

Intergenerational Aspects of Ethnic Conflict in Africa

The Nigerian Experience

ADEBAYO OLABISI ODEJIDE, AKINADE OLUMUYIWA SANDA,
and ABIOLA I. ODEJIDE

INTRODUCTION

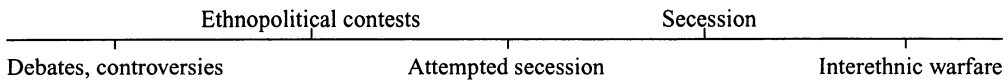
This chapter examines ethnic conflicts and their long-term consequences in Africa in general and in Nigeria in particular. At the outset, we need to outline our understanding of ethnic conflict.

In some cases, ethnic conflicts may be reflected in hostile interethnic stereotypes and prejudices that may derive from sociocultural contact or economic competition (Post & Vickers, 1973). In other cases, ethnic conflicts may be transformed into fierce political contests between ethnic groups over vital issues, interests, or objectives (e.g., census counts, rotational presidency) or violent interethnic internal wars.

Theories and research in the field of ethnic relations suggest that ethnic conflict may result from emergent forms of social stratification and collisions over power, especially when power, or what Post and Vickers (1973) termed “control capacity,” becomes valued above anything else.

Ethnic conflict may also result in threats of secession, secession, or wars against or in favor of secession, as has been the case in Nigeria, Uganda, and Zaire. In all these cases, considerable violence and loss of life occurred and, as in all wars, there was also significant destruction of property in ethnic communities.

In essence, therefore, ethnic conflict, as conceived in this chapter, occurs to different degrees and in different forms, and can therefore be perceived within the context of a continuum:



ADEBAYO OLABISI ODEJIDE • Department of Psychiatry, College of Medicine, University College Hospital, Ibadan Nigeria. AKINADE OLUMUYIWA SANDA • Department of Public Administration, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. ABIOLA I. ODEJIDE • Department of Communication and Language Arts, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria.

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In order to appreciate the theoretical roots of ethnic conflict, it may be useful to examine both the theoretically assumed sources of conflict and the meaning of the ethnic group. These two preliminary exercises provide a useful understanding of how ethnic conflicts persist over generations and the consequences of this persistence.

The ethnic group has been variously defined in the literature (Sanda, 1976). Two definitions are, however, of particular interest. One, by Cohen (1969), underscores the common interest of members as the unifying factor. This is why he perceives the ethnic group as an *informal interest group*, whose members share some compulsory institutions that differentiate them from other groups in the society. Another definition by several authors (e.g., Olorunsola, 1972; Schwartz, 1965) emphasizes the unique social and cultural heritage that binds members of an ethnic group together and is transmitted from one generation to another.

When conflicts occur between ethnic groups, they tend to persist as a result of either cultural differences that are transmitted over different generations, or as a result of the type or nature of ethnic interest that is at stake. Such conflicts of interest often include power conflict or conflict of authorities, or economic conflict, as distinct from a conflict of cultures. In Africa, all these types of conflict (political, economic, class, and religious) often take on ethnic dimensions or become couched in ethnic terms.

Magnarella (1993) attempts to account for the genesis of the conflicts and the outcomes:

European powers drew their boundaries with little regard for the political affiliations, or lack thereof, of encapsulated indigenous populations. Subsequently, many African leaders have relied on the support of fellow tribesmen or cultural affiliates to achieve and maintain positions of power. In return, these leaders have often favoured their supporters with privileged access to the limited available resources. Such tribal or ethnic politics, which favours the few over the many, has not and cannot generate the generality of legitimacy necessary for regime stability and internal security. (p. 331)

Our concern in this contribution, however, is with intergenerational aspects of ethnic conflict. According to the *Webster Encyclopedic Dictionary of the English Language*, a generation is "a single succession of the human race in national descent, calculated at thirty years" (1969, p. 362). In other words, while a set of people and activities may belong to one generation, another cohort of people that emerges after about 30 years constitutes a different generation. And the persisting consequences of events (ethnic conflicts) beyond 30 years represent intergenerational effects.

