The Growth and Importance of Ethnic Militia in Southeastern Nigeria.

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to examine in a critical manner the socio-economic and political importance of ethnic militia in southeastern part of Nigeria. The situation is that ethnic militia has become unquestionably and steadily considerable factor in the nation's political climate. According to supporters and as could be seen from external literature, their importance range from agitation, threats of secession, neighborhood protection as well as platform for union and development. It is upon these that the researcher adopted primary data collection by making use of interview, questionnaires distribution and observational methods as sources of data collection; while secondary data collection include; internet research, journals, Articles, Newspapers, textbooks and Radio. The content analyses were simple percentage and tables. The theories of deprivation and consequentialism were used which decried the consequences of depriving ones right of justice and equity in sharing the dividends of democracy in the country. Accordingly, some findings were made; in the findings; the researcher observed that the need for security of lives and properties, protection of the Geographical Territory against hoodlums and other forces is paramount. He further observed that marginalization, injustice and domination of the ethnicity by the major power holders from majority ethnic groups have become factors responsible for the emergence of the militia within the southeast of Nigeria. In the recommendations, the researcher recommended the need for sovereign National conference among all ethnic groups, equitable distribution of the dividends of socio-economic and political resources of the nation according to the principle of derivation and there is also the recommendation of the adoption of referendum which is regarded as a panacea for peaceful co-existence in Nigeria.
Keywords: Ethnicity, militia, Proliferation, marginalization and Importance

Introduction

Ethnic militia has been the forces that have contributed to development and challenges within socio-political and economic systems of the region and the country (Nigeria). These groups of ethnic militants emerged as a result of inequitable social relation exist within the production and distribution of the dividends from oil and non-oil exploitation and exploration in Nigeria. The injustice, neglect, impoverishment, marginalization, unemployment and economic bastardization have been experienced in the country. Within the Southeast and South-south zones of Nigeria, some groups of militia emerged from the region known as: Movement for Actualization and

sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB), movement for Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND), the Niger Delta volunteers force (NDVF), *Ijaw* Youth Council (IYC) and new emergence of Avengers Militant Group.

The activities of these groups of militias is of genuine ideology for self freedom, independent and equitable addressing of matters that required urgent attention such as injustice, marginalization of smaller ethnic group who have the major sources of nations economy.

Therefore, this paper is set to achieve the following **objectives:**

1. To obtain the comprehensive analysis of the emergence and growth of ethnic militia in Nigeria.
2. To evaluate the effect of the activities of these militias in the socio-economic and political systems of Nigeria.
3. To state reasons behind disagreement between the Indigenous citizens and Nigeria with respect to unsuccessful nature of all efforts to curtail the activities of these militias in Nigeria.

Adebisi (2008.9) asserted that:

> *"The persisting gaps and inequality between minority and majority ethnic group enhance the tension between the groups who are reacting out of frustration and aggression."*

Paul Oghenero Okumagba *and Okereka O.P.* (2012:5);

> *The activities of ethnic militia revolve around the distribution of national resources and the struggle for power, authority and values in the face of marginalization; ethnic group can be seen as an instrument around which youth who share common ancestral existence can mobilize support for civil struggles against socio-economic deprivation.*

The deprivation in the Niger Delta is the remote cause of the emergence of the militant groups within the Niger Delta axis. According to *Okumagba (2008:375)* cited from *Akinyele (2001)*;

> *"The emergence of ethnic militias within the Niger Delta area is the result of the aggressive pursuit of the principle of self-determination due to imperfection of Nigeria Federalism. According the assertion, ethnic militias was the manipulation of ethnicity by the governing elites across*

the various regions especially as a means of bargaining for power in the political equation.

The ethnic militia emerges as a result of mismanagement of ethnic governances by the Nigeria state and its agent's consequence to the formation of aggrieves defiance that is against the oppressive rule of Nigeria Government.

Moreover, Niger Delta region and Igboland have been in the league of militancy due to the neglect by the government. The upsurge in the formation, growth and the effect of ethnic militia in Nigeria is described as a result of bad leadership and poor democratic practices witnessed in the country. According to *Adejumobi* (2002:7)

> *"The issue of marginalization and social deprivation within the ethnic minorities of Niger Delta region resulted to the emergence of militias in the region. The politics of oil and lack of development of such region that is experience poverty, lack of present of social amenities are responsible for the emergence of militancy in Nigeria".*

With these analyses of the historical development of ethnic militia in southeast of Nigeria; several authors, scholars and concern citizens have raised questions and eye bole about the state of the region in Nigeria which have been experiencing insecurity of all kinds coupled with corruption among the leadership and administration. These prompted the researcher to go into research with the following questions:

(i) What are the imperatives of adopting militia in the achievement of the regional socio-economic and political development in Nigeria?

(ii) Do you see marginalization, conflict, war and division of Nigeria according to region, ethnicity measure for unity, progress and development of the society?

(iii) Do you observe sectional tendency in Nigeria mostly against Igbo's as step towards ensuring sustainable peace, unity, progress and development of Nigeria?

Considering the importance of objectives of the study with the research questions in every research study; the significance of the study are such that should ensure the followings:

(i)   To ensure adequate provision for orientation and re-orientation of the citizens as imperative to enable them ensuring security in the region. This education with enlighten will help them for cultural adjustment, attitudinal change and ready for service.

(ii)　　It will enable the federal government of Nigeria and Nongovernmental organizations to come in collaboration towards addressing issues of marginalization, injustice thereby imbibe the spirit of true leadership and democratic principles

(iii)　　It will further acknowledge the federal government of Nigeria the need for dialogue among the aggrieved militant groups on the possible measure to ensure peace, unity and development of the country.

