

Socio-Economic and Political Contributions of Igbo Ethnicity in Sokoto Metropolitan

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Abstract

The study examined socio-economic and political contributions of Igbo ethnic groups in Sokoto Metropolitan. Sokoto is one of the states in Nigeria with approximately 5 million populations of male and female. Igbo tribes in Sokoto have played a number of socio-economic and political roles in the development of Nigeria and Sokoto in particular. The study therefore enumerated the benefits of Igbo's contributions in improving the lives and economic standard of the state in general. However, Igbos had positively transformed its edge towards the betterment of the nation. The study utilized conceptual approaches, data were triggered through secondary information, such information were; journals, books, internet, newspapers, magazines and other related non-formal participation of the respondents and many more second hand information. The study revealed that, series of centers dominated by Igbos were constantly marked as business portions of the state, some of these areas where, Emir Yahaiya, Shahara, and many more, fundamentally tracing the significance of economic donations by Igbos to the state towards improved number of social and political protection from the migrants. The study revealed one of the major challenge to be lack of proper provision of security that could protect the lives and properties of migrants. Igbos had become one of the primary victims of any instability that took place in the state and this has served as a challenge to them. Finally, the study recommends adequate strategies and methods that could be employed in transforming and keeping those migrants protected and safe.

Background of the Study

Igbo socio-economy and political activities in the area of agriculture, trade and local manufacturing have dominated a number of socio-economic and political sphere in Nigeria. 17th and 18th centuries Igbo people began to migrate from their land to other states which they began to establish economic empires and dominated many communities across the country. At this period, they started dominating the local markets. They were good in specialized buying and selling of slaves, whereas the coast communities received slaves and other commodities for their vital export trade. However, the socio-political control of this business has triggered a number of political statuses of many Igbos across the nation (Anene, 1979). Increasingly, the position of the researchers in respect of the argument noted that the spread of Igbo ethnicity within and outside the country gave them fundamental opportunities in establishing businesses in various communities. However, the accession of the argument was comprehensive due to the logical fact on the nature of Igbos.

Between 1964; the period Nigeria experienced civil war that resulted to a number of socio-economic and political unrest, lives and properties were destroyed. The Igbos has faced a number of exclusion from the most influential positions in the state and the formal economy. Igbo traders, artisans and business people have achieved legendary success in the informal economy. Similarly, the conflicts had resulted to loss of land, economic and political power from Igbos, for that purpose, the Igbos had no option than to migrate to another state looking for more opportunities. The stand of the researcher was to identify what, why and how. The fundamental argument and the reason behind Igbos' movement to other places was as a result of shortage of land, destruction of economy and feeling more safe in Northern Nigeria. (Northrup 1978; Brautigam 1997) noted that, from the socio-economic and political development, Igbos have developed effective informal pattern of business that have affected several ethnic groups across the country. Fundamentally, the Hausa ethnicity from representing an ethnically insular and exclusive strategy, Igbo advancement within the informal economy has involved the development of strong inter-ethnic linkages and cooperative relations with other Nigerian ethnic groups. The position of the researcher on the basic of developing inter-ethnic relations and positive social relations to developmental formula that manufacture unity and peace, the Igbos have positively enhanced and enlarged the country's economy and served as management of unemployment among Nigerians.

In similar vein, a number of governmental, non-governmental, stakeholders and individuals have contributed immensely towards providing security for the protection of their lives and properties. However, the fundamental objective of Igbos is to ensure all northerners are established with business activities at the same time to generate money. What they need is protection against bad people who could harm them and their properties. Based on that, several security strategies were introduced in all the areas dominated by Igbos such areas are, Upper Road, Sahara, Emir Yahaiya, Bello Way and many more places in Sokoto metropolitan, each of these places had heads that represented an overall as king who represents all the Igbos. All complains were

