



HORIZONTAL INEQUALITIES AND ETHNIC CONFLICTS: IMPLICATIONS ON DEVELOPMENT POLICIES IN NIGERIA

Ezeji, Nkeiruka Rosario¹,

Ozoigbo, Bonaventure Ikechukwu

Directorate of General Studies

Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Nigeria

Abstract:

The epicenter of every development discourse is for humanity--placing individuals firmly as the major concern for analysis and policy. With its economic and political implications which can frustrate development, Horizontal Inequalities (multi-dimensional inequalities among identity groups rather than individuals) is an important dimension of wellbeing and correcting Horizontal Inequalities should form a significant aspect of development policy design. People act according to perceived injustices and hence perceptions of Horizontal Inequalities affect the likelihood of conflict. This paper focuses on the group dimension of inequalities which seems to be ignored/ relegated but is a recurrent causative factor of ethnic conflicts in heterogeneous societies. It also explores the power and employment distribution amongst ethnic groups in Nigeria. The paper recommends mainstreaming the perspective of Horizontal inequalities in development cooperation in Nigeria vis-a-vis redefinition of ethnic/ regional make up; re-creation of local government areas based on population rather than land mass; adequate compensation for resource based areas; putting time line to the catchment area policy and achieving a representative bureaucracy through effective employment equity policies/programmes. These will help to close up the unequal gaps, reduce ethnic grievances and thus, promote stability and development.

Keywords: horizontal inequalities, ethnic conflicts, development policies, Nigeria

¹ Correspondence: email nkeiruka_ezeji@yahoo.com, ozbonito@yahoo.com

1. Introduction

Inequality began when our species began. Since then its dimensions and its harmful consequences have both multiplied. The debate over the status of grievances dates back to the 1960s with the introduction of relative deprivation theory. Gurr (1970) and his colleagues adopting psychological theories of conflict in his theory of relative deprivation characterizes various types of collective violence as reactions to frustrations stemming from unfulfilled aspirations usually related to material well-being. That is to say, economic and other types of inequality more generally increase the risk of internal strife through frustrated expectations.

Overlap between ethnicity and religion (Seul, 1999), geographic region (Cederman et al, 2007) and socio-economic class (Stewart, 2000) have all been linked to higher grievances that can fuel ethnic conflicts. The difficulty of measuring grievances directly has led many scholars to investigate how structural features such as societal divisions can generate violent conflicts. Although different types of cleavages can be theoretically linked to conflict, the most obvious is ethnic distinctions because of their ascriptive and highly visible nature as well as their clear importance in many actual conflicts (Sambanis, 2001; Bahaug et al, 2014).

Horizontal Inequalities matter to people and society for a variety of reasons; because group members identify with their group and the well-being of the group affects their identity (Akerlof & Kranton, 2000; Stewart & Langer 2008); because such inequalities affect efficiency since the potential of the deprived group is not realized and perhaps most serious because they can lead to political instability (Ostby, 2003; Mancini, 2008; Stewart & Langer 2008). Unequal access to political/economic/ social resources by different cultural groups can reduce individual welfare of the individuals in the losing groups over and above what their individual position would merit, because their self-esteem is bound up with the progress of the group. But of greater consequence is the argument that where there are such inequalities in resource access and outcomes, coinciding with cultural differences, culture can become a powerful mobilizing agent that can lead to a range of political disturbances.

Stewart (2001) pointed out that the inclusion of such vital information or data on both horizontal and vertical dimensions of inequalities would provide a comprehensive policy framework for programs targeting poverty and inequality. On the contrary, the exclusion of any of the multiple dimensions of poverty and inequality can be an impediment that could weaken the effectiveness of anti-poverty strategies and by so doing, weaken the capacity of Nigeria to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Studies by Stewart (1999, 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2005) on horizontal dimension of

inequality suggest that horizontal analysis provide useful information that society or country can use to combat most horizontal tensions which build up to perpetuate violent conflict.

