

THE IMPACT OF NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE CORPS ON NATIONAL INTEGRATION

(A case of National Youth Service Corps Members in Ogun State)

ADEOYE KOWIAT TITILAYO

Department of General Studies

The Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro

E-mail: layo4sure@gmail.com

E-mail: kowiat.ayanwale@federalpolyilaro.edu.ng

AND

ADESANYA KAFILAT ADENIKE

Department of General Studies

The Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro

E-mail: kafilat.adesanya@federalpolyilaro.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

National Integration since the beginning of the Nigerian country has been a critical issue for different Nigerian government administrations. There are rules and regulations set up to accomplish National Integration. Nigeria's endeavors at accomplishing national integration have remained to a great extent undiscovered on the grounds that Nigeria's solidarity has kept on being tormented and undermined by inserted socio-social and strict contrasts. The objective of this study is to analyze the components compromising the solidarity of Nigeria as a country and to assess the effect of National youth service corps on National Integration utilizing Ogun State as contextual analysis. Both primary and secondary data were used. Questionnaires were gathered, sample collected was analyzed using regression method.

Keywords: National Integration, Youth, and Youth empowerment

INTRODUCTION

The integration crisis facing Nigeria is manifest in the minority question, religious fundamentalism and conflicts, ethnic politics, indigene-settler dialectic, resource control, youth restiveness and militancy and the clamour for a (sovereign) national conference or conversation about the terms of the nation's continued unification. Ifeanacho & Nwagwu (2009) observed, Nigeria's endeavors at accomplishing national integration have remained to a great extent hidden. In their words, the historical backdrop of democratization in Africa, by and large, and Nigeria, specifically, has remained the historical backdrop of national disintegration. Business as usual has writhed the profitable area, constrained the effect of government's monetary projects on the individuals, undermined nourishment instability, complexities social weakness, extended the weakening of physical and social frameworks, bothered the expectations for everyday comforts of a dominant part of Nigerians, militated against the instructive framework and brought about the ostracisation of the all-inclusive statement of Nigerians and their avoidance from the political and financial space, among different glitches. The entire social matrix in Nigeria is characterized by inter- and intra-community, inter and intra-ethnic, and inter- and intra-religious strife. Some of these conflicts are as old as the history of the Nigerian country.

Green(2009) have argued that this concern has been more recently reported by Miguel (2004), Collier (2009) and other people who have pushed for national integration as a policy to promote state building in a continent now notorious for and overflowing with political unsteadiness and economic throwback.

Ojo (2009) contends that "Nigeria has an interesting issue not experienced by any state on the planet past or present. The issue is that of accomplishing solidarity in real life and reason amidst many ethnic nationalities each applying both radiating and centripetal powers on the focal issue of the country, bound in opportunity, harmony and solidarity where equity rules." Numerous researchers have attempted to put a figure to the quantity of ethnic gatherings

inside the nation at well more than 250 (Attah, 1987; Onwujeogwu (1987); Kirk-Green, 1969:4; Otite, 1990; Suberu, 1998).

Despite the way that the British colonialists and the Nigerian world class that succeeded them used ethnicity to perfect their political frameworks and score up some budgetary and political increases, as Emelonye & Buergenthal (2011) watched, neediness and incapable administration in Nigeria today have additionally honed ethnic divisions prompting misconception among ethnic and strict gatherings who consider themselves to be rivals that must be outperformed using any and all means, in this way hampering national integration. They include that in light of the fact that the Nigerian state is starting to lose authenticity and authority, the dread of vulnerability has expanded to the degree that residents presently resort to self-improvement looking for security and solidarity in their own ethnic, strict or local connection and personality. In this way, another measurement to Nigeria's ethno-strict savagery is the expanding enrollment and assembly of ethnic and provincial civilian armies, vigilantes and other equipped gatherings: the Oodua People's Congress in Yorubaland, the Arewa People's Congress in the north, the Bakassi Boys in the east, the Egbesu in the south, and the rise of a vainglorious armed force of dread vendors who speak to fighting interests to Nigeria's impediment. The implication of these hydra-headed clashes is that national integration endures, there is expanding instability of citizens and property in the nation, remote venture is hindered and monetary advancement is frustrated. The requirement for peaceful co-existence and perhaps, manageable improvement among these different societies provoked the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern Protectorates in 1914.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- Examine the factors that threaten the solidarity of Nigeria as a country i.e social,cultural, religion and political constraints and how they have affected the integration of Nigeria as a country

