The practice of inclusive representation in Nigeria bureaucracy: The federal character principle experience

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Abstract: This paper reviews the application of federal character principle (FCP) in Nigerian civil service for inclusive representation and national unity. It draws on case studies and empirical works on the exacerbated disunity, persistent primordial sectional loyalty over national loyalty. It adopts face-to-face interviews, documentary and thematic analyses. Findings reveal that FCP has negative effects on Nigerian bureaucracy following the way it has been applied. It illustrates how inter-ethnic rivalry and national disunity continue unabated because of governance issues associated with representative bureaucracy. A number of research priorities linking inequalities between federating units are identified for the immediate attention of researchers whose research interest areas may include practice and the future of Nigeria bureaucracy. The paper, however, argues for sound governance model as a substitute for FCP. It highlights the components of sound governance model to include citizen active participation, collaboration, network, equity, stronger regulations, etc. Its implications for public trust, equity and public-service diversity management and national unity in Nigeria’s democratic governance were equally highlighted.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

In this paper, the authors examine the historical evolution and philosophical underpinnings of FCP, and dynamics of its vague operational dimension in the Nigerian bureaucracy. Hence, the authors stress the need for incorporating sound governance as its complement, or suffer abandonment and replacement by sound governance approach for FCP’s ironical emphasis on ethnic chauvinism rather than presumed national integration goal. The authors propose sound governance as an approach for repositioning the Nigerian bureaucracy for effective and efficient service delivery, which FCP in the pretext of representative bureaucracy has failed to achieve in Nigeria.

PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

The introduction and application of Federal Character Principle in the Nigerian civil service is a distraction from meeting governance needs to the extent that nepotism, mediocrity and corrupt practices have substituted merit and competence. This article highlights major social, economic, psychological, emotional and political implications of representative bureaucracy in Nigeria. Face-to-face interviews, documentary and thematic analyses reveal negative influence on efficiency, effectiveness and national unity. Findings show that application of the principle left the country more divided, created by absence of inclusion, equity, popular representation and improvements in the welfare of the citizens. The pervasive effect of the above issues is the justification for removal of the federal character
1. Introduction
Recent scholarly research in public administration has interrogated the impact of democratic governance in Nigeria’s public bureaucracies (Ijewereme, 2015; Okolo, 2014; Okpata & Ukeje, 2017). Among the demands of democratic governance, inclusivity is the most avowed. Mosher, Pitki view active representation as a fundamental goal of democratic governance (as cited in Andrews, Ashworth, & Meier, 2014). The concept of inclusive governance is imposed by the ideals of equity and a sense of national belonging. Alafuro and Thom-Otuya (2014) argue that equity and inclusiveness are central to good governance. In multi-ethnic and almost rigidly heterogeneous societies emphasis on the prerequisites for good governance takes the top priority. In particular, the pervasive role of bureaucracy in governance of a relatively highly volatile society positions it as the cynosure of all eyes. Bureaucracy is the heartbeat of government without which the latter’s essence vanishes. Asiodu clarified that the civil service is the first manifestation of government to the people (as cited in Aziken, Ndujihe & Kumolu, 2015). Its technical competence has earned it the status of the toast of government that it is so carefully guided and preserved. Hence, the Nigerian federal state where national unity is threatened by intense completion for the soul of the bureaucracy, created by the unresolved governance issue, equity and inclusive representations, have gained prominent importance in the bureaucracy.

The political philosophical underpinning of representative bureaucracy is the elimination of ethnic domination induced by emotions, nepotism, tribalism and gerontocratic traditionalism through accommodation of diverse interest groups in governance system. In Nigeria, it was also intended to encourage behavioural transition from the primordial ethnic loyalty to a regime of national integration and consciousness. Influenced by the threatening imbalanced resource allocation and ethnic disillusionment, several means of power sharing for inclusive government have been experimented. Within the search for governance framework that can create an atmosphere for mutual ethnic cooperation and national loyalty, little progress, in practical terms, has understandably been recorded.

Despite several efforts, agitations of ethnic nationalities have not been doused, a phenomenon responsible for recurrent calls for political and economic restructuring of the country (Ikeanyibe, Ori, & Okoye, 2017). Among the power sharing dynamics is policy contrivance technically referred to as Federal Character Principle (FCP). Its introduction into the Nigerian governance lexicon in 1975 by the Murtala administration and its enshrinement in the country’s constitution for the first time in 1979 was intended to solve the country’s fundamental problem. Since then it has been replicated in subsequent Nigerian constitutions, and appointments into public institutions have reflected such concept in a brazenly suspicious manner. For instance, appointments to public service institutions undermined, linguistic, religious, ethnic and geographic diversity of Nigeria in the most unfairly manner. Politicization of the country’s bureaucracy occasioned by subjective enforcement of the FCP brings to fore the incompatibility of bureaucratic norms with ethnically representative bureaucracy. In this sense, the application of FCP in the federal civil service has no doubt reduced the merit-based bureaucracy to ridicule in the course of implementing the quota system essentially based on states of origin, with negative impacts on the sanctity of the Nigerian bureaucratic virtues. The underlying conflict between the public bureaucratic norms and the processes of achieving representative bureaucracy as clearly enunciated in the FCP can be an important aspect in understanding the governance impact of FCP in Nigeria. Nevertheless, there is an increasing demand for inclusiveness, equity and bureaucratic performance globally. These issues are important as they highlight ongoing concerns about the impact of diversity management and research on bureaucratic practices in other federal systems for national unity and representative bureaucracy (Naff & Copers, 2014; Naff & Crum, 2000; Selden, 2006; Sowa & Selden, 2003).

In sum, the Federal Character Principle (FCP) is widely seen to have promoted exclusion, especially in appointments in the Nigeria’s civil service, and the growing mutual distrust, ethnic loyalty, regionally based agitations for self-governments that follow highlight the issues surrounding the national policy integration model. Performance failures in representative bureaucracy and inclusive
governance in Nigeria are not unconnected with the skewed application of FCP. This observation has enjoyed wide and eloquent affirmation. According to Federal Character Commission (FCC, 2006), attainment of public good and unity is a corollary of the spirit of representation in an equitable and transparent manner that accommodates the principle of diversity management in bureaucratic representation as against the ideology of FCP and application.

This study attempts to highlight shortcomings of FCP as a model for national integration and inclusivity, and how Nigerian bureaucracy, service delivery and national consciousness are impeded. It is in the light of this that the study argues that considerations beyond the sheer rhetoric of FCP should be contemplated. Hence, it presents sound governance framework as an alternative realistic tool or a complement to FCP for depersonalized inclusivity, national integration and development.

Drawing from Marxian perspective of Bureaucracy, FCP is in itself an elite’s exploitation construct to douse ethnic tension and divert citizens’ attention from the ineffectiveness and inefficiency of the Nigerian civil service. The representatives will not take action to further the interests of the people they are presumed to represent.