Nigeria is a federation consisting of diverse ethnic groups that can each be distinguished by the area they inhabit, their language, culture, religion and even resources (Olowu, 1995; Affin, 2007; Adeosun, 2011). Nigeria has between 250 and 400 ethnic groups. Otite quoted in Mustapha (2007) specifically identified a total of 374 ethnic groups. The three major groups are the Hausa/Fulani in the North; the Yoruba in the South-west; and the Igbo in the South-east. Other groups include the Edo in the mid-west; the Kanuri in the North-east; the Tiv and Nupe in the Middle-belt; and the Urhobo, Isoko, Ijaw, Itsekiri and Efik in the Niger-Delta region. The South is predominantly Christian while the North is mostly Muslim.

Nigeria's heterogeneous environment naturally creates a complex climate for intense competition for available resources and opportunities amongst the various ethnic groups that constitute the country. Nigeria's political history is replete with issues of marginalization and inequitable distribution of resources and opportunities. Marginalization manifests in terms of the perceived failure of the distribution of political power and public sector employment, to fairly reflect the country's linguistic, ethnic, religious and geographic diversity. (Bassey, 2005; Akintoye et al 2012). It has been observed that, ethnically polarized societies are prone to competitive rent-seeking activities by different groups and will have difficulty agreeing on public goods such as infrastructure, and good policies, hence, there is a widespread notion that the lopsided distribution of resources of the nation accounts for the strong agitation for power control at the centre. And we ask, do horizontal inequalities explain ethnic conflicts in Nigeria? If yes, what are the implications on development policies in Nigeria?

This study seeks to bring to light the knowledge gap the horizontal dimension of inequality. This is a major constraint in designing anti-poverty strategies and policies. It is expected that outcomes from the study would stimulate the debates and further researches on inequality and more empirical evidence which would serve as a policy module for the government when designing an intervention for inequality and poverty in Nigeria.

2. Horizontal Inequality and Ethnic Conflicts

Horizontal Inequalities (HIs) is defined as inequality among culturally defined (or constructed) groups (Stewart & Langer, 2008). Horizontal Inequalities are

multidimensional such as political, economic and social, and a range of elements in each of these dimensions.

- Economic HIs include inequalities in access to and ownership of assets – financial, human, and natural resource-based. In addition, they comprise inequalities in income levels and employment opportunities, which depend on such assets and the general conditions of the economy.

Great economic inequalities may persist over a long period of time without raising violent response. But when these economic inequalities are combined with changes in cultural or political status (such as downgrading or exclusion from power) these economic factors can be important in the polarization process of the inequalities, and thus as a mobilizing agent (Langer & Brown, 2008).

- Social HIs include inequalities in access to a range of services, such as education, healthcare and housing, as well as benefits of educational and healthcare outcomes.
- Political HIs include inequalities in the distribution of political opportunities and power among groups, including control over the military, the cabinet, local and state governments, legislative assemblies, the police and the presidency. They also encompass inequalities in people’s capabilities to participate politically and to express their needs. Political HIs are connected to the ethnic groups position in relation to the executive power / government, and being excluded from participating in political life is an important factor of political HIs (Østby, 2008). Groups being excluded from power obtain almost around the world; one example of a group experiencing exclusion from central power is the Kurds in Turkey.
- Cultural HIs include disparities in the recognition and standing of different groups’ customs, norms and practices. The cultural HIs, which are differences between groups, are connected to culturally inherited factors, such as official language or religion (Stewart, 2008). Inequalities along the cultural dimension have a focus on differential treatment from the state (and others) when it comes to culture “in itself”. Langer & Brown (2008) define cultural HIs as “*perceived or actual differences in the treatment, public recognition or status of different groups’ cultural norms, practices, symbols and customs*”.

