

A FRAMEWORK OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria returned to the fold as a democratizing nation in 1999 after several years of military rule after several years of military autocracy was the combination of external and internal pressures. However, the military left the corridors of power after perfecting a strong network of patron-clients relations spanning social, economic and political terrains (Ajayi, A 2007: 65-67). The paper examines civil- military relations and National Development in Nigeria. It intends to conceptualize the constituents of civil-military relations, identify the various types and nature of Civil-military relations, ascertain constraining factors, and determine the basis for co-operation, as well as, forges a framework towards enhancing civil-military relations in Nigeria. It argues for the military to take up its secondary role in society, which it had neglected in the past.

Keywords: Civil-Military Relation, National Development, Democratization, Framework.

INTRODUCTION

The end of 'Cold War' accelerated the process of democratization in most developing Nations. A period that witnessed massive transformations of formerly communist nations and authoritarian regimes across Africa, Eastern Europe and Latin American to democratic ones. It was the 'third wave' of democratization according to Huntington that began implausibly and unwittingly in Portugal in 1974 (Huntington, 1991:21) as Thomas Carothers, describes it as a global democratic trend that involves a simultaneous movement of several countries away from dictatorial rule towards more liberal and often democratic government (Carothers, 2002:5-21).

Nigeria returned to the fold as a democratizing nation in 1999 after several years of military rule after several years of military autocracy was hard worn (Joseph, 1999:359). It was the

combination of external and internal pressures that led to the voluntary withdrawal of the military from politics. However, the military left the corridors of power after perfecting a strong network of patron-clients relations spanning social, economic and political terrains (Ajayi, A 2007: 65-67).

The military is thus seen as part of the myriads of institutions that aids the consolidation of the democratic system. There is thus, an unassuming contention that the military is expectedly subservient to the civil authority that commandeers political power for the interest of the State. However, some seemingly intractable avalanche of crises has persistently characterized the modicum of relationship between the Military and the civil authority especially in developing countries like Nigeria. This has made the Civil-Military Relations in developing countries to appear not only problematic but has as well assumed a paradoxical dimension. While there is a contentious allegation that the institution of the Military which is created to protect the polity is saddled with ample power (emanating from the wielding of the barrel of gun) to become a threat to the society, there is also a growing discontent with the scorn the institution is treated with. This is probably the reason Feaver (1999) argued that the civil-military relations is so vexing because it involves balancing two vital and potentially conflicting societal desires.

It is against this backdrop that this paper locates its appropriateness. Consequent upon the above, the research is an attempt to assess the framework for civil-military cooperation for National development. The study simultaneously adopted the Agency theory with some modifications and praetorian/ Communist-Authoritarian models to enhance the possibility of combining traditions and theories which have not previously been connected.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Civil-Military Relations (CMR) / COOPERATION

The concept of civil military relations has a long history which extends to the very beginnings of military organization in civilian societies. For some countries, it depends on the role of the army as a state institution in the given country and the subordination of the military to political authorities as defined in laws and constitutional arrangements. It emerged alongside the determination of human society to create organizational structures for political, economic and social order. The order would be incomplete without the security content. The security becomes relevant in the light of threats the society is confronted with. Therefore, the idea of the military was necessitated by the societal quest to protect the values that keep it together as well as from those that might cause it to disintegrate. It is in this context that Claude Welch sees civil military relations as an interaction that exists between the armed forces as an institution and factors of the society in which it is embedded (Welch, 1993).

The most empirical works on civil-military relations in Nigeria often follow discursive perspectives of norms as stipulated in the constitution and the strategies the military employ to remain in political power (Adekanye, B 1999, 2005; Fayemi K. J 2003: 57-77; Ajayi, A 2007: 97-110; Ojo, E 2007; Zabadi I 2006:76-90). These studies therefore do not go beyond analyzing the role of military as outlined in the constitution.

National Development

Development has been interpreted in different ways by various scholars. However there is no generally acceptable definition of the concept. Traditionally development meant the capacity of a national economy. Whose initial economic condition has been more or less static for a long time to generate and sustain an annual increase in its gross national product (GNP) at rates perhaps 5% to 7% or more (Todaro and Smith 2004). Development, within this perspective was seen almost as purely as an economic phenomena, thus the major index of development has been a growth of income per capita or per capita GNP.