2. Material and method
Two methods for data gathering in social research are considered appropriate. Either the quantitative or the qualitative has proved very useful, depending on the nature of the social problem and how the researcher intends to investigate and solve it. Particularly, qualitative method was used by the researchers. Both documentary analysis and thematic analysis were used in order to address the research questions highlighted in the introduction. Conventionally, qualitative methods provide explanations only of the particular case studied. Qualitative research method is useful in understanding of a phenomenon such as poverty, migration, insecurity, as it proceeds from exploring the totality of the situation; often with access to large amounts of “hard data” of a non-numerical form. The major task of qualitative research is to analyse data by organising it into categories on the basis of themes, patterns, concepts or similar features (Neuman, 1997). Similarly, as a form of qualitative research analysis, thematic analysis emphasises pinpointing, examining and recording patterns across data sets that are important to the description of a phenomenon, and are associated to a specific research question. Using qualitative methods and thematic analysis helped to delve into and understand the individuals’ perceptions, experiences, feelings, attitudes, emotions, frustrations, towards implementation and outcome of FCP in Nigerian civil service.

The paper focuses on the impact of FCP-Bureaucracy intersection (representative bureaucracy) on service delivery, national unity and governance by assessing the application in major appointments/recruitments in Nigerian civil service. Essentially, the study relies on primary source of data like government documents, reports and face-to-face interviews with 10 respondents drawn from the civil service, 15 respondents randomly selected from outside the civil service on the contribution of their representatives to their welfare. Some of them either belonged to separatist movements or were supporters of same.

Using interview techniques helped to reveal how the FCP is inadequate to address unequal representation and national disintegration. In all, 25 interviews were held usually for 15 min to 30 min and were transcribed and analysed. Comprehensive notes were written up during each interview. The data were interrogated for validity, thematically analysed and findings discussed in narrative.

3. Analysis
The paper adopts a thematic analysis as highlighted above. It is a commonplace that since military incursion into Nigerian politics the bureaucracy has been highly politicized and compromised on competence. The introduction of FCP has complicated the situation, though. According to Azelama and Agbebaku, “administration of Gowon was enmeshed in corruption, nepotism, favoritism, and insecurity and gradually becoming ineffective...” (as cited in Ijewere, 2018, p. 5). In 1975, the same year FCP was introduced, “about 11, 000 bureaucrats were summarily dismissed on grounds
of corruption, divided loyalty, declining productivity, without the benefit of defending themselves... the purge led to the dismissal of the good civil servants with the bad” (Ijewere, 2018). This was confirmed in an interview with Chief Philip Asiodu, a foremost civil servant who retired as permanent secretary in 1975. His impression of the civil service of today and impact of FCP:

“I joined the civil service towards the end of the colonial era. And I became a permanent secretary under Zik and Balewa. I stayed on in the first two military regimes of Ironsi and Gowon. And then came the destruction of that civil service in 1975 when Gowon was removed. I was retired and I was the number one civilian among those retired with immediate effect!.. Since leaving civil service I had the opportunity of coming back to the public service three times but not as a civil servant. So I have had the opportunity of seeing the civil service under the colonial and post independence era. There is no doubt that it is a completely different situation because the civil service that I joined had clear rules to be satisfied and defined conditions of entry. There were well arranged courses that you had to undertake before confirmation. And after that, there were local and international programmes to be undertaken. We had clear demarcation of classes.. We went into quota and misapplied the quota system...with the great shock of 1975, stars were driven out of the service. They made sure that the civil service was no longer the choice destination. My father was a civil servant, which was attractive then...After the disruption of 1975, they just started promoting people without respect to the organogram of the service. So we ended up having a public service without traditions. The fact that the service is no longer secure and objective did not do good to the public service..To show the decay, there was a time an examination was introduced for people who were to be made permanent secretaries and a number of them could not even write minutes. When you look at what we have in the civil service today, it is a far cry from what we had”

4. Nigerian bureaucracy and citizens’ welfare
One respondent expressed disaffection with the civil service, comparing the gains up to 1970s to what it is now.

“Today we hear that quality of education was very impressive in the past; why no longer so now? Today, we have learning facility deficit and unemployable graduates. Learning materials are either nonexistent or very insufficient. Infrastructures are of very low quality. Does the ministry of works still exist? I mean, this is madness”

5. Nigerian civil service competence and service delivery
Nigerian bureaucracy has never improved on corruption scandals and poor performance. The above observation was reaffirmed by a former president of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, according to NCC on SERVICOM:

Public offices are the shopping floor for government business. Regrettably, Nigerians have for too long been short-changed by the quality of public service delivery by which decisions are not made without undue outside influence, and files do not move without being pushed with inducements. Our public offices have for too long been showcases for our combined evils of inefficiency and corruption, whilst being impediments to effective implementation of government policies. Nigerians deserve better. And we will ensure they get what is better (as cited in Offu, Ukeje, & Offu, 2018, p. 2)

6. FCP and national integration
From our respondent, national unity of this country worsened in the current administration. This, according to our findings, threatens the peace and the country’s corporate coexistence.

Respondent 5:

“Buhari has failed the nation with his divisive style of government. Although, I have thought, Nigeria under Jonathan and Yar’adua governments was making head way towards unifying the country since the return of democracy, I am beginning to believe that the Nigerian project will never work, and therefore a waste of time and hope. It is time to start thinking
about the agitation and creation of a Country where the coalition of the willing can live together side by side. Buhari is a total failure, and I doubted his ability to govern Nigeria with fairness and justice, and he has demonstrated that he is nothing but a bigoted fellow, and he will ensure his successor will have the same dark and evil hearts as his. Therefore, we must begin the process of extricating ourselves from the stranglehold of this falsehood called Nigeria, if it means another civil war, it is better than to be a slave in your own country without resistance”

Respondent 6

“Your views make a lot of sense but I must disagree with the very idea of a civil war. South Africa ended dictatorship without a civil war; the Soviet Union broke up without a civil war. I am sure we can restructure Nigeria without a civil war if we are serious. Once we begin to consider the idea of a war, it will become inevitable. Moreover, modern wars hardly end. Look at Somalia, look at the Sudans, look at the Middle East, look at the War on Terror. We must decide that we can resolve our issues in a non-violent way. The problem is that we have not even started trying. Most citizens are very illiterate and unenlightened about our poltiical issues so they don’t know how to respond except by resorting to ethnic, regional, and religious bigotry. That is why someone as visionless as Buhari has the support he has today. In my view, our biggest problem is political illiteracy and not even corruption. And I think that is where we should start, by educating our people, especially the young. My two cents …”

7. Representation, equity and welfare of citizens

Our findings show a high level of disaffection with level of representation and equity.

Respondent 8

“I am from the Southeast of Nigeria. If you took tour of the region you would discover deplorable roads connecting states. These roads have been so since my secondary school days. In our hospitals, there is scarcity of drugs, shortage of qualified personnel and dilapidated surroundings. Some time, I blamed our leaders in the belief people from the north had better welfare. I later discovered that they complain as much as we do here. I have come to understand that our representatives from the East and from the north are the same. And that is the reason you would see the north complain of marginalization same way as the people from the South”

Respondent 19

“There is no fairness in recruitment and appointment in this country. It is a settled issue that the North relies on a purported higher population to take the best and more positions than the South. Maybe because the north has produced more heads of state and presidents. Under President Buhari, most our ministries, parastatals and departments are headed by people from the north. So, tell me, where lies equity?”