Each type of Horizontal Inequality is notable in itself, but also have wider impacts, affecting other types of inequality. Political power, for example, is both an end and a means, as inequalities in political power often lead to social and economic inequalities. Similarly, there are causal connections between educational access and income: lack of access to education leads to poor economic opportunities, and low

income tends to result in poor educational access and achievements in a vicious cycle of deprivation (Stewart, 2009).

2.1 Origin of Horizontal Inequalities in Societies

HIIs in some cases are persistent and “produced” by past colonial heritage, where the colonial powers deliberately put one group over others, and thereby producing lasting differences between groups in a country (such as in Rwanda or the Maluas in Malaysia) (Brown & Langer, 2010). But it is also important to mention that the HIIs do not have to originate from this type of “constructed” differences by colonial powers. In some cases, the HIIs are just a case of more peripheral groups which through modernization have more contact with the more powerful groups of the society (Østby, 2011). So HIIs can therefore be persistent over time, or more changeable (Sorensen, 2013; Brown & Langer, 2010; Østby; 2008).

It is noteworthy to state that ethnicity is not a cause of violent conflict. It is caused directly by intergroup differences. Most ethnic groups in most cases, pursue their group interests peacefully through established political channels (Lake & Rothchild, 1998).

Some studies have explained the causes of ethnic conflict on two levels of analysis—the systemic level and the domestic level (Posen, 2003). According to him, the first systemic prerequisite for ethnic conflict is that two or more ethnic groups must reside in close proximity. Conflict arises in mixed ethnic community within a single state. Ethnic conflict is based on the struggle between different groups for political power and status. This leads to competition between the groups for the control of the government. The second systemic prerequisite for ethnic conflict is that national, regional and international authorities are weak to ensure the security of individual groups (Posen, 2003). These groups then become uncertain of their physical safety and survival. Collective fears for the future arise when states lose their ability to arbitrate between groups or provide credible guarantees for their protection; therefore, security is paramount under such condition.

The second level of analysis is the domestic level which has to do with the effectiveness of states in addressing concerns of their constituents, the impact of nationalism on inter-ethnic relations and the impact of democratization on inter-ethnic relations (Gayatri, 2010)

The contemporary *rational choice* literature considers it differently as grievances and greed/opportunities (Collier & Hoeffler, 2001). Grievances refer to historical injustices and inter-group inequalities in economic, social and political parameters while Greed emphasizes the role of rents, which are lootable in producing inter-group

rivalry for their control (Collier & Hoeffler, 2001). In summary, Collier & Hoeffler (2001) grouped potential causes of conflict as; (1) the quest for justice and (2) the quest for loot. However, Stewart (2000) influenced by the work of Gurr (1970), advanced horizontal inequalities as the reason behind grievances felt by excluded groups which can lead to violent conflict. Hence, HIs support the grievance approach that originates from the theory of relative deprivation. It is based on the notion that when cultural differences coincide with economic and political differences among groups, there can be a deep resentment that may lead to violent struggles (Stewart & Brown, 2007). The theory of horizontal inequality connects both theories of relative deprivation and social identity (Østby, 2011).

Gurr (1970) explains the emergence of violent group mobilization and violent conflict. He posits that grievance-induced discontent is the main determinant factor for political mobilization, often leading to violence. He defines relative deprivation as actors' perception of discrepancy between their value expectations (goods and conditions of life to which people believe they are rightfully entitled) and their value capabilities (goods and conditions which they can presently maintain, or believe themselves capable of attaining and keeping in the future). The proponents of the relative deprivation argue that if people believe their current value capabilities are at odds with their reasonable value expectations, there is increased likelihood for collective violence, especially if the imbalance in expectations is unlikely to be mitigated in the future (Don, 2013; Gurr, 1970).

Furthermore, Gurr (1970) states that the relative position is the key determinant of conflict. Perception plays a tremendous role here. Individuals may or may not actually want certain goods, but, the main factor is that they perceive themselves to be deprived.