THEORIES / MODEL OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

Every society emerges at one point or the other with its own model of civil military cooperation. They came about through struggles between social forces. As a result, and for the purpose of this work, we will be examining three models of civil military relations such as the Classical Western model, Communist Authoritarian model and the Praetorian model which captures the practices of civil -military relations in developing countries, including Nigeria. With the aim of adopting the model that best explains civil military relations in Nigeria.

The Western Classical model as practiced in Western Europe, Canada and America is seen as an objective model where the military-institution is taken as the tool of the state (Huntington, 1968). This however, does not come by fiat constitutional establishment. For instance, in 17th and 18th centuries, the monarch and parliament in England were in tango over the control of the military. This is because whichever organ controls the military-monopolizes not only the instruments of violence but also the authority of the state. This degenerated to the struggle between aristocrats and bourgeoisie in the 18th and 19th centuries Europe. This was extended to the USA between the, presidency and the Congress. However, the growth and development of democratic culture finally led to the supremacy of the democratic ethic as defined by the constitution over and above the various contesting interests. And this constitutional empowerment could only be exercised by legitimate means. The constitution, which is the template of the state, rationalizes this control of the military-appropriately. While the Executive presides over the setting out of broad frameworks of defense policies and implementations, the parliament provides legislative oversight. The military-itself on its own is left with the responsibilities of sustaining professionalism.

The second model is the Communist-Authoritarian civil military-cooperation. This model is seen as subjective because it is not guided by any legal instruments but more on the dictates of the leadership. The military-is used to maintain the hegemony of the ruling party over the state and society. The ruling political party brings the Military-into the mainstream of governance. Permutter pointed out that the participation of the military-in this model is a guardian of the heroic party and the ruling political ideology. The military-in the party state is ipso-facto politically oriented (Permutter, 1992). This model is found in the defunct Soviet Union and its allies like China, Libya, and Syria among others.

The Third model is the praetorian model, which Huntington, spelt out its nature and characteristic to include: ... the absence of effective political institutions capable of mediating, refining and moderating group political actions. Social forces confront each other nakedly. No

crop of professional political leaders are recognized and accepted as legitimate intermediaries to moderate group conflict. Each group employs means, which reflect its peculiar nature and capabilities to decide upon office and policy ... The techniques of military intervention are more dramatic and effective than the others (Huntington, 1968).

The character of the third model refers to weak political societies of mostly the post colonial states, Africa, Latin America and some Asian countries. Under this model the state is in constant chaos, and military engagement and re-engagement is recurrent not because it is better off but also because is a factor in sustaining this weak basis of the state. In this situation, it is difficult to maintain puritanical model of civil military relations as devised under the Western European model in Africa except through sustained practices overtime.

Also, where public attachments to civilian institutions are strong and firm, military interventions in politics and civilian governments will be weak. On the contrary, where the public attachment to meaningful political activities and ideologies are weak or non-existent, the military will find credible basis for assuming power (Finer, 1975:21). The basic trust of the theory is that "the propensity for military intervention in government decreases with increasing popular attention to participation in partisan politics" (Putnam, 1967).

These weak institutions of government, partly explains the very poor state of development in Africa [Nigeria]. Weak institutions and low level of political development can be explained in the light of recurring military intervention occasioned by frosty CMR. The net effect of these is weak governance and weak public administrative system, culminating in a lack of development in Africa [Nigeria] (Lieuwen, 1962; Putnam, 1967; Finer, 1975 and Huntington, 1976), especially in the country under review: Nigeria.

