
POWER SHARING CONUNDRUM AND THE CHALLENGES OF 2015 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *The centrality of power in any political setting is axiomatic. Small wonder or no wonder capturing it has almost become a do or die affairs. It is incontrovertible that the nationalist struggle was not a power tussle among Nigerians but rather between Nigerians and the British colonialists. However, towards the twilight of independence, Nigeria's political terrain has been fraught with rabid competition for power even up till now. While in other climes, leadership position to a reasonable extent is tied mainly to performance criteria, in Nigeria, it is laced with economic and ethnic connotations. The above scenario has become a perennial as well as recurring decimal in Nigeria. The corollary is the furore surrounding the 2015 general elections. The power melodrama pundits argue if not well managed can have serious implication for democratic consolidation particularly as the country approaches another election year. The paper affirmed that power sharing or rotational presidency lacks legitimacy. It assessed the federal character principle as enshrined in the 1999 constitution of Nigeria. The work examined the hurdles to 2015 general elections. It concluded by proposing some policy options while relying on secondary source of data.*

KEYWORDS: Election, Ethnicity, Democratic Consolidation, Good Governance, Power, Power-Sharing

INTRODUCTION

Among the laws that rule human societies is one which seem to be more precise and clear than all others. If men are to remain civilized, or to become so, art of associating together must grow and improve in the same ratio by which the equality of condition is increased (Tocqueville, 1995).

The above epitomises the thematic idea of this work. Power sharing among the major ethnic groups and regions in Nigeria has been a volatile as well as thorny issue particularly since independence. It has been a perennial problem which has not only defied all past attempts at a permanent solution but that also has a tendency for evoking high emotions on the part of all concerned each time it is brought forth for discussion or analysis (Ladan, 2011). This may not

be unconnected with the plural and ethnic character of Nigerian federation. This consciousness is at the centre of every discourse in the country. The above scenario can be aptly captured in “Things Fall Apart”, thus: Now that he has won our brothers and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart (Achebe, 1958). It is against this background that the 1994/1995 National Constitutional Conference inaugurated by General Sani Abacha stated that “the issue of equitable power sharing has been very contentious in Nigeria especially since independence... the problem of power 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” (Amuwo, 1998). Arising from the above, the Head of State General Sani Abacha gave the charge:

Device for our people system of government guaranteeing equal opportunities, the right to aspire to any public office irrespective of state of origin, ethnicity or creed, and thus engender a sense of belonging in all our citizens. (Tribune, 1995).

In the opinion of (Duchacek, 1970), “... even a grossly erroneous perception of asymmetry of power in a federal union may produce disaffection and resistance to the federal way of life. Such resistance is, indeed, responsible for the political instability in Nigeria. (Ake, 1998).

The dilemma of ethno-linguistic domination reared its ugly head in the abortive coup de’ tat of 1990. Justifying the putsch, Major Gideon Orkar, who led the said coup asserted: Our history is replete with numerous and uncontrollable instances of callous and insensitive, dominatory and repressive intrigues by those who think it is their birthright to dominate till eternity the political and economic privileges of this great country to the exclusion of the people of the Middle Belt and the South (Newslink, 1990).

Appallingly, twenty four years after Orkar made the above statement, events up till now show that the country is incapable of carpeting the quagmire of power sharing. More than ever before, the issue of power sharing is reverberating to the extent that it is perhaps the major explanatory factor for the gamut of challenges facing the country thereby posing a daunting challenge to democratic consolidation. Acknowledging the volatile nature of Nigerian federation and the call for power rotation, President Jonathan at Inauguration was categorical when he said “the national conference was significantly expected to give special attention to the concern over Nigeria’s future beyond 2015, especially the issue of power rotation amongst the nation’s ethnic nationalities” (Daily Independent, 2014). Put differently, (Agbakoba, 2011) stressed the importance of zoning in Nigeria when he posited that “the call to abolish zoning seriously underestimates and ignores the complex political character of Nigeria”. In an insightful remarks, (Ogbowe, 2014) is of the opinion that the continuing quest for a stable polity is in itself a constant reflection of the reality as well as the inevitability of our diversity. He predicated the necessity for a credible power rotation model on what he described as “the desperate urgency of our present circumstances”. In the opinion of (Emmanuel, 2013) “several factors have been identified as being responsible for the lopsided political leadership in Nigeria. They include: greed, avarice, insensitivity to the feelings of the masses, lack of integrity on the part of our political leaders, e.t.c”.