All these points if carefully put in place will address the problems of insecurity in Nigeria. However, notice has been made that the insecurity nature of southeast of Nigeria was experience from the discovery and production of oil within the onshore region of Rivers States-attracted several interests within and outside the country Nigeria. The effects of Civil war; the national interest in exploitation, explorations, production and development of oil sector has attracted the creation of geopolitical zones; of South-East and South-south as well as the interest of the colonial country (Britain) and allies into the Oil in the south; within 1960's to early 1970s Nigeria economy was dominated by Agriculture such as food crop and cash crop. The discovery of oil diverted (shifted) nations interest from Agriculture to oil sector followed by exploitations of the region thereby led to development of ethnic interest and resource control mostly the Niger Delta areas which today comprises of South-South and South East region of Nigeria. The quest for resource control is as a result of marginalization, inequitable distribution, domination of Northern Nigeria to Socio-economic and political systems of the Eastern Nigeria. Both the North and South West of Nigeria with the application of superior power within the political circle influence the economy by the way of controlling the oil wells among individual's leaders of the regions. They absolutely determine the operation and administrative activities of the oil sectors and refineries. At this point, the South-South and South East who owned the oil seemed to be sidelined, suppressed and lost the control of their environment and its natural resources. The need to reclaim the lost glory, though the agitation for resource control, and unfavorable derivative principles resulted into grouping and regrouping of the indigenes towards fostering the agitation for resource control resulted to what is today called militancy (Militia).These militancy started from ethnic grouping of association such as Movement for Actualization sovereign state of Biafra (MASSOB),Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), *Ijaw* youth council (IYC), *Itsekiri* peoples movement, movement for emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) down to recent emergence of Avengers.

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However, other militia emerged from different background in a difference dimension of ideological conception. The emergence of the movement for the actualization of sovereign state of Biafra (MASSOB) and Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in Eastern Nigeria was for agitation against Marginalization indirectly imposed by British colonial country against eastern Nigeria arising from the effect of colonialization thereby prompting the rest of the North and South west purported the politics of suppression, oppression and depression. In another development, ethnic militia arose from ethnic organization of the people in other to protect its citizens and the environment. The Ethnic ideology is to inculcate their languages and traditional orientation to the off springs, protection of their ethnic territorial and geographical environments. For instance, in Nigeria today, there are over two hundred ethnic groups. These ethnic groups have association that protects their various interests in the country. Such include: *Afenifere, Ariwa* and *Ohaneze Ndigbo* for Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo and *Ijaw* Elders in council for Ijaw Ethnic nationality. These socio-cultural organizations protect their people and interest to the national level. Within their capacity, they will oppose any act capable of jeopardizing the interest of its citizenry within and outside their geopolitical area. For instances: Any of such interest against the Main Interest of the ethnic group will tantamount to conflict, violent and agitation. For instance, the injustice and marginalization of Igbo's in Nigeria has attracted several reactions from Igbo people around the globe leading to formation of one or two agitation groups called MASSOB- movement for Actualization Sovereign State of Biafra and IPOB indigenous people of Biafra.

GROWTH AND IMPORTANCE OF ETHNIC MILITIA IN SOUTHEAST OF NIGERIA

Ethnic militia can be defined as an organization of association member's forces grouped according to their ideological pursuit of self recognition and survival within the geographical territory. Militia is refers to as group of people with similar philosophical orientation who emerged as a result of imbalance state of affairs within an organization and society that aggravated into injustice, marginalization, suppression, oppression as well as denial of human

and constitutional rights consequence to destruction of lives and properties as well as sectional tendencies among the society.

However, ethnic militia emerged from the Southeastern states of Nigeria as a result of injustice, marginalization and partiality observed in the arrangement and harmonization of socio-economic and political affairs of the country. These phenomena attracted the action and reaction which lead into quest for self-determination, referendum and sovereign independent state which is assumed to be the possible remedy to tremendous acts of de-humanization and atrocity in the killing of innocent people by military and police within the south east of Nigeria.

This has been notifying the world that the factors that lead to civil war have not been addressed instead developing into a more dangerous effects to the Nations unity and development. The end of civil war 1970 ushered in policy of reconstruction, rehabilitation and renovation of socio-economic and political spheres of Nigeria among the tribes of Nigeria by general Gowon and the civil war affected Eastern region that had their socio-economic and political environment destroyed due to the effect and consequence of civil war in Nigeria. It is unfortunately that the policy was adopted to build the Northern part of Nigeria at the expense of Eastern part where the effect of civil war was negatively affected lives and properties as well as economy and political organization of Igbo and their brothers. These singular act continue to trigger responses, complain and understanding of possible marginalization of Eastern and injustice with sectional manner in which the rest of Nigeria used against the Easterners. With these effects lead to emergence of Militia within the ethnic geographical territory of Igbo land.

Moreover, despite the denial of constitutional rights of Easterners; their natural endowment such as crude oil and coal which have been tapping by Nigeria government that serve as the major economic hob of the nation while zones (region) where these resources are exploit and explore are facing with dilapidated environment, de-humanization from the military and top politicians from Northern and Western parts of Nigeria against the Easterners who owned the resources. The marginalization nature of Nigeria system of political administration has been an eye saw and the action prompted the emergence of Militia such as movement for Actualization Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB) within the southeastern part of Nigeria and the Ijaw Youth People's Congress, Itsekiri, Militant groups within the South-South Zone of Eastern part of Nigeria.

The case of MASSOB and IPOB have been known for their movement that seek for justice, equity and fairness in the distributive of socio-economic and political affairs of the country or self-determination and resource control within the Eastern part of Nigeria. The movement champion by MASSOB and IPOB are for peaceful arrangement of socio-economic and political powers of Nigeria among the tribes mostly the major oil producing region and preferential treatment to the minorities in Nigeria who are suffering due to their small population, external influence, De-humanization and human right violation within the region.

