



CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN NIGERIA, 1966-1999

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Introduction

Since independence, Nigeria has witnessed series of coups and counter coups, leading to the intervention military in Nigerian politics. This has significantly affected the relationship between the civilians and the military. This research therefore examines this pattern of civil-military relationship, taking into considerations the unique cases of each regime in Nigeria from 1960 to 1999. Historical research method was used to give a clear picture of how civil-military relations have developed under different governments and under what circumstances. The findings of the research show that military officers dominate the politics of Nigeria and technically shaped the course of relationship which occurred between them and the civilians. The research recommends that the military should be professionalized; while the civilians need to develop a positive attitude to nation building. Nigeria has experienced very problematic civil-military relations since its independence in October 1960 with unbalanced historical epochs: the First Republic; the coups and Civil War of 1966-1975; the coup and transition to civilian rule through 1975-1979; the Second Republic; the coup and failed transition to civilian rule of 1984-1992; Abacha's rule through 1993-1998; and finally the consolidation of democracy from 1999 until today.

While this research focuses on civil-military relations, it will analyse how civil-military relations developed over time in Nigeria. Factors which influence these relations will be examined as well as how civilian authorities are able to control the state's armed forces. Civil-military relations are central when it comes to understanding the democratisation and the development of a state. The military is quite visible in Nigerian governance, and it is impossible to separate military, democracy and politics completely when studying independent Nigeria. The military as an institution has had a

strong influence on the democratisation process in the country. It is important to analyse civil-military relations in African countries and understand the degree to which the military has been controlled by the civilian authorities. A broader and more complete understanding of these relations must be reached, and this research seeks to be a contribution to this understanding.



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