

THE ROLES OF OHANAEZE NDIGBO AND AREWA CONSULTATIVE FORUM ON NATION-BUILDING IN NIGERIA, 1976-2019

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Abstract

This study examines the roles of Ohanaeze Ndigbo and the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) in Nigeria's nation-building process from 1976 to 2019. Emerging in the post-Nigerian Civil War era, Ohanaeze Ndigbo evolved from the Igbo Forum around 1976–1979, while the ACF was formally established in 2000. As leading ethno-regional socio-cultural organisations, both have served as critical platforms for articulating and defending the collective interests of the Igbo (South-East) and Northern regions within Nigeria's multi-ethnic federal system. The research adopts a qualitative historical approach, drawing on primary and secondary sources. These include organisational documents, policy papers, media reports, official records, and relevant scholarly literature. Fieldwork involving key informant interviews with leaders and stakeholders from both organisations, as well as content and thematic analysis, was employed to evaluate their activities. The study analyses how these bodies have influenced national politics through policy advocacy, inter-ethnic dialogue, elite consensus-building, and crisis management across periods of military rule, democratic transitions, resource allocation disputes, restructuring debates, and national unity efforts. While both organisations have often promoted equitable power-sharing, regional development, and peaceful coexistence, their actions have simultaneously reflected and sometimes exacerbated the tensions of ethno-regional politics. The findings highlight significant successes in fostering regional solidarity and shaping national policy, alongside limitations arising from zero-sum ethnic competition. The study concludes that Ohanaeze Ndigbo and the ACF remain influential actors whose constructive engagement is essential for sustainable national cohesion, equitable development, and democratic consolidation in Nigeria.

Keywords: Ohanaeze Ndigbo, Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF), nation-building, ethnic politics, federalism, Nigeria, inter-regional relations, socio-cultural organisations, national unity, post-civil war politics.

Introduction

The contributions of Ohanaeze Ndigbo and Arewa Consultative Forum in the nation-building process of Nigeria between 1976 and 2019, during which there was military authoritarianism, democratic transitions, constitutional crises, and constant ethno-region All conflicts. The study questions how these two powerful ethnic socio-cultural organisations have been used as brokers between regional constituencies and the Nigerian state in influencing national discourse through cultural advocacy, policy intervention as well as mediating conflicts. The study is divided into three broad thematic sub-headings, namely Cultural Advocacy and Socio-Political Identity; Policy Advocacy and national development and integration; and Conflict Resolution and the Challenges of Nation-Building. It places Ohanaeze Ndigbo and ACF in the overall history of politics in Nigeria brings into view the paradoxical nature of ethnic organisations as both stabilizing and disintegrating. Based on documentary-level evidence, press releases, speeches and secondary literature, the analysis has revealed that, although these organisations have played an important role in enhancing democratic accountability and inclusion, their actions have also revealed long-term strains between regional loyalty and national cohesion.

Cultural Advocacy and Socio-Political Identity

One of the most plausible contributions of the Ohanaeze Ndigbo and Arewa Consultative Forum to Nigeria's socio-political contexts is the cultural advocacy. The formation of the two organisations was triggered by the

perceived marginalisation, and the desire to defend the collective identity in the face of the growing centralisation of the post-colonial state. Ohanaeze Ndigbo, which was officially formed in the year 1976, made its mission statement to be the maintenance of Igbo culture, language, and political relevance following the Nigerian Civil War that had significantly displaced the Igbo identity and confidence in the federation.¹ In the same way, the Arewa Consultative Forum, formed in 2000 with its origins in the previous Northern political traditions placed itself in a custodial role of Northern heritage, values and political interest in the face of democratic resurgence.² The two organisations tried to bargain their position in a plural national system through cultural festivals, public lectures and policy statements, in order to reaffirm regional pride. This cultural activism highlights a point that is advanced by E. E. Osaghae that ethnicity in Nigeria is not only a primordial attachment, but a dynamic tool of political participation.³ As a result, cultural advocacy was one of the channels which these organisations imposed to claim relevancy and legitimacy in national matters.