The importance of MASSOB and IPOB within the Southeastern part of Nigeria cannot be over-emphasized. This is as a result of their contribution towards projection of lives and properties of the geographical area and the wellbeing cum welfare of its citizens as well as advocate role that should be played in sustenance of right of the citizens. Therefore, the importance of ethnic militia within the southeast of Nigeria in particular and Nigeria Nation in general cannot be over-emphasized with the following reasons.

1. As defense and protection of geographical boundary against external aggressive: The ethnic militias have many importance roles to play towards sustenance of the region which among them are the provision of defense mechanism against terror and external aggression. This can be done by checkmating the activities of the non-citizens of the area who move in and out of the area to ensure safeguard of their citizens and socio-economic and political development of their subjects. As a militias or forces that grown out of particular area; its responsibilities are to advocate for economic sustenance, peace and unity of the area thereby checkmate the activities of external forces who are in for and against the welfare and wellbeing of the citizen of the eastern part of Nigeria. As military and police force, defending territorial boundary and protection of lives and properties of the areas to ensure the protection and development of the Eastern Nigeria.

2. It promotes Regional Integration: Despite their role towards ensuring defense and protection of territorial boundary; ethnic militia like MASSOB and IPOB help to ensure the sustainable regional integration among the inhabitants in the region thereby foster peaceful co-existence among one another. Such integration is being carryout through the protection and defense of their region and zones as well as ensuring the orientation and re-orientation of the citizen to imbibe with the spirit of sportsmanship and symbiotic

relationship in the society. It is also witnessed in the philosophy of their existing association that made it necessary.

3. It ensures order and Discipline: Order is a state of discipline which demands good behavior in the society. The militia within the ethnic bloc contributes towards ensuring order and discipline of their citizen by ensuring surveillance, security and guardians of the people within the geographical boundaries of the area. For instance, the vigilantes within the southeast vow to maintain order and ensures re-orientation towards character molding and good behavioral conduct of the people. Like the civil guard, community watch and Imo Network vigilante groups within Imo State of Nigeria; they maintain order and discipline within the state and foster peaceful co-existence within the State. So MASSOB and IPOB play similar responsibility through advocating for peace, order and discipline within the southeast Zone in particular and Eastern region in general which ensure the order and discipline of the society.

4. It provides Security and ensures the maintenance of laws and regulations: It is an utmost importance to say that MASSOB, IPOB and other vigilantes within the southeast Nigeria Maintain law and regulates the rules and orders established by government within the society towards ensuring peaceful co-existence in the society. The security of lives and properties has been of great importance within the southeast. This is due to certain insecurity challenges observed in the society; such as kidnapping, assassination, murder, robbery, rapping and other aspects of contemporary social problems witnessed within the region like injustice, marginalization, partiality, suppression, oppression and depression of individuals citizens residing within and outside the region. These atrocities necessitated the establishment of vigilantee groups and emergence as well as the growth of ethnic militia within the southeastern part of Nigeria to cushion the effects of the ugly trends in the society.

5. The Provision of Social Security and Social Amenities: Militias can be a source of empowerment to youths and citizens of their area through provision of financial aids to members and citizens, provision of necessary infrastructural facilities such as pipe borne water, electricity, good road network, hospitals/maternity through their various services and contributions in government, non-governmental arrangement and private organization to the civil society groups, individuals to alleviate their suffering and

hardship thereby promote good and sustainable development in the society. This arrangement can be a source of poverty alleviation program, subsidization and empowerment to better the lives of the citizens within the area. Therefore, militia can arise to provide protection, defense, empowerment and sustainable growth and development of an area.

6. Social Mobilization of the Citizens: Mobilization is an act of recruitment of section of citizen for the purpose of achieving objectives. militia within the southeastern bloc is to mobilize the citizens, train them and inculcating the right ideology for the protection and sustenance of sovereignty of the geographical area of the society and to ensure the pursuit of the justice, equity and fairness as well as the protection of the territory of eastern Nigeria.

7. It serves as a strong force against war and conflict of interest within the Region. Ethnic militia is a strong force used to cushion the effects of war and conflict in the society. It serves as guard and security that protect the geographical territory within Igbo land and other part of eastern Nigeria. This is because, several attempts by herdsmen and other insurgence from Northern part of Nigeria to cause mayhem were breach by regional militia coupled with military and police forces. Therefore, the activities of vigilantes' militants are quite enormous which provide guard, protection and sustainability of the citizen within the geographical area. Therefore, movement for actualization sovereignty state of Biafra (MASSOB), indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB) and other vigilante groups within the southeast of Nigeria have been performing wonderfully through provision of enable social security, maintenance of laws and order, provision of security and welfare as well as the source of mobilization and the force against war and conflict of interest within the geographical area of the region for the sustainable peace and development of the region in Nigeria.

8. Source of Dialogue and Inspiration of the Region: These militias have been the source of agreement, motivation and force of the region. In the case of conflict, misunderstanding and enforcement; ethnic militia such as MASSOB, IPOB and other vigilantes have become the sources of conflict resolution through mutual agreement, understanding and deliberation as well as an enforcement to fight or cushion the effects of the crises and war within the geographical territory of the region. An attestation can be adduced through

dialogue between Niger Delta Militias and federal government of Nigeria in a bid to stop the bombing, destruction of pipelines and oil wells which is the economic hob of the country (Nigeria) after an observation was made that the activities reduce the percentage of Barrels of crude oil produce daily in Nigeria. Then Federal government took the decision to ensure dialogue between them and the Niger Delta Militants in particular and the zone in general towards ensuring peaceful coexistence and national integration.

