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FEDERALISM AND THE MINORITIES IN NIGERIA: A GEOPOLITICAL ANALYSIS

Suresh Kumar¹✉, Smita Yadav², Vibha Gupta³

Abstract:

This article examines federalism, its challenges, and minority agitations for equity and development in Nigeria. It explores the geopolitical analysis to have smooth development in Nigeria and seeks to abort all or any discrimination against the minorities section of the society. This paper further suggests the methods of enhanced protection of minorities' rights and the practice of true federalism in Nigeria. Nigerian Governments have tried to practice federalism to promote equity and minorities' rights, but they have failed to adhere to this doctrine as stipulated in the constitution, thereby raising the question of minority marginalization in Nigeria. This article assesses that unless the Government practices federalism as enshrined in the constitution and generates resource control, power sharing, equal rights, and accountability, it may become a permanent source of geopolitical conflicts in the coming days.

Keywords: Demography, Ethnicity, Languages, Geopolitical, Constitution & Protectionism

1.0 Introduction:

The notion of minorities in Nigeria is a complex one, while there is a broad agreement on the status of minority ethnic groups. Due to its great population scale, Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo ethnic groups are regarded as the majority. The three constituted approximately 60% of the population, while the limited sample scale of hundreds of small ethnic communities represented 40% of ethnic minorities. Historic structures, social forces and political influence, especially during the colonial system of indirect control, can track the substantial demographic scale. In the post-colonial period, the colonial people consolidated their influence and opened the way for minority dominance and subjugation in the form of inter and intra-factional power struggles. The question of power domination often gave the structure of Government a distinct impression. Geopolitically, the majority groups preferred government centralization and the minority were after a decentralized power control, which they hoped would create room for them to overcome size limitations in the connection to and income from power. Racial minorities have emerged in Nigeria against many crises. The demographic structure of Biafra Civil War of 1967-1970 with the formation of the colonial master, this aggression and unrest stated. Religious strife in the Northern and Niger Delta

1 [Author] ✉ [Corresponding Author] Professor, University of Delhi, Department of African Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Delhi-110007, INDIA. E-mail: skafrica2003@gmail.com

2 [Author] Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Daulat Ram College, University of Delhi, Delhi-110007, INDIA

3 [Author] Associate Professor, Department of Commerce, Lakshmi Bai College, University of Delhi, III-Ashok Vihar, Delhi-110052, INDIA

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crises contributed to a massacre in recent years which explains the status of ethnic minorities in Nigeria.

"The number of different ethnic groups in Nigeria has been estimated to range from 250 to over 400. Nigerians speak distinct languages and certain language minorities generally speak more than 60% of the Nigerian population, including Hausa Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo (29% of the population being Hausa-Fulani), Yoruba is 22%, Igbo is 18%" (Chinenye and Ogbera, 2013: 15-21).

The different language-speaking communities such as Ijaw, Kanuri and the Tiv are classified as languages with a considerably large number of participants. In different areas of the region, the concept of religious minority groups is expanded, like the northern Chrétien minority, or the Middle-Belt and south-eastern Muslim minorities.

Geopolitically, ethnic minorities in the North and the Middle Belt are demanding political representation, but those Central Government groups and a just allocation of money to help their citizens expand. The minorities in the south are looking to achieve meaningful growth in the country by controlling their capital directly. The recent regulation of resources organized for minority groups in the Niger Delta region illustrates this.

"With respect to minority spare parts in the past, Kelechi would be agreed that they fall within the scope of bureaucratic governance, for example, tax distribution, census numbers, establishment of new States, appointments by the Federal Government, and access to the national institutions" (Kelechi A. Kalu, 2004:40).

Despite the formation of Nigeria by British amalgamation in 1914, the post-independence era for person and group Nigerians seems not to demonstrate an allegiance to the British Government. Most Nigerians are thus inclined to first identify with their ethnic origin and then collectively identify with Nigerians, regardless of their nationalist assertions.

"Geopolitical federal structure concentrated influence on the three areas, dismissing the interests of the unrepresented ethnic minority communities, rather than encourage a broad range of interest groups to make claims about the Nigerian state. The presence and influence of these three politically influential ethnic communities has transmitted colonialism's contribution to ethno-genesis and to Nigeria's individual ethnic identities" (Cooper, 2002:90).

The fear of control, marginalization, subjugation and the deprivation of rights, especially of minorities, often has led, in any multiethnic community, to agitations, even in the case of Nigeria's federalism against the odds of majority communities. Successive Nigerian governments have been trying to pursue Geopolitical federalism to uphold justice and the dignity of minorities. However, the theory, as laid down in the constitution, has not been practiced, increasing the issue of marginalization of minorities in Nigeria. However, minority groups have been marginalized in recent times by violence; unless federalism, as enshrined in the constitution, is practiced by Government and adequately addresses the conflicting issues of control of resource resources, power sharing, equal rights, and liability, it would face increasing and dangerous minority turmoil. The minority groups are agitating for justice and growth in Nigeria and suggesting that minority rights could be protected better in Nigeria; this is the main issue of liberal federalism.

The academic dialogue studies on constitutional federalism is partly due to non-compliance with constitutional rules on the implementation of federalism and at times the dominance or under-representation of the minority classes in public Relations and organizations, in particular with regard to minority turmoil and marginalization issues. Minority turmoil has therefore led to studies to reverse such segregation considering the enormous position performed by both components of communities in national growth (the minority and the majority). Regardless of the essence and scale of the shortcomings in philosophy and practice that might characterize

Geopolitical constitutional federalism in Nigeria, it has been a significant political factor for quite some time. However, not much academic capital has been used to examine genuine federalism as enshrined in the constitution as a vehicle to tackle minority turmoil in the south.

2.0 Perspectives of Geopolitical Federalism in Nigeria:

The political distribution of powers among the tiers of Government in a nation is the principal notion of federalism. Historically, Nigeria originated as the British colonial Government amalgamated the dominant protectorates in 1914.

"There were more economic than political factors for combining the southern and northern protectorates. The Protectorate of the North, which became the province of the North, had regular revenue deficits whilst the Protectorate of the South had surpluses. The budgets of the two elements were combined to remove the subsidies from the British treasury" (Barkan, et.al 2001).