THEORY AND CONCEPT IN ETHNIC CONFLICT

Ethnic conflicts have been described and explained from a variety of theoretical viewpoints in the literature on ethnicity (Wolf, 1967). Some authors have explained such phenomena (ethnic conflicts) by reference to structural causes (Skocpol, 1985). Others have argued for the recognition of the place of *actions* (e.g., individual or group actions) in patterning responses to either structural preconditions or determining structural outcomes (Taylor, 1988). The exact relationship between *structure* of societies, *culture* of social groups, and *actions* of individuals remains controversial in the literature, especially in the ways in which each of the three variables influences social (or revolutionary) changes.

With particular reference to ethnic conflicts, while there may be some structural and cultural preconditions to ethnic tension in society, it seems plausible to suggest that individual or coercive state actions may function as the catalyst to the outbreak of conflicts (Sklar, 1963).

Some analyses of interethnic conflicts in Nigeria may have relied extensively on the assumed dominance of contradictory or conflicting political cultures (Olorunsola, 1972), or what Schwarz (1965) aptly described as being the dominant issues: my tribe, my faith, my culture. These were also described as pluralism, tribalism, or primordialism (Geertz, 1963; Olorunsola, 1972; Skinner, 1968).

Other analyses of ethnic conflicts have emphasised economic stratification (Bamishaiye, 1976; Kuper, 1971), political stratification and contests for political succession (Sanda, 1974b; Skinner, 1968; Sklar, 1976), or for control of scarce resources, such as land, or control of public offices (Ayoade, 1982; Sanda, 1982). The following observations by three different authors may illuminate these points.

According to Skinner (1968),

The various groups in contemporary African societies are not competing for ancestral rights or privileges, but for the appurtenances of modern power. In most cases they seek to control the nation state where they find themselves or at worst they seek to prevent being dominated by other groups within the state. (p. 183)

Skinner's contention is that, rather than focus attention upon culture and tradition as possible sources of ethnic conflicts, we must direct our attention toward the various manifestations of power contests that have become transformed into ethnic conflicts.

While recognizing the great potential that an ethnically plural society has for transforming power and authority conflict into ethnic conflicts, Sanda (1974b) observed elsewhere that "non-elite political actors in our research area are as likely to transform intergroup competition for scarce goals into their ethnic conflicts as are elite members of the same society" (p. 518). Two closely related policy implications emerge from this: first, the strategy for distributing scarce values or goals in an ethnically plural society such as Nigeria and, second, and perhaps more important, the procedure for electing top political officials.

From the preceding statement, it would appear that interethnic conflicts are intrinsic to ethnically plural societies, owing to the ever-present issue of competition over scarce resources and positions of authority. But just as different types and scales of conflicts may be generated from experiences of ethnic hierarchy or domination, the effects of ethnic conflict may also vary, depending upon the type and scale of conflict.

In addition, since the segmentary structure of ethnic communities provides a basis for fission and fusion at different times (Otite, 1976), the consequences of interethnic conflicts may also vary. This is largely because of the possibility of changing alliances among ethnic groups in the ethnically segmentary and plural society.

It is nevertheless instructive to acknowledge Horowitz's (1985) social-psychological explanation of ethnic conflict and its basic derivation from the ascriptive traits that give the ethnic group its identity as distinct from other identities. Horowitz recognized the potential of ethnic elites for manipulating and mobilizing the masses in order to attain status-related or economic gains. However, in his view, the cultural, symbolic differences provide the roots for the ethnic groups' anxiety, or feeling of wrong, or perception of threat. According to him, "The sources of ethnic conflict reside above all in the struggle for relative group worth" (p. 143).

Perhaps the most illuminating part of Horowitz's contribution lies in his prescriptions for reducing ethnic conflict. These are (1) deliberate proliferation of power centers instead of a single power center; (2) conscious devolution of power and reservation of offices for ethnic groups, thereby fostering intraethnic conflicts that would reduce interethnic conflicts; (3) deliberate encouragement of interethnic cooperation through provision of inducements; (4) fostering of policies that promote assignments that are not based upon ethnicity (e.g., social class

or territory); and (5) reduction of disparities between ethnic groups in order to reduce roots of disaffection.