The factor responsible for the Growth of ethnic Militia in South East of Nigeria

There are several factors responsible for the growth and emergence of ethnic militia in South Eastern part of Nigeria. They include the followings:

1. Increasing rate of injustice and marginalization
2. Sectionalism and tribalism in the country
3. Poverty and unemployment of the citizens
4. Political instability
5. Socio-Economic factors
6. Ideological/philosophical conception of the corruption
7. Institutional weaknesses

Injustice and Marginalization

Injustice has been defined as a serious issue that affect relationship between individuals, groups and organization, it occurs as a result of social discrepancy, discrimination, favouritism, corruption and marginalization of people, group and organization by another who assumed superior position, influence and authority in the society. Marginalization take place when sectional part of organization have not been given fair hearing, share, position and responsibility as well as less valued in the leadership and decision of an organization or country. When these take place in the society, those affected by such obnoxious ideology will begin to nurture grievance and become aggressive because of the unfair treatment. These may usher in some strategy towards expressing feelings, agitation and protection of themselves which does not exclude geographical territorial boundary, lives and properties as well as self-determination.

The increasing rate of injustice and marginalization against the southeast Nigeria by the leadership of the country since after the civil war has been an eye saw. It involves deprivation of the seat of presidency, vice president, and other key positions in the country (Nigeria). In the economic aspect of the country, it is sincere fact that eastern Nigeria is the economic hub of the Nation; with major contributor to the economy as crude oil which is from Eastern part of the Nation; but it is the worst thing that no body from the east has access to oil wells in Nigeria; rather all belong to Northern and Western leaders. The issue has become matter which demands an urgent attention consequence to several agitations for resource control among the zones. The influence of corruption and exploitation become factors used to exploit and explore the resources in the zones against the owners and in marginalization of the zones thereby lead to civil agitation by the zones lead by their youth.

Poverty and unemployment

Poverty is a situation by which people lack food to eat and money to buy some needed things around them, while unemployment is when a person or persons lack job to do in other to feed and meet some impressive needs as well as aspirations in the society. The rate of poverty and unemployment have become the contributory factor towards mobilization, participation, agitation as well as the growth and development of ethnic militia within the southeast and eastern part of Nigeria. This is because; there are high level of poverty and unemployment among the citizens of the zone. There are highest number of graduates within the zone who have no job, thereby faced with high level of poverty and hardship in the region. Nature has favored the Eastern part of Nigeria in such that natural resources are at abundantly discovered within the region but bad government (leadership, corruption and Dorminarism) demonstrated by the Northern and Western leaders of Nigeria have affected the Nigerians economy thereby thrown the resources owners into poverty, unemployment, environmental degradation arising from lack of attention of federal Government to Oil producing Areas including the activities of oil companies within the region stance as a cog to the development of Niger Delta area in particular and Eastern Nigeria in general.

Therefore, poverty and unemployment arise as a result of lack of good governance and socio-economic and political instability which is bad leadership, corruption and injustice are the responsible factors associated with the above problems in Southeastern and Eastern Nigeria.

Weak Institution: An institution is a body that responsibility in the administration of a particular organization and society. Notice has been made on institutional weakness within Nigeria area. Nigeria's socio-economic and political activities are anchored on three institutional structure and organs of the government. Such structure includes the federal, State and Local governments, while the organs are the legislature executive and judicial organs. The institutions carryout their responsibilities according to the vertical and horizontal structure of socio-economic and political arrangement of the country. Unfortunately the three structures of government could not allow themselves to work independent in other to discharge its duties more effective. The Federal and State Government are comfortable to discharge their functions effectively but could not allow local government to function independent according to constitutional stipulation. While these are observing in the country; the legislators whose obligation is to make laws remain adamant; the judiciary whose obligation are to interpret and adjudication the constitutional law has been facing similar problem from executive and legislature; while executive enjoys high level of immunity clause which enable them step against the independent of judiciary thereby shatter the need for good governance, quality leadership and socio-economic and political stability in the society. Hence the institutions are not adhering with the constitutional provision, there will be no stability in the government administration and its leadership will continue to experience down ward change that affect socio-economic and political nature of the country.

Ideological Conception

This involves believes, values, orientation, ethics and moral principles and philosophy which forms the basis of peoples way of live. Within the South Eastern and Eastern Nigeria; the people believe in God through their idea of Christianity and life of Christ like. Their cultural practices have different inclination with the rest of Northern and some part of Western Nigeria who are predominantly Muslim and belief in Sharia as well as sharing different culture and tradition with

the Eastern region. The observable differences in language, culture and tradition, religious, ethics and moral orientation, environment and behaviors have caused several misconception, civil disobedience, injustice and marginalization, sectionalism, nepotism and crises which lead into killings, depression, oppression and suppression of this kind within the region thereby lead to the rising nature of ethnic militia in the Eastern part of Nigeria.

Corruption

Corruption is unconstitutional act which lead to misappropriation, embezzlement, criminality, unethical conduct and indiscipline. In Nigeria, corruption has affected many things within the country's socio-economic and political spheres. It causes mistrust between one another. It degenerates into sectional tendencies, nepotism, favouritism, undue sentiments, segregations and incessant socio-economic and political instability among the citizens in the country. These aggravated into disorder, violence, agitation, demonstration and criticisms of all kinds within the society thereby lead to the growth of ethnic agitation, mobilization and participation of the people in order to demand for justice, equity and fairness in the country.

Political Instability

Political instability involves uncertainty and negative effect occurs within the political environment which affects socio-economic activities of the organization, thereby trigger responses and reactions against the ugly development in the society. Examples of political instability are electoral crises, rigging, party crises, poor voting arrangement, sectionalism, violence, chaos and Dorminarism within political system. These issues triggers crises among region, zones and sections of the country which lead to the rise of ethnic militia (youth into Association) for defense, protection and agitation for betterment of the area and for justice to be done. These are exact factors behind the emergence and growth of ethnic militia in Nigeria.