British polity of interactions and interrelations of regional grouped diversities, a geopolitical approach appears scientific in nature. A geographical approach emphasizes regional interactions, explains geopolitical constitutional federalism, and analyzes sociological, economic and political nature of society accordingly.

"Federalism is a compromise institutionalization. Not only is it egalitarian, it also has the most important institutionalizations; it is also innovative and sufficiently agile to implement many adaptation formulas" (Mazrui, 1971: 90).

Linking it to the situation in Nigeria, Agbu (2004) commented:

"federalization has emerged from the socioeconomic perspective not just in the search for political access and influence but also as an access to federally derived income." Agbu (2004: 26-52)

The apprehension of regional rule or the exposure differences between provincial leadership has led to an agreement that geopolitical federalism may be an appropriate doctrine or instrument to hold Nigeria into a single political body. It should be noted that, given the federal geopolitical solution as the best political agreement, it would provide the concessions and guarantees needed to achieve political stability in Nigeria. These problems brought about a great deal of hue and cry that people began to clamour for the disintegration of the country. In a bid to save Nigeria from the brink of disintegration and possibly unite all its nationalities, federalism became the best option. However, the antecedent of federalism in Nigeria can be traced to the Lyttleton Constitution of 1954, which was the first federal constitution of the country. From the foregoing, it can be inferred that all successive constitutions in Nigeria, have varying features of federalism, and the successive governments address prevailing contending issues in Nigeria. Nigeria's federal state has always been multi-facets ranging from non-compliance of political elites to the constitutional provisions for the practice of federalism, ethnic rivalries, domination, denial of minorities' rights to more contending issues of resource control, revenue sharing formula, and minorities'- majorities' agitations for state creation. This will lead to the challenges of geopolitical federalism in Nigeria.

3.0 Marginalization and Nigerian Geopolitical Federalism:

Federalism in Nigeria is marginalized by nearly every geopolitical region complaining about one or the other kind of inequality. For starters, scholars have various explanations to reveal the degree to which marginalization has influenced minority groups in Nigeria, Ojukwu(2005: 130-153), a relative deprivation of state, systematic disempowerment of a population by a group or groups who exert political power during a given period and regulate the distribution in the center of material and other resources, Obianyo (2003: 130-153) reveals that "marginalization means the allocation of state social and political wealth or the indices of growth through indifference,

participation or injustice.”. Borrowing a leaf from this premise, Akinbade, (2004: 93) sees marginalization as a “denial of access by a party or territory to political authority or social facilities when giving the benefit of others.”

All the various groups (most or minority) protests have begun protesting that they are oppressed, and the south is calling for the control of resources, which for a long time have escaped them. This shows in the end that the opportunities of the world are not equally spread and that marginalization leads to other contending problems, including oppression, dominance, claims and charges of neglect, corruption, victimization, sexism, nepotism and racism. For Agbu, (2004: 26-52), “The politics of ethnic minorities have mostly reduced minorities to dominated or inferior classes, who are always comfortable in ‘spoiler’ politics.” It is not surprising that all of these parties are in the lead of the Nigerian Federation's restructuring calls.

The importance of race or racial politics in promoting Nigerian is marginalization. The position maintained by Angaye (2003: 93) is that “Conflict happens as the deprived communities or people want to enhance or change the existing traditions, customs, ideologies, or philosophy.” There will be sensations of strangulation, emasculation and bigotry. In recent times, federalism appears to face greatest challenges in Nigeria in agitating ethnic minorities, particularly in the south of the country, over federal distribution, resource management, compensation for environmental pollution, gas flaring diseases and political marginalization. Since colonial times, crude oil has been a cause of continued unrest and instability, the main sources of income in the monocultural economy of Nigeria.

The marches and turmoil from the South-South was premised on antiquated dialectics, implying agitations preceding Nigeria's liberation. This turmoil comes from wider marginalization of places of socioeconomic inequality, underdevelopment of the region and injustices, which include governmental income distribution, inadequate facilities or public appointment. The citizens perceive the profound meaning of marginalization and exclusion from the reality of the riches of the nation and the political issue of marginalization developed by the new ownership and control regime gives economic dimension to this topic.

The advantages of crude oil became a key field to resolve South-South marginalization. Nigeria remains one of the world's leading oil producers, but this country is deprived all essential needs in life, such as decent roads, health care centers, sanitation, power and the loss of farms owned by southern residents. The basis of the fight is inequality that contributes to disparities in power, resources and status distribution. “The dominance and persecution of larger communities and their employees in the lesser groups irritated the minority in the South-South” (Angaye, 2003: 93). The unfair and illegal misuse of South-natural South's capital is an expression of the area's marginalization. South-South demography has little ability to exploit land on its territories, but political leaders dictate and decide the capital exchanged in other areas. Over the years, the golden egg goose remained the South-South geopolitical region. The economic significance of the palm and groundnut exchange between Nigeria and Europe serves as a stimulus prior to the independence on the Oil Rivers. “Although ironically, the contraction named Nigeria has remained an object of political emasculation. Although the list of poverty remains inexhaustible, after inhuman abuse of their wealth, the citizens of South-South continued to wallow into poverty and the danger of extinction” (Ekong, 2004). Therefore, until and during the amalgamation of Northern and Southern protectorates in 1914, the South-South was an indispensable and articulate force.

“A policy of almost total arrogance of the South/South oil resources by means of intense regulation and accumulation of power and resources in the Federal Government was initiated by the Northern dictatorship benefiting from military repression. Oil was a big objective. Oil and gas

have been owned under the Federal administration by separate decrees, and the region's derivative entitlements have fallen from 50% to only 1.5% in 1984 and then to 3% in 1999" - (Ikelegbe, 2005: 71-86).