The 2015 general elections in Nigeria will serve as a litmus test as there are cacophonies of voices particularly from well-meaning Nigerians bothering on succession. The equivalent of their demand can be described thus, “no power rotation, no Nigeria”. The question now is:

are we not gravitating towards the predicted failed state in 2015? This work cannot come at a better period than now because of the anxiety surrounding the 2015 general elections.

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

For the avoidance of ambiguity, terms used in this work will be clarified. The postulation of (Chafe, 1994) becomes relevant that “the primary requirement for debating anything is to understand first and foremost the actual thing being talked about”.

Nigeria is often regarded as a pioneer and exemplar in Africa in the use of power-sharing mechanisms and practices to promote inter-ethnic inclusiveness, or discourage sectional imbalance and bias, in decision making processes. (Rothschild, 1995) (Suberu, 1996). The Committee on power-sharing perceived it as “Invariably touching on the question of equity, fairness and justice in the allocation of fundamental indices of power which were identified as economic, military, bureaucratic, media and intellectual” (Report of the Constitutional Conference).

Power sharing is a strategy for resolving disputes over who should have the most powerful position in the social hierarchy. Instead of fighting over who should have power over whom, power sharing relies upon the joint exercise of power. If conflicts can be reframed to focus on how such power sharing might take place, they can become much more constructive. (www.colorado.edu/conflict).

Power sharing can take a variety of forms. One approach is to grant minority group autonomy over some-or-all-aspects of their own affairs. This autonomy can be limited to crucial issues: religion and education for example, or it can be extended to cover the social, economic, and political spheres as well. At the extreme, it can take the form of granting complete independence and allowing a minority group to form its own sovereign nation state (www.colorado.edu/conflict)

Another approach to power sharing is more integrative. Governance is handled by leaders from each group who work jointly and cooperatively to make decisions and resolve conflicts. This approach relies on ethnically neutral decision making and public policies. Typically, the electoral system will be structured to encourage multi-ethnic coalitions within the political system. (www.colorado.edu/conflict)

Implementing either approach is usually difficult, as groups holding power are reluctant to relinquish that power, and groups without it tend to want massive change to occur more quickly than the dominant group is likely to accept. For this reason, demands for power-sharing and autonomy often ferment conflict more than they resolve it. However, if minority groups can frame their demands in a way that emphasis joint benefit, and focus on developing a mutually acceptable way of achieving self-determination for all groups, they are likely to meet with more success than they are if they take a more combative or competitive approach (www.colorado.edu/conflict)

Relating the above to Nigeria’s situation, one would agree that the inability to design a mutually agreeable fair power sharing arrangement as portrayed by the political class is one of the issues Nigeria is battling with that if it is not well managed, it could serve as albatross to political stability.

Election is a formal decision-making process by which a population chooses an individual to hold public office. Elections have been the usual mechanism by which modern representative democracy has operated since the 17th century. This process is also used in many other private and business organizations, from clubs to voluntary associations and corporations. (www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/election).

An election according to the Hutchinson's Encyclopedia is the process of appointing or selecting persons to public offices or a political party to govern, by voting. It is indeed a vital political right of expression of choice. Election is at individual level, an inalienable opportunity and political expression of citizenship and at a collective level, an expression of sovereignty by which a people determine their preferred policies according to the manifesto of competing persons or parties. Election is the soul of democracy, for it is the singular activity that distinguishes democracy from the rest (www.democracyinternational.com). Elections provide a peaceful democratic means for societies to channel competition for political power and make collective decisions. By casting votes to select who will represent them in public offices, citizens express preferences about the policies those representing them will pursue. Citizens may also make decisions on issues through special elections called referenda. Aside guaranteeing choice, elections confer legitimacy to governments and act as a check on a sitting government and eject responsiveness to avoid loss in the next election.

As a framework of analysis, social conflict theory will be adopted. Social conflict is the struggle for agency or power in society. Social conflict or group conflict occurs when two or more actors oppose each other in social interaction, reciprocally exerting social power in an effort to attain scarce or incompatible goals and prevent the opponent from attaining them. It is a social relationship wherein the action is oriented intentionally for carrying out the actor's own will against the resistance of other party or parties (www.en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/social_conflict). Competition over resources is often the cause of conflict. The three tenets of this theory are the following; (1) society is composed of different groups that compete for resources (2) while societies may portray a sense of cooperation, a continual power struggle exists between social groups as they pursue their own interests. Within societies, certain groups control specific resources and means of production (3) social groups will use resources to their own advantage in the pursuit of their goals. This often means that those who lack control over resources will be taken advantage of. As a result, many dominated groups will struggle with other groups in attempt to gain control. The majority of the time, the groups with the most resources will gain or maintain power (due to the fact that they have the resources to support their power). The idea that those who have control will maintain control is known as The Matthew Effect (www.en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/social_conflict).