Socio-economic Factors: Socio-economic factors are certain issues and circumstances which bedeviling the social activities and economic environment of the society. Such as problem within sports and entertainment, inter-communal relationship, problems, cultural misconception, unethical conducts; while economic factors such as poor production, exploitation and extortion, economic recession and meltdown, unemployment and poverty, food shortage and substandard

products, high cost of living and poor infrastructural facilities, environmental pollution and degradation rising from carbon monoxide emission which has negative effects to the environment and lack of cleaning of oil spillage which occur as a result of oil exploitation, exploration and production among oil companies in the society. These activities generates into mixed reaction and call for concern which if care is not properly taking will result into violence, war and related issues in the society. Therefore, in the southeast Nigeria, there are certain issues as extortion, exploitation, unemployment, poverty nature, high cost of living mostly fuel increment, poor economic wellbeing of the people, sectionalism and infrastructural problems in the area are responsible for the emergence of ethnic militia and its growth within the zones and region.

Remedial measures to cushion the effects of ethnic militia

1. Government should make provision for dialogue among the aggrieved groups and association.

2. The need for orientation and re-orientation with foster peaceful co-existence among individuals, groups and organization in the society. This can enable sensitization of the individuals, groups and organization on the possible way of withdrawing from championing the cause of conflict and violence in the society.

3. There should be adequate opportunity for employment and appointment of the citizens into the scheme of work that will enable them generate money for the welfare and wellbeing of their families.

4. Government should create provision for empowerment; both financial and other wise to support the groups in other to become self independent to cater for their various families.

5. Government should ensure the provision of infrastructural facilities to the area to enable socio-economic growth and development of area.

6. Self determination/independent status to control their affairs without external control/intervention.

The impact of the remedial measures to the social

1. Socio-economic growth and development: The peaceful coexistence from the reconciliation and dialogue will engender socio-economic growth and development through improve production of goods and services, trade relation, industrial improvement, agriculture and wellbeing.

2. Self reliance and actualization: These can be achieved through peace, unity and mutual understanding between one another.

3. Industrialization and Agricultural Advancement: The provision of infrastructural facilities will engender industrialization and agricultural advancement. These promote economic growth and development in the society.

4. Peaceful coexistence and Security of lives and properties: The provision for dialogue, orientation and re-orientation within the society will enable peaceful co-existence and ensures security of lives and properties in the society.

5. It makes provision for economic resuscitation, stabilization, flexibility and social equilibrium which ensure sustainable development and environmental sustenance, welfare and wellbeing of the citizens.

6. It makes provision for infrastructural development and environmental sustainability when there is peace and unity, it facilitates the growth and development of infrastructure thereby ensures the environmental suitability and self reliance

SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

The scope of the study was South East states of Nigeria which comprise of Imo, Enugu, Anambra, Abia and Ebonyi States. This study take central point in Imo State where the researcher made huge surveyed research to actualize the empirical observation and data collection which formed the basis of the Idea stated in the study

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

This research study is carried out in Imo State and other States that make up of south eastern Nigeria. The following are the limitations of the study:

Insufficient fund: The financial limitation resulted from lack of sufficient fund and lack of sponsorship from corporate bodies, Individuals and Nongovernmental organizations; as the researcher's little resources could not take care of the entire areas of the states for research study of this nature. In the research implementation, there is a problem of fund to increase the number of questionnaires to be distributed to the public within the specified period of time appropriated for the research study. These serve as the limitations of the study.

Time constraint: Time limitation for the research study coupled with the submission of the research work was short for an expansive research study to be actualized. The inability to serve all the well meaning citizens within the zone written questionnaire and collect it in a specified period of time was the limitation.

Attitudes of the respondents towards the questionnaire administered: The unwillingness of staff from some ministries and civil society groups to respond to the request of providing the needed data and information's has been a serious problem, due to fear of unknown. All these served as the limitations of this study.

Literature Review

Conceptual Framework
The Effects of Ethnic Militia in Nigeria
The emergence of ethnic social-cultural organization to protect their geopolitical and ethnic interest cum citizens resulted to uncommon issues borders on national interest, unity, peaceful co-existence and development. The effects of ethnic militia in the country was aim at ensuring the capacity building, in which lack of it, have been the order of the day following the huge cost

of the devastation effects done by the neglect of Nigeria government to Southeast and Niger Delta areas including the activities of the Niger Delta militia and so forth. The outcomes of these groups are the consequences of the following:

1. **Economic recession and dwindling:** At this period, the economic activities are at minimal following the reduction in the production, distribution and development of economic sector of the country's economy. This reduction has been observed to be the destruction of pipelines where crude oil production are taking direction for distribution and the oil wells where the crude oil are stored for upward utilization. The vandalization of oil wells and pipelines absolutely decrease the productive activities, distributive and development of oil sector thereby affect the economic quantum expected in the generation of country's revenue. These affect development, consumption and the targeting capital and re-current expenditure which boast the socio-economic and political activities of the nation.

2. **Destruction of lives and properties:** The activities of ethnic militia have incurs tremendous damages following the destruction of human lives and properties within the environment. For instance. The properties worth of Billions have been lost due to their demonstration of Crude character resulted into destruction of lives and properties, bombing of pipelines and oil wells, kidnapping resulted to economic redundancy.

3. **Lack of patriotism and Sectionalism:** The roles of ethnic militias have created gap in the unity and peaceful co-existence of the nation; following their quest for self determination as a result of the marginalization of minority by the majority. It has resulted into several agitations for division, created room for sectionalism and enshrine corrupt tendency within the polity.