While it has not been expressly stated by Horowitz, it could be inferred that the absence of these five measures or prevalence of the opposite trends in state policies may perpetuate interethnic conflicts across generations.

If not resolved, interethnic conflicts often result in traumatic events such as pogroms, civil wars, and destruction of property. Such significant human stressors create emotional problems described in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-III) of the American Psychiatric Association as posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Kaplan and Sadock, 1988). In this disorder, characteristic symptoms such as reexperiencing the traumatic event, numbing of responsiveness to or involvement with the external world, exaggerated startle response, difficulty in concentrating, memory impairment, sleep difficulty, guilt feelings, and depression occur after the experiencing of a psychologically traumatic event or events outside the range of normal human experience.

Apart from the direct effect of the disorder on the individual, PTSD may impact on the family and the family's attitude toward future generations, thereby creating intergenerational transfer of the trauma (Danieli, 1985). The transfer of the effects to future generations may imbue in them traits of aggression, anger, disillusionment, resignation, apathy, low self-esteem, guilt, and depression.

THE STATE OF KNOWLEDGE OF THE ROOTS OF ETHNIC CONFLICT IN NIGERIA

According to Aliyu (1975), intergroup conflicts and competition in Nigeria before 1966 reflected the interparty competition between the three dominant political parties in the society (i.e., the Northern People's Congress [NPC]; the National Congress of Nigerian Citizens [NCNC]; and the Action Group [AG]). The three political parties were ethnically or regionally based: The NPC was dominated by the Hausa-Fulani ethnic cluster; the NCNC was dominated by the Igbo ethnic group; and the AG was dominated by the Yoruba. Also, geographically, AG membership was concentrated in the old Western Region that later metamorphosed into six new states. The NCNC was largely an eastern regional party, while the NPC was a northern political party. It was therefore relatively easy for political competition among the three dominant parties to become transformed into ethnic conflict.

A pattern of ethnic politics did not, however, emerge until 1952. This was the year when Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe resigned his membership in the Western House of Assembly and retreated to the Eastern Region as a result of the failure of the Yoruba-dominated Western House (which functioned as the electoral college of the central legislature) to vote for him in the elections for the Central Legislature. Since that episode, ethnoregional political parties have emerged in different parts of Nigeria to ensure the success of aspirants to strategic national or state offices.

Two other contests for scarce resources preceded the 1967–1970 civil war. One was the struggle for the control of strategic bureaucratic positions (i.e., in the public service, including the civil service, parastatals, government corporations, banks, etc.). The other was the perennial struggle over the creation of new states.

While the former process resulted in the subsequent inclusion of the ethnic representation principle in the 1979 Constitution, the latter produced the progressive fragmentation of Nigeria from three regions to four regions, to 12 states, to 19 states, and to the current 30 states.

The agitation for the creation of more states from the nonviable ones already existing has continued unabated, thus increasing the pressures for the creation of new states such as An-ioma, Oke-Ogun, Ijebu, and Ekiti. The arguments are predicated on perceived marginalization of the people from the federal government, nonlocation of key federal establishments in their areas, loss of revenue accruing to states, and exclusion from key government positions in charge of generating and managing the nation's wealth.

The year 1966 appears to be a more indicative time for the events that perpetuated interethnic conflicts across the generations in Nigeria. This is not to ignore the context provided by the artificial state boundaries and the structure and culture of ethnic pluralism in Nigeria, but it is meant to underscore the emergent definition of ethnic relations that started with the events of January 15, 1966, and culminated in the 1967–1970 civil war and the subsequent events.

On January 15, 1966, a group of young majors in the Nigerian army attempted a military coup to overthrow the civilian government of Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, a northerner. The exact ethnic composition of the coup plotters has continued to be a subject of controversy (Ezeigbo, 1986), but the core group was made up of five officers from the southern part of the country (Ademoyega, 1981). After the initial confusion, the most senior officer in the army, Major General Aguiyi Ironsi, became Head of State.

