power (at the centre) … secures economic advantage for individuals and (the ethnic) groups survival, (Njoku, 1999:9). In this context, the major ethnic groups cannot fight alone. Therefore, the support of the smaller ethnic minorities in the respective regions becomes vital any time the major ethnic groups are competing for the power at the centre. At this particular point in time, the minority ethnic groups in the respective regions will be made to feel more secure by identifying with the major ethnic group of their region. For instance, the minority ethnic groups of the middle belt such as the Igalas, Idoma and Tivs would reconstruct their identity to that of Hausa-Fulani any time the Hausa-Fulani are competing with the other major ethnic groups like the Ibos and the Yorubas. Thus, at any point, who controls the centre has remained a serious source of ethnic conflict for fears that others’ interest might be undermined. Given the mutual fear of domination, ethnic politics in Nigeria is a ‘win or die’ affair, as losing means to lose every thing. In the end, electoral losers for power at the centre prefer to destroy the system instead of accepting electoral defeat. The point being made here is that, ethnicity and ethnic identity cleavages has become very important as each of the ethnic groups could no longer afford to leave the destiny of their groups in the hands of the state, controlled by ethnic hegemons (of the other ethnic groups), that had failed all along to respond satisfactorily to their grievances
or ensure their identity and material progress (Osaghae, 2001:2). Ironically, whenever the common enemies have lost out, the minority ethnic groups return to their respective regions to bitterly experience the unrestrained oppression of the majority ethnic groups of their respective regions.

At a later stage of the political history of Nigeria, the tri-regional colonial federal structure manifested itself in the form of the emergence of regional political parties – the Northern people’s Congress (NPC) in the north, the Action Group (AG) in the west, and the National Council of the Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) in the east. The entire sociocultural and political arrangements as explained above later resulted in the political marginalisation, economic deprivation and social oppression of the minority ethnic groups and their consequent resentment and agitation for autonomy (Imobighe, 2003:4). From the foregoing, the exit of the British colonial masters paved the way for the emergence of internal colonisers who relied on tribalistic ideologies and oppressive regional power for their constituent interest… (Njoku, 1999:8)

It should be noted however that, during the early periods of the struggle for independence, the nationalists tried to create a common Nigerian Identity by recruiting people from various ethnic backgrounds in the country into the anti-colonial struggle. Thus, before independence, the overriding goal of Nigeria’s political elites was how to create a feeling of common belonging among Nigeria’s diverse ethnic groups. But at the same time, as Nigeria advanced towards independence, there were latent fears of political and economic domination. These fears and concerns took multi dimensional forms. On the one hand, the minority ethnic groups entertained fear of domination by the larger ethnic groups in their respective regions. On the other, there were mutual fear and suspicions between the major ethnic groups. At another level, the northerners, which include the Hausa-Fulani and all other minority ethnic groups in the north feared that the southerners, which consists of the Yorubas and the easterners which consists of the Ibos and all of the minority ethnic groups in the west and east by virtue of their earlier start in western education, would remain the dominant groups in a fully integrated system, while the latter, on their part, expressed concern over northern domination because of their numerical strength (Ezera, 1964:6-7). However, immediately political independence was granted on 1st October 1960 and the spoils of the victory were to be shared, Nigeria
witnessed a major regionalisation of Nigerian Nationalism (Coleman, 1986:319-331). For instance, there was crass competition for the occupation of public bureaucracies left behind by the colonial masters. In order for the elites to win occupation of public offices, ethnic ideological tendencies were invoked by the political elites. In the process, the flame of national unity that was to burn bright and strong with the construction of national symbols like the concept of Nigerian citizen, national flag, national anthem, and the practice of quota system of appointment into federal service never materialised (Iweriebor, 1990:6-7). The fear of domination and the need to remove the fear led to series of conflicts between 1962 and 1970, and reoccurrence of several others in the 1990s.

The inference one can make from all of the above is that, ethnicity and inter-ethnic conflict crystallised over time in Nigeria because, the state became the object of ethnic group’s struggle. That is to say, the root causes of ethnicity and inter-ethnic conflict in contemporary Nigeria, whether between the majority versus majority, majority versus minority and even minority versus minority etc could be interpreted to mean the ultimate desire of each of the ethnic groups to take charge of the control of political power at the centre and the respective regions as the case may be. The desire to take absolute charge of political power stems from the notion that, with political power, ethnic identity and material well being of the ethnic groups in power is secured. From the foregoing, even though the question of ethnicity and inter-ethnic conflict in Nigeria is a complex web of issues, one can subscribe to the view of Cohen quoted by Suberu that the question of ‘ethnicity (ethnic conflict) is basically a political and not a cultural phenomenon’. The above narrated scenario has therefore been the causes of the unending litany of ethnicity and inter-ethnic conflicts that has become the burden of the Nigerian nation-state in contemporary time.

