

## **Federal Character Principle And National Integration (1999-2011)**

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**ABSTRACT:-**This research determined whether the application of the federal character principle in solving ethnic tension, national question and inequitable distribution of political power possesses the potentials for achieving national integration which is the prerequisite for economic development. Most of the information in this research was based on the secondary source of data collection. Since independence in 1960, Nigeria has been plagued by ethnic tension and political conflicts which have taken the toll of unity and stability in Nigeria. Various solutions, ranging from the adoption of unitary system, federalism to the creation of states, have been proffered and implemented to the creation of states, proffered and implemented, but the problem has persisted. The adoption of federal character principle in Nigeria is to hold the federating units firm. This research also traced the history of amalgamation and evolution of Nigeria as one political unit. It also analyzed and examined the adoption of the Federal Character Principle as a solution to the problem of ethnic tensions arising from inequitable distribution of political power and posts, its relevance to the solution on ethnic tensions and marginalization.

**Keywords:-** *National integration, amalgamation, economic development, political power and ethnic tension.*

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The concept of federal character is a device through which every section of a nation would take part in the decision making process. It is believed that this will give everybody a sense of belonging which is essential for the creation and promotion of unity in a country. In Nigeria, the concept of federal Character was first entrenched in the 1979 constitution of the Federal Republic so as to prevent reoccurrence of those ugly incidents that characterized the first republic in which ethnicity was the hallmark. This concept known as Federal Character implies an embodiment of the Federal Characteristics of Nigeria taking cognizance of different rights of constituent nationalities and ethnic groups [1, 2, 3, 4 and 5].

It refers to a national measure and has assumed different names; quota system, ethnic balancing, equal representation and geographical spread. Prior to 1914, the territory known as Nigeria consisted different communities, each with its own political, economic, social and cultural setting. In fact, they were kingdoms in their own right as they had all the political and economic relationship with the outside world just as the way modern nations relate with each other. So when the British colonial overlords amalgamated the Northern and southern protectorates in 1914, different people with diverse cultures were brought together which created structural imbalance, with the North being much larger than the south [6, 7, 8, 9 and 10].

As a result, the problem of diversity arose and has been confronting our nationhood till date. There also existed kingdoms like the Benin Kingdom, Oyo Empire, the Sokoto Caliphate and the Itsekiri Kingdoms etc. The British colonial masters lumped this kingdom for administrative convenience without making effort to unify them. This gave rise to inter-regional and ethnic rivalry and competition, which have remained a part of our polity today. This action on the part of this British was largely for their selfish economic benefit [11, 12, 13 and 14].

Hence, Ochie Okolo writes ‘‘It is a truism that Nigeria is a creation of European ambition and this presupposes that many groups of divergent cultural background were lumped together to satisfy the European quest for absolute economic and political domination’’. In 1946 following the adoption of Sir Arthur Richards constitution, Nigeria was divided into three unequal regions- North, West and East. The Northern region was the biggest and it became apparent that the affairs and politics of each region was dominated and controlled by the major ethnic group within the enclave-Ibo (East), the Hausa-Fulani (North) and Yoruba (West) and hence clung to regional rather than national interests. This stemmed from the divide and rule tactics entrenched by the colonial overlords as they discovered that the kingdoms they had amalgamated were not unified and hence could not live in peace and harmony due to their different cultural backgrounds. Indeed Jide Oshuntokun remarked that ‘‘what Sir Arthur Richard did was to express in a constitutional form the reality of Nigerian politics of divide and rule’’. Their inter-regional and ethnic rivalry, which had come to be the hallmark of the first republican politics, was also reflected in the party formation. The three major political parties were formed

along ethnic and regional lines. The Northern parties were formed along ethnic and regional lines. The Northern Parties were formed along ethnic and regional lines. The Northern people Congress (NPC) was dominated by the Hausa-Fulani Ethnic groups in the North, the Ibos controlled the National Council of Nigerian Citizen (NCNC) while the Action Group (AG) was dominated by the Yoruba ethnic group and each of these political parties was in control of its own region as was clearly shown in the 1959 general election, hence no single political party commanded two –third majority of the legislative seats. Despite these obvious ethnic differences, Nigeria got political independence from Britain and adopted British Fashioned Cabinet system of government [15, 16, 17, 18 and 19].