4. **Absence of Industrial development, Foreign Investment and Unemployment:** When conflicts, violence and war occurred, there is every tendency that industrial activities and development will be at minimal while the foreigners who wish to come and invest their money into Nigeria's economy will be scared of the country; thereby lead to high rate of socio-economic and political effects such as unemployment, poverty and underdevelopment in the country. Therefore, the effects of ethnic militias in Nigeria have created enough setback to socio-economic and political systems of the country due

to social crises, economic dwindling and recession as well as political instability which the outcome affected the region, geopolitical territory and the country.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical paradigms used to analyze this concept are the derivative and consequentialism theories. This theory has much more relevance to the study of the growth and importance of ethnic militia in Nigeria. Relative derivational theory is conceptualized by American sociologist known as Robert K. Merton and Walter Runciman. These scholars view social behavior and movement as an action people take due to the nature of social change within their environment. Such action is aim to acquire something such as opportunities, status, recognition and wealth that others posses and which they believe they should have too. It defines the nature and feelings of economic, political and social deprivation people encountering within their environment. It equally involves the poverty nature and social exclusion of some people within their environment as a factor. The ethical theory is a theory that involves the systematization of dependency and recommendation of the concept of right and wrong behavior. The Consequentialism theory of ethics is a normative theory holds that the consequence of one's conduct is the ultimate basis for Moral justification.

Therefore, deprivative theory is an idea where some set of people who are feeling deprived and discontent of their desires due to neglect, marginalization and populations within their environments react by demonstrations, expression of violence and war. These injustices are responsible for the cause of social movement by the deviance. Richardson (2011) explained that relative deprivation result to different kinds of political violence which raise the idea of revolution as drive by a relative sense or feeling of inequality, rather than absolute equality. It occurs when somebody is being denied of desirable condition in the society. Therefore, ethical theory of consequentialism and deprivative theory have been the most favorable theories of this nature. This is because; morality is a virtue that controls the action of people whether good or bad but the consequence of every action is sacrosanct due to the effects towards the environment. It is ethics of human behavior that controls the action and inaction but when action resulted to complex destruction yield immeasurable consequence. However deprivation of one's rights, liberty and freedom due to political positions, power exercise by the major players from major ethnic nationalities which resulted into deprivation may likely result into some revolutionary

trend, which erupt violence, crises, war and other civil disobedience leading to the demand for secession, self-determination and independent struggle.

The emergence and proliferation of the activities of ethnic militias in Nigeria have metamorphous into fraternity of ethnic organization from common agitation for justice and fairness into atrocious tendencies such as abduction for ransom which affected both indigenes and the expatriates. Before now, the aim of militias was to seek for justice and fairness in the distribution of the wealth of the nation, culture and religious practices. But today this aims have moved into criminality and atrocity resulted into socio-economic effects.

Empirical Study

In the course of the research work; the researcher observed that Ethnic militias emerge as a result of deprivation of their rights, liberty and freedom of existence. Their growth takes prominent stage through the refusal of the federal government to listen to their plights in the society. The effects of their activities resulted into killing, assassination, abduction and vandalization of properties.

Marginalization of some ethnic groups resulted to agitation for justice and equity in distribution of the wealth of the nation. Where there is injustice, there is conflict and war which resulted from partial way of administration. For instance, lack of attention to Niger Delta area despite being the oil producing area tantamount to the conflict witness in the region; following the activities of militancy in that region. Meanwhile cultural ethnocentrism and religion issue are responsible for the case of Boko Haram and Shiite groups of militants in Nigeria. They are struggling to get Islamic State from Nigeria where there culture, tradition and religion practices can be practiced without foreign cultural and educational interference.

Finally, for effective stabilization of these nations; there is a need for dialogue among ethnic groups to determine the unity and integration otherwise disintegration will be the consequence.

METHODOLOGY

The following are the research methodology used in writing, analyses and interpretations of the study of this nature. Such as:

The primary and secondary sources: In the secondary data collection; internet research, textbook, journals, newspapers, radio and television information where used to gather data which form the basis of the analysis and study respectively

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The primary data collections are information's generated for the purpose of this research work. The data from this research work were gotten from questionnaires which were carried out to the respondents accordingly, interview was conducted and observation was made through empirical study. This data collection was done through questionnaires distributions to respondents who are the civil society comprise of employees and non employees in the Imo State and other part of south eastern States.

The secondary method of data collection were gotten from existing information's that are already written, published and unpublished that are related to the topic. Such include: Textbook, Journals, Newspapers, Magazine, Internet, Radio and Television.

THE POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population for this study covers all the public servants and non workers in Nigeria. This comprises of Nigeria population of 170,000,000.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique
. The area of the study is Owerri in Imo State in the south east Nigeria. The populations of 170,000,000 people in Nigeria were used with the sample size of 400 respondents stated below:

N = Population under Study

n = Sample size

I = Constantly given

e = Error of Co-efficient estimate of 5%

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

$$\frac{170,000,000}{1+170,000,000(0.05)2}$$

$$\frac{170,000,000}{1+170,000,000(0.0025)}$$

$$\frac{170,000,000}{1+425000}$$

$$\frac{170000000}{425001}$$

n = 399.99

n = 400

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data presentation, Analysis and Interpretation were carried out smoothly with the help of tables, frequency tables, pie charts, percentages and simple statistical methods. These instruments were used to ensure a comprehensive analysis of data and result oriented research study. The following are the statements of data presentation, analysis and interpretation of the study.

1. **Table 1.0**

s/n	Areas	No Distributed	%	No. Returned	%	No not Returned	%
1	Igbo	160	40	130	32.5	30	7.5
2	Hausa	95	23.75	85	21.25	10	2.5
3	Yoruba	75	18.75	65	16.25	10	2.5
4	Niger Delta	70	17.5	60	15	10	2.5
	Total	**400**	**100**	**340**	**85**	**60**	**15**

Source: Survey research, 2017

The information from the table stated that out of 400 questionnaire distributed, 340 was collected marking 85% success while 60 questionnaire representing 15% were not returned or declared missing. The disappearance of the fifteen questionnaires is from the tribes respondents who could not submitted their questionnaire collected.

Question 1:

Do you see the marginalization of some ethnicity as a measure for quality leadership and good governance in Nigeria?

