

NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS, INTEGRITY AND UNITY

National consciousness is the strong feeling of love, commitment, loyalty and affection that enables a citizen to work for the growth, development and progress of his nation. It is the awareness that enables the individual to pursue the interest of the nation above personal, ethnic, religious or tribal interest. It is the affection that compels an individual to advocate for the total freedom and unity of his nation.

National integrity is the complete adherence to the moral principles and standards that ensures the development and prosperity of a nation. It is national integrity that enables the individual to avoid all manner of sentiments and act rightly in the face of any situation.

National unity is the deliberate effort made by the citizens of a country to work and promote the factors that ensure the unity of the nation.

The above three concepts are interrelated. However, national consciousness is the main focus of this study.

FACTORS THAT PROMOTE NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS

1. **Tolerance:** Tolerance is the ability to endure with others no matter how offensive or inferior their opinion. Tolerance is the quality that enables the citizens to overlook the weaknesses of other people in order to promote national interest.
2. **Hospitality:** Hospitality is the quality that enables an individual to take care of another person without minding his or her tribal, ethnic, regional or religious affiliation. Hospitality is one of the major factors that promote national consciousness and national unity in a nation like Nigeria with over 250 ethnic groups. A nation is prosperous if their sense of hospitality cuts across tribal and religious lines.
3. **Inter-tribal Marriage:** Intertribal marriage is the coming together of a man and a woman from different tribes, ethnic group or culture as husband and wife. This is another factor that can strengthen national consciousness and unity.
4. **Respect for Human Rights:** Respect for the rights of other people will help to promote national consciousness. A situation where the fundamental rights of individuals are respected there will be peace and acrimony will reduce.
5. **Effective and Independent Judicial System:** An independent judicial system that can dispense justice without fear, favour or interference of external factors will help to promote national consciousness.
6. **Citizenship Education:** The knowledge acquired through citizenship education will help the individual to imbibe the right values that promote national consciousness and unity.

FACTORS THAT CAN PREVENT THE PROMOTION OF NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS

1. **Tribalism** – This is a situation where an individual prefers or favours his tribal kinsmen above other tribes in public dealings.
2. **Intolerance** – This is the inability to exercise patience over an offence or argument when relating with other people in society.
3. **Selfishness** – This has to do with satisfying personal interests irrespective of violating other people's rights.
4. **Bad Governance** – When there is an irresponsible government people seek for personal satisfaction rather than national interest.
5. **Religious Fanaticism** – People who are excessively faithful to a particular belief see other people of a different religion as enemies.
6. **Illiteracy** – Those who are not informed can constitute a danger to national consciousness because they are ignorant of what is expected of them in society.

EVALUATION

1. Mention five factors that can promote national consciousness.
2. List five factors that can limit national consciousness.