Group inequalities have been a contributory factor to conflicts in many countries (Langer, 2005), such as Cote d'Ivoire, Sudan, Northern Ireland, Syria, South Africa, Nigeria etc.

3. Nigeria and Horizontal Inequalities

Nigeria has suffered a number of violent clashes between different ethnic and religious groups, notably in the Middle Belt of the country where religious and ethnic divisions are. Although political and economic issues usually take centre stage, in many conflicts these issues are complemented by perceptions of cultural discrimination (Langer and Brown, 2008; Langer, 2009). As Horowitz asserts: cultural questions, 'such as the designation of official languages and official religions, and educational issues, such as

languages of instruction, the content of curricula, and the official recognition of degrees from various educational streams associated with various ethnic or religious groups,' often play a central role in the emergence of violent conflicts (Horowitz, 2002). Similarly, Langer and Brown (2008) argue that an important factor behind group mobilization is the extent to which cultural customs are differentially recognized by the state.

Ugoh & Ukpere (2012) drawing from Mustapha (2007) highlighted the interplay between communal identities and respective administrative boundaries that led to a number of ethnic, regional and religious cleavages in the Nigerian political life among which are;

- (a) Cleavages between the three major ethnic groups on the one hand and the 350 other ethnic groups on the other hand;
- (b) Between the North and the South in respect of 1950 censuses;
- (c) Between the 36 states grouped into 6 zones with three in the North and three in the South.

Some of the cleavages overlap such as the South-east zone overlapping with the Igbo ethnicity and Christian religion while the North-west zone coincides with the Hausa/Fulani ethnicity and the Islamic faith (Ugoh & Ukpere, 2012).

The South's pre-eminence in educational resources and supply of requisite manpower is only counter-balanced by the North's dominance of the political power, population and size. The North is afraid of Southern domination in bureaucracy while the South is suspicious of Northern domination of federal cabinet and elective posts (Mustapha, 2009; Ugoh & Ukpere, 2012; Adeosun, 2011).

Often this led to feelings of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, race or religion among the groups that were inadequately represented, which in turn provoked tensions and conflicts, culminating in Nigeria's civil war (1967–1970). Indeed, as Mustapha further notes: 'High levels of ethno regional confrontation and conflict over the skewed distribution of bureaucratic and political offices up to 1966 contributed in no small measure to the eventual collapse of the First Republic in 1966 and the Civil War in 1967.

Since the end of the Nigeria/Biafra War, however, Nigeria has introduced some measures to contain the threat to its survival posed by these inequalities and other fissiparous tendencies, including the evolution of federalism aimed at providing more opportunities for different groups to hold a share of political power; the introduction of educational quotas; the adoption of the Federal Character principle and the establishment of the Federal Character Commission (FCC) aimed at ensuring that different groups have equal access to and representation in the Nigerian public sector;

and even the building of Abuja as Nigeria's capital (Langeret al., 2007). For instance, employment into the civil service in Nigeria takes cognizance of the country's diversity despite constitutional and statutory provisions on merit and professionalism in the civil service (Balogun, 2000). The idea of Federal Character Principle dates back to the pre-independence struggle for participation in the administration of colonial Nigeria but more so after the country became a federation in 1954. During this period, in an informal manner, the concern was with legislative representation and equalization of interregional appointments in education and appointments at the federal level (Adeosun, 2011). Regional quotas were introduced for military recruitment in the 1950s. But the quest for reforms after 1966 meant the entrenchment of affirmative action which is *"planning and action to end the absence of certain kinds of people – those who belong to groups that have been subordinated or left out – from certain jobs and schools"* (Ugoh & Ukpere, 2012).

Affirmative action, a key premise to the federal character principle is defended on three grounds (a) to offset past discrimination; (b) to counteract present unfairness; and (c) to achieve future equality (Ugoh & Ukpere, 2012). The first concerns compensation of victims for past discrimination. The second concerns providing a level playing field to counteract present unfairness while the third relates to promotion of diversity.