8. Theoretical framework of analysis

The performance failure of bureaucracy in Nigeria in terms of sound governance, equity and national integration through the underlying representative rhetoric of FCP is viewed from the Marxist tradition. However, for a balanced account of bureaucracy in terms of its normative values and operations, other contending conceptual perspectives and models are mentioned in passing. It helps to illuminate an appreciation of why Nigerian question has remained unanswered, and the extent FCP has fared in the hope of providing answers to the multifaceted problem of Nigeria.

From the Weberian standpoint, “bureaucracy is a large scale, complex, hierarchical and specialized organization designed to achieve in its operations, rational objectives in the most effective and efficient manner” (Obasi, 2005, p. 56). It is in the light of bureaucratic qualities of formalism and impersonality that maximization of the rational goal is largely contemplated. Certain qualities
such as hierarchy, division of labour premised on specialization, merit-based recruitment and promotion policy, security of tenure, the constitution of an office as a career, application of formal rules to guide official conduct, performance of official duties in the spirit of impersonality, fundamentally qualify classical bureaucracy of Weber as superior organization.

However, assessment of Nigerian bureaucracy against classical Weberian criteria revealed non-conformity. Similarly, result from its assessment against the liberal Weberian perspective revealed similar result. More so, an assessment of the country’s bureaucracy against the neo-bureaucratic mode of Herbert Simon’s criteria of rationality and productivity; against the institutional mode of Charles Lindblom’s criteria of pluralism; against the Human Relation model of Elton Mayo’s criteria of worker satisfaction, personal growth and individual dignity exhibited same result. Most importantly, finding from an assessment of Nigerian civil service against the Public Choice model of Vincent Ostrom criteria of citizen’s options or choices, equal access to services produced revealed nonconformity.

The Marxian theory provides explanations for the nonconformity and noncompliant practices in the Nigerian bureaucracy. In the first instance, the Marxian conception of a bureaucracy is that it is an instrument of class domination, exploitation and oppression. More particularly, it views bureaucracy as an instrument wielded by the ruling class in the accumulation of capital. The fact that the ruling class projects the important driving force of a bureaucracy as a developmental instrument, Gana pinpoints that domination of bureaucracy is usually marked by interposing itself as the general interest smoke screen between the exploiters and the exploited (as cited in Obasi, 2005). Obasi further argues that the failure of the Nigerian bureaucracy to perform effectively and efficiently since independence is largely due to the neo-colonial capitalist character of the state. Emphatically, the economic and social base of a state determines its essence. Therefore, a state is invariably an instrument in the hands of the minority for consolidating its dominance if the society’s foundation is on private property and the exploitation of the poor by the rich (Obasi, 2005). Thus, in absence of common property, the objective conditions for inequality and exploitation of man by man thrives thereby making the state an instrument for expressing the will of the ruling class, not the will of the masses.

The Nigerian state is a creation of British colonial authority, and its institutional mechanisms like FCP designed to address the national question reflect the character of the state from where they emanate. Emphasis on zoning of public offices between federating units by Nigerian political elite is because it serves their economic interest (Ezeibe, Abada, & Okeke, 2016). Similarly, commenting on the behaviour of the Nigerian state, Ake (1985, p. 1) contends thus:

The state is a specific modality of class domination, one in which class domination is mediated by commodity exchange so that the system of institutional mechanism of domination is differentiated and dissociated from the ruling class and even the society and appears as an objective force standing alongside the society.

FCP, like other policy models, is a creation of the military dictatorship, a replica of colonial administrative tradition by its modus operandi, imposed on the people without their consent. Not only did its application in the Nigerian bureaucracy make no progress, it also plunged the bureaucracy into a stream of corruption, nepotism, mediocrity and a system of conduit for the ruling powers. The highest echelon of the bureaucracy operates outside strict rules but within the dictate of influential politicians with ethnic bias and sentimentalism in collaboration with their counterpart ruling elite. The fact of its rhetoric and false appearance of representativeness appears misleading. The truth of the matter is that the beneficiary ruling class, who is without geographical boundaries exploit the masses through the FC policy. But appointment/recruitment into the civil service has ethnic propensity, depending on the region in charge. The agitations by sectional groups do not emanate directly from the consciousness of already de-capitalized and emotionally bruised masses, but are driven by elitist forces of some form of material inducement. This is the disgruntled faction that fell out of favour with power mainstream at the time. This intra-class conflict is, however, settled at the expense of the masses without life-transforming agenda.
The pitfalls of FCP identified at conception by the Ostrich posture were hastily glossed over by the contending faction of a Constitutional Drafting Committee (CDC). Having a bureaucracy firmly founded on ethnic representation meant all was not going to be well with it as capacity would be sacrificed. Appointments into the civil service are intended to protect the ruling class interest. The neutral competence and merit-based bureaucracy has been exchanged for partisanship and mediocrity under what appears as representative bureaucracy, technically called FCP. Before and after the introduction of the policy, the Nigerian bureaucracy had been conservative, neglecting the most critical elements of citizen-government collaboration and cooperation, and people-driven governance. Regional representation in the public service is without citizen participation in the policy choice. Under such conditions, general interest becomes the last resort. Interestingly, there is a call for restructuring of the Nigerian federal system, yet it is driven by some elements in the ruling class some times in the pretext of ethnic marginalization mantra. However, there is an assumption that adhering to the frequent call for restructuring would disrupt the power base of the elite. But what might happen is power shift from one elite group to the other. The struggle has been between the elites from the North and their southern counterpart (Adeosun, 2011). It is equally possible, however, to have an outcome in favour of the masses, momentarily though.

In sum, in whatever guise, the gains of elite-controlled bureaucracy and FCP will only swing within the elite formation. Unless sound governance system is entrenched in the federation in terms of encouraging active citizen participation in decision-making activity, collaboration, partnership, networks, enforceable laws and limited government control, representative bureaucracy will amount to nothing but poor service delivery thereby preserving the status quo.

9. Federal Character (FC)

Power-sharing contrivance is closely associated with federalism. Existing numerous disparate entities in Nigeria predispose it to a federal state, which requires it to expediently fashion a mutually-balanced federal mechanism. To ensure equity in distributing national resources, including authority, terms like “zoning” or “quota” system was introduced in the colonial administration. Furthermore, precisely in 1975 the erstwhile phraseology became conceptually but operationally embodied in FCP.

Comparatively, FCP represents a close-fitting semantic of federalism. However, what has been observed is that Nigeria’s FCP is encapsulated in rhetoric, novelty and illusion; so designed to subtly further the collective interests of the elite, although it was assigned otherwise definition. Federal Character of Nigeria refers to:

the distinctive desire of the peoples of Nigeria to promote national unity, foster national loyalty and give every citizen of Nigeria a sense of belonging to the nation notwithstanding the diversities of ethnic origin, culture, language or religion which may exist and which it is their desire to nourish, harness to the enrichment of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (see Ammani, 2014).