Fourth model is the Structural Functionalist Theory as enunciated by Emile Durkeim, Talcott Person and Robert Merton. This theory serves as a means of explaining the functions performed by the structures in a political system. Political system has structures that must function to remain in balance, if one structure of the political system changes, equilibrium or balance is temporarily disrupted until other structures change to create a new equilibrium. It focuses on social integration, stability and co-operation (Merton, 1990). According to Merton (1990) some functions are manifest functions and they are intended and recognized like the constitutional responsibilities of the military as an institution but latent functions are unintended and unrecognized just like the various differences between the military and the civil society. These social patterns that contribute to the maintenance of a political system are regarded as functional while those that have negative consequences are considered dysfunctional. However, when related to politics, structural functionalism can be described as a means of explaining basic functions of political structures in the political system and it also serves as a tool of investigation. Since the political system is made up of parts, structural-functional approach explains the relationship between the parts (structures) on one hand and the relationship between the parts and the whole (political system) on the other hand. The structures are many and they can take any form. It is the contribution of each part (structure) that sustains the political system (whole). This aptly explains the reason why a soured civil-military relation can pave way for political crises as it has consistently done in the Nigerian case.

The fifth model is Peter Feaver's Agency Theory (2003, 2005), Rebecca Schiff's Concordance Theory (1995, 2009), Thomas Bruneau's civil-military analogy of the Fox and the Hedgehog (2005) and lastly, the democracy as a globalising variable in the civil-military relations of states in transition (Bruneau and Harold Trinkunas, 2006). The Agency theory is based on the traditions and experience of civil-military relations in the United States. The military is an 'agent' of the civilian leadership who is referred to as the 'principal'. It is a two actor relationship, the principal and the agent. The goal of this theory is to explain 'how civilians exercise control- identifying the factors that shape civilian control on a day-to-day basis and the trade-offs inherent in the relationship' (Feaver, 2003: 2). The question is how the principal controls the agent. It assumes that in a democracy the hierarchy of de jure authority favours the civilians against the military..... Regardless of how strong the military is, civilians are supposed to remain the political masters (Feaver, 2003: 5- 6).

DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Developing a framework for Civil-Military Relations takes the understanding of the historical development of civil- Military Relations in Nigeria; which the practices of it have become subjective. There are also some limitations in the application of Civil-Military Relations in Nigeria due to the current model in use. Nigeria cannot continue to maintain the praetorian/communist-authoritarian civil-military relations model because it is out of place with the realities of typical Nigerian traditional system of egalitarianism. Therefore, the need for robust alternatives framework for improving Civil- Military relations becomes necessary. The following theories below, though not exhaustive or without their weaknesses, if adopted and practise will provide relatively an enduring and sustainable civil-military cooperation in Nigeria:

- i. Peter Feaver's Agency Theory (2003, 2005),
 - ii. Rebecca Schiff's Concordance Theory (1995, 2009),
 - iii. Thomas Bruneau's civil-military analogy of the Fox and the Hedgehog (2005) and lastly,
 - iv. The democracy as a globalising variable in the civil-military relations of states in transition (Bruneau and Harold Trinkunas, 2006).
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- i. **The Agency theory that emphasizes CONTROL** is based on the traditions and experience of civil-military relations in the United States. The military is an 'agent' of the civilian leadership who is referred to as the 'principal'. It is a two actor relationship, the principal and the agent. The goal of this theory is to explain 'how civilians exercise control- identifying the factors that shape civilian control on a day-to-day basis and the trade-offs inherent in the relationship' (Feaver, 2003: 2). The question is how the principal controls the agent. It assumes that in a democracy the hierarchy of de jure authority favours the civilians against the military..... Regardless of how strong the military is, civilians are supposed to remain the political masters (Feaver, 2003: 5- 6). The nature of the relationship between the principal and the agent is 'a strategic interaction carried out within a hierarchical setting' with the agent subordinate to the principal (Feaver, 2005: 54). Explicitly, the civilian leadership controls through monitoring the activities of the military to the extent that the preferences of both the principal and the agent converge. It implies that the higher the level of convergence between the policy

preferences of the principal and the agent, the higher the tendency for the military to obey the civilian principal (Feaver, 2003: 57-58). The agent is likely to shirk (disobey) the principal when there is incompatibility of the method or goal to be pursued. This translates to the degree of civilian intrusiveness in military affairs and perceived loss of autonomy by the military. To tackle shirking, the principal uses incentive driven mechanisms to either punish the military or accords rewards that may reverse shirking behaviour (Feaver, 2003: 75).