In the field, the growth activities which have resulted in massive oil returns have also been marginalized and actually ignored. According to Ikelegbe (2005: 93) "the area in the 1990s was one of the poorest and least established. More sadly, the increased discovery of oil has led to economic and social prostration in the area because of extensive environmental deterioration, socioeconomic destruction and insecurity". The situation contributed to a slow increase in the second fight from a moderate renewal in the 1970s to a wide-ranging movement focused on communities in the 1980s. "Furthermore, the thematic articulation by the powerful in the area has become a widespread movement with a significant transformation of the substance of requests, tactics and techniques for combat" (Omede and Akhanolu, 2013: 93). By the 1990s, the region had been sufficiently organized to begin a broad, broad, active regime of opposition by the flourishing of civil society, intensive identity mobilizations and ethnic nationalism. Politically, though in recent years, the South-South region has representation at the presidency level and fairly represented in other political offices, but for a very long time, it was on record that people of the South-South were marginalized from occupying public offices, unlike other regions. The degree of South-South marginalization politically implied that the three main tribes regard political offices in the country in a scandalous way. "They simply arrogate the position of the President and other most lucrative positions to themselves, irrespective of the concept of federal character" (Ekong, 2004: 90).

Socially, the South-South region is also marginalized in terms of poor social facilities, environmental degradation, oil spillage, and polluted water system, among others. Social amenities in other regions are provided with the wealth derived from the South-South Region, but in spite of these wealth and resources, the region remains largely impoverished. The state of marginalization in the South-South region is the government empowerment with oil wells and things.

"The government and the legislature only sit in far inland (Abuja) to legislate over the affairs of the South-South people without understanding the problems of the South-South territory where communications are so difficult, building so expensive and education so scanty" (Ekong, 2004: 93).

In most regions of the South-South, infrastructural facilities tend to be primordial, despite the existence of enormous resources in this area. Oil discovery natural failures left the ground waste. They find the provision of clean water and a viable road network tough, or sometimes impossible at times. Pollution from continuous oil spills and other risks of exploitation and discovery of petroleum have rendered fishing, the lifeblood of most local people, almost unworkable and unprofitable. Spillage often kills thousands of naira fishing nets. The standard of living of the ordinary citizen in the south has been adversely affected by both of these. "The citizens have felt deposed and alienated from the political community" (Jike, 2004, 686-701). It shows that the South-South region is marginalized politically, socially and economically in spite of the fact that this region has been the stronghold of the country's wealth.

4.0 Geopolitical Constitutional Nigeria and Minority Movement:

The fight and recurrent upheaval by requests by minority groups for their privileges in the constitution and the disruption of conventional jobs in the area is an important underlying causes. As Akpan has noted, "the dispossession of their territory and the waters of oil corporations generated chronic unemployment amongst the representatives of the formerly occupied populations" (Oshewolo, 2011: Online). This has consolidated poverty and dualized economic classes in oil-producing areas in line with a highly-income economy with strong economic and social infrastructure, a high unemployment

level, and a declining environment that contrasted with the conventional subsistence income market. Another important cause of protest is the deterioration of the atmosphere. The whole South-South country is interconnected by water canals, with heavy rains and disasters triggered by periodic natural flooding, oil spills, and flammable gas (such as airborne diseases) having a detrimental effect that can easily disperse across the whole area as transport vehicles, through relief and climatic conditions. Naess recognizes bio-centered and anthropocentric methods for environmental sustainability. The bio-centered solution to pollution is resurrected by just reimbursement (Oshewolo, 2011: Online). In either scenario, rewards and utilization of resources are far from achievable. So, after decades of demonstrations and legislative efforts, environmental destruction continues. The human experience in the natural world is focused on an anthropocentric attitude to the quest for capital to collect income through the lack of the climate. An illustration of the second solution is the rise of multinational companies in the south and the federal and some state governments' interests.

Corruption is another issue of South-South turmoil. The increase in the incidence of corruption among Nigerian officials may also be attributed to the high prevalence of agency and commission operations linked to the wide share of government-controlled capital. The overconcentration of money in the center not only institutionalizes but also glamorizes corruption in Nigeria. It is also said that a traditional Nigerian leader has always wanted to share a national cake rather than strong administration. "Aristotle, the great philosopher, and philosophical colossus, therefore pointed out that the root of revolutions and sedition is generally the government picture and caution should be taken to avoid the usage of offices to benefit people" (Murkherjee & Ramaswamy, 2007: Online). It shows that such corruption can be called political. This implies that the office is used to amass resources, keeping the region mostly underdeveloped, for example, by chairmen and officers of the Niger-Delta Development Commission for primitive accumulation of wealth and personal growth.

In recent decades there have been nonviolent marches to express discontent to address a few contending issues, but these peaceful marches have given way to aggression in recent decades. "The movement has been more and more aggressive and militant in recent years, including demand for democracy and self-determination, which have influenced the federal administration in the city" (Oshewolo, 2011: Online).

The real tradition of geopolitical federalism has been prevalent and has failed because of the unfair marginalization of communities in Nigeria. However, the degree to which this category is marginalized differs from State to State. Discriminatory federalism has had a tremendous effect on the interests of ethnic groups, and this has caused the pendulum to swing to the minority classes in South-South in an outrageous way. Against this backdrop, Nigeria's significance in addressing the recurrent minority agitations and party inequality in the practice of a true federal republic.

A multi-faceted solution that requires a variety of variables needs to be followed to facilitate the efficient and swift practice of true federalism to combat agitation and promote party equity. To that end, a focus should be given, amongst other things, to develop a positive attitude in the minds of the political elite toward true federalist practice in Nigeria and to discourage ethnic distortions of minority communities, particularly towards their involvement in the public and political process. Real federalism as enshrined in the constitution, calls for concerted and ongoing efforts. Considerable achievement in the face of the multi-ethnic and cultural diversities in the country will take perseverance.

5.0 Geopolitical Constitutional Affirmative Action:

Like other previous constitutions, the framers of the 1999 Constitution were intending, in order to foster the goal of creating a single, free country for all Nigerians through citizenship and fundamental rights provisions. This is consistent with the ideology of modern Nigeria's founding fathers, who guided the fight against colonialism. The same purpose is re-established in many major national documents, such as the Second National Development Plan, which clearly stated that a strong and prosperous economy and an open, democratic and equal society where there are no sexual, ethnic and religious inequalities that oppress everyone, is the objective of national development. Three key fields are concerned: the anti-discrimination provision, the Federal Character, and the federal Commission. Chapter two of the 1999 Constitution, dubbed 'The Basic Objectives and the State Policy Directive,' set forth the concepts of justice and inclusivity, referred to as the theory of federal nature. It is to reflect the Federal Character of Nigeria and the need for the promotion of national unity and national loyalty that the composition and conduct of the Government of the Federation or any of its institutions shall therefore ensure that persons from some States or from any ethnic or other sectional groups shall not be predominant in any other country.