-Evaluate the impacts of national integration on National Youth Service Corps members

HYPOTHESES

- Social, culture, religion and political constraints does not have significant effect on integration of Nigeria as a country
- National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) does not have significant effect on National Integration

CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

NATIONAL INTEGRATION

According to Eme and Tony (2014) integration may refer to the way toward having together socially and socially discrete gatherings into a solitary regional unit. This definition assumes that there is in presence a morally pluralist society in which each gathering is described by its own language or other hesitant social characteristics. This regional integration suggests that the region must be in presence heavily influenced by one state and one government; similar to the Nigerian State and that the authority of the central government must be solidly settled over all the nation's regions. The ultimate objective of national integration as a procedure (regardless of the favored methodology) in this way, is the political unification of the constituent units into one entire country, the type of Plato's polis (city-state). This is known as the procedure of state working, instead of the procedure of country building (Eme and Tony, 2014).

National integration is one among the five sorts of integration distinguished by Weiner. The others are: regional, esteem, world class mass and integrative conduct (Eme and Tony, 2014). National Integration refers explicitly to the issue of making a feeling of regional nationality which dominates or takes out subordinate parochial loyalties. This integration includes amalgamation of unique social, economic, religious, ethnic, and geographic components into a solitary country express, a homogenous entity, the like of Plato's Polis, the city-state. This kind

of integration infers both the limit of government to control the region under its ward just as to invigorate a lot of famous readiness by the individuals to put national enthusiasm above nearby or parochial worry towards the country by and large. Likewise, where national integration flourishes, the people understood their privileges and benefits distinguish completely with the state and owe allegiance to it, since they consider themselves to be standing in direct connection with it (Eme and Tony, 2014).

The emergencies of national integration in Nigeria are exceptionally serious with the end goal that the Nigerian Federation is at its falling point. Nigeria as a nation came into corporate presence in 1914, because of the combination between the northern and southern protectorates by the British. National integration is a definitive objective to be accomplished in a multi ethnic nation like Nigeria for there to be any sensible improvement.

Nation-building or national integration has for quite some time been viewed as a significant concentration for postcolonial African governments. As certain researchers noted, upon African decolonisation during the 1950s and 1960s, social researchers were worried about the requirement for what was then called "national integration" in social orders with different ethnic, religious and racial cleavages (Onifade and Imhonopi, 2013). Bandyopadhyay & Green (2008) have contended that this concern has been all the more as of late revived by Miguel (2004), Collier (2009) and other people who have advocated for national integration as an approach to advance state building in a continent now infamous for and overflowing with political insecurity and economic throwback. Terms used for national integration have included national cohesion, national unity, nation building (Bandyopadhyay & Green, 2009; Ojo, 2009). According to Duverger in Ojo (2009) national integration is "the way toward bringing together a society which will in general make it an amicable city, in light of a request its individuals view as impartially agreeable." Jacob and Tenue in Ojo (2009) portray it as "a relationship of network among individuals inside the equivalent political element... a perspective or air to be firm, to act together, and to be focused on common projects"

YOUTH

The Pan-African Youth Charter (2006) characterizes youth or young people as "every human being between the ages of 15 and 30 years." The Charter, in any case, makes this capability: "Considering the transitional idea of youth that is affected by social, economic, political, cultural and others factors, this definition does not bar youth or youngsters beneath and over the predetermined age run who might be occupied with this change". The United Nations General Assembly originally characterized youth as individuals between the ages of 15 and 24 out of 1985 for the International Youth Year (UNIDESIA, 2004). In 1995, when the General Assembly received the World Program of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and past, it again characterized youth as individuals matured 15-24-years of age, yet recognized that the age go remembered for the term changes among various nations and societies (UNDESA, 2004). In Nigeria to execute the National Youth Policy, the youth is characterized as involving every single youngster between the age of 18 and 35 who are citizens of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (NYP, 2001, 2008)

