



RESEARCH ARTICLE

FEDERAL CHARACTER AND APPOINTMENTS IN NIGERIA, 2015-2023: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

JOSEPH EBERECHUKWU AKONYE, OKECHUKWU DECLAN IZIM

Department of Political Science Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education,
Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

Nigeria is a political entity with six geo political zones. Appointments into federal ministries, agencies and parastatals for the sake of fairness and equity are supposed to be shared among these zones in accordance with the Federal character principle. The Federal character principle is rooted in the proneness for fairness and equity. However, the Ibos from the South-East geo-political zone following the various appointments in the Mohammed Buhari civil administration feel greatly marginalized. This is also same for the South-South who have in the previous years called for Resource control. This paper asserts that there is a history of violation of principle of Federal character in federal appointments. This allegation of violation can better be understood through a comparative framework analysis, the paper argued. A cursory look at the tables of appointment under the different regimes below under study depicts an outright violation of Federal character principle between 1966 and 1994. The same finding is evidenced under Goodluck Jonathan and Mohammed Buhari civil administrations. The paper therefore proffered a two-pronged attack on violation of the principle as solution. One, eradicating the capacity to marginalize and demarginalization of the Ibos and other groups that feel marginalized.

Keywords: Administration, marginalization, federal character, federal Principle, appointments.

Corresponding Author:

AKONYE, Joseph Eberechukwu Tel: 08033414686

E-mail: akonyej415@gmail.com

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1. INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a political entity with six geo-political zones, appointments into federal ministries, agencies and parastatals for the sake of fairness and equity are supposed to be shared among these zones in accordance with the federal character principle. President Mohammed Buhari came into the oval office in 2015 claiming to be detribalized Nigerian and apostle of change. The unsuspecting citizens of this nation had no much cause to doubt him, unfortunately the way and manner he had made appointments into federal ministries, agencies and parastatals has put to question his personality and vision for change. This has also triggered off reactions which have manifested in the Ibos demanding for their own nation BIAFRA (Indigenous people of Biafra) and the general calls for Resource control by the south-south.

It is becoming apparent that President Mohammed Buhari suspected ethnocentric and nepotistic tendencies are attaining an embarrassing proportions. The latest demonstration of this long standing suspicion was the appointment of Mr. Yusuf Magaji Bichi as Director General of the department of State Services (SSS) to replace Mr. Matthew-Seiyefa who was appointed by then Acting President Prof. Yemi Osibanjo. Shortly after that, the President picked former Minister of State for finance Hajia Zainab Ahmed all from the North to replace Kemi Adeosun who resigned over certificate forgery scandal. These and other past action have reinforced speculations about President Buhari prejudice and insensitivity to the principles of Federal character in appointments. This has raised serious question about the constitutional basis of Federal Character, especially in a complicated federation such as ours.

There are cogent reasons why this action call for concern. First, it is a violation of the principles of Federal character, as contained in Act No 34 of 1996, which established the Federal character commission, in an attempt to entrench fairness and equity in the distribution of public posts and socio-economic infrastructure among the various federating units of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It has been featuring in Nigeria's constitution since 1979. And it is in the current 1999 constitution (The Guardian Editorial, 2018).

Section 14(3) of the 1999 constitution reads; the composition of the government of the federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such a manner as to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity, and also to command national loyalty thereby ensuring that there shall be no predominance of persons from a few States or from a few ethnics or other sectional groups in that government or any agencies (1999 constitution).



It should be noted that the phrase Federal character was first used by the Late General Murtala Mohammed in his address to the opening session of the constitution drafting committee on Saturday, October 18, 1975. Federal character of Nigeria, according to the CDC report of 1977, refers to the distinctive desire of the people of Nigeria to promote national unity, foster national loyalty and give every citizens of Nigeria a sense of belonging to the nation notwithstanding the diversities of ethnic nation, culture, language or religion which may exist and which it is their desire to nourish, harness to the enrichment of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Constitution drafting committee 1977).