The Principle of the Federal Character covers different areas of administration, including economic and work policy, education policy and social policy. Section 14(4) of the Constitution of 1999 calls on States and local authorities throughout the country to apply this concept, but no clear systems of execution have been established for this purpose. Furthermore, the Principle of Democratic Character is just federal at work. There are no State-level frameworks to guarantee equity between municipal governments and no local governance mechanisms to ensure equity within the various administrative bodies. Gender inequality is still entirely lacking in the theory of quota.

6.0 The Federal Character Commission:

Since 1979, the Principle of Federal Character has been incorporated into the Nigerian constitution. However, the constitutional Conference of 1994/1995 proposed that a Commission of Federal Character be formed in order to uphold the concept. In 1996 the Federal Character Commission, with the following core functions, was established:

- Promoting, monitoring, and enforcing respect of the proportional sharing principles of all governmental, administrative, company, media, and political offices at all levels,
- To develop an equitable formulation — for the distribution of all office managements in the civil and public services of the Federation and of States,
- The Armed Forces, the Nigerian Policy, and other security authorities.

National equality of States is the fundamental concept of the Commission formula and each country's 36 states and Abuja, the territory of the federal capital, could, in any federal institution in the country, be at an average rate of 2,5 percent with an upper limit of 3 percent. Since the 1960s, this theory has been applied to the military, police and other security forces.

In Nigeria, the nation has a deep intellectual adherence to the affirmative approach recognized as the Principle of Federal Character. Engagement is supported by fears of national, regional or religious dominance and the federal system of the world. "In the region, however, effective action is difficult to enforce, given the lack of clear political will to achieve this" (Toyo, 2003: online). The nation has a reinvestment economy dependent on its reliance on oil incomes. This strongly affects governance, which can only afford political entrepreneurs access to political influence to profit from the infrastructure of destruction they have created. It is impossible to enforce positive policy measures thanks to patronizing practices that are followed and the absence of operational openness and accountability structures.

"Nigeria is more concerned about some of the questions expressed about positive actions in South Africa. Each community of Nigerian cultural, regional and religious groups has a narration of inequality and marginalisation, making it impossible for the country to enforce affirmative action policies. Other people also interpret positive discrimination as negative discrimination" (Woddy, 2004: 60).

Consequently, constructive, affirmative action must be systematic in order to be effective. In Nigeria, the definition of affirmative action can be expanded to include the gender angle to incorporate more racial minorities. A representative voting structure will also help the mechanism. This is also a very useful tool for implementing affirmative measures since, in general, the percentage of racial and religious groups elected in parliament has increased dramatically. This in turn, offers these communities a forum and helps build ways to tackle unequal policies. A host of palliative steps may be taken in the near term to strengthen and extend the execution of the country's affirmative policies. First, State administrations should be required to establish frameworks for implementing the values of federal character in state and local government public utilities. The rules set out in the 1999 Constitution will then be applied. Secondly, common pressure should be placed on the Federal Character Commission each year to fulfill its legislative task of publication of statistics for the public sector. At present, the execution of the strategy cannot be monitored as no statistics have been issued since the Obasanjo rule came to power. This lack of official data renders it really challenging to track and implement. Third, the Ministry of Justice must have a stronger political will at the level of the Federal Character Principles noted by the Commission to prosecute blatant disrespect.

In Nigeria, the type of affirmative action in the form of the Federal Principle of Character is strongly committed ideologically. However, the absence of a clear national determination to do so makes affirmative action impossible to enact. This, in particular, represents employers' policies and the absence of practical processes to ensure transparency and accountability. Furthermore, one party frequently reads constructive discrimination as derogatory discrimination towards others. In the near term, the experience with positive policy interventions in Nigeria may be increased by a variety of measures. First, state officials should be urged to create a state- or municipal implementation process for the Federal Character Principle. Secondly, popular demand to report statistics on the public sector every year could oblige the Federal Character Commission. Finally, the Ministry of Justice should make further effort to bring about flagrant disrespect of the Principle of Federal Character. In the longer term, a representative electoral structure will also profit from a mechanism that, in general, will increase the proportion of the racial and religious minorities elected to the parliament.

7.0 Geopolitical Federal Territorial Structure and Ethnic Minorities:

Probably the most significant cause of ethnic distress and disaffection in Nigeria's federal system today is the over-centralization of the Federal system. The internal territorial structure of the union is the root of unrest among minorities. Constituent units are usually demarcated in multiethnic federations based on ethnolinguistic identities in order to allow a certain level of regional independence within their geographical spaces for each cultural community. However, Nigeria has had no respect for identifiable racial distinctions in its component countries or territories. The regions before 1967, therefore, were subjective and artificial units that simply protected over minority parts the Superiority of the three main nationalities. While the exercise of 1967 was intended to encourage more egalitarian minority groups' accommodation within the federal system, subsequent restructuring activities were primarily influenced by the need to satisfy the demands on distribution, which mostly emanated from the majority. 'In the phase of the homogenous majority's nationalities, many minority groups have been subdivided into unitary.... multiethnic states' (Saro-Wiwa, 1992:37). No wonder so many racial and even municipal minority states have been genuine theatres of interethnic and community conflict and eruption.

The strategy of utilizing territorial amendments to advance the distributive rights of the dominant parts would obviously have to be examined at the detriment of more systematic exposure to ethnic minority issues. The propensity to see and follow territorial reorganizations as a simple path towards federal taxes could become less strong with sufficient improvements in the provisions for income sharing. Nonetheless, the need to ease the complaints of ethnic groups who are oppressively and arbitrarily integrated into the existing system of federal constituents should be overreached by potential territorial reorganizations of Nigeria. The long-term policy of subdividing broad but uniform ethnic groups for solely distributive or "developmental" purposes will consistently suggest a decline.