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE CORPS (NYSC)

The significant point of the National Youth Service Corp (NYSC) was to accommodate and reconstruct the nation after the Nigerian Civil war. The disastrous forerunners in our national history offered catalyst to the foundation of the National Youth Service Corps by declaration No.24 of 22nd May 1973 which expressed that the NYSC is being set up "with a view to the best possible consolation and advancement of common ties among the youths of Nigeria and the advancement of national unity" (NYSC, 2016). As a developing nation, Nigeria is further tormented by the issues orderly upon a state of being worked on, to be specific; poverty, mass illiteracy, intense deficiency of profoundly skilled labor, woefully insufficient financial infrastructural facilities, housing (NYSC, 2016). A corps member is a Nigerian graduate of a tertiary institution, regardless of whether domestic or foreign, who has completely fulfilled the prerequisites of the Senate or the Academic Board of the institution (University, Polytechnic, Monotechnics), not over 30 years old and has finished his studentship on full-time premise. Consequently, with the end goal of this article, a corps member will be referred to a youth

taking an interest in the NYSC programme: a mandatory one year program for fresh local and international Nigerian graduates and who are 30 years old or underneath at the hour of mobilization. The NYSC management arranges three weeks of orientation (outdoors) for Corp members. It is a controlled camp where 70 % exercises are done militarily, exercises, lectures; night shows among different exercises are locked in by corps members. Corps members are relied upon to serve their nation inside one year after which they will be granted a certificate of completion during their Passing Out Parade (POP) Then again, the skill acquisition and entrepreneurship development (SAED) policy is an activity of the NYSC, headed to help corps members in acquiring essential skills that will urge them to seek after business vocations other than looking for paid work that is restricted in supply. The NYSC is said to have joined forces with a few organizations and preparing outfits the nation over to acquire and give the absolute best to the country's corps members at financed rates, courses and live preparing projects created by supporters to furnish them with abilities relating to independent sustenance and business management understanding also (NYSC-SAED, 2017).

It very well may be found that human behaviour is not just compelled by the bigger society yet in addition relies upon the socially built convictions that make them act in specific manners. it is right to state that, while the cultural structures (i.e., Social, financial, family, political, Religious, Marriage, Educational establishments) has direct ramifications on the interest of corps members in the SAED program, there are some socially built convictions that can likewise impact the choice of corps members to take part in entrepreneurship development program during service year. Since past studies have generally centered around the large scale/auxiliary factors, for example, corruption (Ojeifo, 2012); epileptic power supply (Ayegba and Omale, 2016); instability (Okeke and Eme, 2014); infrastructural rot (Ihugba, Odii, and Njoku, 2013); maladministration (Ihugba, Odii, and Njoku, 2013; Chidiebere et al, 2014; Idam, 2014); insufficient subsidizing (Ofili, 2014); absence of well-prepared educators (Adekunle and David, 2014; Agu and Ayogu, 2015), poor sharpening and inadequate checking and supervisory instrument (Ajibola, Salau, and Aladejare, 2014), and absence of information on science and innovation (Diyoke, 2014).

METHODOLOGY

This research was directed among Batch C corps members who were assembled in October 2018 as well as deployed (or redeployed) to Ogun state. Three Local government, Yewa South, Odeda and Ifo neighborhood government were picked. The method for this data analysis was quantitative in nature. The surveys were broke down utilizing regression and analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistical tool. The information for this examination is essential and existing writings were assessed. The researchers administered questionnaires to 150 respondents in which 50 respondents were picked from each local government

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The analysis of data gathered were done both manual and electronically with the assistance of measurable programming known as SPSS. The essential information gathered utilizing survey technique is displayed in the accompanying tables beneath:

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
.906	14

The table above shows the reliability of the questionnaire used internal control reliable. The Cronbach's alpha worth is 0.906 which means that the survey is exceptionally solid and can be utilized for to measure internal control consistent.

TEST OF HYPOTHESES

Hypothesis I

H_0 : Social, cultural, religion and political constraints does not have significant effect on integration of Nigeria as a Nation.