The federal character principle has its root in a proneness for fairness. The fifty wise men who drafted the 1979 constitution understood that disposition, they Justified the entrenchment of the federal character principle in our constitution using the following words "There had in the past been interethnic rivalry to secure the domination of government by the ethnic group or combination of ethnic groups to the exclusion of others. It is therefore essential to have some provisions to ensure that the predominance of persons from a few States or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups is avoided in the composition of government in the appointment or election of persons to high offices in the State. Therefore whimsical mutation of the principle of federal character is not only a bad precedent, but also a potent demonstration that government does not care about the organic law of the land. Furthermore, the arrogance and irreverent audacity with which President Buhari has inundated the federal bureaucracy and the presidency with family members and crones, and his utter disregard for competence, public opinion and sense of justice, has come to unveil the true character of the President who told the nation on his inauguration in 2015, I belong to everybody, belong to nobody". Certainly, this kind of curious allegiance can trigger dissatisfaction in the polity and thus impede national growth and development. This explains perhaps why the Ibos in the South-East have accused President Buhari government of marginalization and the attendant movement for the Indigenous people of Biafra [IPOB) which has Nnamdi Kanu as the vanguard.

2.0. Conceptual Review

2.1. The South-East reaction and allegation of Marginalization

The Ibos from the South-East geopolitical zone following the various appointments feel greatly marginalized. This is also same for the South-South who have in the previous years called for resource control. On the other hand, President Buhari had argued that the Ibos have



the best appointments in defense to the allegation. His concept of best even though ambiguous, needs to be operationally defined or clarified whether in terms of number of appointments or their juicy nature. Moreover, the indices of marginalization in the appointments claimed by the Ibos can only be ascertained when appointments made under President Buhari civilian regime is juxtaposed perhaps with that of his Predecessor-President Goodluck Jonathan. This has become necessary as is the duty of this paper, for the sake of unity and stability of the nation, especially when one realizes the incessant agitation for one reason or the other.

Besides, Nigeria has been labeled a "federation of the Angry" by some political observers in Nigeria coupled with the fact that many Ibos for instance have remained secessionists at heart even though, they accepted defeat in the 1967-70 civil war. The voting pattern in the 2019 Presidential election which was completely anti All Progressive Alliance [APC] is a big pointer. The business Dictionary has defined marginalization as the process whereby something or someone is pushed to the edge of a group and accorded lesser importance. It is a social phenomenon by which a minority, or sub group is excluded, and their need and desire ignored. It should be stated that major approaches to marginalization are represented by Classical economics, Marxism see marginalization as a structural phenomenon endemic to capitalism. For Marxism the reserve army of the proletariat "a pool of unemployed or partially unemployed labours is used by employers to lower wages. Increasingly, modern interpretations stress marginalization's collective character and the role of the State, elite and entrenched group in determining who is marginalized (Tilly 1999).

Oskarson [2016) has argued that political equality is fundamental for democracy. In general, the concept of political equality is restricted to the formal rights and opportunities of citizens to participate in politics. Political equality also connotes every citizen, group, tribe etc. having fair share of the dividends of democracy which includes appointments. With this, one begins to understand why the Ibos and other group in Nigeria feel marginalized in appointments.

2.2. History of Violation of Principle of Federal character in Federal Appointments

According to Oladipo (2013), following some deliberate activities of our highly celebrated past leaders and nationalists such as NnamdiAzikiwe, ObafemiAwolowo and SirAhmadu Bella to mention but a few who fought for Nigeria independence from the colonial masters but went ahead thereafter to domesticate their loyalty to their various regions of origin. Issues



of ethnicity and marginalization of groups within the country have hence grown uncontrollably. In fact, the practice of ethnicity and marginalization is mostly seen today in Nigeria as being normal or as being where it is naturally expected of everyone in position of power without which such fellow or leader risks outright rejection and castigation from his or her folk after his/her tenure in such position of authority and influence.