Table 1.2: Distribute and Returned questionnaire.

s/n	Response	1gbo	Hausa	Yoruba	Niger Delta	F	Percentage
1	Yes	80	45	40	55	220	64.71
2	No	40	30	20	1	91	26.76
3	Neither nor	10	10	5	4	29	8.53
4	All of the above	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	**130**	**85**	**65**	**60**	**340**	**100**

Source: Survey Research 2017.

From the analysis above indicated that out of 340 respondents, 220 respondents representing (64.71%) said that marginalization of some ethnic groups is not a measure for quality leadership and good governance in Nigeria. however 91 respondents representing (26.76%) disagreed that marginalization is not the measure for quality leadership and good governance in Nigeria. while 29 respondents representing 8.53% said neither nor for or against the notion recorded.

Question 2: Do you see the division of Nigeria according to ethnic groups as a measure for unity, progress and development?

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Table 1.3: Measure for Unity, Progress and Development.

s/n	Response	1gbo	Hausa	Yoruba	Niger Delta	F	Percentage
1	Yes	80	45	40	55	220	64.71
2	No	40	30	20	1	91	26.76
3	Neither nor	10	10	5	4	29	8.5
4	All of the above	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	**130**	**85**	**65**	**60**	**340**	**100**

Source: Survey Research 2017.

The table above explained that out of 340 respondents represents in the tables, 220 respondents representing 64.71% agreed that the division of Nigeria according to its ethnic nationality is only source of unity, progress and development while 91 representing 26.76% disagreed with the notion. Meanwhile 29 representing 8.5% said neither nor.

Question 3: Do you see conflicts and war as the best measure to express the feelings of marginalization?

Table 1.4: Express the feelings of Marginalization.

s/n	Response	1gbo	Hausa	Yoruba	Niger Delta	F	Percentage
1	Yes	85	45	45	55	230	67.65
2	No	40	35	20	5	100	29.41
3	Neither nor	5	5			10	2.9
4	All of the above	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	**130**	**85**	**65**	**60**	**340**	**100**

Source: Survey Research 2017.

Judging from the result presented above, out of 340 respondents who expressed their views on the above table; 230 respondents representing 67.65% expressed that it is through conflict and war that the citizens of a particular area can express their feelings of marginalization in the society while 100 representing 29.41% said that, conflict and war are not the best measure to express the feelings of marginalization in the society and 10 respondents representing 2.9% said

neither nor of the view above. Judging from their opinions, there are other means of expressing that outside conflict and war.

Question 4: Do you suggest the sovereign national conference, referendum, equality and equity in the harmonization of socio-economic and political issue in Nigeria as remedial measures to ensure unity and peaceful co-existence in Nigeria?

Table 1.5: Remedial measure to ensure unity and peaceful co-existence in Nigeria.

s/n	Response	1gbo	Hausa	Yoruba	Niger Delta	F	Percentage
1	Yes	125	75	55	56	311	91.5
2	No	5	10	10	4	29	8.5
3	Neither nor						
4	All of the above	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	**130**	**85**	**65**	**60**	**340**	**100**

Source: Survey Research 2017.

From the above table, out of 340 respondents, 311 respondents represented 91.5% agreed on the need for sovereign national conference, referendum, equality and equity in the harmonization of socio-economic and political issues in Nigeria as a remedy for unity and peaceful co-existence in the society while 29 respondents represented 8.5% disagreed with the notion above.

Question 5:

Do you see the nature of religious practices in Nigeria as one that can give room for crises?

Table 1.6: Distribute and Returned questionnaire.

s/n	Response	1gbo	Hausa	Yoruba	Niger Delta	F	Percentage
1	Yes	95	45	50	55	245	72.1
2	No	35	30	10	5	80	23.5
3	Neither nor		10	5		15	4.4
4	All of the above	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	**130**	**85**	**65**	**60**	**340**	**100**

Source: Survey Research 2017.

From the analysis above indicated that out of 340 respondents, 245 respondents representing (72.1%) said that the nature of religious practice in Nigeria give room for crises. However 80

respondents representing 23.5%) disagreed while 15 of the respondents representing 4.4% said neither nor of the above notion recorded.

Question 6: Do you observed primordial culture and belief of the people as factor behind ethnic conflict in Nigeria?

Table 1.7

s/n	Response	1gbo	Hausa	Yoruba	Niger Delta	F	Percentage
1	Yes	95	45	50	55	245	72.1
2	No	35	30	10	5	80	23.5
3	Neither nor		10	5		15	4.4
4	All of the above	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	**130**	**85**	**65**	**60**	**340**	**100**

Source: Survey Research 2017.

Judging from the result presented above, out of 340 respondents who expressed their views on the above table; 245 respondents representing 72.1% expressed that primordial culture and belief of people is factor that affect ethnicity in Nigeria. While 80 representing 23.5% said that primordial culture and belief do not affect the country; while 15 respondents representing 4.4% said neither nor of the above..

Question 7: Do you advocate for peace, orientation and re-orientation to cushion the effect of ethnic militancy in Nigeria?

Table 1.8 Distributed and Returned Questionnaire

s/n	Response	1gbo	Hausa	Yoruba	Niger Delta	F	Percentage
1	Yes	110	45	60	55	270	79.4
2	No	20	40	5	5	70	20.6
3	Neither nor						
4	All of the above	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	**130**	**85**	**65**	**60**	**340**	**100**

Source: Survey research 2017

The analysis above indicates that out of 340 respondents, 270 respondents representing 79.4% advocates for peace, orientation and re-orientation of the people to cushion the effect of ethnic militias in Nigeria. However, 70 respondents representing (20.6%) said "No" while non represented neither nor.

The pie chart above recorded the number of respondents and its percentages of agreement and disagreement as well as none of the above. This makes the analysis more comprehensive for proper understanding of the research study.