The idea that the pluralism of the Nigerian society should be reflected both in the political appointments and in the civil service gained momentum in the 1970s. This has a constitutional backing in the 1979 constitution which required the reflection of federal character in political appointments and in the civil service. This was further buttressed by the 1988 civil service reforms which made Directors-General political appointees. Measures were earlier taken to eliminate gaps in educational output between the North and South through quota admission in the federal tertiary institutions for students from all parts of the country. The Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) was created in 1977 to admit students into all universities on the basis of stipulated quotas.

The application of the Federal character principle heightened a sense of separateness arising from an excessive concern over state of origin. The quota system in employment is seen by some to negate merit and efficiency by lowering standards. The proponents of federal character principle laud it on the basis of the need for stability, even development, equity and fairness. This debate mirrors the US debate on equal opportunity clamoured for the African-Americans and the affiliation against reverse discrimination by the white majority (Dworkin, 1978; Posner, 1983).

4. The Nigerian Government's rules and Guidelines on Representation

In accordance with Federal Character Commission (FCC) Act of 1996, each state of federation and the FCT shall be equitably represented in the Public Service and Civil Service while the best and most competent persons are recruited from each state and the FCT. The distribution is made zonal if there are not enough positions. When you have only two positions, they should be shared between the Northern and Southern zones. Where indigenes of a state or the FCT cannot take up all the slots, the indigenes of any other state in the zone are given preference in taking up the vacancy. Only where there is nobody in the zone found to fill the post will resort be made to indigenes from another zone.

Each state is to produce 2.75% of the total workforce in any federal establishment while the Federal Government produces 1%. The Commission adopts a lower limit as well as an upper limit for state workforce in an establishment. The range is between 2.5% and 3.0%. In effect, the Statistical Division of the FCC, monitors the composition of different institutions, grouping them into (a) not represented (NR) 0%; (b) grossly under-represented (GUR) under 1.5%; (c) adequately represented (AR) between 2.5% and 3%; (d) over-represented (OR) between 3.1% and 3.9%; and (e) grossly over-represented (GOR) above 4% (Ugoh & Ukpere, 2012:6778).

4.1 Power and Employment Distributions

Power sharing at the federal level among the major ethnic groups and regions of the country has been a thorny issue since independence. For example, the 1994-5 National Constitutional Conference inaugurated by Gen. Sani Abacha on June 27, 1994 stated that *"the issue of equitable power sharing has been very contentious in Nigeria, especially since independence...the problem of power sharing had been responsible for much of the tensions, emotions, conflicts, stresses and strains...no other single issue received a greater attention than the issue of rotational presidency"*. Although the 1960 and 1963 constitutions were silent on the mechanism for power sharing, the founding fathers recognized the need for power sharing to ensure that no group is marginalized or oppressed.

The table below shows the Leaders (Heads of State/Government) of Nigeria since independence. Nigeria (at least since the end of the Civil War) has been able to prevent ethno-regional inequalities and tensions from escalating into large-scale violence both at the national and local levels, though both have experienced some violence (Langer, 2009).