It has to be stated that for instance the Ibos claim of violation of principle of Federal character in appointments and the subsequent marginalization precedes the President Buhari civilian administration. Analysts recall that the major reason colonel Chukwuemeka Odimegwu Ojukwu gave to justify the declaration of Biafra in 1967 was that the Ibos had lost faith in the Union, because they were been treated as second class citizens. The proclamation of the Republic of Biafra led to a civil war that lasted 30months. The Ibos have always complained of being marginalized by successive government whether civilian or military. It had to be recalled that the history of the marginalization of the South-East started with General Yakubu Gowon creation of twelve States precisely to weaken Ojukwus resistance to government in 1976 prior to the declaration and the commencement of the Nigerian civil war. Though Gowon twelve State structure, had a sense of equality between the North and South of Nigeria at six States per zone, it denied the South-East majority States in the defunct Eastern region as was the case for the Hausa and the Yoruba in the Northern and Western region respectively.

Gowon's twelve States ensured that the South-East, the heart of Biafra revolution, was lumped into one state called East central State. This was the beginning of marginalization. Gowon did not stop there, he ensured that the ceding of some oil-bearing Ibo areas to River State. When General Murtala Mohammed spilt the country into nineteen (19) States in 1976, the East central State became two States of Anambra and Imo. Thus Mohammed gave the South East one out of Seven States he created. It was General Ibrahim Babangida that rose to address the South East marginalization, by giving an additional two States of Enugu and Abia out of Eleven States created. At that time, the zone needed three States to level up with others. The late Gen.Sani Abacha also gave the zone one State, Ebonyi when he created six States.

There is no doubt that the Federal principle character has often been violated by leaders and the South East as a reference point unduly marginalized in the State creation structure of Nigeria. Under the presently thirty-six (36) States structure, which ought have given each



zone six States a piece, only the South East has five (5) and North and West seven [07] respectively. In the arbitrary distribution of the nation's seven hundred and seventy-four (774) Local Governments, the south East has the least, the entire North has four hundred and Nineteen (419) Local government areas, while the South as a whole has three hundred and fifty-five (355) Local Government areas. The zonal distribution of the local government is as follows: North-West 186, North Central 115, North East 112, South-West 137, South-South 123, and South East-given 95. The question is why was the South East 95 when other zones got over 100 local Government areas?

According to Okoye (2017) marginalization of the Ibos actually started when Ndi-Igbo (who on account of their large population in the East, where they were by far the dominant majority ethnic group). were suddenly relegated to only one out of the three States created by Gowon out of the Old Eastern region, and by a stroke of the pen, Gowon rewrote demography and made Ibos a minority in their region in which hitherto they were in overwhelming majority.

In the area of appointments in successive governments especially the Buhari led government, the Ibos have continued to suffer undue marginalization. Osudibia(2001:117) lamented that;

One of the problems and infact the major obstacle on our way to true nationhood is marginalization and neglect of Federal principle in appointment. No one can truthfully, and without error of denying the obvious claim that Nigeria is not without a marginalized people or section. I have notified on my own part, that the East has been apparently, imperiously and without qualms by the powers that be marginalized in Nigeria.

Okaneme (2014:43-47) collaborated by arguing that the Ibo people have been marginalized for a long time in Nigeria but the marginalization got to a climax after the Nigerian Civil war. I am of the opinion that some predisposing factors are responsible. First, the Ibos by all standards are neither organized to act coherently as a people nor have they defined really for themselves what their group interests really are, as well as how to promote or realize those interests. Secondly, the Ibos leaders (even politicians) always prefer playing second fiddle coupled with the natural love for money which predisposes them to sycophancy and not standing strong as a group. Thirdly, the leadership question among them is an issue to resolve. There is some long standing confusion about the nature of this leadership. – Ohaneze Ndi Igbo.



3.0. METHODOLOGY

The data were generated from secondary sources such as textbooks, journals, newspapers, magazines, internet materials etc. the study adopted content analysis which provided qualitative framework for processing and analyzing secondary data, drawing largely from the opinions, arguments, and perspectives of previous scholars that are relevant to the stud

4.0. DISCOURSE

4.1. Distribution of Political appointments among the Ibos, the Yoruba and the Hausa/Fulani under some regimes

The allegation of violating the Federal character principle in the area of appointments can better be understood through a comparative framework analysis. This is to avoid bias and to enable a more valid and realistic conclusion in this study.