Further more, the Federal Character Principle as provided for in Chapter 2, Section 14, subsection 3 of the 1999 constitution of Nigeria states that:

The composition of the government of the federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such a manner as to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity, and also to command national loyalty, thereby ensuring that there shall be no predominance of persons from a few states or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that government or in any of its agencies (p. 31).

Scholars and analysts hold varied views on FCP, particularly in Nigeria. Accordingly, Ugoh and Ukpere (2012) argue that the FCP was enshrined in the 1979 constitution, to appropriate linguistic, ethnic, religious and geographic diversity of Nigeria. Eziebe (2010) views it as involving a deliberate plan to construct means of ensuring the proper distribution of amenities and government projects.
in a country. Okolo (2014:123) maintains that FCP “connotes number of constituents, their inter-
relationships, allocation of powers and functions amongst them and such other tangible matters
which are spelt out in legal terms in a constitution”. However, he conceptualizes it as a palliative
principle aimed at uniting once-existed autonomous sub-nationalities through quota system for
purposes of equality of opportunities and peaceful coexistence.

From the above definitions, FC is a concept implying inherent differences among entities in
a federation and possibility of inequity, domination and exclusion in accessing common resources,
including authority, without which corporate existence is threatened.

10. The birth of FCP of Nigeria: the Ostrich posture-realist dialogue

The federal character of Nigeria is understandably a tricky one with its myriads of contradictions
and challenges, hence solutions are variably sought. However, what has come to be an enduring
solution model is a product of an elaborate debate of the late 1970s. The debating groups under-
stood the dynamics of the country’s Achilles heel. Historically, the concept of FCP in Nigeria owes
its inchoate origin in the colonial period of Nigerian making (Yahaya, 2018). Terms such as “zoning
system” and “quota system” had been predominantly used during the heat of growing ethnic
disaffections with British colonial administration. It became a makeshift policy response to the
aftermaths of the “forced marriage”, commonly referred to as the marriage of convenience.

Prior to the formal balkanization of Africa in 1884/85, societies, nations and kingdoms on the
African continent had undergone critical boundary adjustments, displacing many humans, cultural,
linguistic, religious and geographic identities. In that epochal scale of dislocation, hitherto nations
were forcibly coalesced to suit the imperialist administrative designs and interests. Of course, the
new composition also witnessed power shift so it was fiercely challenged by the aggrieved peoples,
particularly minority ethnic nationalities. All of this combined to question and threaten the
legitimacy of the new social and political formation. In this new arrangement, however, struggle
and scramble for offices, opportunities and national resources defined the peoples’ relations and
heightened inter-ethnic rivalry and mutual distrust. This development progressed and quickly took
a more worrisome dimension when attempts to break away from the marriage by any means
possible (including taking up arms against the constituted authority) in the colonial and post-
colonial Nigeria became pervasive. This dynamic process has continued till today. At this juncture,
importance of the federal character of Nigeria and the diversity management was highlighted,
leading to the birth of FCP.

In the modern times, hitherto power sharing mechanisms have taken a form represented in FCP.
Osaghae (2011) observes that the FC policy was adopted because over 252 well-known ethnic
groups were in Nigeria, each with its own dialects, customs and traditions. Formalization and
institutionalization of FCP in terms of constitutional enshrinement occurred in the post-colonial
Nigeria. It was conceived on 18 October 1975, following a debate between two broad groups out
of Constitutional Drafting Committee set up by the Murtala administration to find governance tool
that could promote national loyalty. The committee was divided into the brutal realist or pessimists
and the ostrich postures over the choice of the concept of FCP (Okolo, 2014). For the realists, the fact
of age-long inter-ethnic rivalry prompting the domination of government by one or more ethnic
nationalities to the exclusion of others entailed having some provisions that would eliminate the
phenomenon. They added that such provisions would eliminate such a tendency in the composition
of government or the appointment or election of persons to higher offices in the state.

The Ostrich postures, on the other hand, admitted that inter-ethnic and sectional rivalry had not
been helpful as it was responsible for the collapse of the first Republic, but considered the
entrenchment of the principle of “ethnic balancing” in the constitution as inappropriate and
undesirable. Alternatively, they submitted that state creation and other constitutional provisions
could prove sufficient to safeguard the rights of the disparate communities. To this end, insistence
on the participation of all communities in government was unnecessary and impracticable. The
worst of it, as they argued, was the retardation of the evolution of national loyalty by playing up sectional representation in the conduct of the state affairs. The influence of the just ended Nigerian civil war exposed the pretext of ethnic loyalty; hence the imperative for a constitutional space for a newly branded national integration model firmly embedded in philosophical inclusivity.

To rationalize it, at the end of the debate the CDC came up with its report that the Federal Character Principle of Nigeria (FCPN) enjoyed wide acceptance, possibly on grounds of its freshness, aesthetic content, ornate charm and vagueness. According to Okolo (2014), the vagueness manifested in CDC members’ display of virtually total ignorance of the same thing they had accepted. Such height of ignorance strayed into its definition when the CDC portrayed it as the distinctive desire of the Nigerian people to promote national unity, foster national loyalty, as well as ensure every citizen of Nigeria has a sense of belonging to the nation irrespective of the diversities of ethnic origin and other characteristics. This definition merely describes Nigerian federation without clarity.

11. The civil service and entry perceptions in Nigeria

Bureaucracy is a body of non-elective government officials or an administrative policy-making group. It is associated with professionalism, merit-based orientation and rule system. Provision of essential public services via implementation of government programs and policies is the essence of public bureaucracies. The bureaucrats are believed to possess wider breadth of technical areas and competencies to handle them for which a regime takes either credit or reprimand. Consequent upon this, the civil service helps to stimulate economic growth and development, as well as increase trust and the citizen-government connection (Ijewereme, 2018; Olaopa, 2018). Whether this will occur is a function of degree of neutrality, competence and autonomy of bureaucracy. And once the contrary emerges, the citizen’s life is at risk. By its nature the civil service restricts the citizen’s life’s critical choices and control of his own destiny (Balogun, 2001).

Effective performance of public services is underpinned by certain core values, which include, integrity, meritocracy, discipline, professionalism, patriotism, impartiality and secrecy of government information, unless declassifying such information falls within the breadth of the Freedom of Information Act. The philosophical premise derives from studies’ finding that “no nation can attain sustainable development for the enhancement of the living standard of the people without a properly organized public service to implement government policies” (Osawe, 2015, p. 45). In democratic age, bureaucracy is widely seen as an inevitable complement to democracy (Olaopa, 2018). However, for a good deal of selfless discretion in decision-making and administrative processes, there shall be disciplinary mechanisms for compromised professional ethics. Interestingly, evidence from Nigeria reveals unhealthy practices for effective and efficient bureaucratic performance. The condition and disillusionment outcome explain what Olaopa (2018, p.) presents as “…in a place like Nigeria, the public service as a bureaucracy, is not a complement to democracy but a patently pathetic manifestation of bad governance.” There is a structurally jaundiced Nigerian bureaucracy, which has an adverse effect on recruitment/appointment processes. For instance, a recent study shows that motives many had joining the civil service account for two broad perspectives on the professional ethics: self versus public. Responses from a sample of Nigerian civil servants highlighted income prospect, the prestige, the stable career path, the opportunity to serve Nigeria, job availability, educational opportunities as reasons for taking a job in the Nigeria’s civil service. Inferred from these is that while some are intrinsically motivated, others are extrinsically motivated. According to Phiri (2018), the former constituted only one-thirds of the participants. Those civil servants who engaged in the cashgate scandals joined the civil service because they wanted to become rich, professionalism was to them of no value (Phiri, 2018). The above submission is consistent with Osawe (2015) findings that failure to adhere strictly to the core values was due to adverse environmental factors such as corruption, favouritism, nepotism, constant political interference and other primordial factors such as geographical, ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious affiliations. It should not appear strange that a certain percentage of the one-thirds may encounter reality shock to divert the entry behaviour to a dominant self-serving mindset. Admittedly, it is a difficult task to screen out
such people in appointments and promotions in managing and improving the civil service for effective and efficient service delivery in Nigeria.