8.0 Power-Sharing or Accommodative Strategies:

"Nigeria is also considered to be a leader in Africa in using power sharing systems and activities in promoting inter-ethnic inclusiveness in decision-making processes or in discouraging sectional imbalance and prejudice" (Rotchild, 1985, 1986, 1991).

In several ways, Nigeria's political leaders have tried to institutionalize policies for power distribution in Nigeria, the federal theory of character, the allocation and rotation of political party roles among geo-ethnic zones, and the setting up of coalition governments between interparty parties. Nonetheless, the hegemonic interests of the plurality of nationalities, the generality of the Nigerian political landscape and the prevailing victor-all syndrome, the imperfections and inconsistencies in constitutional power-sharing provisions, and the irregularities underlying the federal territorial form have sometimes been deformed or thwarted by these tactics. In democratic parties, for example, zoning arrangements have at times only worked to legitimize or replicate the influence of major classes. This happened particularly in the Second Republic, where three senior positions as President, Vice-Presidential Nominee, and Party Chairman of Hausa-Fulani, Ibon, and Yoruba were zoned by the governing National Party of Nigeria, respectively.

In a similar way, the ruling elites in Nigeria at all public authority levels continued not to distinguish between the allocation of wealth and opportunities in favour of their communal and/or political clientele, far from the constitutional principles for 'federal' or broadly inter-ethnic representation in the behaviour and composition of public institutions. This violence has, at the state level, marginalized ethnic groups in the federal Government through hegemonic majority interests. Those who control a national power apparatus either did not take the interests of the middle belt into account in composing and conducting government affairs and their agencies or did not give the matter particular attention to the impact of the 'federal character' principle on the fortunes of minority communities in the Middle-Belt, according to the Sonni Gwanle Tyoden study" (Tyoden, 1993:7). This suggests that the constitutional arrangements (of the "federal nature"), due to the rejection or resistance over the years of those who have held the country's reins, have not improved... sentiments of alienation and oppression.

The ethnocultural and systemic inconsistencies in the operation of the Nigerian Federal System have aggravated the ethnic-political barrier against the successful application of proportionality, accommodation or power-sharing concepts. Writing on the Second Republic, for instance, (Donald Williams, 1992:206) argues as follows:

"From the start, debate engulfed the application of the ideals of proportionality. This is because the constitution did not provide a clear mechanism for racial selection, nor did it be agreed in ensuing treaties. Instead, the distribution was to be based on the nineteen States alone, a structure which was faulty from the outset since Nigeria has no perfect boundary and ethnic group division in either nation" (Donald 1987:212).

More specifically, no clarification was drawn between ethnic minorities, majorities or the North-South clashes — all of which were essential for the correction of historical disparities. Nevertheless, the concept of federal character, notwithstanding its congenital and procedural defects 'has been the pillar of racial justice and fair governance in Nigeria.

The task is to improve its efficiency and to reduce the vulnerability of the plurality of sectors to coercion and misuse. In particular, the concept of 'Federal character' may be justified in order to allow minority groups who are politically disadvantaged or under-served to pursue a proper judicial remedy. Another additional approach would be to define the necessary conditions for intergroup representation — for example, in the true sense of proportionality by relating this representation to relative ethnic groups.

The need to guarantee fairer access to the vital institution of the federal Presidency must also be considered. In a basic way, the election of a presidential regime under the Second Constitution of the Republic constituted a reverse for power sharing since it substituted a central presidential entity with the collegial arrangement of the first republic's legislative system. This accumulation of energy in a single individual is clearly one of today's main causes of ethno-regional tension and anxiety. According to General Olusegun Obasanjo:

"The executive presidency's huge forces are the only true bone of contention in national politics. The President of the Federal Republic is sovereign in Nigeria's political economy, by power that the Head of State has exercised in the freight or withholding of legislative appropriations, military or petroleum contracts, primary appointments and special grants" Sunday Vanguard, 1994:16).

Murtala Mohammed did also urge the constitutional arrangements of the Constitutional Drafting Committee in 1975 to ensure that the president and vice president must be elected to office in order to represent the federal nature of the country, in order to ensure a widespread national mandate and credibility to the occupant of the presidency. Consequently, the 1979 Constitution requires not only the president to gain a quarter of the vote in any one of at least two-thirds of countries for direct election but also to take into account the federal character of the region. Today's divided discussions and conflicts for Presidency power are symptomatic of a failure to foster inter-ethnic justice, compromise, and accommodation through these steps.

Ethnic minority communities and elites, particularly in the south, are at the forefront of ongoing change or reform of the presidential structure to make it easier to gain access to federal national political authority. The ideas for change are very varied and often contradictory. The most influential comprise the North-West, Middle-East, South-East, South-West and South-centralists, the rotating of the Presidency from North to South as well as among the country's six main geo-ethnic areas (or Southern Minorities). The reduction of the President's terms to a single period of five years or the refusal of the outgoing President to have the right of succession. Introduction of a multi-vice-presidential structure to guarantee that the federal executive represents more than only the three minority dominant classes. Establishment of the French presidential-parliamentary role model, which will help to complement and broaden the federal executive ethno-regional basis. The establishment of a presidential institutional structure based on the Swiss model, which annually rotates the federal presidency among the members of a President's Council composed of representatives of each of the geo-ethnic six or more regions. It is still conjectural to create a specific mix of reforms to overhaul the presidential structure of Nigeria. The presidential amendments are the product of resistance from racial minorities, and the presidential structure is viewed as inequalities.

"The dignity and stability of the regime would need to change or reshape the existing US presidential model significantly in structural terms" (Vanguard 17 October 1994:1).

9.0 Government Policy and its Effectiveness:

Unattended or inappropriately treated, the issue of minorities and their agitations remains. There is also a significant achievement in the successive Government's efforts to permanently improve these issues. These efforts include the departed OMPADEC, which appeared to function only in its presence but not in its substantive nature and thus could not do anything useful. Also another device, the Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF), was accused of selectively carrying out ventures and now of the Yaradua Administration Niger Delta Development Cooperation (NDDC). The minority agitations of the Niger Delta region have led to the establishment of these bodies. Some Governors in the Middle Belt region have already called for them to establish a similar partnership to help grow regions in the Middle Belt. "While solid minerals have been exploring in the area, it seems like these calls probably didn't work because they were half-heartedly made" (OcheOnazi, 2002: 90).