Unfortunately, the system rather exacerbates the problem of ethnicism, regionalism and sectionalism. According to Ochie Okolo; ‘‘this system of government panned a lot of embers of cultural and ethnic differences among the people. Confidence was lost in the leaders whose primordial allegiance was going to their various ethnic groups rather than to the artificially created nation-Nigeria’’. The ethnic differences and loss of confidence in leaders paved the way for the Army to seize power. The aim of the Army was to stamp out tribalism, nepotism and sectionalism. In this connection, Gen. Aguiyi-ironisi administration introduced unitary system of administration introduced unitary system of administration for the projection of a united Nigeria, but this was misconstrued by Northerners as a device to consolidate Ibo domination over the resources at the National level. Therefore, the Army itself could not sheer away from the problem of ethnicism, tribalism and sectionalism which characterized the socio-political system they sought to change. Besides, the Army thought that the solution to this regional and ethnic imbroglio was the creation of more states, but this in a way created statism not nationalism. It has been found that creation of more states had not been able to solve the problem of national unity [20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28 and 29].

Due to the desire to achieve a faster and more stable means of national integration, the institutionalization of the Federal Character in 1979 constitution as the way forward became imperative. This study is therefore intended to examine the variety of the federal Character principle as a solution to the problem of national integration.

## **II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of the research are as follows:-

- To examine whether the application of the federal character principle has really helped in any way in achieving national integration and fostering political stability.
- To assess how far the application of the federal character principle has reduced the geo-politics and ethnic politics since its inception in 1979.
- To find out whether the concept of Federal Character is imperative in the distribution of offices and in employment, appointment and promotion in public service.
- To find out probable problems associated with the Federal Character principle and proffer solution to the problems.

## **III. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The importance of this research cannot be over emphasized. However, this study intends that a successful research on why the Nigerian society is still bridled with the problem of disintegration regardless of the Federal Character principle which has been invented to serve, as panacea to the problem of disintegration has not been given adequate attention. Therefore, this study will explore and reveal the nature and the character of the nationalities question and uncover its effect on the national integration and political stability of Nigeria. The study will examine recent developments and proffer informed suggestion that can move the nation forward. Most importantly, the study will be helpful to government officials especially policymakers to work out an equitable formula for power sharing in the federation. It is hoped that the study will draw to the attention of the attendant ills inherent in implementing any policy that has little or nothing to deal with the problem of national disintegration and underdevelopment within the institutional frame work of nation building. Finally, the study will enlighten the government and the people of Nigeria on dangers of sectionalism, fragmentation arising from regressive ethnic conflicts and political hegemony. **Materials and methods**

## **IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The primary role of a theory especially in the social science literature is to explain the underlying connections between groups of related phenomena and thus attempt to describe how the elements of the physical and social world are related, thereby enhancing clearer understanding. Having adequately studied the nature of this work, we consider the political economy paradigm as our preferred framework of analysis. The issue of ethnic tension revolves around man and his well being. Considering the fact that man is a social animal, he does not exist alone and outside the society. His social status prompts him to interact with those around him. His interaction with his environment is based on his struggle for survival. And his struggle for survival arises from

the primary of materials in the society in which there is needs to produce and consume. It is this connection that classes begin to emerge. These classes and how the materials are produced and distributed lay the foundation of domination of one class by another. According to Claude Ake, ‘once we understand how the society produces materials to meet its needs, how the materials are distributed and what type of social relations arise from the organization of production, then we have come a long way to understand the culture of the society, its law, its religious system, its political system and its mood of thought’. Society cannot be discussed outside the nature of its classes and their relationship with one another. Whenever classes exist in society, there is bound to be a State. The State has been a specific modality of class domination with its main distinguishing feature being the autonomization of class domination. So, the product of class struggle is an instrument of the struggle, which is meant to be neutral in the struggle. The problem of national integration in Nigeria arises from class struggle has been cited as an example in this connection. The federal structure in Nigeria does not take cognizance of her heterogeneous nature. As O. Ikejiani and M. Ikejiani put it; ‘the Nigerian leaders have failed to create a true and just Nigerian Federation where no ethnic group would be dominated by other and where the problem of ethnic imbalance which has been the precipitating factor behind most of the crisis independence would be addressed and dealt with squarely’. Going by this fact, the problem of ethnic intolerance can be traced to the class struggle over the allocation of the materials and post and mobility of the Nigerian state to perform its function of mediating the struggle. Thus, the Federal Character Principle, by its application, seems to be unable to solve the problem of national disunity in Nigeria. Therefore, the political economy paradigm is relevant to the problem of ethnic conflict in Nigeria.