Hence, the searchlight of this will beam specifically on the following:

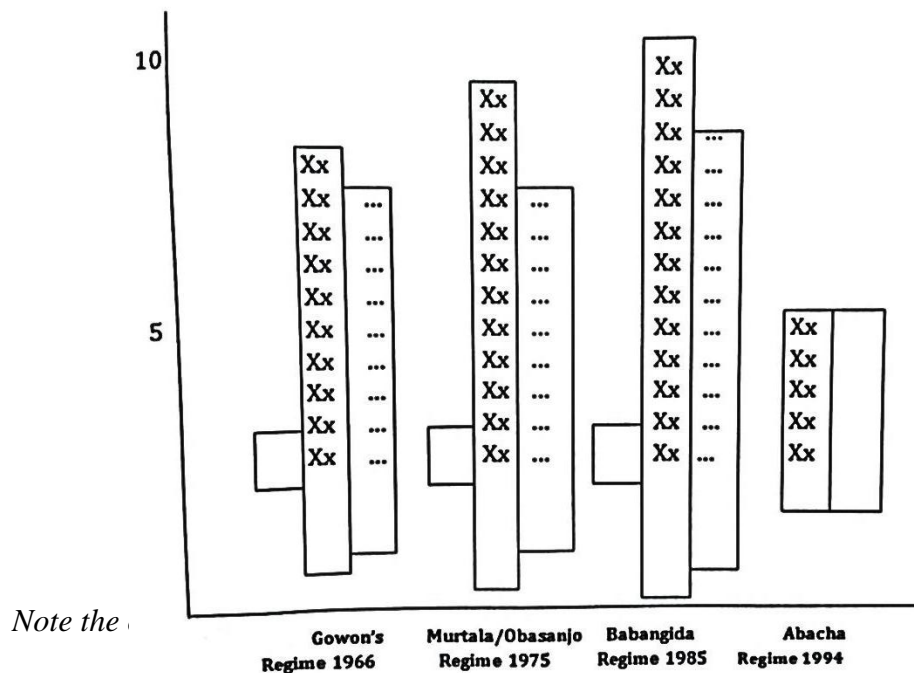
Gowon regime, Murtala/Obasanjo regime, Buhari regime, Babangida military regime, Jonathan and Buharirespective civilian regimes. In as much as this work may not capture in totality all respective regime appointments in all areas, efforts are made in highlighting a compendium reasonably enough to support claim and conclusion.

Table 1: Shows distribution of political appointments from July 1966 January 1994 under military regimes

REGIMES	IBO	HAUSA/FULANI	YORUBA
Gowon Regime (July 1966)	1	9	8
Murtala/Obasanjo 1975	1	10	7
Governors (30/7/75)	0	6	4
Governors (3/2/76)	1	9	4
Ministers (3/2/76)	2	6	7
Buhari Military (SMC 1/1/84)	1	9	2
Babangida AFRC 1985			
Abacha National Defence & Security Council (4/1/94)	0	5	5



Fig 1. Shows chart how power has been shared in Nigeria between 1966 and 1994 under respective military regimes in the areas of military Governor, Ministers and Service Chiefs.