The background to the outburst of hostilities was provided by the continuation of the colonial policy on army recruitment, which was based on the quota system, to the advantage of Northern Hausa-Fulani, the Tivs of the middle belt, and the Kanuri, but to the disadvantage of the Southern Igbo and Yoruba groups. Fifty percent of the army was recruited from the North while the Western and Eastern Regions (i.e., where Yoruba and Igbo ethnic groups were dominant) provided only 25% of army recruits (Barua, 1992). By January 1966, when the military took over the government, most of the army officers were of Igbo origin, whereas most of the noncommissioned officers and other ranks were largely of northern origin. To quote Barua (1992),

In 1966, the Nigerian army was yet another manifestation of the numerous ethnic tensions that divided Nigerian society. Hence the structure of the Nigerian army, instead of contributing to the solution of the divisions in society merely reflected and reinforced them. It was the coincidence of military rank and ethnicity that made possible the coup or mutiny against military superiors who were also ethnic opponents. (p. 131)

General Obasanjo's account also outlined the existence of ethnic divisions and what he called "tribalism" in the army. However, he did not share the ethnic explanation of the coup. Obasanjo suggested that the coup leader was motivated by national patriotic concerns, but the implementation of the coup by the coup leader's accomplices led to misinterpretations. His biography of Nzeogwu, the coup leader, clearly depicted the ethnic political origin of the crisis that began with the Western Regional elections of 1965, the final precipitant. He (Obasanjo, 1987) asserted:

All sorts of postulations have been made on the failure of the coup to bring about the "honest progressive new government" which would be closely watched and guided by the military but to my mind *the coup was heavily tribally based in its execution* in the South and that nailed its coffin. (p. 100, emphasis added).

Northern politicians and officers suffered a greater loss of their key members than the southern politicians and officers in the January 1966 coup. The June–July reprisals by northern soldiers were meant to avenge their initial loss and to prevent a "sudden change in the political equation" (Obasanjo, 1987, p. 100). The ethnic motivations in the Hausa-Fulani

soldiers' attack on 180 officers were also emphasized by Barua (1992). Interpretations of the motivations for the coup have differed radically, ranging from those that explain it as an "Igbo coup" as in *Danjuma: The Making of a General* (Barrett, 1979) and Mainasara's *The Five Majors: Why They Struck* (1982) to that of Nnoli (1972), who attributed it to the imperialist and colonialist forces in the country, led by British monopoly capitalist interests.

The June–July 1966 massacres of Igbos in the cities and villages in the North resulted in the massive dislocation of the people—civil servants, teachers, traders, artisans, farmers, and university students from all over Nigeria—to the eastern part. Soyinka's (1972) *The Man Died*, the memoirs of his detention by the federal government during the period, reports some of the dilemmas of such Igbo victims. *Nigerian Crisis: Pogrom 1966*, an official publication of what was then Eastern Nigeria, was a potent propaganda weapon used internationally to portray to the outside world the reality of the horrors of the massacres. As Ezeigbo (1986) described the booklet, it contained "bizarre and horrifying pictures of the Northern massacres of Eastern Nigerians in 1966" (p. 90). It showed pictures of men, women, and children with maimed limbs, matchete cuts all over their bodies, and "eyes gouged out of the sockets" (p. 90).

Yet the federal government was "unable or unwilling to provide effective protection for Ibo civilians during the gruesome massacres" (Uwechue, 1971, p. xxii). Eastern Nigeria then declared itself a separate state named Biafra.

These were the events that set the stage for Nigeria's 3-year civil war to prevent the attempted secession. The war was marked by starvation and suffering among the Igbos, and indiscriminate bombings of civilians by the Nigerian Air Force (and reprisals by Biafrans). The figures of the Igbo casualties in the massacre range between 30,000 and 50,000 (the Biafran figures) and 5,000 and 7,000 (the Nigerian figures) (Ezeigbo, 1986). It was incontestable that Igbo losses in lives and property were massive enough to be devastating.

According to Odogwu (1985), the fear of extermination of the Igbo race was largely what "fired and sustained the Biafran resistance" (p. 253).