Summary of Findings

Based on the survey study of this nature; the followings are the observable findings of these research work.

1. The evidence from the research work indicated that the activities of ethnic militia are justifiable in line with natural justice. This is because; justice and fairness as well as equity and equality coupled with dialogue are tools for conflict resolution and peaceful co-existence in the society.

2. There are indication that marginalization of some ethnic groups who are part of the existing country is not a measure for quality leadership and good governance which we advocate in Nigeria. This entails that the tools that will facilitate peaceful co-existence are good leadership and good governance.

3. The summary entails that where the leaders failed to ensure peaceful co-existence through the application of democratic principles, division of the country remains sacrosanct and can engender unity, progress and development.

4. There is an observation that conflict and war can be used to express the feelings of marginalization in the society. These will attract sympathy and co-operation thereby ensures conflict resolution and national integration if agreements are made among the citizenry.

5. Furthermore, findings indicate that the harmonization, equality and equity in the proper addressing of the socio-economic and political issues are imperatives and stand as a remedy for unity, peaceful co-existence in Nigeria.

6 There is clear observation that the nature of religious practices in this country mostly the Northern Muslim breeds crises and conflict in Nigeria.

7   The observation entails that where there is knowledge and understanding, the people behave well but, where there is small or neither of this conflict exists.

8   The study asserted that primordial culture and belief of the people are responsible for crises within the ethnic nationality.

9   Finally, peaceful co-existence coupled with good orientation and re-orientation will address the challenges of ethnic crises, lack of peace in the Country.

Conclusion

The growth and importance of ethnic militia is predicated by the inability of the leaders to carefully address the complex issues of national concern. Hence the emergence becomes imperative. Within the context of poor leadership, corruption and unpatriotic administration, the above were experienced. Therefore, the need to ensure togetherness is a collective responsibility otherwise breaking away of the ethnic groups is sacrosanct. It is in the light of the above issues that national conference, referendum and dialogue geared towards ensuring peaceful co-existence among the citizenry is imperative.

Finally, all ethnicity no matter how small should be accorded some deserve respect and integrate into the national grip which is a step to build up new Nigeria and ensuring brotherly relationship geared towards maintaining oneness of purpose, unity and peaceful co-existence and development. Applying these virtue cum quality leadership will proffer a lasting relationship, peace, unity and reduce security threats observed in the country thereby give room for development and capacity building socially, economically and politically in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Considering the effects resulted from the growth of the activities of ethnic militia and government inability to proffer lasting measures to caution it in Nigeria; the following recommendations are imperative for peaceful co-existence and are a panacea for complex challenges in the nation. They include:

1. Equitable distribution of resources according to the principle of economic derivation must be adhered. This will address injustice that has grown out of marginalization and

unfair treatment of some ethnic groups where such resources are exploited and explore in greater quantum.

2. Quality and exemplary leadership: A good leader is known by the ability to integrate all ethnic nationalities with utmost transparency, honesty, responsiveness and accountabilities, selfless service to humanity. We need leaders and not rulers in Nigeria. We have had enough rulers since independence. The rulers whose principles are for divide and rule. Therefore, we need leaders who are endowed with milk of human kindness to understand the plights of the people they lead. We need erudite leaders' not antagonistic fellow; but co-operative elites who are capable of demonstrating the spirit of sportsmanship, patriotism and nationalism without unnecessary sentimentalism and nepotism that can cause disunity and hatred among the citizenry in the country.

3. Government should endeavor to call for sovereign national conference to enable all ethnic nationalities express their view in respect of the unity of this country. Dialogue about some impressive issues on security, allocation of resources, positions and conditions for continuity.

4. The need for referendum should be considered to determine the degree of willingness of the ethnic nationalities in becoming one united front. If otherwise government should haste up to allow confederal system of government or give room for independent of some agreed ethnic groups. Meanwhile no country can exist effective under forcible integration. Every normal human being need freedom, peace and co-operation, but where neither of all these, the chances of the collapse of the country is imminent.

5. Both the government and the people should be careful on their unguarded utterances which destroy the hard earned peace, unity and oneness of this country in 1960. The most affective issues in this country are inflammatory statement by the leaders, marginalization by the powerful political leaders who are speaking from majority angle against those assumed to be speaking from minority angle, lack of equity, justice and fairness as well as bad leadership and insecurity have continued to deny us the much expected development and mutual relationship among all ethnicities.

6. The leaders of the region under militia must understand the need to dialogue as the most effective measure for conflict resolution. The federal government of Nigeria, the states in

questions, the militia groups in the zones should endeavor to embrace dialogue as the best instrument towards ensuring conflict resolution and peaceful co-existence in the country.

7. The Nigeria government should endeavor to embrace the spirit of true federalism which recognizes all ethnic groups both small and big into the mainstream of the country's polity, thereby ensures the structurization of the country according to constitutional provision of true federalism.

8. There is a need for equitable distribution of dividends of oil derivation according to principle of derivation and enhances the percentages of derivation. For instance, the 13% derivation which has been allocated to Niger Delta region has been described by many scholars as injustice. There is a need for such allocation to be increase within the range of 30-40% and the oil well should be allocated to the region within the same percentages of derivation (30-40%) respectively to enable them enjoy their gift of nature and inherited blessing from God.

9. Federal government of Nigeria should endeavor to ensure rapid infrastructural development in the region involved to ensure an effective capacity building.

10. The need for amnesty program should be facilitated in the regions involved. This will make provision for orientation and re-orientation of the various militia groups across the ethnic nationalities of Niger Delta states and Igbo's in general in Nigeria and other agitate groups within the south eastern states of Nigeria known as Biafra region of Eastern Nigeria.

11 If there is no mutual agreement on all these; the call for referendum, self determination and division of the country will as a matter of fact remains a good option for peaceful co-existence in the society of this nature.

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