**V. HYPOTHESIS**

This research is based on a number of assumptions which are as follows;

- a. The imbalance emanating from the unequal size of the component units of the Nigerian federation tends to give undue advantage to the North and thereby aggravates the problem of marginalization and ethnic intolerance.
- b. The non-implementation of the Federal Character Principle in the recruitment of staff in the public sector is likely to increase efficiency and professionalism.
- c. The personalization of the state power by political leadership promotes prebendalism and undermines even distribution of public offices.

**VI. METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION**

Most of the information in the research is based on the secondary source of data collection. This is because; information and data are collected from written materials and documents. The document and materials include periodicals, Newspapers and magazines, books, seminar papers and articles, past research paper on the works and the 1979 constitution and 1999 constitution.

Table 1 : Composition Of The Federal Government (1979-1983) Ministers

S/N	NAME	POSITION	REGION
1.	Alhaji Shehu Shagari	President	North
2.	Dr . Alex Ekwueme	Vice president	East
3	Dr. Joseph Waya	Senate president	South
4	Chief Edwin Ume-Ezeoke	Speaker, House of Representative	East
5.	Alhaji Shehu Musa	Secretary to the Federal government	North

**MINISTERS**

1.	Alhaji Adamu Groma	Agriculture	North
2.	Alhaji M.H. Jesa	Aviation	North
3.	Alhaji Maitama Yusuf	Commerce	North
4.	Mr. Audu Ogbe	Communication	North
5.	Dr. Sylvester Ugoh	Education	South
6.	Dr. E.C.Osamor	Employment, labour and productivity	south
7.	Prof. Ishaya	External affairs	North
8.	Alhaji Musa	Federal Capital Territory	North
9.	Mr. Victor	Finance	South
10.	Chief C.A. Bamgboye	Health	south
11.	Alhaji Ahmed Musa	Housing and environment	North

12.	Alhaji Akambi Oni	Industries	North
13.	Alhaji Garba	Information	North
14.	Alhaji Ali Baba	Internal Affairs	North
15.	Chief R. Akinjide	Justice	South
16.	Ibrahim Hassan	Mine and Power	North
17.	Mrs. Ebun Oyogbola	National Planning	South
18.	Dr. Wahab Dosomu	Science and Technology	South
19.	Alhaji Baba Ahmed	Social Welfare, Youth, Sports, and Culture	North
20.	Prof. Sunday Essang	Works	South
21.	Dr. E.J Atanu	Water resources	North
22.	Dr. Wmaru Dikki	Transport	North

Source: Nigerian Year book 1983, p.27-28

The table above shows how the 1979 composition was made on the ethno-regional basis. By drawing ministers from all states in the regions, the table shows that apart from the positions of the president and the secretary to federal government held by people from the North, 14 ministers came from the Northern region while 8 ministers were appointed from the south. Based on the North-south dichotomy syndrome, the North invariably dominated in the federal cabinet thereby negating the regional balancing formular.

TABLE 2: COMPOSITION OF FEDERAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL 1999 BY STATE AND ZONE

S/N	NAME	POSITION	STATE AND ZONE
1.	Zango Daura	Agric and Rural Development	Kastina (N- West)
2.	Dr. Segun Aganga	Aviation	Ondo (S – West)
3	Engr. Bello Mustapha	Commerce	Niger (N – West)
4	Mohammed Arzika	Communication	Sokoto (N – West)
5.	Mr. Ojo Madueke	Culture and Tourism	Abia (S – East)
6.	Gen. Yakubu Danjuma	Defence	Taraba (N – East)
7.	Tunde Adeniran	Education	Ekiti (S – West)
8.	Dr. Hassan Adamu	Environment	Adamawa (N – East)
9.	Alhaji Ibrahim Bunu	FCT	Borno (N – North)
10.	Adamu Ciroma	Finance	Yobe (N – North)
11.	Sule Lamido	Foreign Affairs	Jigawa (N – West)
12.	Dr. Tim Menakaya	Health	Ananbra (S – East)
13.	Dr. Iyochia Ayu	Industries	Benue (N – Central)
14.	Dapo Sarumi	Information	Lagos (S- West)
15	Jerri Gana	Integration in Africa	Niger (N-West)
16.	S . M Afolabi	Internal Affairs	Ogun (S-West)
17.	Kanu G. Agabi	Justice	Cross R. (S-South)
18.	David Jemibowen	Police Affairs	Kogi (N-Central)
19.	Bola Ige	Power and Steel	Osun (S –West)
20.	Ebitimi Banigo	Science and Tech.	Bayelsa (S- South)
21.	Damisi Sango	Youth, Sports, and Social Development	Plateau (N – North)
22	Kema Chikwe	Transport	Imo (S –East)
23.	Col. Mohammed Bello	Water Resource	Kebbi (N – West)
24.	Tony Anenih	Works and Housing	Edo (S-South)
25.	Chief Tonye Douglas	Labour and Productivity	Rivers (S – South)