Table 1: Nigeria's Heads of State/Government since Independence

President/ Head of State	Geographic Zone	Period in Power	Duration in Power
1. Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa (Prime Minister)	North East	1 Oct., 1960 – 15 Jan., 1966	5 years + 3.5 months
2. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe (Governor-General, then President*)	South East	1 Oct., 1960 – 30 Sept., 1963 1 Oct., 1963 – 14 Jan., 1966	3 years 2 years + 3.5 months
3. Gen. Aguiyi Ironsi	South East	15 Jan., 1966 – 28 July, 1966	6.5 months
4. Gen. Yakubu Gowon	North Central	29 July, 1966 – 28 July, 1975	9 years
5. Gen. Murtala Mohammed	North West	29 July, 1975 – 13 Feb., 1976	6.5 months
6. Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo	South West	13 Feb 1976 – 1 Oct. 1979	3 years + 6.5 months
7. Alhaji Shehu Shagari	North West	1 Oct. 1979 – 31 Dec. 1983	4 years + 3 months
8. Gen. Muhammadu Buhari	North West	31 Dec 1983 – 27 Aug. 1985	1 year + 8 months
9. Gen. Ibrahim Babaginda	North Central	27 Aug. 1985 – 26 Aug. 1993	8 years
10. Chief Ernest Shonekan	South West	26 Aug. 1993 – 17 Nov. 1993	3 months
11. Gen. Sani Abacha	North West	17 Nov. 1993 – 8 June 1998	4 years + 7 months
12. Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar	North Central	9 June 1998 – 29 May 1999	1 year
13. Olusegun Obasanjo	South West	29 May 1999 – 29 May 2007	8 years
14. Alhaji Musa Yar'Adua	North West	29 May 2007 – 6 May 2010	2 years + 11 months
15. Dr. Goodluck Jonathan	South South	7 May 2010 – 29 May 2015	5 years
16. Gen. Muhammadu Buhari	North West	29 May 2015 – date	

Adopted and adapted from Mustapha (2007).

One important source of cultural discrimination is the differential treatment in relation to religious practices and regulations. Suberu's (2009) analysis of the Sharia crisis in Nigeria, following the reintroduction of Islamic or Sharia Law in a number of northern states from 1999, clearly points to the divisiveness of these issues. The reintroduction of Sharia Law resulted in violent confrontations between the majority Muslim and minority Christian communities in the northern states of Bauchi, Niger, Gombe, Sokoto, Kano, Borno, Jigawa, Plateau and Kaduna. In some cases, the death toll from these clashes was considerable; for example, in Kaduna the religious clashes claimed around 2000 lives in February and May 2000 (Langer et al, 2009).

Violent conflict is often carried out by ethnic militias, which are prevalent in Nigeria. In the North, there is the Arewa Congress; the Oodua People's Congress (OPC) -- OPC is very influential in the Yoruba-dominated areas in the Southwest and The Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) operates in the South-East dominated by the Igbos. The most recent incidence by the Coalition of Northern Groups, on 6 June 2017, giving

all Igbo residents in the 19 states of the North a three - month ultimatum to quit the Northern region is a case at hand.

4.2 Implications of HIs on Development Policies

Dealing with perceptions of inequality is particularly complex from a policy perspective because different groups may have different views on what a “just” system would be, and on the origin of the observed inequalities.

The first step in understanding the status and dynamics of Horizontal Inequalities in any country is to classify the relevant identity groups (identifying salient groups) for example, ethnic, religious and regional --- the group boundaries that people mind about and the boundaries on the basis of which discrimination or favouritism occurs. Others include; whether the salient groups are geographically concentrated or dispersed; whether groups are specialized on particular economic activities; whether the government is politically inclined to tackle inequalities or wishes to preserve them.

Each of these questions according to Stewart et al (2007) is relevant for policy design. Since the adoption of the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) in the mid-1980s, successive Nigerian Governments have pursued policies that claimed to target economic growth without addressing inequality. There seems to be implicitly a tolerance for growing inequality (Gboyega et al, 2004). Lack of any serious attempt to address the issue of HIs in the country is responsible for the continuous failure of development policies. This is observed in the;

- 1) The worsening of income distribution within individual households, groups, states and regions which have resulted in poverty being experienced in some remote and backward as well as prosperous areas in the country
- 2) The unbalanced development among states, local government areas and regions which has led to greater inter regional, and interstate income inequality

4.3 Tackling Horizontal Inequalities

4.3.1 Political Sphere

Political exclusion is likely to alienate group leaders, therefore ensuring that each major group participates in the political arena and has access to power is a critical requirement for sustained peace. Political power is located at many levels hence group participation need to be identified at each level and appropriate policies devised. There is need for inclusivity. Monopolization of political power by one group or another is often responsible for many of the inequalities and for violent reactions.