The tragedies of the wars left indelible marks on families, who lost children, and wives of dead husbands. The negative consequences were of such dimensions that Gowon's victorious government announced his policies of no victor and no vanquished, as well as the deliberate fostering of reconciliation, reconstruction, and rehabilitation.

INTERGENERATIONAL EFFECTS

It is significant that there are no studies on the psychological effects of the civil war on the combatants on both sides. However, there is a considerable amount of civil war literature that explores with varying degrees of literary expertise the horrors of living through the war and its posttraumatic effects. One could ascribe this phenomenon to one of the features of posttraumatic syndrome described by Kaplan and Sadock (1988), that is, "actual or preferred avoidance of circumstances resembling or associated with the stressor" (p. 321). The preference for its recreation in fictional forms may well be best described as a displacement reaction.

A host of accounts written by participants and observers, as well as some official histories, though showing bias in varying degrees, provide insight into the effects of the trauma suffered in the Nigerian civil war. Fictional writings for adults and young children by renowned Nigerian writers such as Achebe (1977), *Girls at War and Other Stories*; Emecheta (1980), *The Wrestling Match*; Nwapa (1975), *Never Again*; Ekwensi (1973), *Coal Camp Boy*; Okpewho (1976), *The Last Duty*; and, Ekwuru (1979), *Songs of Steel*, reveal a wide array of responses. Examples are numbness at the perceived injustice of the pogroms before the war, the savagery

of the war period, intense yet muted anger at the Igbo's powerlessness as a vanquished people, and resentment of the rest of Nigeria and the world that stood by and let it happen. Odumegwu-Ojukwu (1989), the leader of the Igbo during the war years, captures the postwar mood succinctly: "The post-civil war Igbo historical vogue is to bemoan the material losses, the diminution of human dignity, an endemic economic retardation and the like" (p. 95).

Ekwuru's (1979) *Songs of Steel* reports in an unconstrained way the unmitigated horrors of the war. In this apparently fictional writing, a young boy is portrayed sitting, "holding the head of his capitulated brother, . . . his face and hands covered in blood" (p. 97). In Achebe's (1974) short stories, *Girls at War and Other Stories*, these same kinds of experiences are transmuted into artistic forms through implied meanings and subtle nudges at the reader's sensibilities.

Achebe and Iroaganachi's (1972) *How the Leopard Got Its Claws*, published 2 years after the end of the Nigerian civil war, has been explored as an allegory of the traumatic experiences of the Igbo people and the Nigerian nation (Miller, 1981; Odejide, 1989). A fight over brazen inequity in the sharing of national assets results in the humiliation and ejection of the erstwhile king: the leopard. The allegory ends with the leopard arming itself with the most deadly weapons—claws, teeth, a thunderous roar—in order to reclaim its throne. Echoes of the civil war slogans abound—"We must stay together"—and so on.

The possibilities for drawing parallels are endless: the animal's hall and the nation's assets, the embattled leopard and the Igbo people, the vicious and unjust dog and the military leaders of the time, and the other conniving, inconsistent animals and the remaining Nigerian regions (Odejide, 1989).

One insidious but possible interpretation of the ending is the possibility of a resurgence of the fight for Igbo rights, a possibility that cannot be easily ignored in the light of recent undercurrents of Biafran agitation, especially in the wake of the annulment of the 1993 presidential elections in the country.

The degree of apprehension over the marginalization of the Igbos since the civil war has not diminished. It has been expressed in newspaper articles and public pronouncements by Igbo citizens. As Odumegwu-Ojukwu (1989) argues,

Constant punishment, reproach or reminder has inhibited true Igbo participation in Nigeria's development efforts. . . . What they (the Igbos) feel and say today is that the speed of total reintegration is slow and that it should be faster to the mutual benefit of all Nigerians. . . . Today there is a yawning gap of non-Igbo presence in crucial organisations from which they withdrew in 1966. Properties are seized and regarded as abandoned. (p. 171)

This is articulated in the complaints about the paucity of senior officers of Igbo origin in the armed forces, premature retirement of the few in such positions, the paucity of Igbos in top civil-service positions, and recurrent attacks on them in northern cities. This is summed up by a feature writer in the newspaper *Vanguard* (Nwakanma, 1994), who, in the heat of the political crisis following the first anniversary of the annulment of the presidential elections, wrote that a "mixture of apathy, undefined empathy, 'siddon look' [pidgin for sit down, look] and an under-current of tension boiling steadily into a rage paints a blurred picture of the East, in the current logjam" (p. 13).