The composition of the federal executive council under Obasanjo in his first term in 1999 had equal representation and distribution of political post. In other words, there was parity in the composition between the North and south in the federal executive council. Nevertheless, the situation changed in 2003 when he drew ministers from all states of the federation. Under this arrangement, there is no more parity in the composition between the North and the south in the federal executive council. At the initial stage of his regime, Obasanjo seemed to have appreciated the need to abide by the Regional balancing formula, but made about–turn in his second terms and the pattern of inequities in the distribution of political posts re-emerged. The table below shows the composition of Obasanjo’s Inaugural Cabinet in 2003 by state.

TABLE 3: MEMBERS OF OBASANJO'S INAUGRAL CABINET (2003).

S/N	NAME	MINISTERIAL POSITION	STATE
1.	Adamu Bello	Agriculture	Adamawa
2.	Bamidele Dada	State of Agriculture	Oyo
3	Isa Yuguda	Aviation	Bauchi
4	Idris Waziri	Commerce	Taraba
5.	Cornelius Adebayo	Communication	Kwara
6.	Prof. Fabian Osuji	Education	Imo
7.	Bintu Musa	State of Education	Bornu
8.	Olu Adeniji	Foreign Affairs	Ogun
9.	Samala Sambawa	State of Foreign Affairs	Kebbi
10.	Ngozi Okonjo – Iweala	Finance	Abia
11.	Nehadi Esther Usman	State of Finance	Kaduna
12.	Eyitayo Lambo	Health	Kogi
13.	Dr. Iyocha Ayu	Internal Affairs	Benue
14.	Saidu Sambawa	Industries	Kebbi
15.	Chukwuemeka	Information	Anambra
16.	Akinlola Olujimi	Justice	Oyo
17.	Hussani Akwanya	Labour and productivity	Nasarswa
18.	Kunle Adedoyin	National Planning	Kwara
20.	Prof. Turner Isuon	Science and Tech	Bayelsa
21.	Mayamus Egbesia	Solid Mineral	Edo
22.	Col. Musa Mohammed	Sports and social Development	Gombe
23.	Mutari Shagari	Water Resource	Sokoto
24.	Dr. Abiye Sekibo	Transport	Rivers
25.	Adeseye Ogunlere	Works and Housing	Lagos
26.	Saleh Shehu	State of Works	Jigawa
27.	Rita Akpan	Women Affairs	Akwa- Ibom
28.	Broderick Bozimo	Police Affairs	Delta
29.	Abubakar Tanko	State of Internal Affairs	Niger
30.	Mrs. Mobolaji Osomo	Housing and Urban	Ondo
31.	Frankline Ogbuewu	Culture and Tourism	Ebonyi
32.	Lawon Gana Guba	Co-operation and Integration in Africa	Yobe
33.	Frank Nweke (Jnr)	Inter-governmental and special Duties	Enugu
34.	Nasiry El-Rufai	FCT	kaduna
35.	Rabiu Kwankwaso	Defence	Kano
36.	Roland Oritesejafor	State of Defence	Delta
37.	Mohammed Musa	State of Environment	Plateau
38.	Bala Mand	Environment	Zamfara

Sources: News Watch June 23, 2003.

With the desire to ensure ethnic balancing and for every state to be represented in the cabinet, the president appointed ministers from all the states in the federation. Out of 38 ministers, 21 are Northerners and 17 are from the south. The aftermath is the inequity in the distribution of the posts in favour of the north. According to Ifesinachi, 'the use of ethnic or geographic region as criteria for the distribution of political posts is needed a blue-print for political instability'. As it is, the Nigerian Federation is quite unbalanced as the Northern region is larger in population and landmass than the East and West put together. As Prof. Nwabueze observed the structural unbalance of Nigerian Federation, he said: The most astonishing peculiarity of Nigeria Federation was the imbalance in size and population between the North and other regions. The Northern region was larger than the rest of the regions put together, encompassing 75 percent of the land area and 60 percent of the population. To emphasize this point even further as it is the present federal structure, out of 36 states in the federation, the north has 19 states and the East and the West put together has 17 states. From this analogy, there is inevitability of inequities and inequalities in the distribution of political posts and national resources.