12. Representative bureaucracy: the FC-bureaucracy intersection

The term bureaucracy acquired an adjectival prefix (representative) to denote diffusion of power concentration. In that sense, representative bureaucracy has become a growing concept in governance vocabulary. While bureaucracy is technically oriented and emphasizes on the best qualified personnel, FCP is exclusively a political consideration and emphasizes on ethnic balancing. When they are interwoven the result is representative bureaucracy with negative impact on the former and citizens’ expectations. The concept of representative bureaucracy can be traced to the writings of Kingsley (1944). Thus, discussion on the importance of representative bureaucracy in addressing the role of the civil service in a democracy is not a recent undertaking (see Naff & Capers, 2014). The concept of representative bureaucracy is defined as “the notion that public organizations should look like the population they serve” (Andrews et al., 2014, p.1). They further contend that the broader an organization is representative of the demographic composition of the population, the more likelihood of representatives of the people who share their values to be more responsive to their needs. This definition is similar to Naff and Capers (2014) interpretation as descriptive (passive) representation, a dimension much of the recent literature has interrogated its ability to translate into active representation. The representatives of a people may not know why they are appointed or selected, but because they come from the same geographical description the people feel their interests are secured.

Groeneveld and Van de Walle (2010) examined the three dimensions of representative bureaucracy in the subject of public administration and diversity management as a form of representation that captures virtually all aspects of a society's groups in the administration of the state. In particular, the concept of representative bureaucracy has been predominantly associated with decentralization, inclusion and management of diverse groups depending on the centralized nature or otherwise of the country's political system. This is the effect of the dominance of varied ecological factors exemplified by the bureaucratic elites in the social, political and economic domain (Denhardt & DeLeon, 1994), which also results in producing programs and political policy that did not meet the needs or interests of all social classes in managing the special effects of representation. Gidengil and Vengroff (1997) assert that inclusive public service is characterized by the demographic composition of the populace it serves, and to which its policies apply. Further studies on the theory of representation, values and interest sharing, diversity management and organizational performance (see, Coleman, Brudney, & Kellough, 1998; Groeneveld & Van de Walle, 2010).

Contextually, the irony of representative bureaucracy in Nigeria is contained in the application of FC document as expressed below:

Where the number of positions available cannot go round the States of the Federation or the Federal Capital, the distribution shall be on zonal basis but in the case where two positions are available, the positions shall be shared between the northern and the southern zones.

Where the indigenes of a State or the Federal Capital Territory are not able to take up all the vacancies meant for them, the indigenes of any other State(s) or the Federal Capital territory within the same zone shall be given preference in filling such vacancies. Provided that where the zone to which the preference is given fails to take up such vacancy the indigenes from any other zone shall be considered for the appointment (FCC, 2006, pp.14-15).

The emphasis of the above expression is ethnic representation without recourse to merit. Thus, FCP is somewhat an interference with what bureaucracy stood for at the point of representative imperativeness, in terms of competence, meritocracy, professionalism and output performance. But bureaucracy would have still leveraged on FCP had the latter been properly conceived of and applied. Recent studies on the state of administrative reforms and impacts on Nigeria public service bring to question the effectiveness and institutionalization of the New Public Service theory.
in Nigerian public bureaucracy in enhancing a citizen-centric service delivery. The New Public Service rooted in democratic government theory, highlights the imperative of accountability of officials to citizens, whereby officials serve and respond to citizens rather than steering society. Its assumption is that representatives will be inspired in serving public interest in a committed and dedicated manner, thereby responding to citizens’ expectations of a healthy and responsive public service (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000; Osborne, 2006). The negative comments about bureaucratic performance in Nigeria conform to the findings of (Kelly, 2005) that the overall service performance in relation to the citizen-centric service satisfaction has not been fully institutionalized as evidenced in the market model public service delivery approach. Although the New Public Service approach proposed by Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000 focused on citizen-oriented service delivery, the policy implementers’ notion of service delivery has remained unchanged.

13. The underlying complexities of the Nigerian problem

According to Ezeani (2014, p. 17) “before the year 1914, there was no country in the world known by the name Nigeria. Instead, for hundreds of years, there existed within the geographical space known today as Nigerian peoples and nations identified as Yoruba, Igbo, Tiv, Benin..”. The basic descriptive sociology of Nigeria indicates that Nigeria is multi-ethnic in character. These kingdoms were unilaterally brought together into a federation by colonial fiat (Adeosun, 2011). Fundamental issues such as equitable distribution of opportunities, positions and resources were not given the required attention before bringing them together as “a united entity”.

Consequently, Ibor, Egolikuma, and Isa (2015) reveal that unequal representation may result in dissension among geographic units and can lead to severe consequences such as discontent, conflict and even war. Their findings were based on the analysis of data gotten from the office of the FCC on the percentage of state and region in the employment distribution of workforce in the Federal Civil Service from 2008 to 2012. The above submission is substantiated by ever spreading separatist movements such as the “Oduduwa Peoples Congress”, “Bakassi Boys”, “Movement for the Actualization of State of Biafra”, “Egbesu Boys”, “Oduduwa Liberation Movement”, “Arewa Vanguards”, Indigenous Peoples of Biafra, as have become the aftermaths. More dangerous are the disunity indicators that have equally permeated the cultural values of the peoples: Afenifere for the Yoruba, Ohaneze Ndigbo for the Igbo, Arewa Consultative Forum for the Northerners. The cultural dimension represents the highest layer of ethnic consciousness. This is hinged on perceived injustices as the diverse groups aim at protecting their ethnic interests in the sharing of collective resources by the government (Uwa, Akinyemi, & Adenegan, 2013). Particular instance is the unquenchable secessionist clamour by the people of Igbo geographical region under various names since the build up to the Nigerian civil war. What led to the noble aspiration and the memory of demographic, economic and ecological trauma that climaxed the degeneration of the Nigerian federation to the verge of inevitable disintegration is highlighted in several literature. The secessionist agenda, according to Smith, was inflamed by the morally unacceptable pogrom of the Igbo residents in the north totalling more than 30,000 deaths (as cited in Ojo & Lamidi, 2018).