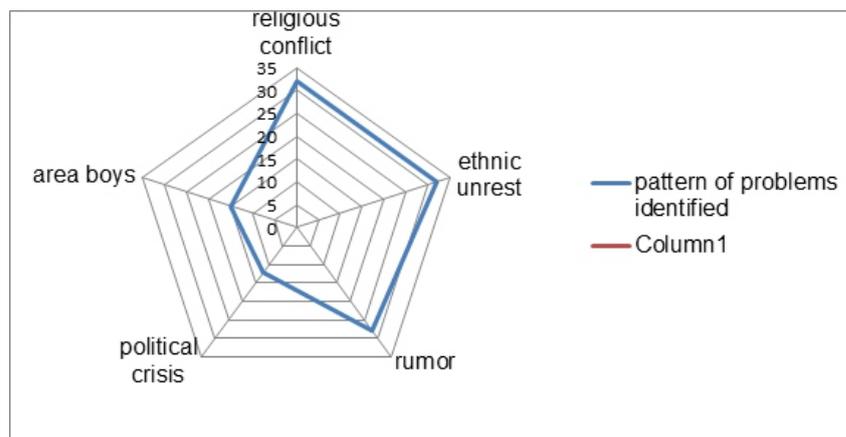
transferred to the unit heads and those unit heads handled and submitted all complains to the kind. The king finally presented all complains to the executives for necessary action.

Statement of the Problem

Ongoing conflicts, such as political instability, circulation of rumor, fear, uncertainty, poor governmental policies over non indigene, weak protection of lives and properties of those Igbos residing in Sokoto, areas boys or political thugs, religious unrest, ethno-religious and ethnic conflicts and many more have triggered a number of Igbos back to their state over fear of being killed and properties destruction. However, a series of political instability have mended Igbo lives and properties. Nafzinger (1968) argued that some ethnic network have led so many conflicts and left destruction of lives and properties, all of these developed fear and uncertainty among Igbos.

High levels of migration and Igbo dominance of lucrative trades in other ethnic regions of Nigeria particularly in the Hausa areas of the North have been represented as important triggers of ethnic riots both in the run-up to the civil war, and during serious outbreaks of violence during the 1990s. Just prior to the civil war, Nafzinger (1968) argued that ethnic networks were highly inclusive. However, below are summary of problems identified.

Fig. 1



Sources: 2020, Reviewed Work

Government at the national and local level had established mechanisms for the protection of non-indigenes to ensure their business and lives were adequately protected and safe. Similarly, this study shall utilize the pillars of social; control government established to protect human particularly non- state indigenes.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to examine the role of Igbos in maintaining socio-economic and political control in Nigeria. Therefore, the specific objective is to identify the fundamental contribution of Igbos in Sokoto metropolitan, to discuss some vital social responsibility, economic responsibility and political responsibility among Igbos, to

highlight some challenges facing Igbos and finally, to proffer recommendations as strategies for social reformations.