Odumegwu-Ojukwu (1989) had argued earlier that this kind of apathy could be one of the psychological and political hangovers of the civil war, a dilemma for the Igbo vanquished. Should they retreat into isolation or not? Which political party should they join?

It could, however, be argued that the "siddon look" attitude, the apathy, is limited to national politics, to activities in Abuja and Lagos, except where it touches on the economy. The preoccupation is primarily with individual and ethnic survival, through working aggressively

to recover from the material losses of the civil war. The emphasis of the young Igbo men appears to be on trading, and it is no wonder that they have a virtual monopoly on the trade in motor spare parts and building materials in several cities nationwide. The sheer size and great visibility of such a population of young Igbo traders led in the late eighties and early nineties to a widespread assumption that the ratio of school enrollment of boys vis-à-vis girls had shifted drastically in favor of the girls. However, a recent study commissioned by UNICEF (Women's Research and Documentation Centre, 1994) showed that, contrary to popular assumption, there were more boys in primary and secondary schools in Imo state. The difference was 1.34% in favor of the boys at the primary level, whereas, at the secondary level, the percentage difference had fallen to 0.06% (p. 210).

Although it is instructive to observe that in comparison with non-Igbo states, the percentage difference among the Igbo schoolboys and -girls, especially at the secondary level, is low, the greater significance is in the decline of the enrollment for boys. In the long term, a situation might be created in which a people who had prided themselves on their intellectual achievement since the 1930s, with the graduation of Nnamdi Azikwe from Lincoln University, would now become disadvantaged academically.

The apparent loss of faith in academic achievement among the Igbo males could be regarded as one of the intergenerational effects of the civil war. Their emphasis during the immediate post-civil war period was on rebuilding their towns and their ravaged economy. The acquisition of Western education to a high level was not a prerequisite for their kind of trading, so apprenticeship to established traders became the norm for young boys.

In addition, this refusal to obtain qualifications that would enable them to enter into the civil service and become part of the administration of the government could reflect a deliberate distancing of themselves as a group from a state apparatus that had been unable or unwilling to protect them at a time of need. This highlights a decline in their feeling of national identity.

PSYCHOSOCIAL EFFECTS

The psychological fallout of the experience of a civil war does not elude children, as seen in Okpewho (1976), who re-creates the chaos and dislocation of the war as seen through the eyes of a young boy. His thoughts are revealed in a free flow of language, lacking the constraints of adult conventions of punctuation but exhibiting an uncanny insight into the concept of the spoils of war: "The soldiers don't like people to steal anything because they want to keep it all to themselves" (p. 114). An entire family's life is blighted by the civil war experiences, and the last picture of the boy is a poignant one: frightened, powerless, unable to comprehend the full tragedy of the wasting of his entire family.

In contrast, emotional rehabilitation is the theme of Ekwensi's (1973) *Coal Camp Boy*. The major problem is the rediscovery of the self, the individual as well as group psyche, in the aftermath of a war that had shattered the closely knit urban community built around the Enugu coal mines. The disruption of their economic and social lives had bred a new kind of morality in some of the returnees, that is, survival by all means: the "win the war" mentality. However, the author, in his usual commitment to morality, optimism, and belief in the regeneration of man, no matter the level of debasement, advocates a sense of optimism, disregard of bitterness, and rugged resilience of the people epitomized in the staging of a festival of masquerades as soon as they settled down. For them, life had started again, and their creativity was an affirmation of the continuity of life.