Note the

Table II: Key: Ibo ☐ Hausa/Fulani ☐ Yoruba ☐



Federal Appointments under President Goodluck Jonathan's Regime

Mr. Bashir Yugud-	Minister of State Finance (North)
Deziani Alison Madueke-	Minister of Petroleum Resources (South-South)
Dr. Akinwunmi Ayo Adesina-	Minister of Agriculture (West)
Hajia Asabe Asmau Ahmed-	Minister of State Agriculture (North)
Bala Muhammed-	Minister of FCT (North)
Mrs. Olajumoke-	Minister of State for FCT (West)
Sanusi Dagash-	Minister of works (North)
Mr. Adeyeye-	Minister of State, Work (West)
Dr. Abubakar Olarenwaju Sulaiman	Minister of National Planning (West)
Mohammed Adoke-	Attorney general and minister of Justice (North)
Mr. Osita Chidoka-	Minister of Aviation (East)
Mr. Edem Duke-	Minister for culture and tourism (South-South)
Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau-	Minister of Education (North)
Lawrence Laraba Mallam-	Minister of environment (North)
Ambassador Aminu Wali-	Minister of Foreign affairs (North)
Prof. (Mrs) Viola Onwuliri-	Minister of State foreign affairs (East)
Professor Onyebuchi Chukwu-	Minister of Health [East]
Dr. Khaliru Alhassan-	Minister of State Health (North)
Labaran Maku-	Minister of Information & Communication (North)
Comrade Abba Moro-	Minister of Interior (North)
Chukwuemeka Wogu-	Minister of Labour and Productivity (East)
Arc. Mohammed Musa Sada-	Minister of mines & steel development (North)
Dr. Stephen Orise Oru-	Minister of Niger Delta (South-South)
Mr. Darius Dickson Ishaku-	Minister of State Niger Delta (North)
Gen. Aliyu Gusau-	Minister of Defence (North)
Senator Idris A. Umar-	Minister of Transport (North)
Boni Haruna-	Minister of youth development (North)
Hajia Zainab Maina-	Minister of Women affairs (North)
Dr. Tamuno Danagogo-	Minister for sports & Chairman national sport commission (South-South)
Mrs. Akon Eyakenyi-	Land, Housing and Urban Development (South- South)
Kabiru Turaki-	Minister for special duties (North)



Table III: Appointments under Buhari Civilian Regime

Chris Ngige-	(Anambra) Minister of Labour& Employment
Kayode Fayemi-	(Ekiti) Minister of Solid Minerals
Rotimi Amaechi-	(Rivers) Minister of Transportation
Babatunde Fashola-	(Lagos) Minister of power, Works and Housing
Abdulrahman Dambazau-	(Kano) Minister if Interior
Ogbonaya Onu-	(Ebonyi) Minister of Science and Technology
Hajia Zabiab Ahmed-	(Kano) Minister of Finance
Abubakar Malami-	[Kebbi] Minister of Justice & Attorney-General
Sen. Hadi Sirika-	(Katsina) Minister of State, Aviation
Barr. Adebayo Shutti-	(Oyo) Minister of Communication
Suleiman Adamu-	(Jigawa) Minister of water resources
Solomon Dalong-	(Plateau) Minister for youth and sports
Ibe Kachikwu-	(Delta) Minister for state Petroleum
Osagie Ehanire-	(Edo) Minister of State, health
Audu Ogbeh-	(Benue) Minister of Agriculture
Udo-Udo Udoma-	(Akwa-Ibom) Minister of Budget & National Planning
Lai. Mohammed-	(Kwarra) Minister of Information
Amina Mohammed-	(Gombe] Minister of Environment
Ibrahim Usman Jibril-	(Nasarawa) Minister of state, environment
Hajia Khadija Bukar Ibrahim	(Yobe) Minister of State, foreign affairs
Cladius Omoleye Daramola	(Ondo) Minister of State, Niger Delta
Prof. Anthony Awuka-	(Imo) Minister of state. Education
Geoffrey Onyema-	(Enugu) Minister of foreign affairs
Dan Ali	(Zamfara) Minister of Defence
Barr. James Ocholi	(Kogi) Minister of State, Labour& Employment
Zainab Ahmed	(Kaduna) Minister of State Budget & National Planning
Okechukwu Enelamah	(Abia) Minister of trade, investment & Industry
Muhammadu Bella	(Adamawa) Minister of FCT
Mustapha Baba Shehuri	(Bornu) Minister of state, power
Aisha Abubakar	(Sokoto) Minister of State, Trade & Investment
Heineken Lokpobiri	(Bayelsa) Minister of state. Agriculture
Adamu Adamu	(Bauchi) Minister of Education
Isaac Adewole	(Osun) Minister of health
Abubakar Bawabwari	(Niger) Minister of State, Solid Minerals
Pastor Usani Uguru	(Cross River) Minister for Niger Delta
President Muhammadu Buhari	Minister of Petroleum



Senior Special assistant. Media & Publicity: Garba Shehu, (Kano State, North West]

Accountant General of the Federation: Ahmed Idris (Kano State, North West]

Special adviser, Niger Delta Amnesty Office: Paul Boroh (Bayelsa State, South-South)

Acting director General, Nigerian Maritime Administration, Safety and Security Agency
NIMASA Baba FlarunaJauro(Yobe State, North-East]