Federal character Principle in Nigeria: An Overview

What necessitates the thought of federal character principle is the ethnic composition of Nigeria with rabid competition for power and positions. It is adopted to counteract the national question that is an enigma. Commenting on the national question (Ajayi, 1992) argued as follows:

The National Question is... the perennial debate as to how to order the relations between the different ethnic, linguistic and cultural grouping so that they have the same rights and privileges, access to power and equitable share of national resources.

This federal character principle is not entirely new as it was enshrined in the 1979 constitution of Nigeria in the second republic. However, section 153 subsection 1 (c) bothers on Federal Character Commission, (FCC) while the Third Schedule 7 is about the functions of the commission enshrined in the 1999 constitution of Nigeria.

Similarly, section 14 subsections 3 and 4 of the 1999 constitution stated that:

3. 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 group in that Government or in any of its agencies.
4. The composition of the Government of a state, a local government council, or any of the agencies of such Government or council, and the conduct of the affairs of the government or council or such agencies shall be carried out in such manner as to recognise the diversity of the people within its area of authority and the need to promote a sense of belonging and loyalty among all the peoples of the federation.

The implementation of the federal character principle has generated tension among the component units in Nigeria. Although, celebrated by some as the “cornerstone of ethnic justice and fair government in Nigeria”, the federal character principle has also been denounced by others as a euphemism for federal discrimination at best, or geographical apartheid at worst (Olawale, 2007).

The principle in practice has the problem of over-generalization to areas where the problems of imbalance do not exist even within the same ethnic groups. Because of this principle, federal, states and local governments are likely to be over-stretched by the mandate of the federal character appointment in the sense that where portfolios cannot go round either at federal or state levels, the groups or zones without representation in terms of political appointment may feel alienated somehow. Thus, the policy is engendering federal instability rather than integration that it was intended to achieve (Ayoade, 1998).

It is equally argued that the principle of federal character in Nigeria erodes the integrity and standards of the public service and other governmental agencies that should be insulated from politics. There is the dichotomy of representation and balancing of equity consideration in relation to efficiency. This is capable of killing morale especially of officers superseded as a result of geographical factor (Ojo, 2009).

From another standpoint, the policy as being implemented in Nigeria is elitist and class biased. (Ayoade,1982). The unreliability of data renders the principle questionable. It is widely believed that the principle has created three types of Nigerian citizens.

1. The most privileged are those who belong to the indigenous communities of the state in which they reside.
2. Those citizens who are indigenes of other states are less favoured
3. The least privileged are those citizens who are unable to prove that they belong to a community indigenous to any state in Nigeria and women married to men from states other than their own. (Busari, 1989).

Similarly, in an examination of the policy, (Ayoade, 1995) notes that as long as the application of the principle discriminates against one group and favours another; no unity can result from such an exercise. The application is also falsifiable because distributive justice, which it aims to achieve, is the equality of all states, which is assumed. But states are not equal in population and they are far from being equal too in the size of the pool of eligible candidates for appointment. There is no greater inequality than the equal treatment of unequals. Competent people who are disqualified on the ground of state of origin and such other spurious criteria cannot be a willing material on which to erect the unity of the nation. They must feel wanted in order to volunteer themselves for national service (Ayoade, 1995).

Conversely, inspite of the pitfalls of the principle in Nigeria, the country cannot afford to jettison it at least for now. The establishment of Federal Character Commission (FCC) must have helped to truncate the criticism of the principle by regular update of data from time to time. While peace promotes development, only equitable development can promote national integration. But equity transcends the pursuit of inclusiveness (Ojo, 2009).

Empirical Indices of Power Relationships since Independence till Date

It is worth mentioning for the purpose of clarity that inspite of the claim to power by the component units of Nigerian federation, there is nowhere in the statutes book that the issue of power sharing is codified. The import of the above is that the agitations lack legality or legitimacy. Whatever arrangements that must have been existing since the nation's independence is borne out of homostatism-self adjustment mechanism.