The contending issues surrounding corporate existence of the postcolonial Nigeria are in part holdovers from pre-independence national disaffections. Nigeria is multi-ethnically and multi-linguistically diverse, corresponding to the coalesced pre-colonial nationalities. Although varying degrees of conflict is inevitable in homogenous societies, there is the destabilizing influence of the aforementioned features on the heterogeneous and complex systems like Nigeria. Leaders of ethnic and regional groups have at one time or the other threatened to walk out of the union. Between 1914 and 1960, regional/sectional agitations for self-governing on political, economic and socio-cultural grounds had long questioned the continued corporate existence of the country. Today, the increased dimension of disruptions in the national unity evokes a sense of despair; hence the need for expedient mechanisms. The human, economic and environmental casualties and displacement by immoderate Boko Haram insurgents, the moderate Niger Delta Militancy and the mild IPOB separatist movement point to the importance of the above claim.
All efforts to deal with the issues of overwhelming ethnic loyalty and national disintegration tendencies have not been rooted in sound governance system, which as a collaboration/partnership model aims at integrating all these cleavages. Though governance within the realm of public administration applies to organizational processes, we are constrained to believe that if the political structure of government cannot be settled, then the challenge of the structure of governance at the organizational level would be at risk. Governance practice should be seen to proceed from the very foundation on which a state is structured down to the processes and methods employed by state institutions. Just as the new public governance paradigm entails, the involvement of private sector organizations and civil society actors as crucial elements of service delivery and permits the actors involved to have some say over the manner in which the services are delivered, if not necessarily in the actual content of the services to be delivered (Peters, 2003).

The Nigerian civil service and governance system is a colonial heritage (Obasi, 2005) that is restrictive, alienatory, elitist and imperialist, and it is not suited to the current realities. The nature of representative bureaucracy under British rule did not only emphasize the differences between north and south but also pitted the regions against themselves. This had unhealthy divisive impact on their regional civil service. Aderonke (2013) argues that representational equity in Nigeria started with the problem of unequal North-South duality. Ayoade (1998) study revealed that the northern region had embarked on the Northernization of the public service to keep away the southerners before independence. According to him:

> If a qualified Northerner was available, he was given priority in recruitment. If there was no Northerner available, an expatriate may be recruited. A Southerner was only recruited as a last resort and on contract terms only. In reality, the Northerner policy was directed more against southern Nigerians than against expatriate. The purpose was to make the Northern Public Service a representational cross-section of the northern society. In 1959, expatriates constituted 83.2 per cent of the senior posts in Public Service of Northern Nigeria. And of the 315 Nigerians in that Service, Northerners were 207 while Southerners were 108. This meant that Northerners were only a paltry 11.2 per cent. This sharply contrasts with the figures for the East and the West. Easterners constituted 74.4 per cent of the Eastern Nigerian Civil Service and Westerners 76.2 per cent of the Western Nigerian Civil Service (Ayoade, 1998, p. 111).

Ayoade (1998) further observed that at the federal level, there was also a deliberate policy on Nigerianization that started in the fifties. But since Northernization and Nigerianization were simultaneous, the North did not contribute much to Nigerianization. According to Anazodo, Okoye, and Chukwuemeka (2012), the adoption of the Nigerianization policy was geared towards reducing expatriate dominance in the higher Civil Service, but it resulted in regionalization of the Civil Service. In part, regionalization of civil service escalated the problem of sectionalism in the Nigerian Civil Service. Today’s Nigerian federal structure has remained a shadow of its past.

The recurrent clamour for restructuring of the Nigerian federal state to create an atmosphere for equity and development reflects the unfavourable federal system. Some constitutional conferences have been commissioned by government to address some of the issues, albeit with the usual caveat of “no go areas”, that is, issues that cannot be discussed by such conferences. We consider this caveat and even the failure to take seriously the recommendations of such conferences as a hindrance to governance priority. Governance model advocates for responding to stakeholders’ concerns in a legitimate way. A key challenge of the country’s government and governance processes is the de-emphasis on unconditional negotiation of the basis of corporate existence of disparate nationalities. The almost four decades of military rule in Nigeria consolidated colonial heritage of repression, intolerance and anti-negotiation tradition; a tradition founded on capital accumulation, protection of the interest of the insatiable ruling class. The military distorted the federal structure of the country. While the creation of states and local governments was meant to enhance the country’s federalism by granting autonomy to various groups beyond the three major regions defined under the colonial government, the truth remains...
that this approach has succeeded in compounding the problem of boundaries by rationalizing cleavages syndrome in the country (Ikeanyibe & Njoku, 2006).

The new federalism in Nigeria based on multiplicity of states and local governments was defined under the centralising rationale of various military regimes. Now, in various ways there has been constitutional conflict between the federal government and states over the control of local governments, and it has not helped matters. Despite the so called third tier status of local government, experts still find the Nigerian local governments as better described as an arm of the state governments.

Apparently, the federal structure of Nigeria is widely seen as a contraption, so the call for restructuring to address the poor foundation of governance base for the country. Ryan Gibson (2011) avers that governance, whether in rural or urban areas, emerged principally from the criticism of large central governments’ inability to accommodate the preferences of diverse communities or regions. The multiplicity of opinions represented throughout rural communities in large jurisdictions, such as a province or country, has proven difficult for central governments to address. At the local and regional level, residents, community-serving organizations, and the private sector have sought new forums of decision-making. The Nigerian governance dilemma not just in terms of the most recent paradigm oscillation in public administration, but also in terms of broad issues of governance, must be founded on clear principles of consent and inclusiveness. Kauzya and Balogun (2005) observe that though several African countries, Nigeria inclusive, have implemented far-reaching governance and public service reform measures in recent years, much more remains to be done to reposition governance and public administration institutions for the emerging challenges. Our take is that a major governance issue that needs to be attended to is to renegotiate the basis of corporate coexistence of states in Africa as a constituent element of sound governance.

14. An assessment of federal character principle

Within the framework of FCP, there is an obvious disconnect between the policy design and policy implementation, between intent and actual practices. The implication of this is the absence of significant progress for national integration. This failure derives from “the compromised bureaucracy” through over-politicization of the institution, particularly in the area of appointment. For instance, appointments made by various administrations since the inception of FCP have rather reflected exclusion rather than equity. In explaining the shortcomings of the application of the principle, in Nigeria, the issues of making public institutions reflect the FC was taken up haphazardly giving rise to arbitrariness and victimization of some unfortunate public servants (Ijewereme (2018)). The issue interrogates the application of the FCP since appointments reflect dominance of one ethnic region in power over others. Table 1 below provide graphic detailed information and confirmation.