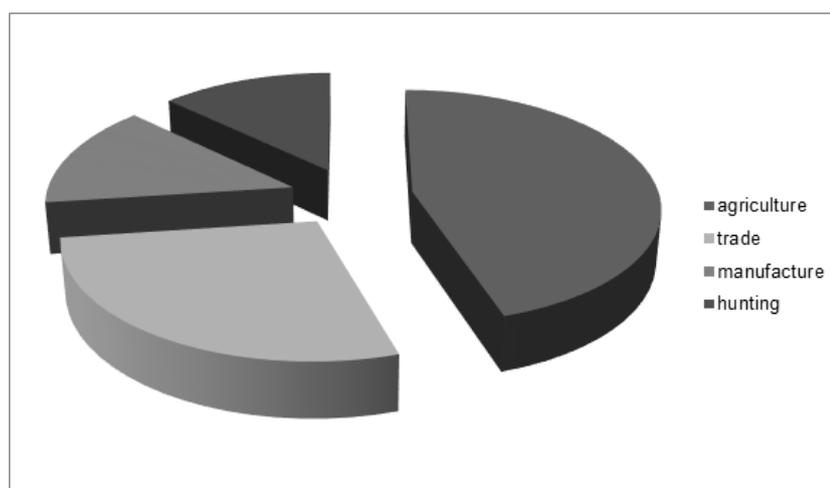
Literature Review

Brief Igbo Socio-Economic Role in the Pre-Colonial and Colonial Period

Pre-colonial Igbos were basically centered on vital economic and social responsibility. The economy had basically three fundamental foundations: agriculture, trade hunting and manufacturing. Agriculture was the mainstay of the country's economy. It was largely subsistent in nature and everyone irrespective of gender, fully participated. Yam was the stable crop, it was at this period a number of Igbos could not spread all over the country; they emphasized on micro agricultural product. Initially, emphasis on agriculture superseded that of trade. Ecological differences and varied vegetation were the major factors behind the development of local and regional trade amongst the Igbo. The inhabitants of northern and central Igbo land whose soils were over-farmed resorted to trade. It could be noted from the researchers that a number of reasons that have prevented the Igbos from spreading within Hausa land due to the fact that they have different pattern of soil and geographical nature (Anene, 1979). However, the discovery of some vital developmental issues such as iron ore in Awka, salt in Uburu and Okposi and lead in Abakaliki encouraged mineral exploitation and the growth of crafts and manufacturers such as the famous blacksmithing forges in Awka (Anene, 1979).

Below is a figure indicating reviewed evidences on the primary product and the rate of migration of igbos to various communities in Nigeria (Pre-Colonial Period)

Fig. 2: Reviewed Evidences on the Primary Product and the Rate of Migration of Igbos to various Communities in Nigeria (Pre-Colonial Period)



Source: Reviewed 2020

The above figure explains the interrelationship between Igbos and other businesses. Igbos were completely engaged according to identified explanation from the literature,

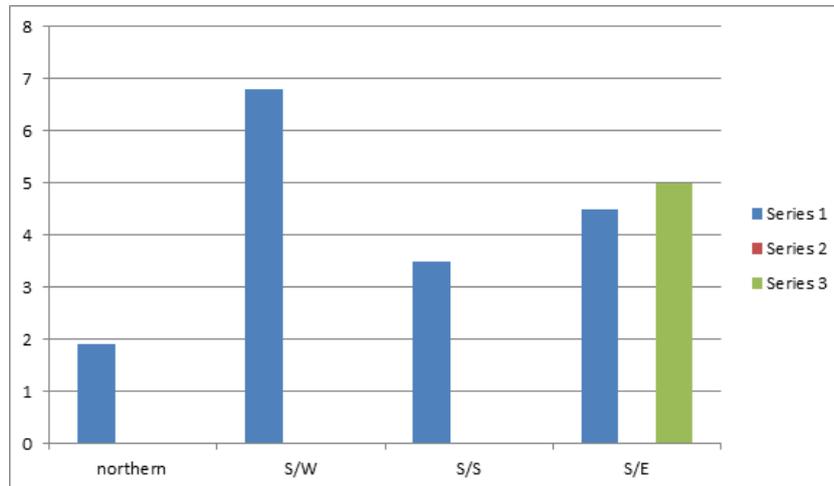
agriculture was the best business that took place at the pre-colonial period. However, agriculture was given priority and it served as a basic source of income. Trade and manufacturing of local products were also present at that period. The position of the researchers of agriculture among Igbos had long time business among the people. Below is a summary of migrations and pattern of settlements among Igbo people. It was noted that the spread of Igbos within the country at this phase could be identified with low movement, what was basically common was slave trade.

However, British colonial rule was the basic characteristics that explained the relationship among them in terms of business of slaves. Olutayo, 2010, noted and highlighted these developments: The major crisis of the Aro oligarchy began with the persistent expansion of European influence. Christianity became established on the Niger. From the late 1830s, the British began to sign slave trade treaties with various communities. The establishment of British Oil Rivers, after being made a protectorate under the United African Company, and so on, all contributed to weaken the religious and economic supremacy of the Igbos. The people started to jettison the traditional religion and beliefs. The establishment of consular agents also assisted the British in abolishing human scarifies, especially through the establishment of Native Courts under MacDonald's administration in 1891. The building of roads did not follow the old trade routes, and the administrative headquarters gradually moved trade away from the Aro trade route network (Olutayo 1999).

