



The Military in Nigerian Politics

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Abstract: This work explores the military configuration in Nigerian politics. The colonial system adopted by British colonialists was a composition that kindled discord among Nigerians but with the false notion of oneness. The consequence of this composition was evident in high levels of tribal sentiments and stratification, and despite the fact that these challenges existed in the pre-independent Nigeria, it had become increasingly evident since the first half-decade of post-independent Nigeria. Therefore, independence and the flagging of the republic in 1960 and 1963 respectively, greeted Nigeria with more complex puzzles to solve. Subsequently, the military forced its way into the political frame of Nigeria through a coup. This study, therefore, seeks to provide analysis of military regimes through historical and descriptive lenses in a bid to ascertain the instrumentality of these regimes in affecting political climates. It employs secondary data sources in achieving this objective. In the work, it is observed that although the military regime recorded some successes, it was however crazed with problems of various magnitudes such as human rights abuse, economic decline, and corruption, among others. This military configuration naturally provoked international condemnation which led to its decline and final return to democracy.

Keywords: Colonial; coup; war

1. Introduction

The history of military in the Nigerian state could be trailed to the period preceding colonialism, largely characterized by relatively disunited, unplanned, and unskilled

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military elements in mobilization for wars, thus, influence from their efforts was also relatively insignificant; however, the narrative turned with the European arrival into the country (Abdulrahman & Mang, 2017). The formation of the Armed Forces of Nigeria was sparked when the then British navy officer commanding Lagos chose eighteen Nigerians to provide the Brits in Nigeria trade security as of 1863 (Arnold-Baker, 2001). In clearer terms, the Nigerian military rather stemmed from an existing army than it was created on its own. Abdulrahman and Mang (2017), in their submission, informed on the Nigerian military being an offshoot of the British colonial army; because of the Industrial Revolution and the need for markets, Nigerians were originally mobilized to provide protection for the British industries for trade in Africa when Britain perceived the possibility of threats from Africa. A good example of this was the Royal Niger Company charged to serve Britain's interest on trade after being given more trade control in the north (Flint, 1960). Ukpabi (1987) posited that Nigerians had already been merged with the military force of this company since 1896.

Early phases of mobilization were centered around the perceptive notion of the British colonialists on the different ethnic groups, most especially the north. For example, Arnold-Baker (2001) noted that the eighteen selected Nigerians in 1863 were all from the north. According to Abdulrahman and Mang (2017), more northern Nigerians were initially selected for military positions than any of the other regions, and although Britain was satisfied with this arrangement because the northerners were believed to be more conformist, it was detrimental to the emergent Nigerian military. Corroboratively, Kirk-Greene (1980) opined that although the Igbos and Yorubas were added to the military, the majority of the pioneers of the British military from Nigeria came from the Hausa ethnicity. However, more Yorubas were picked compared to the Igbos because they were believed to be docile and influenceable (Smith, 1974). The British were skeptical about mobilizing Igbos because of their non-conformist tendencies; nevertheless, as a result of their educational savvy, owing to the development of Christian learning institutions in pre-colonial Nigeria, the Igbos were incorporated into the military to fill secretarial and other lower positions (Ejiogu, 2011). Abdulrahman and Mang (2017) observed that the likeliness of the south (specifically the east) being unfavorable to overall British interest was the reason northern Nigeria was preferred over southern peoples.

This selection bias caused a significant imbalance in the representativeness of the early Nigerian military by encouraging clusters of divided loyalties within the military which only favorably served the Nigerian military during the colonial times

and spelt dividedness and doom for her in the independence era (Abdulrahman & Mang, 2017). Barrett (1976) also agreed by stating that the arrangement in clusters might be considered to have assisted in fostering cooperation within the Nigerian military during the colonial season and although the stratification based on perception was to cease after the second world war, it has already been set up and repairs were already deemed untimely – soon, Nigeria would turn against itself during independence. In brief, it can be deduced that both pre-colonial and colonial Nigerian military were infected with fundamental and inherent cancer of regionalism and ethnic strands.

It is on this background the weight of the work rests as the factors characterizing the military in both pre-colonial and colonial times serve as a foundation on which the behavior of the postcolonial military, to an extent, can stand as would be seen in this work. However, in a bid to achieve scholarliness in this narrative, conceptual clarification is needed to delineate the various concepts and constructs used throughout this work, as well as help put them in proper perspective.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Conceptual Clarifications

Politics can be viewed from different perspectives as it has been widely conceptualized by countless scholars, but the aim of this paper is not to preoccupy itself with conceptualizations. Nevertheless, most scholars appear to consider politics to concern contest for anything of worth; many of them associate politics with power, influence, or control. For instance, Olufemi states that the Marxists view politics in terms of antagonisms between different classes for state control (Olufemi, 1998).