Yet ripples of the war are evident in the consequent disregard of social values exhibited by the “Omu aya Biafra,” an age group born during the civil war, as recreated in Buchi Emecheta’s (1980) *The Wrestling Match*. This subculture, exhibiting disruptive behaviors such as muggings, lawlessness, and disregard for elders, was a creation of the social and educational limbo occasioned by the war. Semiliterate, unemployed, and lacking a sense of direction, the boys could not be accommodated in a society that was trying to exhibit the national postwar affirmation of “No victor, no vanquished.” The elders arranged a placebo treatment, a farcical wrestling match with young men from a neighboring village. At the end, the author appears to reiterate the slogan: “In all good fights, just like wars, nobody wins” (p. 73).

The immediate post-civil war trauma is re-created in Ekwensi’s (1976) *Survive the Peace*, a fictional work that presents the chaos and lawlessness of the former Biafra. It was a situation in which people in army uniforms paraded on the highways, posing as genuine military officers, and carried out brazen armed robbery—events completely alien to the community before the war. Traumatized, young, demobilized men took to robbery and unleashed terror on their own kith and kin.

Iroh’s (1982) *The Siren in the Night* examines in fictional form a new kind of terror imposed on the vanquished: the sadism, the psychologically dehumanizing attacks on their psyche. The much-touted reconciliation, especially the question of the general amnesty given to the “rebel officers” by the federal government, did not preclude the use of torture by military intelligence. Anarchy, uncertainty, an unprecedented increase in the crime rate, and chaos were the fallout of the war. Immediately after the war, the people who had lost were still suspects, subject to accusations of fueling rebel resurgence.

The placatory pronouncements quoted in *The Wrestling Match* (Emecheta, 1980), however, mask growing tension among the three dominant ethnic groups as well as between the minority groups and the dominant ethnic groups. The former has been discussed in the earlier sections of this chapter. The latter is reflected in the current struggles for self-determination by such groups as the Ogoni in the Rivers state, who have taken their case against Nigeria and the multinational oil companies over the devastation of their environment to the United Nations. Continuous agitation over the mismanagement of resources derived from the oil-producing areas in Rivers, Delta, and lately Ondo states have increased the presence of military personnel there to protect the pipelines against sabotage. Allegations have been made of destabilization and promotion of ethnic rivalries in such areas. The consequence is the prevalent feeling among the indigenes that they are under an army of occupation. The trials and executions of their leaders such as Ken Saro Wiwa by military tribunals have exacerbated the tension. This corroborates Sivard’s finding that “military governments are more than twice as likely as other Third World governments to frequently employ torture and other violent forms of repression against the populace” (Magnarella, 1993, p. 332).

Lingering mutual mistrust fueled by statements about the belief of particular sections of the country that they are destined to continuously produce political leadership has led to calls for confederation or even a complete breakup of the country into smaller states. The “Sabongeri,” “settler stranger” syndrome, whereby indigenes from other ethnic groups live in distinct areas of towns among the host communities, inhibits full integration and prevents them from feeling that they have a stake in the progress of the community. Institutional and procedural mechanisms such as the “nonindigene” label, different school fees for “nonindigene” children, different examination cutoff marks for secondary and tertiary institution candidates based on their states of origin, and preference for expatriates in appointments into the civil service rather than Nigerians from other states accentuate, amplify, and reinforce the feeling of alienation. As Obasanjo (1994), a former leader of Nigeria, convincingly argues,

For as long as our leaders and sponsors of leaders lead and sponsor for personal, ethnic, geographical, sectional, religious and purely economic interests, for so long will problems (i.e., the politics of prebendalism) remain with us, no matter the sophistication of our constitution or the frequency of change. How do we provide a stake in Nigeria for every Nigerian if Nigerians from one part of the country can be told that God has ordained people from another part of Nigeria for permanent political leadership and the others for followership? (p. 31)

Odumegwu-Ojukwu (1989) may be correct in his conjecture that without the reintegration of disadvantaged groups, there might grow "a sense of apathy, anger, and disillusionment in the minds of future generations who did not know anything about the war" (p. 172). He concludes that "the aim should not be to create intellectual Bantustans in our polity" (p. 172).