Similarly, coastal traders and some pro-British groups among the Igbo saw economic advantages and helped the British abolish the Aro oligarchy. This new situation gave the Igbo hinterland producers of palm oil and allied products direct access to coastal traders who had dealt with the Aro middlemen. Some of these coastal traders were also Igbo. It also gave the Igbos access from the areas adjacent to the North, and more coastal-bound compatriots, direct access to the Europeans. Over time, the Northern Igbos became more favorably disposed towards trade and alliances with the Europeans to the detriment of their Southern counter parts (Olutayo, 1999). These were just a few of the dynamics to proclaim Igbo entrepreneurship during the colonial period. In most economies, the agrarian foundations were made up of Nigerian entities and stopped the mercantilist industrial capitalism of the colonialists.

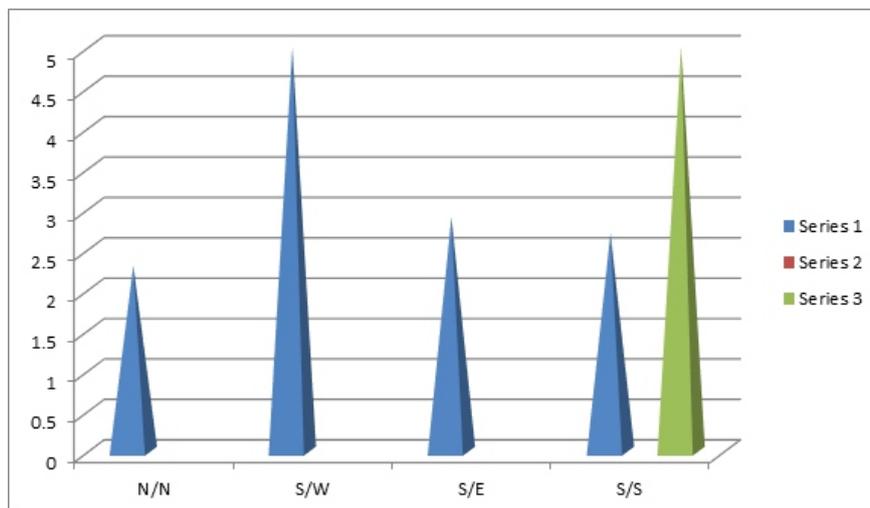
The position of the writers suggested that, the colonial masters have contributed fundamentally, in opening ground for Igbos as farmers, traders and manufacturers.

Fig. 3



Post-Colonial Period of Igbo Migration to Northern Nigeria Particularly, Sokoto State

Fig. 4



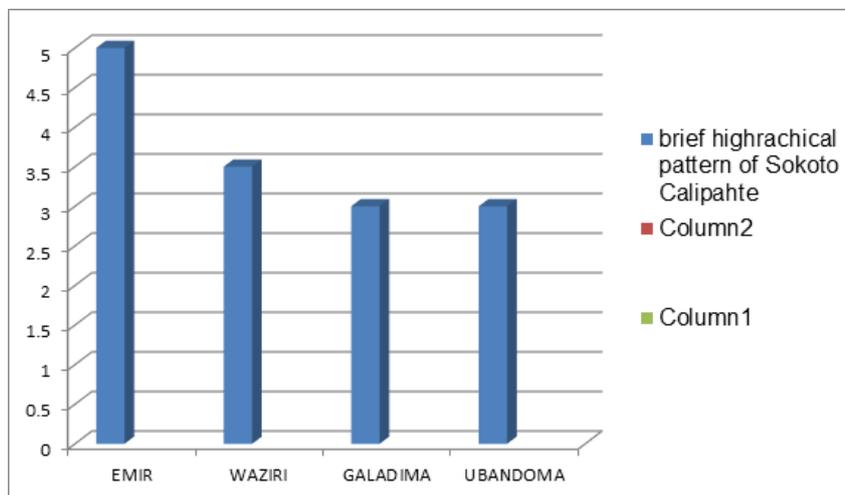
During the nineteenth century, i.e. the colonial era, new transformation emerged that completely shaped the nature and pattern of Igbo social and economic evolution. However, the series of evidence have happened considering the rapid movement of Igbos to various communities in Northern Nigeria was a result of after civil war in 1964. With a dynamism that characterizes the innate Igbo flexibility, they came to terms with the new world demands. The political economy of the Igbos had been self- motivated Nigerians moved from the pre-colonial economy into the slave trade era (an epoch that extended into the colonial economy). One major contribution that cannot be disputed by Africanists is the fact that colonial capitalism subordinated the pre-existing social structure within which many people participated. Unlike in the northern part of Nigeria Shenton, 1986 argued that merchant capitalism did not subordinate the existing social structure well enough (Shenton 1986). However, at this period Nigeria witnessed appreciable transformation particularly, between 1964 that was the period Nigeria experienced a series of Civil War that has resulted to a number of socio-economic and political unrest, lives and properties were destroyed.