The military can be seen as a defense body made up of individuals disciplined and trained in the use of various weapons and stationed for the purpose of combat (Uzodinma, 2015). The aim of the military from his definition implies that the military possesses traits of violence and can be forceful. This quality provides an explanation for their undemocratic behaviors in various political offices. Toyin (2015) stated the qualities of the military as having a disciplinary, bureaucratic and hierarchical nature. The Nigerian Armed Forces is the military body in Nigeria which fundamentally consists of land-based, air-based, and sea-based soldiers (George, Amujo & Cornelius, 2012). However, since the latter two groups (air-based and sea-

based soldiers) did not feature much in the power play of the independence era, the military refers only to the land-based soldiers (the army) for the purpose of this work.

Military intervention can be viewed as efforts of soldiers to associate themselves in politics in order to proffer solutions and bring political order, which is the reason they attribute their involvement in politics to issues like insecurity, lack of governmental stability, and electoral rigging, amongst others.

2.2 The Military Involvement in Nigerian Politics

The military was charged with the responsibility of protecting Nigeria from foreign threats, ensuring safety in its territory, and assuring border security (Brown, 2014). In the words of Toyin (2015), in terms of original configuration, the military is not disposed to govern but to protect. However, the colonial system adopted by British colonialists was one that kindled discord among Nigerians, but with the false notion of oneness (Jackson, 2007). Abubakar (2008) relayed that Nigeria during independence was fraught with many challenges originating from the colonialists – these challenges were hinged along regional and ethnic lines combined with a fragile political composition. The consequence of this composition was evident in high levels of tribal sentiments and stratification, and despite the fact that these challenges existed in the pre-independent Nigeria, it had become increasingly evident since the first half-decade of post-independent Nigeria (Abdulrahman, 2014). Therefore, independence and the flagging of the republic in 1960 and 1963 respectively, greeted Nigeria with more complex puzzles to solve.

The representing political parties of the 3 main regions were a reflex of divisive Nigeria: the National Council for Nigeria and the Cameroun (NCNC) was for the east, Action Group (AG) was for the west, and the Northern People Congress (NPC) for the northern region (Brown, 2013). According to Brown, there was an existence of fierce conflicts within and without those parties. For example, Hariman (2006) stated that events like the Action Group Awolowo-Akintola conflict concerning voting snowballed into the popular western regional crisis of 1962 and the ripple effect spelt chaos for the country – Obafemi Awolowo, together with few other chiefs in the party, were imprisoned. He added that problems like false nationalism among the political parties and inaccurate headcount result of northern Nigerians in 1963 were major issues. Ultimately, the 1964 election rigging distorted the election process and heightened hostility (Arikpo, 1967). The failure of the civilian

government to instill peace and security to Nigerians, and the absence of true constitutionalism, destabilized the political structure and resulted to the end of the republic in 1966 (Babatola, 2008). According to Isaac (2013), the civilian government was incapable and unjust in matters concerning the nation. This invariably resulted in the intervention of the military on the fifteenth day of January in 1966 by a military coup (Bevan, Collier & Gunning, 1999; Gambari, 1995)

The Brutal January 15 Coup (1966)

This era pioneered military reign in Nigeria, which did not let go of the reins of power till a decade and three years later. They intervened under the false notion of bringing the country out of conflict (Muhammad, 2014). With the intervention, the military got engrossed in politics, which they were not adequately configured for; hence, they governed the way they were configured – with fierceness (Osoba, 1977). From the report of Oluleye (1985), it was a ferocious coup orchestrated by Kaduna Nzeogwu together with four other majors, mostly from the east. They abducted and massacred civilian and military rulers, majorly from western and northern lines. Among the people killed were Sir Ahmadu Bello, the northern premier; Tafawa Balewa, who was the then prime minister; Ladoke Akintola, the western premier; the finance minister, including many other top officials of the military (Oluleye, 1985).