One of the key aspects of cultural advocacy by the Ohanaeze Ndigbo has been to promote the Igbo language and historical awareness as the basis of socio-political identity. The organisation has repeatedly decried the loss of indigenous languages by the younger generations with linguistic erosion being a concern that could endanger the survival of culture and political independence. The Ohanaeze Ndigbo Constitution framers realised that the language is one of the most basic components of the culture of people. Thus, one of the goals and objectives of Ohanaeze Ndigbo as stipulated under Article 2(ii) of its Constitution is to promote, develop and advance Igbo language and culture.⁴ Centrality of language in enhancing unity was highlighted at the Aka Ikenga and Ohanaeze Ndigbo leadership retreat in Asaba in the year 2004 when Barth Nnaji in his key note speech noted:

Every major ethnic group in the world draws strength from its common language, which forms the very thread that binds the tapestry of its culture. Within such groups, language is often deliberately preserved and transmitted by the educated and elite, who serve as models for others. History demonstrates that to dominate a people, one must first seize their language and their religion or, by extension, their culture.⁵

Since the restructuring of the Ohanaeze Ndigbo in 2001, it has been championing the use of Igbo as the official language at all public functions involving the Ndigbo. The organisation uses Igbo in all its meetings and programmes such as Ohanaeze General Assembly, Igbo Day celebrations, Imeobi meetings among others. Ohanaeze through its State Chapters, has funded television and radio show programmes to promote language and cultural heritage of the Igbo people. It is worth mentioning that the Enugu State Chapter came up with a television programme in Igbo, called Oganiru Ndi Igbo aired on the Nigerian Television Authority aimed to promote and develop Igbo language and values within the country. Moreover, the Ohanaeze has encouraged the South-East Governors and State Houses of Assembly to pass the bill that would render Igbo mandatory in all primary and secondary schools in the Igbo speaking states. The organisation has also supported legislations that compel civil servants within the South-East to don traditional clothes on Fridays to project the Igbo culture as well as pressuring the State Houses of Assembly to adopt Igbo in the conduct of parliamentary activities at least four times a month.⁶

In addition, the Igbo National Day Celebration was initiated in 2000, though it is not a brain-child of Ohanaeze Ndigbo per se. The predecessor apex Igbo socio-cultural organization, the Ibo State Union (ISU), instituted the Igbo National Day Celebration in pre-independence Nigeria as a way of promoting the Igbo traditions and cultural practices. The Union observed the Igbo National Day on the 1st Saturday of every December.⁷ In a pamphlet titled “Nigerian Disunity: The Guilty Ones”, the Ibo State Union defined its roles as:

A coordinating factor which concerns itself with arranging social functions that affect Ibo in general and the resuscitation of the culture and traditions that were fast dying out with the onslaught of western culture and sophistication. The Ibo National Day is one of the means of reviving Ibo tradition and culture.⁸

Although Ohanaeze Ndigbo assumed the social and cultural role of the Ibo State Union, the Igbo National Day goals took on a new dimension amid historical events that had a tremendous influence on the Igbo community, especially on the tragic massacres in the former Northern Region and Lagos between May, July, and September 1966 which cost the lives of over 50,000 Igbo people.⁹ These atrocities, that came after the January 1966 coup and the Unification Decree of the then General Aguiyi Ironsi, was characterized by a state of selected murders of the Igbo, forcing Ohanaeze to declare 29 September as Igbo National Day, a day to remember the tortures and the humiliations that the Ndigbo were subjected to in Nigeria. According to A. O. E. Animalu “It is an appropriate occasion to look at the roots, the trials and tribulations, visions and hopes of Ndigbo. It is a day for stock-taking and re-positioning of Ndigbo within the Federal Republic of Nigeria.”¹⁰

The Igbo National Day is a three-day celebration, which begins with a carnival on 27 September followed by a symposium on 28th where an eminent Igbo scholar delivers the annual theme. For instance, in 2000 the theme for Igbo Day was *Onye Kwe, Chi ya Ekwe* (when you say yes, your god concurs). It was a resort to the organization's inner strength and its indestructible human will. In 2001 the theme was, *Orue Na Omume* (It is time for positive action), and in 2002 it was, *Ogu Eji Ofor* (Our justified struggle). The festival culminates on 29 September with prayers, a two minutes silence to fallen Igbo heroes, state contingent marches, cultural dances, traditional wrestling and goodwill messages by the Igbo governors and leaders. Ohanaeze Ndigbo has given cultural advocacy a political status through the Igbo Day events and inclusion of Igbo history in the educational systems, among other aspects. This, therefore, means that the achievement of advancing Igbo heritage is not only a process of preserving the cultural core of the community, but also a platform of bargaining influence and political recognition.