**VII. EVALUATION OF YAR ADUA'S CABINET.  
THE CABINET OF PRESIDENT UMARU YAR'ADUA**

Table 4: The cabinets that replaced that of President Olusegun Obasanjo and was named in July 2007; two months after Yar'Adua has assumed office.

Cabinet Membership Title	Officeholders
1) Vice president	Goodluck Jonathan (May 2009)
2) Secretary	Baba Ganakingibe (July 2007-Sept 2008).
3) Agriculture and Water Resources	Abba Sayyadi Ruma (July2007- March 2010).
4) Aviation	Babatunde Omotoba (Dec. 2008- March 2010).
5) Commerce and Industry	Charles Ugwu (July 2007-Oct. 2008)
5b) commerce and Industry	Achike Udenwa (Dec. 2008 – March 2010).
6) Defence	Mahmud Jayaele Ahmed (July 2007-Sept.2008.
7) Education	Igwe Aja –Nwachukwu (July 2007- Dec. 2008)
8) Environment	Halima Tayo Alao (July 2007- Oct.2008)
9) Federal Capital Territory	Aliyu Modibbo Umar (July 2007- Oct.2008).
9b) Federal Capital Territory	Adamu Aliero (Dec. 2008-March 2010)
10) Finance	Shamsuddeen Usman (July 2007-Jan. 2009)
10b) finance	Mansur Muhtar (Jan. 2009-March 2010)
11) Foreign Affairs	Ojo Maduekwe (July 2007-March 2010)
12) Health	Adenike Grange (July 2007- March 2008)
12b) Health	Babatunde Osotimehin (Dec. 2008- March 2010)
13) Information and Communication	John Odey (July 2000 Dec. 2008)
13a	Dora Akunyili (Dec.2008-March 2010)
14) Interior	Godwin Abbe (July 2007-July 2009)
14b) Interior	Shettima Mustapha (July 2009-March2010)
15) Justice (Attorney General)	Micheal Aondoakaa (July 2007 – Feb.2010)
16) Labour	Hassan Muhammed Lawal (July 2007-Dec.2008)
17) Mines and Steel Development	Adetokunbo Kayode (Dec.2008-Feb.2010)
17b) Mines and Steel Development	Sarafa Tunji Ishola (July 2007- Oct. 2008)
18) National Planning	Diezani Alison –Madueke (Dec. 2008-March2010)
19) Niger Delta	Ufot Eketta (Dec.2008-March 2010)
20) Petroleum	Rilwanu Lukman (Dec.2008-Feb-2010)
21) Police Affairs	Ibrahim Lame (Dec. 2008-March 2010)
22) Power	Rilwan Lanre Babalola (Dec. 2008- March 2010)
23) Science and Technology	Grace Ekpiwhre (July 2007-Dec.2008)
23b) science and Technology	Alhassan Bako Zaku (Dec.2008-Feb. 2010)
24) Sport	Abdulrahman Gruba (July 2007-Oct.2008)
24b) Sport	Sani Ndanusa (Dec. 2008 – March 2010)
25) Transport	Diezani Alison – Madueke (July 2007-Dec.2008)
25b) Transport	Ibrahim Bio (Dec. 2008-March 2010)
26) Tourism, Culture and National Orientation	Adetokumbo Kayode (July 2007 – Dec.2008)
27) Women Affairs	Saudatu Bungudu (July 2007-Oct. 2008)
27b) Women Affairs	Salamatu Hussani Sulieman (Dec. 2008 March 2010)
28) Works and Housing	Hassan Muhammed Lawal (Dec. 2008-March 2010)
29) Works and Housing	Hassan Muhammed Lawal (Dec.2008 March 2010)