The regime was characterized by the suspension of the constitution, centralization of powers, and authoritarianism. Unfortunately for Major Nzeogwu and the other majors following him, they did not establish their dominance in the west (most especially in Lagos) as much as in the northern region. Consequently, through a deceptive agreement with Aguiyi Ironsi (the then Major-General of Igbo descent commanding Lagos) to grant clemency to the coup plotters, they were arraigned, and an Ironsi government was established as the first military and unitary government in Nigeria (Emenyeonu, 2013).

There were arguments that despite the political reparations intended by the coup plotters, the pattern it followed raised significant suspicions among the northern and western peoples against the Igbos (Emenyeonu, 2013). From the position of Ejoor (1993), the Igbo domination was influenced by the selection discrimination they had experienced since the colonial and early independence period. A circumspective look at this situation was probably what influenced Abdulrahman (2014) to opine that the

military was welcomed with high expectations from Nigerians, but their regime was not strong enough to cure the disease that ailed the Nigerian state at independence. Instead, they were inherently infected by the same disease that resulted in the death of the first republic – regionalism. Thus, it would not be wrong to assert that the surgeons themselves were sick (Abdulrahman, 2014). Akin to the preceding, it was not long until there was another junta in late July of the same year, which led to the assassination of Aguiyi Ironsi (south) and saw Lieutenant-Colonel Yakubu Gowon (from the north) succeeding him (Aremu & Osadola, 2018).

The July 29 Counter Coup (1966-1975)

The Gowon coup canceled the establishment of the Nigerian state to a Federal Republic on the eve of September in the same year the coup took place, contrary to the unitary system structured by the Ironsi government (Muhammad, 2014). Muhammad further stated that the Gowon Supreme Military Council (SMC) saw the creation of 12 states in a bid to accommodate the ethnic minorities, among other things.

In tandem with the thoughts of Abdulrahman (2014), the counter-coup of 1966 could be referred to as a reflex of an inter-regional power struggle within the army, i.e., while the Igbo coup and the preceding regime remains a subject of debate, it is possible to say that the coup after (the "anti-Igbo coup") was intended to forestall the Igbo rule and establish their own (northern) supremacy. Muhammadu and Haruna (1981) revealed that apart from Ironsi, the ruler of the west was also assassinated together with countless top and average-ranking military personnel. They equally revealed that these killings of the Igbos heightened in the months following as the northerners were not satiated. Consequently, sensing the lethargy from Lieutenant-Colonel Yakubu Gowon concerning the pogrom, Lieutenant-Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu (the ruler of the east) called the Igbos residing in the north home. After this, he declared a Biafran Republic on the 29th of May, 1967 – this set the pace for the intranational (civil) war (Ajayi, 2013). While Gowon's structure of state establishment relatively helped in the accommodation of minorities, it however accomplished little in stopping the war (Muhammadu & Haruna, 1981). Nevertheless, it recorded some impact in terms of decentralizing the Biafran power (Ajayi, 2013). Resultantly, the military attempted an operation to rid themselves of the plaguing regional politics through the 1967 to 1970 intranational (civil) war

(Abdulrahman, 2014). The war caused the massacre of about one million individuals and ended with a landmark public address in 1970 (Muffet, 1982).

Gowon's government was in power for 9 years; his regime saw the 30 months war and the 1975 oil boom (Aremu & Osadola, 2018). The oil boom implied massive revenues for Nigeria to an alarming extent which resultantly enhanced minimum wage and the issuance of awards such as the Udoji Awards under Gowon's administration (Adebisi, 2013). Gowon in 1974 made a public revocation to his prior commitment to restore rulership to the civilian government in 1976, which solicited condemnation from a number of officers. This nosedived into another takeover in July 1975, though without bloodshed (Abdulrahman, 2014).

The First Bloodless Coup (29th July, 1975-1979)

The 1975 palace coup marked the beginning of General Murtala Ramat Muhammad and Olusegun Obasanjo as the Nigerian Head of state and the Army Staff Chief, respectively (Abdulrahman, 2014). Murtala's Supreme Military Council quickly got rid of military rulers and governors in the 12 states created by Gowon, added 7 more states, emphasized the presidential as opposed to the parliamentary system of government, and most importantly, declared October 1979 as the maturity time to hand over the government to civilian control (Otoghagua, 2011). All these were part of the efforts to aid a seamless transition to a civil government. More so, internationally, his administration was instrumental in the anti-apartheid campaign in South Africa (Abdulrahman, 2014).

Not only was the Murtala coup supported by the people, drastic restructuring policies of his administration leading to sanitization of the public service attracted the backing of the people (Agbese, 2000). Murtala was assassinated in a failed junta led by Lieutenant-Colonel Bukar Sukar Dimka.