The Ethnic Security Dilemma Theory: A Tool for Understanding Conflicts in Nigeria?

The growth of academic interest on ethnic conflict is not by happenstance, but a result of the need by intellectuals, policy makers, NGOs and concerned individuals to rise to one
of the emerging societal tragedies of post cold war. Hence, academic and political interest in conflict studies became unavoidable. For instance, beginning from the 1990s, inter-ethnic tensions became the world’s most common problem as it accounts for the spectacle of state collapse in many countries. To be specific, it led to the disintegration of many countries such as the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the former Yugoslavia. There are several other contemporary evidences to show that ethnicity and inter-ethnic tensions accounts for the collapse and or reconstitution of some nation-states. Given the enormity of inter-ethnic conflict that is spreading like wild fire, attempts to create understanding for its sudden upsurges led to formulation of theoretical literatures. Among the many approaches/models includes the emergent anarchy approach championed by Barry Posen and Chaim Kaufmann, the constructivist approach championed by Stuart Kaufman, the weak state approach championed by Mohammed Ayoob and the scarcity model championed by Thomas Homer-Dixon among others. Given the above background therefore, this part of the article reviews the ethnic security dilemma theory, and also attempts to highlight its relevance to understanding the new waves of inter-ethnic conflict in Nigeria.

The term ‘security dilemma’ is relatively new. As far as the origin of the term is concerned, while it is Herz who is accredited with coining the term, the grand father of the security dilemma is the British historian Herbert Butterfield (Collins, 2000:3). The scholarly works of (Herz, 1951; Butterfield, 1951; and Wheeler et al, 1992) etc contained extensive use of the term ‘security dilemma’ at the level of inter state analysis to explain circumstances that may warrant conflict among states in the international system. From the foregoing, it is very clear that, the security dilemma prism was originally conceived with inter-state firmly in mind (however) since the end of the cold war in particular there has been an increasing tendency among many writers towards utilizing the security dilemma in terms of the intrastate level of analysis (Roe, 1999:188). Part of the reasons for the interest in utilising security dilemma at the intrastate level can essentially be put down to the eagerness to address the question of ethnic conflict which became a public issue after the collapse of the cold war. In this connection therefore, the first writer to utilise the security dilemma as an explanation for ethnic conflict was Barry Posen in 1993. Posen’s explanation of the causes of ethnic conflict took its cue from the realist
theoretical assumption, which contends that the condition of anarchy makes security the first concern of states (Posen, 1993:28). To Posen, ethnic conflict can occur if the situation such as ‘emerging anarchy’ exists. By emerging anarchy, it means, the absence of a sovereign - for political relations among states (Posen, 1993:27). The consequence of the absence of sovereigns is that, they leave in their wake a host of groups - ethnic, religious, cultural, - of greater or lesser cohesion (Posen, 19993:28). The issue now is that, if the ethnic groups care about their survival as an entities, these groups must pay attention to the first thing that states have historically addressed – the problem of security – even though many of these groups still lack many of the attributes of statehood (Posen, 19993:28).

From the foregoing, in keeping with the realist tradition who contends that the condition of anarchy makes security the first concern of states, similarly, if ethnic groups care about their existence, there will be the competition for the key to security – power. The competition will often continue to a point at which the competing entities have amassed more power than needed for security and, thus, consequently begin to threaten others. Those threatened will respond in turn (Posen, 1993:28). The above circumstance is based on the fact that relative power is difficult to measure and it is always subjectively appraised. This is most especially that what seems sufficient to one state’s (ethnic group) defence will seem, and will often be, offensive to its neighbours. Because neighbours wish to remain autonomous and secure, they will react and try to strengthen their own positions. Under this circumstance, what one does to enhance one’s own security causes reaction that, in the end, can make one less secure (Posen1993: 28). Attempts by states to secure cooperation to bring the above situation under control may be difficult as someone else’s cheating may leave one in a militarily weakened position. All fear betrayal. And this is the ethnic security dilemma.