Minority rights are a major problem in Nigeria, recalling that in the past six decades of independence, they have reported a lot of strife and tragedies. The 1967–1970 civil war taught Nigeria many lessons in controlling varying disturbances and preventing the events of ethnic cleansing that happened at some stage in Rwanda and Bosnia. It can also be noted that regardless of the fact that a party might be a majority or a minority, each group has the tendency to manipulate smaller groups. For example, the settlers of Hausa in the state of Plateau accuse the indigenous people of oppressive activities, while the indigenous excuse their acts by accusing Hausa of seeking to enforce their aristocratic practices in colonial times. The Yoruba in Kwara made identical charges against the reigning family of Fulani. In the sense of Citizen Rights and National Integration, a tangible approach to the question of minority groups should also be found. "There should be a return to true federalism, under which countries recover their independence, to become once again units of economic activity, in any meaningful effort to restore Government to normalcy in Nigeria. This will include a re-examination of the topic of tax distribution" (Wilberforce Conference, 1997: Online).

Although democracy ensures that the common can be expressed by majority rule, it is clear that it must ensure that majority authority should not misuse its power to suppress the minority's fundamental and inalienable rights. The freedom of the citizens to change the majority by-elections must be a fundamental feature of democracy. The supreme authority of the people should be able to seek all required privileges to participate freely in elections, such as freedom of expression, of assembly, of association, and, of petition etc. Otherwise, the majority would become a perpetual tyrant, and the freedom of the minority would become a victim. In principle, the majority rule was needed to articulate the common will and the foundations for the republic cannot be ignored. It is often made explicit that an agreement or law cannot be forced on free citizens by everyone's agreement.

Despite the loss reported by the country in using card readers that were acquired initially by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to ensure only registered and approved voters voted during the polls, the Nigerian Government successfully carried out the 2015 Presidential elections in the country. However, it is very straightforward for all, except for some people who knew the effect of race and faith on Nigerian politics, to accuse the federal Government of not conducting very credible elections. The current Nigerian constitutional structure should be remembered as evolving from the British imperial constitution. When, however, the European-guided democratic theory finally came as a development concept in Nigeria, the leaders soon discovered that the model was largely abstract in nature as its historical specificity was not addressed, but that development was not related to the citizens and culture in Nigeria.

The Clifford Constitution of 1922 made possible in the colonialist constitutions, in the Lagos Legislature for Nigerians, for elected their own representatives, in the 1939 Bourdillion Constitution, the regional Government's platform, in the 1945 Richard Constitution the Nigerians had a better platform for participating and discussing their own affairs and the Mac. Although ethnicity has consistently played a significant role in Nigeria's stability and prosperity, its impact has not been as pronounced today. A 35% quota needs to be established to ensure the participation and representation of women, minorities, people living with disabilities, and other disadvantaged communities in government and other life spheres. Strengthening constitutional protections to secure the interests of minorities should focus on minority agitations. The defense of ethnic minorities in the Constitution of Nigeria has far-reaching implications for the interests of minorities. The constitutional amendment and its effectiveness would be greater than the establishment of additional nations since economically sustainable states are already brought in. The theory of federal character must be justified. It must be argued strongly that, apart from the first civilian Government to end in 1966, the right to minorities was not yet adequately resolved to the effect that the production of state subsidies and of infrastructure channeling is, in fact, not based on fair demand and needs, but on political influences and unbiased delivery, which is driven by severe corruption activities. If a proactive and just leader led Nigeria, Nigerians would preserve the identity of Nigeria instead of their different ethnic groups. Country services must be reasonably designed for the good and interest of the country. The feeling of nationality is created, and before its diverse ethnic or tribal origin is considered, Igbo, Hausa, Ijaw, Yoruba, etc. are identified as Nigerians.

Nigeria, since independence, has been built up by emotions and the affirmation of ethnic nationalism. Government policies have not yet addressed such requirements, it has been reported that the ideology of ethnic minorities in Nigeria has grown quicker and is far from being solved, irrespective of the Government's answer. If you look at the root of the problem of minority groups in Nigeria, observations suggest that decades could take to tackle some concrete process. The reality that Nigeria does not constitute itself nowadays, just an imperial control tool for the British people, has had a strong effect on the co-operation and the sense that it is a country other than the impression that racial demographic, political and linguistic classes are. The outcome had created a feeling of mistrust and unfaithfulness instead of an unbiased approach to Nigeria's partnership and unity, regardless of the ethnic difference, alongside good governance. Nigeria also has a national president to deliver that would be appropriate to the population, but who has so far received the common loyalty only from a plurality voting forum.

United Nations also set special requirements for the security and protection, participation in decision-making, identity and persecution of people belonging to racial or cultural, religious and linguistic minorities. The federal, state, and municipal governments and ethnic societies of some kind should advocate certain aspects in order to address the concerns of minorities. Peaceful issues of minorities are a cornerstone to the growth, stability and unity of all ethnic groups as one nation. Constitutional modification, true federalist practices and the conference are key solutions to maintaining a harmonious and prosperous Nigeria, and compromise through the idea of giving and acceptance, acknowledgement, appreciation and privileges of different ethnic groups. good governance in Nigeria would bring about unity among ethnic groups.

10.0 Constitutional Safeguards to Protect the rights to Minorities:

The interests of the minority should be preserved regardless of whether they are single or alienated from culture as a majority; otherwise, the rights of the majority lose their value. In his essay on Liberty, John Stuart Mill, a British philosopher, says:

"The sole reason for which authority over any civilized society member against his will may be exerted is to avoid damage for others... The idea of no damage seeks to keep the Government from being the majority tyranny tool..." (Mill, John Stuart, 1869:100).

The main tyranny lies not only in violations of human or political minority rights but also in oppressing minority communities in culture on the basis of factors such as the colour of their skin, race or nationality, language, faith, or sexual preference.