Obasanjo (who was the next ranked after Murtala) ruled in Murtala's stead and continued with his legacy in 1976-1979. He instated a constituent assembly consisting of learned Nigerians in a bid to set out a viable presidential governmental structure – the end product was that the system created stood was solid enough (Agbese, 2000). Obasanjo made educational reforms, including the 6-3-3-4 educational structure that emphasized advanced modes of learning. He also instituted Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) in 1976, fought corrupt practices through the Corrupt Practices Bureau, established a grass-root government, was instrumental in

the 1979 constitutional drafting, and created a Federal Electoral Commission (George, Amujo & Cornelius, 2012). Accordingly, the government was handed over to civilian control, which witnessed the election of President Alhaji Shehu Shagari – the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) contestant and champion of the election (Falola & Ihonvbere, 1985).

The election that brought Shagari and marked the beginning of a second republic was controversial because it was believed by some that the handover was illegitimate. Others were of the opinion that the president did not meet expectations and was ineffective. Ultimately, the electoral misconduct in 1983 and resultant conflict made Nigerians lose trust in the election. This created a condition that resulted in the decline of the second republic (Olagunju, Jinadu & Oyovbiare, 1993).

The December 31st Coup (1983-1985)

Organized by Sani Abacha, this coup saw the end of another civilian administration. Brigadier Sani Abacha announced that electoral corruption and misadministration were the reasons for the coup (Muhammad, 2014). The junta placed Major General Muhammadu Buhari (ruler of the SMC) as the next military ruler together with Brigadier Tunde Idiagbon, who fought against indiscipline (in his famous War Against Indiscipline) and whose government led to the killing and arrest of several corrupt rulers (Agbese, 2000). However, Agbese observed that the Nigerian economy was still weak despite strategies introduced by his administration. These strategies also resulted in hostility against the majority of student and trade unions, arrest of journalists, and shunning-down of criticisms – essentially, there was gross abuse of the rights of civilians. Olagunju et al. (1993) revealed that handing over to civilian government was not part of Buhari's agenda, and therefore, there was low support and high criticisms from the public against his government. This led to another takeover in August 1985.

The August 27th Junta (1985-1993)

Characterized by economic and political reasons, this coup saw the rulership of Major-General Ibrahim Babangida for a period of 9 years. Like Buhari, he had no clear-cut plans for returning Nigeria to a democratic government – the handing over date was vague between 1987 and 1992 (Babatola, 2014). In accordance with Olagunju et al. (1993), there were shifts in the handing-over dates. Babangida formed

11 states, adding to the 19 already existing states (Emenyeonu, 2013). He also forced Structural Adjustment Programme on the people, which resulted in harsh standard of living for Nigerians. The vagueness in the handing-over plan resulted in the nullification of the June 12, 1993 election on 23rd of the same month (an election considered as one of the most transparent), the nullification of all electoral decrees, including the National Electoral Commission (NEC). Public resistance broke out, leading to the end of the Babangida government. However, he set up an Interim National Government (ING) occupied by Ernest Shonekan (a civilian), who governed for just 82 days (Muhammad, 2014). On 17 November, 1993, Shonekan was ousted by General Sani Abacha, marking the end of a third republic.

The November 17 Junta (1993-1998)

Abacha (leader of the Federal Military Government), on assuming power, replaced the Interim National Government with a Provisional Ruling Council (PRC) and Federal Executive Council (FEC). His government saw the formation of 6 states in 1996 (Emenyeonu, 2013). Abacha governed Nigeria with a tough hand in spite of the dwindling economic state of Nigeria (Babatola, 2014). Not only that, Nigeria was given the pariah status during this period due to extreme authoritarianism and gross infringements on human rights, among other issues (Brown, 2013). For example, Emenyeonu (2013) revealed the 1995 brutal massacre of Ken Saro Wiwa and 8 prominent persons in the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP).

Like the Babangida government, the Abacha government was vague on its handing-over period. As a consequence, there was disappointment from the people who had expected him to transfer power to the civilian control of Chief MKO Abiola. Furthermore, arguments about Abacha's intention in utilizing some political parties for the extension of his regime existed. There was resistance from groups such as the National Democratic Coalition (NADECO), which campaigned for a reversal to democracy (Agbese, 2000). Unluckily, Abacha's abrupt death on the 8th of June, 1998, truncated his plans for extending his regime. This unexpected event led to the enthronement of General Abdulsalam (Brown, 2013).