The implementation of the Federal character principle especially in Nigeria public service tends to encourage unethical behaviour among public official and circumscribe merit in the area of employments, promotions and appointments. Notably, 70% of Nigeria Foot-soldiers are from Hausa-Fulani; 80% of all Permanent Secretaries in Federal Ministries are from Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba combine; 80% of those given Oil Wells presently in the Oil Niger Delta Region are from Hausa-Fulani; 60% of Generals in the Nigerian Military are from Hausa-Fulani; 60% of the Heads of Parastatals are from Hausa-Fulani; 60% of the Top Ranks in Nigerian Police Force are from Hausa-Fulani; 70% of Nigerian State Security Services (SSS) men are from Hausa-Fulani; 60% Top Posts in each of: Nigerian Prison Services; Nigeria Immigration and Nigerian Ports Authority are from Hausa-Fulani; About 90% of JAMB employees are from both Hausa—Fulani and Yoruba tribes; 80% of all the employees in Federal Secretariat are from both Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba tribes combined; 95% of the professors and workers in National University Commission are from Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba tribes combined; 80% of employees in ICPC and EFCC are Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba combined; 90% of all the Registrars and Bursars of Federal Universities, Federal Colleges of Education, Federal Polytechnics are from both Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba tribes combined; Nigerians
| S/N | Regime | Minister/Region Defence | Minister/Region Interior | Minister/Region Federal Capital Territory | Minister/Region Mines & Power |
|-----|--------|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1   | Balewa 1960–1966 | Mohammadu Ridadu/North | Usman Sani Ali/North | Mallam Maitama Sule/North |                            |
| 2   | Gowon 1966–1975 | Inua Wada/North | Shedu/Shagari/North |                            |                            |
| 3   | M. Mohammed 1975–1976 | Yakubu Gowon/North | I.D. Bisalla/North | U.A. Shinkafi/North |                            |
| 4   | O. Obasanjo 1976–1979 | Obasanji/South | U.A. Shinkafi/North | (A) Adeogun/South | Alh. Shehu Kagiwa/North |
| 5   | Shagari 1979–1983 | Iya Abubaker/North | Dr. W. Dosunmu/South | Iya Abubaker/North | Iya Abubaker/North |
| 6   | Buhari 1983–1985 | M. Buhari/North | M. Magoro/North | M. Vasta/North | Alh. Rilwan Lukman/North |
| 7   | Babangida 1985–1993 | Domkat Bali/North | Labent Gwarm/North | M. Vasta/North | AVM Nuru Iman/North |
| 8   | Shonekan 1993–1998 | S. Abacha/North | S. Yusuf/North | G. Nasko/North | Alh. Hassan Adamu/North |
| 9   | Abacha 1993–1998 | S. Abacha/North | Alex Ibru/South | J.T. Useni/North | Bashir Dahatu/North |
| 10  | Abubakar 1998–1999 | Abubakar Abdusalam/North | M. Yakubu/North | M. Kontogora/North |                            |
| 11  | Obasanjo 1999–2007 | T.Y. Danjuma/North | S. Afolabi/South | B. Sheri/North | Lesely Obiorah/South |

(Continued)
| S/N | Regime          | Minster/Region  | Minster/Region  | Minster/Region         | Minster/Region        |
|-----|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------|------------------------|
|     |                | Defence        | Interior       | Federal Capital Territory | Mines & Power         |
| 11  | Jonathan 2010-2015 | Akayode/South  | E. Iheanacho/South | B. Mohammed/North       | Mohammed M. Sada/North |
| 12  | Yar’Adua 2007-2010 | Y. Ahmed/North | G. Abbe/South   | A. Modibbo/North        | Sarafa T. Ishola/South |
|     | R. Kwankwaso/North | M. Shata/North | M. Abba Gana/North |                        |                        |
|     | T. Agunyi Transi/South | O. Adeniji/South | N El-Rufai/North |                        |                        |
|     | S. Ibrahim/North   | S. Ibrahim/North | A. Aliero/North  |                        |                        |
| 13  | A. Modibbo/North  | S. Ibrahim/North | A. Aliero/North  |                        |                        |
| 14  |                |                |                |                        |                        |

Source: Sunday Tribune, 7 August 1994, Ibadan, pp. 7-9; Ayoade (1998); Adeosun (2011) Okolo (2014) Adapted and modified by the researchers (2019).
in Foreign Missions both of African Union, ECOWAS and United Nations; 98% of them are from both Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba tribes combined; 70% of all the Ambassadors and High Commissioners are from Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba tribes combined; 95% of all the employees (staff) of Nigerian High Commissions and Ambassadorial abroad are from Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba tribes combined. This was also the same trend in the Nigerian Railway Corporation: out of a total of 431 names on the current staff list of the Corporation, 270 are Igbo and 161 belong to other tribes. The main reason adduced for the above is that the Chairman was simply an Igbo man and not because the employment is done on merit (as cited in Asaju & Egberi, 2015, p. 131).

Taken together, Table 1 above provide graphic view that all the administrations showed particular predilections to their regional extraction in appointments. For instance, under Murtala Muhammed, appointment tilted in favour of Northern Kano. As the table indicates, Obasanjo administration chose a person from Ogun (his state of origin). Furthermore, Alhaji Shehu Shagari, Muhammadu Buhari, Ibrahim Babangida, Sani Abacha, Abdul Salam Abubakar, Umaru Yar’Adua, all of northern extraction were caught in the ethnic chauvinistic snare. Similarly, Ernest Shonekan, Obasanjo (1999–2007) did not live above board so their preferred choice hailed from Ogun state of Western Nigeria. In the same vein, Goodluck Jonathan exhibited ethnic consideration such that a man from his state Bayelsa was appointed.

From the above graphic interpretations, rather than deemphasize ethnic loyalty, there has been increasingly eclipsed national loyalty.

15. The issues in Nigerian FCP: analysis

There are few but influential factors militating against the FCP in trying to attain the representative and national integration goals. Documentary evidence suggests intractability of primordial centrifugal forces due to their colonial legacy. But logical analysis would pinpoint sound governance approach as alternative panacea for the fragile unity of the Nigerian state. Besides definitional controversies, religion and ethnicity are the major shortcomings of FCP and ethnicity. Ethnic preference in appointment negatively affects not only the representativeness of the civil service, but also its capacity. There are visible efforts the Federal Character Commission (FCC) and the Civil Service Commission (CSC) have made as a move to encourage merit-based recruitment/appointment over choice over mediocrity and favouritism. However, failure of such efforts is largely due to the commitment of political leadership and public officials in maintaining the status quo of dominance of the elite priority and interest in the civil service. This phenomenon leads to another layer of the same issue, which the dominant mindset of potential entrants into the civil service tilts to favour. The motives for joining the civil service such as income prospect, the prestige, the stable career path, the opportunity, job availability and educational opportunities. Most people are far more extrinsically motivated.

Within the recruitment (or selection) practice in the country, the best applicants are rejected. Though there is frequent official denial, recruitment/appointment into the Nigerian civil service is widely viewed as favouring people who share regional affinity with government in power without recourse to merit-based criteria. But greater emphasis on merit criteria in recruitment/appointment is needed for improving capacity and performance in the civil service. However, the less regional preference is emphasized in favour of merit based selection, the greater are the gains in capacity. So, addressing the public personnel recruitment/appointment practice is important for improving public sector service performance and rectifying increasing development problems. Through the promise of opportunity, meritocracy (a feature of bureaucracy) can be used as a tool for ensuring inclusive recruitment (Saleh, 2018).