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.889 ^a	.790	.785	2.057

Table 2 depict the model summary of the hypothesis I. The result shows that there is a strong positive relationship between the independent variables (social, cultural, religion and political constraints) and the dependent variable (national Integration) with correlation coefficient of 0.889. Furthermore, 79% variation in national integration could be attributed to the joint effect of the independent variables.

Table 3: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2311.990	4	577.998	136.644	.000 ^b
	Residual	613.343	145	4.230		
	Total	2925.333	149			

Moreover, the F-value (136.644) for the test as indicated in table 3 and p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$ is evidence that the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables is a good one and hence the model is adequate and sufficient in relating the variables under consideration.

Table 4: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	8.461	1.340		6.316	.000
	SOCIAL	1.140	.208	.249	5.495	.000
	CULTURAL	1.401	.234	.290	5.997	.000
	RELIGION	2.588	.252	.458	10.260	.000
	POLITICAL	1.538	.394	.173	3.906	.000

Hence, table 4 shows that social, cultural, religion and political factors are significant with their respective p-values (0.000) < 0.05 significant level. This is an indication that the alternative hypothesis will be accepted and we then conclude that social, cultural, religion and political constraints have significant effects on national integration of Nigeria.

Hypothesis II

H_0 : National integration does not have significant impact on national youth service corps (NYSC) members.

Table 5: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.798 ^a	.636	.634	1.830

Table 5 shows the model summary for hypothesis II with correlation coefficient of 0.798 and about 63.6% variation in NYSC programme could be attributed to national integration.

Table 6: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	866.675	1	866.675	258.804	.000 ^b
	Residual	495.618	148	3.349		
	Total	1362.293	149			

Furthermore, the result in table 6 shows the F-value of 258.804 with p-value of 0.000 < 0.05 significant value, hence the model is adequate in relating the dependent and the independent variables.

Table 7: Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		

	(Constant)	.331	1.102		.300	.765
1	NATIONAL INTEGRATION	.544	.034	.798	16.087	.000

Table 5 shows the contribution of national integration to NYSC programme, the p-value is < 0.05 significant level, hence the alternative hypothesis is accepted and we conclude that national integration does have significant impact on national youth service corps (NYSC) members.

FINDINGS OF THE RESULTS.

- It was discovered that social, cultural, religion and political constraints have significant effects on National Integration of Nigeria
- Also, we are able to reach conclusion that National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) have significant impact on National Integration.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

National integration ought to be given fundamental thought by government just as people in our general public. Nigeria has not had the option to withstand carefully by the established arrangements controlling the genuine act of federalism because of the float from one emergency to the next since independent. Additionally the constituent pieces of Nigeria have not carefully clung to the inherent standards of federalism in the relationship of the different levels of government. Social, culture, religion and political issues must be altogether and fundamentally inspected inside the setting of federalism so that, National integration can keep having positive effect on national youth service corps (NYSC) members. National integration ought to be given fundamental thought by government just as people in our general public. Nigeria has not had the option to withstand carefully by the established arrangements controlling the genuine act of federalism because of the float from one emergency to the next since independent. Additionally the constituent pieces of Nigeria have not carefully clung to the inherent standards of federalism in the relationship of the different levels of government. Social, culture, religion and political issues must be altogether and fundamentally inspected inside the setting of federalism so that,

National integration can keep having positive effect on national youth service corps (NYSC) members.

Based on the findings, the recommendations are as follows:

- Nigeria should target glancing out a political culture that will minimize, if not absolutely eradicate sentiments of doubt, profound situated hostility that exists among the different ethnic groups in the nation and additionally analyze the issue of apparent control of certain areas by others.
- Nigerians must develop dynamic propensities and make strides that would guarantee reasonable socio-political, religion and economic development of the nation
- There is the requirement for the nation to empower arrangements dependent on national and aggregate interests' instead of ethnic or sectional thought.
- The practice of corruption should be discouraged since it does not play a significant role in the National integration of the Country.
- Since youth is viewed as crucial to national development and since no nation can develop without involvement of youth, it becomes not just important yet additionally imperative to find a few solutions for the issues of dwindling resource allocation to development of youth.

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