The June 8 Succession (1998-1999)

Unlike the Abacha government, General Abdulsalami Abubakar kept his commitment to restoring democracy after 11 months. Before his death, Abacha had

imprisoned some perceived coup plotters. The PRC, under the influence of Abubakar, canceled the judgments against the perceived coup plotters and among them was General Olusegun Obasanjo (Muhammad, 2014). Muhammad opined that the administration also brought other poverty-alleviating reforms to Nigeria, like the increase in civil service pay.

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) was the brainchild of Abubakar, created in August 1998 to help conduct elections at various governmental levels. General Olusegun Obasanjo of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) contested in the presidential election and won against the All People's Party (APP) and the Alliance for Democracy (AD) (Muhammad, 2014). General Abdulsalami Abubakar, through the PRC, built on the formerly halted 1979 constitution in order to inaugurate the new president on 29th May, 1999. The constitution contained a bi-cameral legislature, among other things (Muhammad, 2014).

Having examined military rule in Nigeria, questions concerning military performance tend to surface. It is on this basis that this work attempts to measure the impact of military administrations in Nigeria in a bid to assess overall military performance. Again, this gives more credence to the work as an assessment of military performance constitutes one of the pivotal aims for conducting a historical review of the military.

3 Research Methods

This qualitative and nonexperimental study employs a pragmatic approach, triangulating between historical and descriptive methods, in an attempt to evaluate the impact of military governments in Nigeria and thus, get a grasp of military performance in Nigeria. While data from past events (including the origin of the Nigerian military,) were gathered through the instrumentality of the historical method, the descriptive method allowed for an extensive case review on the military governments in Nigeria to gain deeper insight on the subject. Consequently, data for the study was gathered from already available (secondary) sources, including journal articles, books, newspapers, news magazines, internet sources, etcetera.

4 Data Presentation and Analysis

The military has had a significant impact both on Nigerian citizens and on the country in general. For example, Adekanye (2008) posited that the quota system that encouraged military representativeness was also employed as a federal character principle under democratic administrations. The impact of military adventure in Nigeria has been mixed. Similarly, scholars like Toyin (2015) maintained that although military rule may have been unsuccessful in developing the country, it is not without its political and socio-economic achievements, hence, it was not totally disadvantageous to the Nigerian state. Therefore, this work will be identifying both positive and negative impacts of the military in a quest to be more holistic.

4.1 Achievements of the Military

The creation of states under the Gowon, Murtala/Obasanjo, Babangida, and Abacha administrations in 1967, 1976, 1987/1991, and 1996, respectively, was a major feat of the military. For example, state creation under Gowon's administration helped to foster unity by dividing the four regions into six northern and six southern states; in spite of the fact that the creation of twelve states did little in stopping the civil war, it however was instrumental in both impeding Igbos from seceding (by decentralizing conflict among others) and ensuring relative unity after the war (Diamond, 1999). In addition, it allowed representation of the interest of ethnic minorities (Bello, 2011). Furthermore, certain policies made room for integration, i.e., the Yakubu Gowon's military administration united Nigeria on the tripartite principle of reconciliation, reconstruction, and rehabilitation. As part of the efforts in promoting peace, the promoters of the civil war were granted amnesty.

The military has arguably been pivotal to infrastructural developments of various magnitudes. Bello (2011) highlighted the impact of the military after the civil war, which included construction projects (like construction of ports in Lagos, Kano, Sokoto, among others) to aid free transportation as well as the procurement of airplanes to encourage productive international trade. Bello also mentioned that the centralization of military power hastened the decision-making process, which invariably led to faster infrastructural developments and resultantly, improved employment. More so, the military contributed greatly in erecting oil-refining structures in Port Harcourt, Warri and Kaduna, which relatively discouraged dependence on oil importation.

Educationally, prior to the advent of military rule in Nigeria, there were only five tertiary institutions; however, the proliferation of these and other educational institutions by 1999 owe to the military (Bello, 2011). Abdulrahman (2014) penned that the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), instituted in 1973 by the Gowon administration, was a quantum leap towards educating Nigerians for integration via the promotion of interactions among several Nigerian ethnicities.