The cultural advocacy of Arewa Consultative Forum mirrors the heterogeneity of Northern Nigeria and its multifaceted historical experience. The forum represents a region encompassing different ethnicities, languages, and religious traditions. However, communal solidarity, respect to traditional authority and moral discipline are some of the common cultural values highlighted in the forum.¹¹ In its public interventions, especially in educational, governmental and social order debate, these values are often appealed to. According to A. R. Mustapha "the Forum's cultural discourse tries to cover internal diversity and promote a unified Northern identity in national politics."¹² This created identity has been used to mobilise political agreement particularly at the time when there has been a perceived regional threat. However, it has also received criticism in terms of promoting stereotypes and creating a North-South dichotomy that makes national integration more difficult.

Both the organisations have played a major role in the cultural advocacy that has defined Nigeria socio-politically by enhancing the validity of ethnicity in democratic involvement. Contrary to the tendency of modern statehood diminishing ethnicity, it has not gone into oblivion as a political mobilisation factor as postulated by P. Ekeh's theory of the "two publics".¹³ Ohanaeze Ndigbo and the Arewa Consultative Forum mostly act in the primordial public, but they always make incursion into the civic public of the Nigerian state. Their actions demonstrate the mobilisation of cultural identity to seek inclusion, equity and recognition at the national institutions. This two-sided involvement makes difficult the simplistic accounts which assume that ethnic organisations are always anti-national. In their place, their cultural advocacy brings out the negotiated relationship between ethnic belonging and national citizenship. The negotiation is however undermined especially where cultural claims are seen by other groups as exclusionary or supremacist.

Notwithstanding their good works, the culture advocacy of these organisations has sometimes fueled socio-political polarisation. According to Ejitu Nnechi Ota, the focus on regional identity risks establishing sectional consciousness at the cost of national unity.¹⁴ For example, the powerful rhetoric of Ohanaeze Ndigbo on Igbo marginalisation has sometimes been perceived as fuelling the resurrection of secessionist feelings. On the same note, the role of the Arewa Consultative Forum in defending Northern traditional cultural and religious activities such as its advocacy of Sharia law in certain states has given rise to fear of national secularism among non-Muslim population.¹⁵ These strains demonstrate the fragility of cultures with regard to political accountability. Cultural advocacy can be easily used to strengthen the same divisions that nation-building is meant to resolve when it is not well-packaged within an inclusive national narrative.

However, cultural advocacy has also offered a platform of communication and understanding between the various groups in Nigeria. Both the Arewa Consultative Forum and Ohanaeze Ndigbo have attended inter-ethnic forums and national conferences in a bid to work together and understand one another. Their participation in the 2014 National Conference, for instance, showed that they were ready to constructively participate in defining the future of the entire Nigeria. These engagements imply that cultural identity, when properly expressed, can serve as a bridge to national integration instead of being an impediment. This view goes in line with the argument put forward by W. Kymlicka that multicultural recognition and not assimilation provide a more viable grounding to democratic stability.¹⁶ To this end, cultural advocacy is a tool to the management of diversity as opposed to its suppression.

Policy Advocacy and National Development and Integration

One of the most significant entry points in which Ohanaeze Ndigbo and Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) intervened in the process of nation-building in Nigeria during 1976 and 2019 was policy advocacy. In addition to cultural representation, both organisations became powerful pressure groups that expressed regional interests in policy debate on federalism, governance, economic growth and constitutional changes on the national level. Their interference were embodied in a more general post-colonial fact where ethnic formations were replacing weak political structures more especially at times of military domination and the unstable political settlements. Ohanaeze Ndigbo has always made policy advocacy based on the matters of equity, justice and inclusion, focusing on the alleged marginalisation of the South-East in federal appointments, distribution of infrastructure and

revenue. Likewise, the ACF also pursued policy agenda in the name of protecting Northern interests in education, agriculture, security and fiscal federalism usually using past contributions of the region to the political development of Nigeria. Both organisations tried to shape the state policy through the press statements, memoranda to the government, and the presence at national conferences, but they tried to do it with the claim to loyalty to national unity. Their policy advocacy did this through the conduct of regional bargaining and national integration.