Intergenerational effects have continued to linger. The report of an assembly of Nigerian elites at the Azikwe-Gowon Forum held in 1994 in Nigeria was aptly termed "A Babel of Tongues" by a leading Nigerian newspaper (now proscribed). It was marked by accusations and counteraccusations of political dominance, lopsided revenue allocation formulae, unfaithful implementation of the federal character policy, neglect and oppression of minority peoples, and militarization of politics. The conclusion was, however, an affirmation of the continued corporate existence of Nigeria as a federation predicated on justice, fairness, and equity.

A most telling repartee was a quote from John F. Kennedy by David-West, a former Petroleum Resources Minister and a member of a minority: "If you say there is no discrimination in America, which of you whites are willing to change their complexion?" (Odivwri, 1994, p. A7).

INTERGENERATIONAL EFFECTS: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

From the preceding sections, it is easier to appreciate the increasing significance and multidirectional manifestation of the effects of ethnic conflicts in Nigeria. On January 15, 1996, it was 30 years since the first coup, which epitomized the first major interethnic violence of great proportions, took place. Yet today, the level of interethnic tension, which has become intensified as a result of the mishandling of the June 12, 1993, presidential elections, suggests that there has been an increase in the negative effects of interethnic conflicts.

First, because of the experience of non-Hausa victims and survivors of the 1966 interethnic conflicts, there has been an increase in the private arming (with guns and other dangerous weapons) of individuals in many northern cities. Igbos in Kano and Kaduna, Christians in all northern cities, and Hausa in the "Sabongeris," "the stranger areas," of many southern cities, are now in a state of preparedness in the event of an outbreak of interethnic conflict. The federal government reacted about a year ago by asking all private owners of firearms to submit them to the police for relicensing, and this year, all private licenses for arms importation have been revoked and private dealers' depots sealed all over the country.

Second, agitation for the creation of new states as a means of fostering social, political, and economic development of ethnic areas has intensified. Although it is recognized that the elites have benefited significantly from such exercises in the past, the fragmentation of the nation into 30 states and Abuja has not reduced the intensity of demands for new states based upon ethnogeographical affinity, solidarity, and ethnogeographical contiguity.

The third and perhaps the most important effect of interethnic conflict lies in enhanced ethnic consciousness, the consequent proliferation of ethnic associations (for ethnic members in search of political, social, and economic security), and the corresponding decline in national integration. The national identity crisis is manifested in the failure of the Nigerian mil-

Table 1. Variables in Intergenerational Effects of Ethnic Conflicts

Independent variable	Intervening variable	Dependent variables (effects)
1. Ethnic pluralism	1. Leadership a. Quality b. Style (e.g., dictatorial) c. Legitimacy	1. Persistence or periodic resurgence of ethnic conflicts or hostilities
2. Contest over scarce resources (e.g., political power)	2. Institutional patterns a. The military and ethnicity b. The civil service and federal character c. The universities and quotas	2. Identity crisis, intensity of ethnic awareness, and ethnic solidarity
3. Structure/pattern of inequality or ethnic stratification or domination	3. Policy instruments a. On equal citizenship b. On democratization c. On coercive strategies to national unity	3. Persistence of ethnic stereotypes and interethnic prejudices
4. Traumatic interethnic historical experiences: genocidal war or pogrom	4. Reward structure	4. Declining national identity or integration: the domination of politics by ethnicity, continued relevance of ethnic associations

itary in the political arena in spite of their domination of the political arena over the last three decades.

Table 1 shows the tabulation of the interrelationship of factors that have interacted to produce different consequences of interethnic relations over the years. A positive change from the current pattern will be dependent upon how the intervening variables (leadership, institutional pattern and processes, policy instruments, and reward structure) operate to impact upon the independent variables, especially through appropriate policy instruments and a legitimate corps of leaders.

From Table 1, it can be observed that four major categories of intergenerational effects have been highlighted. It is, however, necessary to ascertain the degree of significance, or the salience of any or all of these effects, through empirical research. The absence of such research in Nigeria is a major limitation on the present state of knowledge in this most important area of behavioral sciences.

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