Worthy of note is the fact that the military administration of Buhari in 1984 took definite steps at resuscitating the dying culture of discipline through the War Against Indiscipline (WAI), and this affected basic aspects of social life. The military equally frowned at criminal engagements and unlawful acts, including trade in drugs and other international criminal acts that could mar the country's integrity internationally (Emenyeonu, 2013). Emenyeonu (2013) similarly noted the feat achieved under the Murtala administration in maintenance of order. As part of the steps to building good international perception, opined Bello (2011), Nigeria embraced an Afrocentric outlook in the administration of Murtala/Obasanjo, freeing other African countries from colonial shackles, including fighting the South African apartheid. Furthermore, the creation of the Technical Aid Corps (TAC) program under the Babangida administration was a viable step towards achieving Afrocentrism and helping other countries within the continent (Bello, 2011).

4.2 Failures of the Military

The military juntas that emerged to replace civil rule did so with the idea of averting the disorder and misadministration caused by past civil rulers. However, scholars have argued that the military itself possessed the same ailment that they attempted to avert from the civil government because there existed juntas against military administrations (Bello, 2011).

Among the disadvantages of the military is corruption. Oluleye (1985) opined that the level of corruption that had eaten into the military was alarming. He continued by stating examples of the 1975 Murtala investigation of the rulers during Gowon's era that exposed many of their crooked sources of wealth; the disappearance of close to 3 billion dollars from oil revenue in the Obasanjo era as well as the renowned corruption of the Abacha regime which was investigated under the Obasanjo democratic rule that revealed siphoned billions of dollars, stored in foreign banks (Oluleye, 1985). Also, Toyin (2015) submitted that the SAP under the Babangida

administration exploited Nigerians as a result of corruption inherent in the military. Toyin again, revealed that military coups caused astronomical backdrops on the Nigerian economic state as more focus was placed on military welfare than other sectors of the economy (Toyin, 2015).

The fact that military governments' policies hardly succeeded each other due to unexpected coups after them, which changed the policies or (at least) names of policies reduced the pace of economic growth. For instance, Babangida introduced the Mass Mobilisation for Economic Recovery and Social Justice after a coup in 1985, interrupting the War Against Indiscipline policy of the Buhari regime instituted the year before (Emenyeonu, 2013). This was perhaps one of the lacunas that made Bamgboye (2014) submit that there was still poor economic state (evidenced by low production levels and coated with job scarcity) despite several military policies put in place for economic growth and overall effectiveness.

Failed promises of the military government – some of which include the Babangida and Abacha administrations – for democratic transition and return of power to civilian government exemplify military dictatorship and the sit-tight nature of most military rulers. According to George, Amujo and Cornelius (2012), virtually all the military rulers recognized their unconstitutional acts, which made them embrace giving commitments to ensure the timely transition of government to civilian rule. However, the majority of those commitments were stratagems employed to endear the polity and garner support or to lengthen their stay in office. This is evidenced in the failed transition of all the military rulers except for the 1979 Obasanjo-Shagari and the 1999 Abubakar-Obasanjo transitions. These military rulers, according to Dudley (1982), disregarded their commitments with the view of amassing the financial benefits of their offices. Consequently, this power structure made democratic transition difficult.

5 Summary and Concluding Remark

As observed in this work, the factors underlying the formation of the (pre-colonial and colonial) Nigerian military were characterized by ethnic differences. Similarly, this fragility bedeviled Nigeria at independence and posed a fundamental challenge to civilian governance in Nigeria. This led to military involvement in the politics of Nigeria through a coup as they considered themselves the 'saviors' of the country. However, the seed of ethnic discord had already been sown in the military, which

ruled non-continuously for nearly three decades. The ripple effects were coups upon coups, disbalanced civilian administrations, and even a civil war that lasted for 30 months. Although military regime recorded some successes, it was crazed with various magnitudes such as abuse of human rights, economic decline, and corruption, among others. In conclusion, it is evident that the configuration of the military naturally provoked international condemnation because of the dual issues of human rights abuse and democratic degradation (Emenyeonu, 2013). An example of such condemnations was the nullification of the June 1993 election by Babangida, which was criticized by the US with threats against his administration by severing US-Nigeria relations and freezing foreign aid worth 22 million dollars (Ikim, 1993). Whereas, Obiagwu (1993) submitted that Nigeria equally received similar sanctions from Canada. Furthermore, the inhumane massacre of Ken Saro Wiwa with some other MOSOP leaders under Abacha's administration in 1995 was greeted with a big frown from international entities (Obiagwu, 1993). In brief, since the nature of the military was antithetical to the values of democracy, which had gained increasing international currency, there was a resultant decline and replacement (among other factors,) of military regimes with democratic rule, which is still practiced today.

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