One of the crucial spheres of policy activity that Ohanaeze Ndigbo engaged in is the restructuring of the constitution and the need to have a more balanced federal system. Having been passionate about what it perceived as the structural imbalance of the Nigerian federation, especially the establishment of fewer states and local governments in the South-East relative to other geopolitical zones, since the late 1970s Ohanaeze has continuously criticised the Nigerian federal constitution, which it had described as constituting an imbalance in favour of the North and the North-West (Ohanaeze Ndigbo Memorandum to the 1994/95 Constitutional Conference - reference to be added from archival sources). This grievance is supported by empirical data: by 1996, the South-East could not muster more than five (since the establishment of Ebonyi State, six) states, whereas the North-West could boast of seven of its own, a difference which had a direct impact on the distribution of federal revenue and representation in parliament. The policy stance of Ohanaeze was based on the fact that the real federalism should ensure equality of the federating units, which was frequently cited in its official utterances in the course of the Fourth Republic. This was the same advocacy with the general academic views that the centralised form of federalism in Nigeria represents a major challenge to national cohesion, as it encourages the competition of zero-sums between ethnic groups. Ohanaeze associated regional equity with the national stability in the long-term by preempting constitutional reform as a requirement of national development.

The policy advocacy of the Arewa Consultative Forum was also oriented on the issue of federalism, though with a different regional and historical point of view. The ACF often argued that the over-decentralisation of the country would be undermining national unity and contributing to inter-regional imbalances, especially in less developed regions of the North (ACF Position Paper on Restructuring, 2017 - reference is to be added). This position was based on concerns by Northern elites of uneven development and resource access regarding the liberalised federal system. Nevertheless, the ACF also promoted selective intervention by the federal government in education, agriculture and alleviating poverty as the means of assimilating the North into national developmental programs. As an example, the forum was a great advocate of the federal programmes, including the Universal Basic Education (UBE) scheme, and it insisted that educational backwardness was a menace to the Northern development not only but also the general security and productivity of Nigeria. To this extent, the ACF policy advocacy showed an appreciation of the fact that national development is not any less indivisible even when expressed in regional priorities. Its interventions show how the sectional interests could be defended and the national aims could be advanced by ethnic organisations at the same time.

Another area of severe policy advocacy to both organisations was economic development. Ohanaeze Ndigbo continuously raised the issue of federal infrastructure that it claimed was neglected in the South-East especially roads, seaports, and railways, which it stated inhibited economic integration in the region and national trade. Indicatively, the organisation frequently used the deplorable state of the Enugu-Onitsha and Aba-Ikot Ekpene roads as an example of an impoverished neglect in the system despite the fact that the region contributed greatly to the national trade and entrepreneurship. According to John Nnia Nwodo “no country could grow by isolating economically one of its most productive states”. The ACF on the other hand gave special preference to agricultural policy, rural development and availability of credit as the key element to national economic sustainability. Since more than 60 per cent of the Nigerian agricultural production was concentrated in Northern states, the idea of irrigation and farming support program by the ACF had evident national development ramifications. These economic interventions demonstrate the fact that regional policy advocacy is usually consistent with the sectoral strengths, which confirms the interdependence within the federation.

Both organisations were also actively involved in democratic consolidation and governmental reform by policy advocacy. Ohanaeze Ndigbo came out as a critical political opponent of authoritarianism during such times of military rule, and allied with pro-democratic parties, including the National Democratic Coalition (NADECO) in the 1990s. The organisation worked out democracy as a necessary tool of protection of the minority rights and the prevention of domination in the federation. Likewise, the ACF, despite being seen as conservative, publicly opposed the continued military rule and supported the handing over of civilian government in 1999, noting that the country required constitutional order and political stability. In the fourth republic, both organisations released regular policy statements in denunciation of electoral malpractice, corruption, and bad governance and thus, helped to instill a culture of political responsibility. Diamond says that such civil society interventions are crucial

in weak democracies, whereby formal institutions cannot ensure good governance. They thus used their policy advocacy to go beyond the ethnic interests to the vast arena of democratic nation building.