30) Youth Development	Akinlabi Olasunkanmi (July 2007 – March 2010)
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There was a great deal of lobbying and jostling for position during Yar' Adua's regime. Notwithstanding, the Yoruba Council of Elders (YCE) rose from a meeting in Ibadan in June and expressed worry over the pattern of federal appointment made by president Umaru Yar'Adua. Either by default or design (I cannot tell) the three arms of government are headed by Northerners. President Yar'Adua, of course, heads the executive. The legislature is split North –South but the upper house, i.e the senate, went to the North as David Mark takes charge. Idris Kutigi, who is also a Northerner, heads the Judiciary and completes Northern domination of the three arms of Government. This calculation is very tricky. Given the distribution formula adopted by the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in which the president was zoned to the North, we still would have had a Northern President. What would have changed this arrangement is if any other party that fielded a non-Northern candidate had won the presidential election. Even if Atiku Abubakar of the Action Congress (AC) or Muhammadu Buhari of All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) had won, we still would have had a Northern President. The Senate Presidency was zoned to the Middle Belt where David Mark hails from. Lastly, the Chief Justice was also from the Middle Belt and has closer affinity with the Yoruba of South West. That notwithstanding, he is still a Northerner even though his appointment predates Yar Adua's election and was only fortunate to have climbed to the top of the judicial ladder. After this, Yar Adua announced his ministers. Again, either by design or default, no Yoruba of consequence emerged as minister or got a juicy portfolio. What would have been the ace, Bode Agusto, was shot down by the senate. The understanding then was that he would head the finance ministry. Let me quickly enter a caveat here, the idea of a juicy ministry is in itself an aberration. Any political appointment is a call to public service. While I agree that service has its reward, it is a very wrong prism to look at appointments. The service aspect should supersede the reward aspect. It is time we start looking beyond ethnic divide. The diversity in our culture and ethnicity should be seen as strength. Election into leadership position should not be based on ethnic sentiments. I wouldn't vote for someone just because he is a Yoruba. For example, what did the Yoruba benefit from eight years of Obasanjo rule? Has Katsina developed any better than Lagos since President Yar' Adua assumed office? These are the important questions we need to ask.

**TABLE 5: STATISTICS ON THE STATE OF POLITICAL DOMINATION IN NIGERIA. HEADS OF STATE 1959–2011**

Tenure	Duration	Civil Era	Military Era	Region
1/10/59-15/1966	6 years	Tafawa Belewa		North
15/1/1966	6 months		Gen. Aguiyi Ironsi	South
29/7/1966 - 29/7/1975	9 years		Gen. Yakubu Gowon	North
29/7/1975 - 13/2/1976	6 months		Gen. Murtala Muhammed	North
13/2/1976 - 1/10/1979	3 years		Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo	South
1/10/1979-31/10/1983	4 years	Alhaji Shehu Shagari		North
31/10/1983-31/10/1983	8 years		Gen. Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida	North
27/8/1993 - 17/11/1993	3 months	Ernest Adegunle Oladeinde Shonekan		South
17/11/1993 - 8/6/1998	5 years		Gen. Sani Abacha	North
8/6/1998-29/5/1999	1 year		Gen. Abdusalam Abubarka	North
29/05/1999-29/05/2007	8 years	Chief Olusegun Obasanjo		South
29/05/2007-5/05/2010	3 years	Umaru Musa Yar' Adua		North
05/05/2010-Date	3 years	Goodluck Ebele Azikiwe		South

		<b>Jonathan</b>		
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The table shows that out of 14 heads of states in this country, 9 were Northern and only 5 have come from the south. From this analogy, one can understand that the North dominates in the political scene both in the civil and military era. It is also quite understood that the present civilian president is the second elected president produced from the South under civilian regime, as perhaps atonement for the annulled June 12 presidential election won by a Southerner. Therefore, the Federal Character principle has not been able to achieve its objectives of equality and fairness in the distribution of power and public offers due to the political hegemony of one section in the country.