The civil war, from the side of Igbos have faced a number of exclusion from the most influential positions in the state and the formal economy. Igbo traders, artisans and business people have achieved legendary success in the informal economy. Similarly, the conflicts had resulted in loss of land, economy and political power from Igbos, for that purpose the Igbos had no option than to migrate to another state looking for more opportunities. The stand of the researchers was to identify what, why and how. The fundamental argument and the reason behind Igbos movement other places was as a result of shortage of land, destruction of the economy, feeling more safe in northern Nigeria. (Northrup 1978; Brautigam 1997) Noted that, from the socio-economic and political development, Igbos have developed an effective informal pattern of business that have affected several ethnic groups across the country. Fundamentally, the Hausa ethnicity, from representing an ethnically insular and exclusive strategy that also shape the psychological and emotional beliefs of Igbos who engage in Northern Nigeria and sokoto in particular

Socioeconomic and Political Contributions of Igbos in Sokoto Metropolitan

The history of Sokoto could not be completed without a brief background of Usmanu Danfodiyo Jihad of 1804. That was the fundamental factors that led to the formation and rise of Sokoto caliphate. Usmanu Danfodiyo had fought the level had succeeded in changing the nature of leadership of its people, with manufacturing the formation OG Hausa land in the 19th century. However, his contributions have led to the formation of unique heritage and socio-political structures of the state. Similarly, Sokoto has unique political structure, such political structure is explained in the figure below.

Fig.5

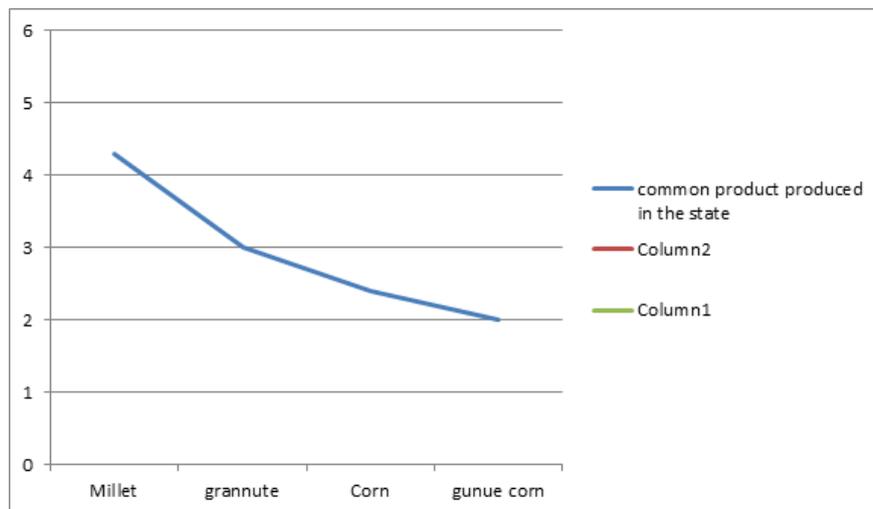


Sources Reviewed 2020

The economic pattern of Sokoto caliphate, the pattern of economic contribution of Sokoto is basically agriculture; several agricultural products were produced in the state, below were basic agriculture produced in the state with percentages of each product produced most.

The figure below shows that Millet is one of the popular food product produced in the state that is common and cheap. This shows that a number of farmers engage in the production of millet as sources of income and serve as food to eat. However, this is followed by groundnut, which is the second product majority produced. However, corn, guinea corn and other products identified were rice, beans, and many more. Other sources of incomes were many.