Table 1: Nigeria's Heads of State 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 + 3.5months
2	Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe (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. Aguyi Ironsi	South East	15 Jan., 1966-28July, 1966	6.5 months
4	Gen. Yakubu Gowon	North Central	29 July, 1966-28July, 1975	9 years
5	Gen. Murtala Mohammed	North West	29 July 1975 – 13Feb., 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 + 3months
8	Gen. Mohammadu Buhari	North West	31 Dec. 1983-27Aug. 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- July 2014	4 years + 2 months

Source: www.waado.org, retrieved on August 4, 2014 and Updated.

**During the First Republic (1 October 1960-15 January 1966), Nigeria practiced parliamentary democracy with N. Azikiwe as the ceremonial Head of State while Alhaji T. Balewa was the Prime Minister and Head of Government (Chief Executive)*

Table 2: Distribution of Heads of State and Duration in Power by Geographical Zones

Zone	No of Heads of State	% of No. of Heads of State	Total Duration in Power	% of Duration
North-West	5	33%	14 years	24%
North-East	1	7%	5year+3.5months	9%
North-Central	3	20%	18 years	31%
South-West	3*	20%	11year+9.5months	20%
South-East	2	13%	5years 10 months	9%
South-South	1	7%	4years+2months	7%
Total	15	100%	59years + 1month	100%
Subtotal North	9	60%	37 years + 3.5months	64%
Subtotal South	6	40%	21 years + 9.5 months	36%

Source: www.waado.org, retrieved on August 4, 2014 and Updated.

President Obasajo is counted two times as two separate individuals. He ruled as a Military Head of State (1976-1979) and as an elected civilian President (1999-2007).

There is double counting for the period 1st October 1960 to 15th January 1966 (95 years and 3 months) when he was a ceremonial Present/Head of State (Dr. Azikwe) and a Prime Minister/Head of Government (Alhaji Tafawa Balewa) who actually had more powers.

Table 2 below depicts the current six geographical zones by the distribution of the leaders and their duration in office. The table reveals that of the 15 Heads of State or Government, the North has produced nine who ruled for 66% of the time amounting to (about 37 years) while the South produced six Heads of State who ruled for 34% totalling (about 19 years). The power asymmetry was occasioned by military factor devoid of democracy. Expecting a balanced power structure during military regime would have been a mirage. In spite of the fact that North-West zone has produced the highest number of Heads of state (5), the North-Central zone has had the longest duration in power (18 years). A comparative analysis of the distribution of political power during the military era and civilian era (see table 3 and 4 below) shows clearly that power sharing was balanced sort of under civilian regimes than under the military eras.

Table 3: Distribution of Heads of State and Duration in Power by Geographical Zones during the Military Era

Zone	No of Heads of State	% of No. of Heads of State	Total Duration in Power	% of Duration
North-West	3	38%	6years + 9.5moths	24%
North-East	0	0%		
North-Central	3	38%	18years	62%
South-West	1	12%	3year+6.5months	12%
South-East	1	12%	6.5months	2%
South-South	0	0%		
Total	8	100%	28years+10.5months	100%
Subtotal North	6	75%	24 years+9.5months	86%
Subtotal South	2	25%	4 years+2months	14%

Source: www.waado.org, retrieved on August 4, 2014 and Updated.

Table 4: Distribution of Heads of State and Duration in Power by Geographical Zones during the Civilian regimes.

Zone	No of Heads of State	% of No. of Heads of State	Total Duration in Power	% of Duration
North-West	2	29%	7year+2months	24%
North-East	1	14%	5 years+3.5 months	17.5%
North-Central	0	0		
South-West	2	19%	8years+3months	27%
South-East	1	14%	5 years 3.5 months	17.5s%
South-South	1	14%	4 years + 2 months	14%
Total	7	100%	27 years + 4months	100%
Subtotal North	3	43%	12years + 5.5 months	42%
Subtotal South	4	57%	14 years+10.5months	58%

Source: www.waado.org, retrieved on August 4, 2014 and Updated.

Note: There is double counting for the period 1st October 1960 to 15th January 1966 (5 years and 3 months)

Inherent in the above table is that the highest percentage goes to the South-West zone with 27%, North-West with 24%, followed by the North-East and South-East that tallied at 17.5%, South-South having 14% and North-Central having no taste under civilian regime. It reveals that the North has an edge under military regime as against the South with upper hand under democratic setting. The North must have been angered by this arrangement.