Achieving political inclusivity has its own challenges. It is not an automatic result of democracy. (a) Rotation of political powers is anti-democratic. Meritocracy must be enthroned but the issue of statism or regionalism must be redefined. Citizenship of a state or region must be flexible and based on residence for at least three uninterrupted years. This will naturally abolish ethnicism and clannishness that have become instruments of violence since amalgamation in 1914. (b) Correcting the imbalance in the number of local government areas; it should be based on human population rather than land mass. (c) The Federal Character and uplifting the educationally, economically and politically disadvantaged states/regions policy of the government is a welcome development but it must not be in perpetuity. A time line of between 10-20 years is recommended for that. Meritocracy cannot be sacrificed at the altar of mediocrity. (d) For the executive arm of government that formulates and implements development policies, the best brain only should be considered. In other to get at this, the paper suggests the reduction of the number of ministries to at most 13-15. The people that will take up these positions will be those who are altruistic in nature, those that will see the whole country as their constituency and act accordingly.

Hence, the paper suggests the adoption of two-party structure with provision for independent candidacy. The two-party structure will automatically break ethnic leanings and thus reduce chances of violence based on ethnicity.

4.3.2 Socio-economic Sphere

- (a) In the distribution of the nation's resources in terms of investments, social amenities and the likes, human population should be the guiding principle. This implies that there must be a free and fair census ab initio.
- (b) There must also be resource derivation consideration. The areas/ regions that produce the natural resources must be adequately compensated. This principle will challenge other areas to harness maximally whatever resources that are found these regions.

5. Conclusion

Horizontal Inequalities and the consequent ethnic violence and conflicts hinder both formulation and implementation of development policies in Nigeria. The Nigerian government in trying to tackle this problem established the Federal Character Principle which has not been able to adequately solve the inequalities and associated ethnic conflicts. Again, the Nigerian government in realizing that for there to be socio-economic and political growth, education is imperative. Hence, the formulation of

“catchment area” policy in admission of students into tertiary institutions. This policy has failed to take care of the educational imbalance. Rather what we observe is the enthronement of mediocrity.

The paper therefore advocates for redefinition of ethnic/ regional make up; re-creation of local government areas based on population rather than land mass; adequate compensation for resource based areas; putting time line to the catchment area policy and finally putting in place leaders that are above ethnic/ regional influences, true Nigerians in all ramifications.

References

1. Akintoye, O. & Utang, P. (2012), “Spatial Disparity in Employee Composition in the Oil Industry in Nigeria and the Implication of the Federal Character Policy”. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* Vol.2 No. 6.
2. Adeosun, A. (2011), “Federal Character Principle and National Integration: A Critical Appraisal”. *International Journal of Politics and Good Governance*. Vol.2 No. 2.4 Quarter IV.
3. Bahaug, H, Cederman L. & Gleditsch, K. (2014), *Square Pegs in Round Holes: Inequalities, Grievances and Civil War*. *International Studies Quarterly* (2014)58,418-431
4. Bassey, C. (2005), “Federalism and Conflict Resolution”, in Onwudiwe & Suberu (eds.) *Nigerian Federalism in Crisis: Critical Perspectives and Political Options*. Ibadan: John Archers.
5. Cederman, L., Wimmer, A. & Min, B. (2010), “Why Do Ethnic Groups Rebel? New Data and Analysis.” *World Politics* 62 (1):87-119.
6. Collier, P. & Hoeffler, A. (2001), “Greed and Grievance in Civil Wars.” *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper* 2355. Washington, DC: World Bank
7. Gayatri, I. (2010), *Nationalism, Democratization and Primordial Sentiment in Indonesia: Problems of Ethnicity versus Indonesianness (the cases of Aceh, Raiu, Papua and Bali)*. *Journal of Indonesian Social Sciences and Humanities*, 3(2).
8. Gurr, T. (1970), *Why Men Rebel*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
9. Horowitz, D. (2002), *Constitutional Design: Proposals versus Processes in the Architecture of Democracy: Constitutional Design, Conflict Management and Democracy*, edited by Reynolds, A. Oxford: Oxford University Press