Secretary to Government of the federation, Babachir David Lawal, (Adamawa, North-East)

Comptroller-general, Nigerian Customs Service, Flameed Ibrahim Ali, (Kaduna state North
Central) comptroller-general, Nigerian Immigration Service. Kure Martin Abeshi, (Nasarawa
state, North Central)

Aide de Camp to President- Lt. Col. Abubakar Lawal (North)

C-in-C of the Armed Forces- Mohammed Buhari (North)

National Security Adviser

Gen Munguno (North)

Perm. Sec Min of Defence

AlhajiDanjuma Sheni (North)

Chief of Defence Staff

Gen. Abayomi Olonisakin (Southwest)

Chief of Army Staff

Gen. T. Buratai (North)

Chief of Air Staff

Air Marshall Sadique Abubakar (North)

Chief of Naval Staff

Rear Admiral Ibok-Ete Ekwe (South)

The Nigerian Military Secretary (Army) Major. Gen. Mohammed Garba (North)

Commander, Brigade of Guard Brig. Gen. Musa Yusuf (North)

Chief Defence Intelligence

Gen. Saliu Usman (North)

Director Air Intelligence

AVM Shehu Adam (North)

Director Military Intelligence

Brig Gen AH Sa'ad (North)

Director Military Information

Brig. Gen Rabe Abubakar (North)



Group Executive director, Exploration & Production; (Now GMD)	Maikanti Baru (North)
Group Executive Director, Finance;	Mr. Isiaka Adbulrazaq (West)
Group Director, Refining 7 technology;	Engr. Dennis Nnamdi Ajulu (East)
Group Executive Director, commercial & Investment	Dr. Babatunde Victor Adeniran (West)
Group General manager, Company Secretary	Legal Adviser; Chidi Momah (East)
Managing Director, Pipelines Products Marketing Company (PPMC)	Mrs. Esther Nnamdi Ogbue (East)
Director General State Security service	Mr. Yusuf Magaji (North)
Managing Director Warri Refining & Petrochemicals Company (WRPC)	Engr. Chinedu Ezeribe (East)
Managing Director, Nigerian Gas Company (NGC)	Mr. Babatunde Bakare (West)
Managing Director Hyson	Mr. Inwa Ibrahim Waya (North)
Managing Director, Nigerian Petroleum Development Company (NPDC)	Mr. Abubakar Mai-Bornu (North)
Managing Director NNPC Retail	Mr. Ladipo Fagbola (West)

4.2. Others are:

Managing Director, Integrated Data Service Ltd. (IDSL)	Mr. Rowland Ewubare (South-South)
Managing Director, NNPC Properties;	Mr. Modupe Bammeke (West)
Managing Director, Duke Oil;	Mr. Abdulkadir Saidu (North)
Group General Manager, Nigerian Petroleum Investment Management Services (NAPIMS) of Subsidiaries	

5.0. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusion

A cursory look at the above tables of appointment under the different regimes under study depicts an outright violation of Federal Character principle between 1966 and 1994, under five different regimes on table 1, the Ibos had a total of (07) appointments. The Hausa/Fulani



65, and the Yorubas 45 appointments. Under President Goodluck Jonathan 2015 Ministerial Appointment for instance, the Ibo got five (05) The Hausa/Fulani 21, and the Yoruba 06. Under the regime led by Muhammed Buhari 2015 Ministerial appointments, the Igbo got 4, the Hausa/Fulani 19 while the Yoruba got 5. On key military appointments made by president Buhari military regime, the Ibo got none (0) The Hausa/Fulani 12, and the Yoruba's (01). On appointments of Nigeria National petroleum Corporation NNPC board of Directors, Managing Directors and Secretary/Legal Advisers, Only one (01) from the Ibos Hausa/Fulani 04, while the Yoruba's got 05. On Presidential aides, the Ibos got none (0), Hausa/Fulani 04, while the Yoruba's got (01). Managing Director-Nigerian maritime Administration, Comptroller General Nigerian Custom Service, Comptroller General – Nigerian Immigration Service, Inspector General of Police and Secretary to the Government of the Federation, all are northerners to mention but few.