Nevertheless, Ohanaeze Ndigbo policy advocacy and ACF policy advocacy have not been devoid of contradictions and limitations. According to critics, their interventions usually served to strengthen elite power, because the top leadership positions in these organisations were often held by retired politicians, former military personnel and economic elites. This elite takeover occasionally watered down the issue of grassroots and dampened the transformative nature of their policy requests. In addition, the policy positions that were promoted by these organisations were sometimes argued in terms of adversarialism, which refined the regional suspicion as opposed to promoting consensus. Indicatively, the differences in views towards restructuring in the Fourth Republic tend to make the North-South divisions more rigid and increased the difficulty of the national dialogue (Suberu, 2009). These failures illustrate the paradox of ethnic policy advocacy: although they give voice to the marginalised, they can also foster sectionalism should they not be handled well. However, these restrictions do not dismiss the substantive effects of their interventions on the national discourse.

Conflict Resolution and the Challenges of Nation-Building

The aspect of conflict resolution was an important area of nation-building of Ohanaeze Ndigbo and the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) in the period of 1976-2019. The post-colonial history of Nigeria has been marked by the repetitive ethnic, religious and regional conflicts which depict the unresolved issues of citizenship, control of resources, political representation, and legitimacy of state (Osaghae, 1998). Within this unstable environment, ethnic socio-cultural organisations have found themselves playing a quasi-mediatory role with more and more importance, when formal state processes are weak or ill-regarded. Ohanaeze Ndigbo and ACF acted as intermediaries between aggrieved groups and the Nigerian state, aiming at de-escalating the situation and expressing group grievances. They based their conflict-resolution activities on moral authority, elite networks, and cultural legitimacy and not coercive power. Although such interventions led to a relative stability in some cases, they also demonstrated how the Nigeria nation-building project was structurally weak. As a result, their experiences provide important information about the opportunities and constraints of non-state conflict management in a highly plural society.

The history of the Nigerian Civil War and its consequences influenced the operations of Ohanaeze Ndigbo in conflict resolution greatly. The organisation was always able to position itself as a protector of Igbo security and dignity, especially when there was a specific violence against Igbo communities who were not part of the South-East. Indicatively, the Ohanaeze had released stern statements and demanded federal security over the Igbo people in the 1980s and early 2000s when there were religious and ethnic riots in the northern cities like Kano and Kaduna (Ohanaeze Press Statements, 2001 - reference to be added via newspaper archives). Such interventions were normally accompanied by high level delegations to the affected regions and consultations with Northern leaders, including the ACF, in order to cool down the tension. Human Rights Watch (2005) illustrates that Nigeria witnessed the death of thousands of people as a result of communal and religious violence between 1999 and 2004 which highlights the magnitude of the task that such mediatory activities will have to counter. The strategy of Ohanaeze was to advocacy among the masses and negotiation in the back room, which was an appreciation of the fact that the attainment of sustainability in peace was both a state responsibility and inter-ethnic conversation. Though, critics have said that the Igbo victimhood that the organisation focused on at times supported the idea of ethnic exclusivism, making it harder to reconcile on a larger scale.

Such an important role in the mediation of conflicts was also taken over by the Arewa Consultative forum especially in Northern Nigeria where ethno-religious violence was a major threat to the stability of the nation. The ACF regularly used meetings of the traditional rulers, religious leaders and political elites to solve disputes relating to herder-farmer conflicts, sectarian conflicts and political unrests. This role is well illustrated by the interventions it made in the Sharia-related crises of the early 2000s. Protecting the constitutional right of the Northern states to choose the Sharia law, the ACF at the same time urged it to restrain and respect the rights of the minority, underlining that violence could be detrimental to both Islamic values and national cohesiveness. According to scholarly reviews, this kind of mediation involving the elite succeeded in averting the development of local conflicts to broader regional conflicts (Suberu, 2009). However, the closeness of the ACF to the Northern political systems of power cast doubt on its impartiality, especially among religious minorities who doubted whether the ACF would be able to be inclusive. All these tensions underline the natural complexity of the situation between regional advocacy and conflict resolution without discrimination.