12. Mustapha, A.R. (2007), "Institutionalizing Ethnic Representation: How effective is the Federal Character Commission in Nigeria". www.crise.ox.ac.uk
13. Sambanis, N.(2001), "Do Ethnic and Nonethnic Civil Wars Have the Same Causes? A Theoretical and Empirical Inquiry." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45 (3): 259-82.
14. Stewart, F. (2000), 'Crisis Prevention: Tackling Horizontal Inequalities', Working Paper Number 33, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford (http://www2.qeh.ox.ac.uk/research/wpaction.html?jor_id=40)
15. Stewart, F., and A. Langer (2008), *Horizontal Inequalities: Explaining Persistence and Change*. In F. Stewart (ed.) *Horizontal Inequalities and Conflict: Understanding Group Violence in Multiethnic Societies*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
16. Suberu, R. (2009), *Religion and Institutions: Federalism and the Management of Conflicts over Sharia in Nigeria*. *Journal of International Development* 21(4): 547-560.
17. Langer, A. (2005), *Horizontal Inequalities and Violent Group Mobilization in Côte d'Ivoire*. *Oxford Development Studies* 33(1): 25-45.
18. Langer, A., and G. K. Brown (2008), *Cultural Status Inequalities: An Important Dimension of Group Mobilization*. In F. Stewart (ed.) *Horizontal Inequalities and Conflict: Understanding Group Violence in Multiethnic Societies*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
19. Mancini, L. (2008), *Horizontal Inequality and Communal Violence: Evidence from Indonesian Districts*. In F. Stewart (ed.) *Horizontal Inequalities and Conflict: Understanding Group Violence in Multiethnic Societies*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan
20. Ugoh, S. and Ukpere, W. (2012), "Policy of the Federal Character Principle and Conflict Management in Nigerian Federalism". *African Journal of Business Management* Vol. 6(23), pp. 6771-6780.
21. Ukiwo, U. (2008), *Horizontal Inequalities and Ethnic Violence: Evidence from Calabar and Warri, Nigeria*. In F. Stewart (ed.) *Horizontal Inequalities and Conflict: Understanding Group Violence in Multiethnic Societies*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
22. www.worldbank.org/publicsector/bnpp/report) retrieved May 24, 2017
23. http://www.waado.org/NigerDelta/Essays/Politics/nigeria_at_51.htm retrieved May 24, 2017
24. www.vanguardngr.com/news retrieved June 2, 2017
25. <http://www3.qeh.ox.ac.uk/pdf/qehwp/qehwps81.pdf> retrieved June 2, 2017

Creative Commons licensing terms

Author(s) will retain the copyright of their published articles agreeing that a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0) terms will be applied to their work. Under the terms of this license, no permission is required from the author(s) or publisher for members of the community to copy, distribute, transmit or adapt the article content, providing a proper, prominent and unambiguous attribution to the authors in a manner that makes clear that the materials are being reused under permission of a Creative Commons License. Views, opinions and conclusions expressed in this research article are views, opinions and conclusions of the author(s). Open Access Publishing Group and European Journal of Social Sciences Studies shall not be responsible or answerable for any loss, damage or liability caused in relation to/arising out of conflicts of interest, copyright violations and inappropriate or inaccurate use of any kind content related or integrated into the research work. All the published works are meeting the Open Access Publishing requirements and can be freely accessed, shared, modified, distributed and used in educational, commercial and non-commercial purposes under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).