From the above analyses, it is therefore evident that the Ibos and the South-South authorities are the most marginalized and endangered species in Nigeria. It should also be noted that out of all political appointments made under the Balewa Administration, 12 were Ibos 15 were Yoruba, and 18 were Hausa/Fulani. In sharp contrast, since the Gowon administration, the distribution of High government position, given in the above tables, eloquently tells the story of Federal character principle violation at the political level. To seal the political fate of the Ibos and put their marginalization all fronts on a permanent footing, the Hausa-Fulani and the Yoruba conspired to: i. Distort the geopolitical structure of the country, to the point where it is decidedly and permanently skewed against the Ibos. ii. Revamp boundary adjustments against Ibo interest; and iii. Exploit the fragility of the relation between the Ibos and their close neighbors in furtherance of the marginalization of the

Violating of Federal character principle is endemic in a polity whose constituent groups/nationalities are bedeviled with unequal and antagonist relationship, (Eme Awa 1994:



29). Marginalization has been the most reprehensible strategy for the exploitation of these relationships in post-colonial Nigeria. In particular, the Ibos have been victims of marginalization since the end of the civil war. As a people, they have been systematically disempowered politically, economically, militarily and socially by the Hausa/Fulani-Yoruba Coalition.

The marginalization of the Ibos or any other group must not only be seen by all as an atrocity; it must also be clearly understood to be inextricably bound up with the national question. It is idle to seek a resolution of the national question while doing absolutely nothing about the marginalization of a group or groups within the country. The stakes are so high that we can no longer afford to pay the ostrich by burying our heads in the sand over the issue, (Adedeji 1993).

History is replete with the lesson that violation of Federal character principle is in the final analysis unsustainable. For if allowed to foster is capable of eventually unleashing explosive reactions which already is evident in the incessant agitations across Nigeria today. Slavery could not be endured beyond a certain point. The vast colonial empires of the European powers have had to be liquidated. The problem of the minorities in the United States of America is eventually being addressed through "Affirmative action". Ian Smiths Rhodesia yielded place to present day Zimbabwe. Apartheid, finally, unable to cope with the reactions it elicited, has had to be terminated. This evil, if allowed to foster in Nigeria, will resolve itself automatically in the fullness of time; but not without bloodshed and social disruption. For ignoring this lesson of history, Yugoslavia, Somalia, Sudan and Burundi paid dearly with the blood of their citizens, (Onabele 1994). The prospect of such a catastrophe is not farfetched for a country like Nigeria whose volatility has already been indicated and underscored by a full-blown civil war.



5.2. Recommendations.

If national stability and unity are to be achieved, we must mount a two-pronged attack on violation of principle of Federal character. The first prong- the fundamental cure is to eradicate the capacity to marginalize. The Second prong and emergency measure is to demarginalize the Ibos and the other group(s) that are marginalized.

The capacity to marginalized will surely evaporate if we devise a Federal Structure in which;

- a. The centre is not all powerful
- b. No ethnic group or coalition of groups can monopolize political cum-bureaucratic power.
- c. No group or coalition can corner the military and use it to either stultify or nullify [for example, with a coup d'etat).

These proposals have obvious implications respectively,

- i. Structural geopolitics (for example regrouping of States into regions)
- ii. Power-sharing and resource control

Finally, no demarginalization agendum can succeed if the questions of Resource control are not permanently addressed. The goose that lay the golden eggs must not be allowed to die. Therefore, States should be allowed to control resources in their areas. This perhaps must be on determined formulae. If these are put in place, equality, justice and fair play will prevail and the nation Nigeria will prosper.

Certainly, frequent violation of the Federal character principle can be inimical to healthy integration, which the country has managed to foster all these decades. Moreover, this kind of curious clannish allegiance can trigger disaffection in the polity and thus impede national



growth and development. However, it is not too late for President Buhari to genuinely redeem his image. Then that he got a fresh mandate, he should have been bold and resourceful enough to address this perception challenge to his integrity. Finally the president could have destroyed the Federal character principle in appointments which is one of the foundations of democracy and demand and public order from the people of Nigeria.

Competing Interest

The author had declared that no conflicting interest existed regarding this paper.

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