Inter-organisational communication between Ohanaeze Ndigbo and the ACF was one of the most valuable inputs of the ethnic organisation to the national conflict management. The joint statements, consultative visits, and inter-ethnic summits were the means of de-escalating the situation at the time of national crisis. One of the remarkable

instances was the resultant cooperation after the 2011 post-election violence that claimed lives of more than 800 people, most of whom were in Northern Nigeria. After the events, the leaders of Ohanaeze and the ACF publicly reiterated their support to the unity of Nigeria and urged their constituents to denounce retaliatory violence. These gestures held a symbolic value, being an indication of elite agreement with non-fragmentation as well as a reaffirmation of the standards of harmonious coexistence. According to Diamond, elite elites and cross cutting networks are usually very vital in stability in partitioned societies. The effectiveness of these dialogues was however limited by the fact that they were not able to go to the grassroots area where grievances mostly went unattended.

Although these were all done, the efforts of the Ohanaeze Ndigbo and the ACF in the conflict resolutions was often sabotaged by the structural issues in the nation-building process of Nigeria. First of them was the endemic ineffectiveness of the Nigerian state to guarantee security, justice and equitable development. According to data provided under the Nigeria Watch project, over 60,000 people lost their lives in the country due to violent conflicts in the period between 2006 and 2015, which is the extent of the insecurity facing non-state mediators. Within such a setting, ethnic organisations were in most cases reacting to a crisis as opposed to stopping it. Also, politicisation of ethnic identity implied that any mediation attempts were viewed through partisan prisms which lowered the level of trust and cooperation. These organization factors restricted the ability of Ohanaeze and the ACF to translate episodic interventions into permanent peace-building mechanisms.

The other major challenge has been the rise of sub-national movements that were not controlled by the existing ethnic organisations. The formation of the groups like the Movement for the Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and then Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in the South-East made the role of Ohanaeze more difficult in conflict-resolution. Although Ohanaeze officially dissociated itself with violent separatism, it could hardly control the activities of younger, radicalised participants who considered the organisation too conciliatory. Likewise, the emergence of Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria made the elite mediation highly ineffective since the group did not consider traditional authority and communication. These trends created generational and ideological divisions in ethnic constituencies, undermining the ability of umbrella organisations to deal with conflict effectively. They also highlighted the boundaries of the legitimate culture in case of extremist violence.

Conclusion

The experiences of Ohanaeze Ndigbo and the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) highlight the persistent contradictions inherent in Nigeria's nation-building project. While these ethno-regional organisations have played important roles in conflict mediation, elite consensus-building, and the promotion of regional interests, their continued prominence underscores the incomplete nature of national integration. As Osaghae has argued, the persistence of ethnic mobilisation reflects the Nigerian state's limited capacity to foster a unifying sense of national identity, loyalty, and trust among its diverse citizens.

Although Ohanaeze Ndigbo and the ACF have made notable contributions to reducing immediate tensions and preventing violent confrontations, their interventions have largely remained palliative. They have not adequately addressed the underlying structural inequalities, inequitable resource distribution, and institutional weaknesses that fuel ethnic grievances. Consequently, nation-building in Nigeria remains an ongoing and contested process, frequently renegotiated through informal channels of dialogue and mediation rather than through robust state institutions.

Ultimately, this study demonstrates that ethno-regional socio-cultural organisations like Ohanaeze Ndigbo and the ACF are double-edged actors: they serve as vital stabilising mechanisms in a fragile federation, yet their activities also mirror and sometimes reinforce the very challenges impeding genuine national cohesion. Sustainable nation-building in Nigeria will require not only the constructive engagement of these platforms but also deliberate efforts by the state to build inclusive institutions that transcend ethnic loyalties.

the research underscores their dual impact advancing constructive engagement on one hand while exposing structural imbalances in Nigeria's federal arrangement on the other ultimately affirming their enduring relevance as critical actors whose collaborative efforts are indispensable for sustainable national cohesion, democratic consolidation, and equitable development. In light of these findings, key recommendations include institutionalizing regular inter-regional dialogues among major socio-cultural groups, integrating them into formal government policy and conflict-resolution mechanisms such as a proposed National Unity Council, addressing fiscal federalism and structural imbalances to reduce agitations, expanding youth and inclusive participation within the organizations, and partnering with media for unity-focused public enlightenment campaigns. Further research is suggested on comparative analyses of all pan-ethnic bodies, quantitative impact assessments, and post-2019 developments to deepen understanding of their evolving contributions to Nigeria's nation-building project.

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