Fig. 6



Sources: 2020, Received

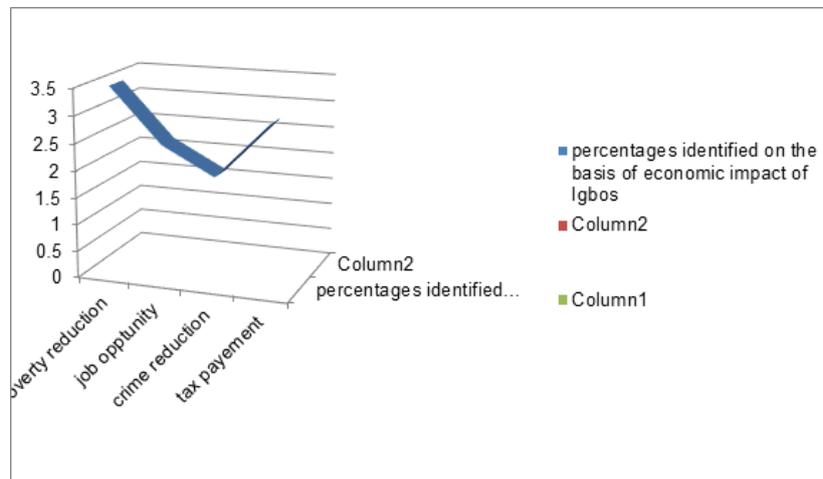
Economic Impact of Igbos in Sokoto

Places dominated by Igbos in Sokoto Metropolitan,

1. Upper Road
2. Emir Yahaiya
3. Bello Way
4. Sahara
5. Old Airport

These are the major economic places dominated by Igbos, where they sale spare parts, they are mechanic, shops owners, bakery company, computer centers, food sellers and many more. Relationships between Igbos and Hausa residential members were cordial in the sense that a number of youths in the state were employed on their business. Below are brief demonstrations of Igbo economic contribution to indigenous members.

Fig.7



Sources, 2020 Reviewed Paper

The above figure had identified a number of economic benefits Igbos rendered to its member in Sokoto metropolitan. According to Shady, 2017, Igbo migrants have contributed significantly in improving the economic standard of people in the region. However, the position of the researchers has also reviewed and identified the basic contribution of such fundamental contributions that could not be identified by the author was the payment of tax. This contributed as sources of income to the state.

Socio-Political Impact

Social and political relations among Igbos and indigenous members were fundamental, cordial and significant due to the fact that based on their positive relationship and solidarity that have manufactured between them have developed several social cohesion and improved social order. Political leaders among Igbos have donated their money for the smooth movement of political leadership in the state. According to Jega, 2011, the positive contribution of the Igbos has lead the state to honor some of its members with traditional rulers, such traditional rulers are (Sarkin Igbo). That is king of Igbos.

Challenges Facing Igbo Migrants in Sokoto Metropolitan

Summary with evidence based on reviewed paper. Jega, 2011 Noted that what was needed most was security and safeguard against their properties and lives according to several pieces of literature reviewed it was noticed that the level of insecurity and lack of social control have triggered the loss of lives and properties among their members.

Conclusion

The contributions of Igbos among its members have positively enhanced socio-economic and political impact, which have gingered numerous transformations in Hausa land and Sokoto in particular. Despite the challenges, many Igbos migrants have settled in the state. As businessmen and women, trainers, mechanics, shops sellers, and many more.

Recommendations

1. Government at the national level should as a matter of urgency introduced laws based on our constitution that should protect and eliminate the system of indigent
2. The government should emphasize on social control
3. Non-indigenes should be protected irrespective of whether they are Igbos or not Igbos
4. An enabling environment should be given more priority in terms of business establishment and other developmental issues
5. Government should encourage non-indigenes and assist them with more financial assistance that they could use to improve their business
6. Religious leaders and traditional leaders should always emphasize on how to stay with others
7. Scholars should educate the indigenes on the importance of peace
8. The government should assist any of its members who were victimized either by lack of security or disaster

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