For the precise identification of the racial, religious and linguistic composition of a nation as complex as Nigeria it is crucial to carry out a statistical study. The compilation of data plays a key role in identifying and informing the necessary measures to resolve social differences within communities. Nigeria is not collecting or analyzing data broken down by race, faith or language. The Special Rapporteur observes. Some civil society and the NCR expressed alarm at the fact that the census had not been performed for the last time in 2006 and the absence of statistical disaggregation and inaccurate census details. However, some voices were reluctant regarding the compilation of broken records, which expressed concerns about the political use of confidential data.

The Nigerian Constitution of 1999 is the highest legislation which enshrines under Article 42, paragraph 1, the concept of fair treatment and of non-discrimination, containing clauses on general non-discrimination on the basis of membership of a single community, racial group, place of birth, sex, faith or political opinion. In Article 14, paragraph 3, the constitution provides for the so-called 'federal character principle', which ensures that appointments of public officials represent a level playing field for all groups on the part of the Government by stating that 'the composition and conduct of the Federation's Government or of any of its agencies shall be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution. (Nigerian Constitution Art. 14, para 3). In addition, Article 14(4) ensures the participation of the various groups at the national and local level by affirming that 'the composition or conduct of the government or of the council or either of these agencies shall be performed to acknowledge and appreciate the existence of the government or councils or agencies' (Nigeria Constitution Art. 14, para 4). The theory of federal geopolitical character has not been implemented in fact, and the only way to achieve that all populations are appropriately treated at various government levels is through the legislative representation of States at the federal level without adding any requirements such as racial affinity (local, state and federal).

Nigeria has a special significance in relation to minorities' rights in Nigeria as the State Party to the main International Human Rights Treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and other primary treaties. The African Human Rights Charter, the African Charter on Democratic Rights, Elections and Governance and the African Cultural Renaissance Charter are all part of the Nigerian Union.

Sharia law frequently regulated alcohol use, enforced gender discrimination in schools and mandated a women's dress code, and restricted the right of travel of women. The religious enforcers who punish women Muslims and non-Muslims hard and on-the-spot for breaking the dress code and travelling alone in taxis are particularly concerned. Despite certain statements saying that sharia law only applied to Muslims, a range of known instances have been made in which the reverse is valid, including where religious law enforcers have punished people which they thought violated sharia law, on the spot. In addition, Human Rights Watch says that the Sharia legal tradition differs from that extended to non-Muslims by the standards of proof, and the right of challenge and legal counsel applicable to Muslims, disclosing intrinsic prejudice

against non-Muslims. Briefly, the mere extension to Muslims and non-Muslims to Sharia criminal law implied that faith was infringed openly.

Democracy can contribute specifically by including the 'representation of different views by multiparty rivalry' in the effective settlement of ethnic minority allegations and disputes.

"Even though the grieving party is not responsible for governing, it moves a disagreement from the violent environment to the democratic arena that can fight for election and have his word heard by members of the Government or even of the Opposition. There was a mistake. Multiparty rivalry transforms armed confrontation into politics, and multiparty democracy provides a formally recognised platform to minorities and their causes. There can be no magic about this shift. Democratic rivalry may be just as weak as military conflicts over national Government, but it may be less expensive in human life and participation in the opposition may no longer be useful in resolving grievances. But the democratic mechanism has a promise which can be followed for a long time" (Zartman, 1993:327).

There can be no doubt that democracy in Nigeria can have a framework in which all groups - large or small - are effectively anchored in a genuinely federalist political system and power-sharing system.

11.0 Demographic Governance:

A full democratic and equitable Nigerian state, minority rights, civil security, and promotion of the rule of law require good governance. Good governance is important. However, in Nigeria, there is a good government gap, with consequences for minority problems and interests and relationships with the group. Good governance has a variety of interconnected elements, including inclusive involvement, dialogue, combating injustice, government policy openness and the responsibility of political actors. Under the framework of minority rights, effective governance is an important factor in ensuring participation and equal consideration in the decision-making process of minority communities that do not occupy dominant roles. Good Government is essential to deter unrest and violence since it guarantees the legal, cultural, physical, political and social rights of all classes and ensures their involvement. Long-lasting claims of broad-based electoral corruption constitute significant issues that threaten minority interests and demand a clear government intervention at all levels to remedy these activities effectively. Anti-corruption institutions should be improved, and consideration should be given to the implementation of a detailed national anti-corruption program and new legislation. Budget openness must be enforced thoroughly in order to efficiently track decision-making processes and to include frameworks for accountability.

It is of particular significance that cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity be represented at the various levels of Government. The Federal Character Commission advocates the implementation of the federal character concept in order to ensure equitable involvement at the federal level. Nevertheless, the Commission does not regard ethnic or religious elements, which makes the fair participation of different groups in practice ineffective for many civil society groups. In order to integrate racial and religious identity, the Special Reporters advise the Government to extend the scope to the federal concept and the Commission's function.

Minorities, particularly minority people, are underrepresented at all levels of political life, especially at state and local levels. The Special Reporters states that minority women, especially in the decision-making processes, lack knowledge about the situation and difficulty. Concrete and targeted action is expected to encourage women's active and successful engagement at all levels of politics. Affirmative policies should be envisaged, including the application of quotas to political groups, to encourage women of minorities and minorities in political life.

The Special Reporters congratulates the Government for the creation of the National Dialog Conference for 2014 as a national platform for various stakeholders, including minority problems of the past, to address and discuss existing political, social, fiscal, and cultural issues. It calls on the Government to continue offering such forums for equal involvement of communities as meaningful means of fostering discussion and seeking consensus on minority concerns.

Nigeria does not gather or analyze cultural, religious, or language-disaggregated results. The Special Rapporteur promotes data collection and research that are necessary to thoroughly chart Nigeria's population and to provide a thorough overview of the different populations of Nigeria and of the socioeconomic situation of its different communities. In terms of policy strategy and proactive strategies to protect the interests of communities of disadvantaged and other vulnerable classes, the benefits overshadow the concerns. In line with universal principles on personal data security and privacy, provisions can be set in motion to defend against bigotry, stigma, and the abuse of confidential details.