In sum, improving the representativeness of the Nigerian bureaucracy would not only improve its performance, but also help to enhance the quality of the country’s democracy since having a representative bureaucracy is the democratic norm (Heong, 2018). However, constitutionally imposed equal representative bureaucracy has proven that not only capacity and quality are hard to attain, but also genuine national integration quest, simply because other competing values
would be compromised. This is the case for the FCP because of its artificiality without entrenched sound governance priority.

16. Sound governance and national integration

The governance challenges of the Nigerian state have necessitated various political and administrative reforms with a view to achieving some measure of development. The view of most analysts is that in the midst of abundant resources development expectation has remained a distant possibility. It is evident that not only FCP emphasizes regional loyalty, but also compromises capacity in the Nigerian civil service, making Nigeria undeniably a mere Awolowo had described Nigeria as a geographical expression. In other words, the violent cleavages resulting from establishment of the imperialist vast expanse of a single territorial administration will remain for a very long time.

Ideally, FCP was good invention in terms of form and intention, but it is best at novelty, aesthetics and grandiosity without definitional clarity. The experience in its application in Nigeria justifies the above characterization. Experientially, representativeness and national loyalty goals appear unattainable. The idea of quota and federal character as means of power sharing and employment has been tied to administrative law and practice. Since the Nigerianization policy of late 1950s, the idea of quota and federal character as fundamental approach towards inclusive government have not provided adequate benefits of participatory governance (Ikeanyibe, Ori & Okoye, 2017). The contradictions of quota system are not peculiar to Nigerian federal state, though. For instance, Saleh (2018, p. 2) identifies the contradictions in the civil service of Pakistan and Bangladesh when he stated that "quota system is particularly criticized for promoting heterogeneity and institutionalizing ethnic divisions in the society."

From every indication, it alone cannot succeed and may need to be complemented or suffer total rejection. But provided Nigeria remains a complex federal entity threatened by stronger primordial sentiments than forces of integration it may not be widely considered reasonable to reject FC; hence sound governance as a good complement. This would play down the ever growing ethnic sentimentalism. It is important to state that the Nigerian military elite understood the importance of downplaying ethnic origins that it resorted to federal structuring through arbitrary creation of states and local governments, a move from the hitherto regional configurations. Despite the efforts, primordial ethnic chauvinism still dominates government processes. The cry and hue of marginalization along ethnic lines appear to sound louder and the recurrent clamour for restructuring becomes much difficult to quell. In the continued search for a realistic approach, sound governance is proposed. Sound governance, as critically conceptualized by Farazmand (2012, 2017), has as its constituent elements comprehensiveness, autochthonous governance regimes, competence, societal cultural base, inclusivity and internationally acceptable values. Sound governance would provide clarity, form and content to the FCP. Sound governance is consistent with the New Public Governance (NPG). The new public governance paradigm advocates for governance characterized by partnerships, collaboration and networks. Sound governance promotes democratic values by increasing citizen participation at all levels of government. So, whether or not sound governance underlines the administration of the country’s affairs provides the background of the national political, economic, bureaucratic and social conditions. Nigeria is composed of intense diverse ethnic nationalities and interests. Although it is a herculean task to accommodate all the interests, sound governance expediency that transcends extrinsic national integration mechanisms needs urgent attention.

Fundamentally, governance underlines social cohesion. More fundamentally, the ultimate end of sound governance is the most essential to the vulnerable social class. Public value, rather than just public good, when actualized satisfies not only the aspirations of the people but also the highest fulfilment of human existence. Public value transcends outputs; it realizes desired outcomes. Within public value choice there is a redefinition of government–citizen relationship, and the new arrangement impacts on service delivery. Implied above is the reality that the conduct of
the people’s affairs no longer becomes the exclusive responsibility of government officials but more than ever the citizens’ right to re-enact their active participation in every stage of decision-making activity. Public value covers citizens’ value for “institutional arrangements which enables markets to operate and societal orderings to function, such as the rule of law, maintenance of order, and mechanisms for the protection of property rights and enforcement of contracts” (Alford & O’Flynn, 2009, p. 175). Equally worthy of particular mention is that value of a service/good can only be measured by and acceptable when the user’s assessment opinion is so sought, not the provider’s. Underpinned by participatory appeal, sound governance aspires to attainment of public value through the institutionalization of the culture of accountability and stronger laws.

There is compelling evidence that Nigerians’ expectation from their leaders is comparatively low. Yet, the government has consistently failed to even meet the minimum of their needs, in terms of guaranteed protection of lives and property, subsistent jobs, safeguard of fundamental human rights, etc. There is palpable fear of unchecked mutual ethnic attacks. Indeed, levels of tolerance and sacrifice shown by the average Nigerian to ensure national stability has been re-echoed in the music circles. For instance, one of popular Afro musicians, Fella Anipokuti once described the Nigerian lower class as “suffering and smiling”. The general attitude suggests that the elites are to blame for the country’s multi-faceted dilemmas. Different shades of religious and regional disadvantages are precipitated by personal disillusionment of the ruling elite (Ojo & Lamidi, 2018). Contextually, however, evidence from most elections in Nigeria speaks less favourable about elite’s interest determinism; rather it provides one of the most credible transcendental-ethnic and governance explanations. This confers an expressed affirmation of the reality that most times Nigerians do not care about the ethnic, religious and geographical origin of “pro-people oriented leadership”. The voting pattern within the lower class illuminates an understanding of class awareness of source of its alienation and dehumanization.

17. Conclusion and implications
This research represents one of the first attempts at providing some interesting insights into the negative impact of FC policy and practice of inclusiveness in Nigerian public bureaucracy and its associated effects within the context of federalism and public administration. The politics of FCP and application in itself is a very fluid concept which loosely refers to the competitions of interests among various geopolitical zones. It is found in every field of human endeavour, especially in public sector administration that is characterized by manoeuvrings and in certain cases subverting, diverting or outright breaking of standard rules, especially in developing nations. Thus, Nigeria democracy and politics have certain principles derived from political expectations which are generally at variance with bureaucratic expectations.

Major shortcomings of FCP in Nigerian bureaucracy stem from dominance of affectionism, patronage and favouritism in the process of recruitment and appointment, neglecting meritocracy, competence and service. In view of the above highlighted issues, sound governance remains a veritable model for national unity, national loyalty and feeling of a sense of belonging.

17.1. Further research
Representation is a dynamic concept, and our findings show how institutionalization of FC policy is not the “end of it all” because, representation especially in the public sector organizations holds the key to the socio-economic development and sustainability of citizens-centred policy outcome. A policy framework on discontinuing the ethnic vested interest in the process of inclusive representation and regulating the penetration of ethnic sentiments, political influence (s) should be instituted by the FCC for just, fair and equitable distribution of employment positions, promotions, transfers and retirement/replacement of posts in the bureaucracies in line with NPM principles since the commission (FCC) has ‘no ethics or guiding principles’ in its application of the principle. In the light of this, an area of further research in Nigeria public sector administration could be links between bureaucratic responsiveness, democracy, and preservation of rule of law, social equity and the protection of human rights in a diversified cultural setting.
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