### VIII. CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between the application of the Federal Character Principle and National integration in Nigeria. Specifically, I evaluated the application of the Federal Character Principle, quota system and catchments areas as a solution to the problem of domination and marginalization. In this connection the following questions were posed: Why has the problem of ethnic intolerance and marginalization persisted despite the introduction of the Federal Character principle?; What are the basic roles of the Federal Character Principle in relation to Nigerian civil service and other agencies?; Has the Federal Character Principle addressed the problem of skewed distribution of skewed distribution of public officers? Given the above, we formulated the following hypotheses: The imbalance emanating from the unequal size of the component units of the Nigerian federation tends to give undue advantages to the North and thereby aggravates the problem of ethnic intolerance and marginalization; The non-implementation of the Federal Character principle in the recruitment of staff in the public sector is likely to increase efficiency and professionalism; The personalization and state power by the political leadership promotes prebendalism and undermines even distribution of public offices. We derived our framework of analysis from the political economy paradigm. We use this to explain man's struggle for survival, arising from the primary of materials in the society in which there is need to produce and consume. In point of fact, the prevailing phenomena, ethnicity, regionalism, sectionalism can be traced to the struggle among the people over the allocation of materials and resources in the society. Hence the problem of ethnic intolerance and marginalization Nigerian arising from the struggle among the groups over the distribution of the materials and resources has been cited as an example. Meanwhile, we commenced the investigations by reviewing related literature on the topic. Through this, some of their arguments concerning the strengths and weaknesses in the study, which were exposed provided help in our search for answers to the problems raised in the work. One important fact revealed by our analysis in chapter one, for example, is the fact that the introduction of Federal Character principle was occasioned by inequality and inequity in the distribution of power among the ethno-regional groups in the country. In chapter two, attempt was made to examine the application of Federal Character Principle by the successive administrations in the sharing of political posts on the basis of ethno-regional quota. In our findings, we discovered that the application of principle in the sharing of posts or offices on the basis of ethno-regional quota has, rather than peace and unity, exacerbated the inter-ethno-regional conflicts and tensions. This is due to the unbalanced structure of Nigerian Federation in which the North is larger in population and landmass than the West and East put together. Thus, in our findings, we discovered that the application of the principle in the distribution of political posts is done in favour of the North which inspires constant feelings of domination and marginalization in others. In chapter three, we examined the application of the Federal Character principle in the recruitment of staff in the public sector to checkmate the incidence of ethno-regional domination. We were able to discover that the application of the principle in the recruitment of staff in the public service results in inefficiency, ineffectiveness and unprofessionalism as mediocrities are invariably recruited into the public service because of their states designated as 'disadvantaged'. In Chapter Four, efforts were made to provide insight into the Northern hegemony in the state power and establish the source of their fate. In our findings, we discovered that the North derived their dominance through contrivance by the rest while colonial authority in Nigeria which provides impetus to the political hegemony, thereby undermining even distribution of political power and office. Conclusively, the adoption of Federal Character Principle as an institutional arrangement was examined. There was a popular notion that the introduction of the principle as an institutional arrangement would address to the problem of skewed distribution of public offices. In this course of analysis, it was evident that the problem of skewed distribution of public offices does not rest with the institutional arrangement, but the type of political leadership. Instantly is a multifaceted phenomenon whose Character and manifestation reflects the existing patterns and processes of socio-economic and political competition, interaction and inter-relationship in the system. On the institutional framework, Nigeria had experimented on such structures as federalism, unitary system, and parliamentary democracy. Military government etc. the question now is, how will the federal Character principle performs the magic? From the evidence available in the study, it was noted that the applications on the basis of ethno-regional quota has the potential of intensifying the problem of domination and marginalization it is expected to solve.



## **IX. RECOMMENDATIONS**

In the analysis, therefore, the study takes the view that the solution to the problem of ethno-regional domination and political marginalization lies in the emergence of people-oriented purposeful political leadership capable of carrying the people along and harmonizing their various interests. No matter the level of compromise on the principle, its prospects are predicted on the type of political leadership in the country. As Achebe rightly remarked: "There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian land or climate or water or air or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility, to the challenges of personal example which are the hallmark of true leadership. What is required, therefore, is to enthrone a political leadership that is capable of pursuing a policy or principle that clings to national interests. This is because the leadership of a country has much influence on the course of events in the country. In our findings, we discovered that the principle is applied in the recruitment of the staff in the public service and admission of students in the Nigerian Colleges and Universities to check the problem of educational imbalance in the country. In which case, the North claims that they are dominated in the public service because of their late acquisition of western education. Invariably this leads to the recruitment of mediocre staff in the public service and admission of unqualified students in the colleges and universities. In order to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and professionalism in the public service, the recruitment of staff and admission of students should be based on merit. We also discovered that political power has long been monopolized by the Northern element of the country which instigates the feelings of domination and marginalization of other units of the Federation. Though, there have been various measures taken by the leadership to ensure equal distribution of political power, we stress the need for the adoption of the principle of rotation of power. Its application should revolve around all six geo-political zones that make up the country. This will give opportunity for every section to taste power as well as go a long way in curbing the problem of domination and marginalization in the country.

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