Dissolved data collection, including national censuses and social polls, and statistical analyses should be performed at the federal, state, and local levels to provide precise pictures of the population and core features and socioeconomic status of various classes. Census questions could enable the participants to define themselves by their racial, cultural, religious and linguistic identity, including multiple identities in inclusive and multiple ways. The limited statistics available show troubling socioeconomic rights problems such as high poverty rates and unemployment and geographic inequalities in access to education. Implementing economic and civil justice is a fundamental move in promoting social harmony and prosperity, as is the commitment to upholding human rights. Action should be prepared and taken carefully, using comprehensive statistics, to improve socioeconomic conditions for the people, particularly in those most inconvenient classes.

Hundreds of languages are part of Nigeria's cultural plurality. Many of them, though, is badly threatened and some are extinct. The Special Rapporteur acknowledges the Government's significant attempts to safeguard the languages in danger and urges it to strive to step up its efforts to safeguard the rich language heritage of Nigeria. The multiplicity of the languages of minorities threatens the viability of education in the mother tongue. The Special Rapporteur reiterates the Declaration of 1992, in accordance with which states are obliged to adopt adequate steps to include mother-tongue language education or education, wherever necessary, on the rights of people belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities. The Government should provide sufficient resources and implement realistic measures to support the education and training of minority languages in public schools, including the availability of teaching materials. If various languages occur in a locality, the Government should accept formal and informal methodologies and programs focused on local language practices, needs and specifications.

The scarce representation of minority languages in public and private media is one of the problems confronted by speakers of minority languages. Media may be of great importance in promoting and preserving endangered minority languages while preserving the traditions and histories of minorities. It should be encouraged and promoted those special spaces for local languages be allocated to television and radio stations as well as in the news.

The Government has to take adequate measures to ensure that all children have access to compulsory education irrespective of their social class. There should be special actions to combat school dropouts, including poverty-related and socioeconomic measures. They should ensure that minority children, particularly minority girls, attend school, including minority children, enhance the provision of minority language education, increase education funding, and state and local collaboration. In order to provide students with basic civil rights, government structures, and the

rule of law, a particular topic of citizenship education should be introduced into the school curriculum. Knowledge of and significant contribution to the enrichment of Nigeria's cultural, social, and reconciliation should also form an essential part of national education programs, including the past of its various racial, religious, and linguistic cultures and classes.

12.0 Conclusion:

The federal system is playing out as a tool in the hands of the few political elites to cause disunity and amass wealth instead of demographic unity in diversity. The practice of federalism is currently done in Nigeria and has trampled on all the features of good governance and expected dividends and promising benefits of a federal state. The working of federalism as the tool for peace, unity, and equity among varying ethnoreligious groups in the country should work cohesively. There should be clear-cut geopolitical constitutional arrangements that would guarantee adequate fiscal and political powers for the regional states and local governments.

The new states may be created in line with the constitutional provisions and not on the choice of political elites. The legitimacy of the newly created states reduced the domineering tendencies of the major ethnic groups, secured some measure of autonomy and freedom, and enhanced the fundamental rights of the minority groups. It is recommended that the Nigerian Government and stakeholders should henceforth permit the true practice of this principle to reflect ethnic group balance rather than honouring letters from eminent political elites.

“The cause of the violent agitations and protests of the South-South, or the frequent disagreement between the federal and the states is the adoption of fiscal centralism (that is, the control of the country's revenue at the center) as against geopolitical fiscal federalism originated by the military” (Agbu, 2004: 26-52; Adeola, 2008:90).

The revenue sharing formula is long over-due for review as the economic realities of states and Local governments in Nigeria is changing every day, and the current formula (52.68% for the Federal Government), (26.72% for the states) and (20.6% for the LGAs) can no longer meet the realities of today at both state and local government level. The idea of giving more money from the federation account to the Federal Government (a single unit), at the expense of (36) states and (774) local governments seem to have many responsibilities and service to offer the people because of their close proximity to the grassroots should be critically looked by Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) and other stakeholders for more revenue share to be given to lower tiers of governments.

In Nigeria, the nation has a deep intellectual adherence to the affirmative approach recognized as the Principle of Federal Character. The engagement is sponsored and supported by the national federal system, by fears of racial, Geographic, or religious dominance. However, affirmative actions across the country are complicated when there is no clear political commitment to do so (Toyo, 2003: 90). The nation has a reinvestment economy dependent on its reliance on oil incomes. This has a powerful effect on politics which can only affect the path to political power to enable the developed spoil mechanism to support political entrepreneurs. The lack of practical frameworks for oversight and accountability makes it impossible to enforce policy-making. In comparison, Woddy (2004:93) might really be more concerned with “affirmative action in South Africa in Nigeria. There is a narrative of injustice and marginalization of any racial, geographical and religious community in Nigeria, which makes it impossible for a government to enforce affirmative policies.”

Some people also consider positive prejudice to be harmful. Consequently, constructive, affirmative action must be systematic in order to be effective. In Nigeria, the definition of affirmative action can be expanded to include the gender angle to incorporate more racial

minorities. A representative voting structure will also help the mechanism, which is also a very useful tool for implementing affirmative measures. The percentage of racial and religious groups elected in parliament has increased dramatically. This offers these communities a forum that continues to build opportunities for discrimination against them. Today, without sustained protest, mobilization, and associational tensions of the ethnic minority representatives and groups, it is impossible to contribute to any substantive changes in state-ethnic minority relations. Overall, the minorities which produce oil are separated by the income sharing between the centers and the provinces. In the various ethnic communities, the tactic of splitting (as has happened in South Sudan) and dominating among the middle classes, the workforce, and the peasant community should not be permitted. This move unites the various racial groups and breaks the monopoly of the dominant ethnicity.

There are two minority groups in the Middle Belt of Northern Nigeria, namely Tiv and Jukun, among the most bloody and long-lasting cases of ethnic violence. Nigeria's ethnic minority groups have the task of overcoming their disparities, establishing a shared vision, and creating a coherent activism infrastructure. This will offer an excellent ground both to mobilize broad national electoral districts in support of civil, minority and environmental rights and to challenge and remedy the excesses and inequalities of the defective federal Government, which is increasingly draconian in Nigeria. Moreover, a strong geopolitical boost to the development and successful functioning of a Ministry of Minority Affairs of the Federal Government, such a coherent infrastructure might provide a valuable institutional tool for organizing and consummating remedial reforms in ties with the state-ethnic minority ethnic group in Nigeria.

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