- ii. **Concordance model that emphasizes PARTNERSHIP** addresses the issue of nature of the relationship between the three pillars of civil-military relations. It argues that stable civil-military relations can be understood as a partnership existing between the military, the government and the citizens (Schiff, 2009: 44). The general picture that concordance theory portrays is that it does not require a particular form of government, set of institutions, or decision-making process.... takes place in the context of active agreement, whether established by legislation, decree or constitution. It is also based on long standing historical and cultural values of such countries (Schiff, 2009: 43). This partnership is a cooperative relationship based on dialogue, accommodation and shared goals in critical areas namely method of military recruitment, military style, composition of the officer corps and the decision-making process of the country (Schiff, 1995: 7-12, Schiff, 2009: 32- 33). Though the theory does not discriminate between democratic and non-democratic regimes.

- iii. **The Fox and the Hedgehog approach which stresses SYNERGY** of civil-military relations is Thomas Bruneau's analogy of the relationship between the civilian leadership and the military establishment of some Latin American countries. The fox is the civilian leadership and the hedgehog is the military. Civilian leaders require some basic expertise on how the military establishment operates. According to Bruneau (2005: 113) They must know enough to be able to ensure that the armed forces are doing what they are required to do, not only in terms of submitting to civilian control... but also in successfully fulfilling the... spectrum of roles and missions assigned to the diverse security forces. The nature of the bond that exists between the civilian government leaders and military officials depends on the level of expertise the civilian leaders have of how to relate with the military establishment (Bruneau, 2005: 113). This relationship is contextualised in terms of what is referred to as the trinity of civil-military relations namely democratic civilian control of the military, effectiveness and efficiency. Control has to do with subordinating the military to the directives of the democratic leadership. Effectiveness means carrying out the tasks as directed by the government and efficiency means carrying out these tasks within the confines of the resources approved by the government. For these to happen, the fox should have some knowledge of what the hedgehog knows in order to establish efficient and effective control (Bruneau, 2005: 112-113). The political sphere of the civilian government in terms of executive directive or legislative oversight should have some expertise in dealing with the military so as to keep it under democratic control and determine its efficiency. The bureaucratic arm of the civilian government as represented by the defense ministry should facilitate military efficiency (Bruneau, 2005: 122-125).

- iv. Bruneau and Trinkunas (2006) propose **understanding the civil-military relations of emerging democracies (emphases EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY)** as a product of global forces. Existing literature on the traditional conception of contemporary civil-military relations puts emphasis on 'domestic political interaction of which international forces have little influence' (Bruneau and Trinkunas, 2006: 777). The end of Cold war has witnessed an intensification of democracy (including semi-democracy) as a global phenomenon (Bruneau, 2006:777). Thus, 'the impact of global democratization trends on civil-military relations.....allowed the US and Europe to transmit their civil-military doctrine and practices to emerging democracies' (Bruneau and Trinkunas, 2006: 778). The globalisation of liberal ethos by the advanced democracies has been accompanied by a systematic export of liberal conception and practice of civilian control of the military forces in the new democracies (Bruneau and Trinkunas, 2006: 777). However, some of these emerging democracies face structural challenges ranging from electoral legitimacy to a military establishment with praetorian tendencies. Thus, the need to support civilian control measures through fostering military effectiveness and efficiency. The objectives of this globalising policy are to prevent military coups against newly elected but fragile governments, enhance peacekeeping capabilities, collaborate in counter-terrorist measures and promote human rights (Bruneau and Trinkunas, 2006: 786). Such transmissions of civil-military traditions are done through bi-lateral or multi-lateral assistance programmes in countries like Chile in Latin America or Hungary in Eastern Europe. These theories have their respective limitations in explaining the genesis and factors responsible for the establishment of civilian-control of the military in an emerging democracy like Nigeria.

Conclusion

This article concludes that, the measures for developing robust civil military relations in Nigeria, is through concordance, collaborative partnership and synergy among others. When these are mutually established it is possible to codify mechanisms for enhancing civil-military relations, through constitutional frameworks. There are limitations for applying classical models in Nigeria, equally too, the praetorian and communist model are not workable because they are based on compulsion.

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