In much the same way, another scholar who is also much concerned with the security dilemmas and ethnic conflict is Stuart Kaufman. Kaufman’s approach to the security dilemma and ethnic conflict is to be found in two of his articles. First, in ‘An International Theory of Inter-Ethnic War’ and ‘Spiralling to Ethnic War: Elites, Masses, and Moscow in Moldova’s Civil War’. These scholarly articles were both written in 1996. Kaufman explained the linkage of security dilemma and ethnic conflict when he
noted that: strictly speaking, the security dilemma should not apply to contending ethnic groups within a state… (however) if anarchy reaches the point where the government cannot control its territory effectively enough to protect its own people, while ethnic based organisation can, then the ethnic based organisations have enough of the attributes of sovereignty to create security dilemma (Kaufman, 1999:151).

Over all if the ethnic security dilemma theory is approximated to the realities of inter-ethnic relations in Nigeria, one can argue that, part of the reason ethnic conflict breaks out is that, a security dilemma situation can develop between suspicious ethnic groups- Hausas, Ibos and Yorubas etc. If ethnic groups fear or suspect each other, they often arm and mobilise in self-defence-formation of militia organisations such as O’dua Peoples’ Congress (OPC), Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) to mention but a few. The formation of ethnic militia groups and political associations aggravate and lead to a spiral of hostility and suspicion that makes conflict likely. That is also to say therefore that, whether arising incrementally out of competition between ethnic groups; state weakness is a necessary condition for violent ethnic conflict to erupt. This is because; In Nigeria today, some ethnic groups are expressing concerns that the state (Nigeria) may not remain neutral and that it has been hijacked by certain ethnic group. This in itself may be sufficient to ignite fears of physical insecurity. In order to mitigate these fears, ethnic groups assume the roles of the state- which primarily is security. The competition for the key to security – power creates a cycle and spiral of hostility and suspicion that makes conflict possible. All of the above situations are known as ethnic security dilemma and these dilemmas are the fundamental causes of ethnic conflict.

There is no doubt the works of Posen and Kaufman has in no small measure contributed to the advancement of knowledge as far as an ethnic conflict study is concerned. But then, their work has attracted a lot of criticisms from other scholars. For instance anarchy which is the basic referent object of security dilemma in Posen’s version was criticised on the ground that, ‘…anarchy in itself is not the cause of worst-case assumptions. Rather, it provides the necessary conditions in which this can take place’ (Roe, 1999: 189). Further more, in his own contribution as to whether anarchy play any role in relation to security dilemma, Collins, (1996) persuasively reason that: ‘For some
anarchy is not a cause of the security dilemma but rather a necessary condition…whether a cause or necessary condition what is clear is that its role is important’. From the foregoing, what is certainly clear is that, anarchy has an important, if not completely causal, role to play in generating ethnic conflict.

**Conclusion**

In this article, attempts was made to highlight the various scenarios that provided background to understanding the origin and transformation of the unending litany of inter-ethnic conflicts that have become a burden for the Nigerian nation-state. The article also highlighted the consequences of the sudden upsurges of inter-ethnic conflicts for a developing country such as Nigeria. In the wake of the challenges posed by the growing inter-ethnic conflict which became the world’s most common problem, the article observed that it became inescapable for scholar to continue to seek ways for understanding ethnicity and ethnic conflict, its dynamics and ramifications. In this direction therefore, the ethnic security dilemma theory was critically examined.

A close examination of the content and context of the ethnic security dilemma theory reveals that some of the major conditions for its operation are available in Nigeria: The prevalence of mutual fear of domination among the various ethnic groups, the politics of a ‘win or die’ affair, since losing means to lose every thing, electoral losers for power at the centre prefer to destroy the system rather than having to stand as losers (Tragedy), proliferation of ethnic militias and ethnic based associations that unleash varying degrees of violence (Anarchy), ethnicity and ethnic identity cleavages has become very important as each of the ethnic groups in Nigeria are suspicious of leaving the destiny of their groups in the hands of the state controlled by ethnic hegemons of the other ethnic groups that had failed all along to respond satisfactorily to their grievances or ensure their identity and material progress (All fear betrayal) etc. Over all, given the availability of some of the major conditions that makes ethnic security dilemma operate, one can conclude that the ethnic security dilemma theory can be a useful tool for understanding the root cause of new waves of inter-ethnic conflicts in contemporary Nigeria.
References


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