The inference from table 4 above is that there exists some sort of power sharing mechanism that is attributable to the federal character principle as enshrined in the 1999 constitution of Nigeria. It is a product of constitutional engineering whereby some elective positions are shared among the geo-political zones in the country to avoid lopsidedness. It is thus safe to conclude that power sharing is fairer under civilian regime than military regime. The North has 12.5 years with 46% whereas the South has 14.10 years totalling 54%. The questions now are how to make power sharing a constitutional issue in Nigeria? And the form it will take-whether North/South divide or geo-political setting? These are knotty issues that the nation has to contend with. These would not have been too necessary but for lack of development in the country. Today, the president is from the South-South, vice-president from North-West, Senate president from the North-Central, Deputy Senate president from the South-East, Speaker of the House of Representative from the North-West and Deputy Speaker from the South-East.

Hurdles to 2015 General Elections in Nigeria

Some months away from the 2015 general elections, the atmosphere is rife with provocative statements from well-meaning Nigerians on the outcome of the elections. One needs not pretend that the country is sitting on a keg of gun powder that may explode anytime if situations are not well managed. We have manifold challenges ahead of 2015 elections. Attempt will be made here to examine those that are critical.

Firstly, the major cause of the so-called bitter and quarrelsome political succession struggle boils down to political elites with no national and public interest at heart fighting and jostling for the spoils of office and political power. (Ekweremadu, 2014). Aligning with the above position, (Fasoranti, 2014), submits that “rather than creating an enabling environment for

rational discourse and contestation of ideas for the electorate to be able to make informed choices, many of the political actors are making inflammatory remarks to inflame and deepen the divisions within our country to make political gains”.

Secondly, that election can only be held in an atmosphere of peace need no much debate. Insecurity is indeed the most obvious manifestation of this uncertainty as Nigeria moves towards the crucial general elections of 2015. (Abubakar, 2014). The insurgency in the North East in particular, kidnapping in the South-South, hired assassin in the South-East, ritual killing in the South-West and other sectarian crises in the North Central portend danger in the coming elections. Lives in thousands let alone properties have been lost with no solution in sight. The most recent that has almost defied solution is the Chibok girls kidnapping that has attracted global attention as the country prepares for 2015 elections. In the words of (Fasoranti, 2014), “never in the history of our country, except in the civil war years, have our people been more insecure than they are today. Hardly is any news segment complete without the word “kill” in it. Life has become short, nasty and brutish like in the Hobbesian state of nature”.

Moreover, at the root of Nigeria’s predicament is ethnicity. The incorporation of ethno-religious sentiments into Nigerian politics is not just now. The tripodal arrangement of Northern Peoples Congress (NPC), Action Group (AG), and National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) witnessed in the course of party formation in the first republic confirmed the above while subsequent republics have not moved away as such from this pattern. “The diversity of Nigeria, which is supposed to be its greatest asset, has unfortunately become the most potent instrument of manipulation in the hands of the political elites. Thus, the selfish ambition of a few are easily articulated and sold as group, religious, sectional, and ethnic interest to the citizens” (Ekweremadu, 2014). Events after 2015 elections will give a clearer picture whether insurgency has political undertone or not.

Not only that, election is a barometer to mention political stability or otherwise. The inability of past elections to guarantee a reasonably free and fair poll is one of the fears being entertained come 2015 in Nigeria. Elections have been characterised by massive rigging and fraud resulting in protests, conflicts and almost endless litigations in courts and election tribunals. The aftermath of the 2011 elections in Nigeria especially in the North cannot be forgotten in a hurry.

According to Buhari, “Nigeria risks an Arab spring of some sort. In 2012, he gave a dire warning of what would happen in 2015: “If what happened in 2011 (alleged rigging) should again happen in 2015, by the grace of God, the dog and the baboon would all be soaked in blood”. (www.eastandsouth.worldpress.com)

Furthermore, political parties in Nigeria are bereft of ideology. Paraphrasing Ekweremadu,(2014), there is equally the lack of political parties with strong ideological discipline for the near-anarchy that has been unleashed by political interests group scrambling to grasp political power in 2015.

As rightly pointed by Claude Ake, our politics was ‘dissociated from issue of ideology and social forces. “Political parties were created, abstracted from social realities – “they belonged to everyone in general and to one in particular and thus constituted anarchy of ambitions” This describes in clear terms the build-up to 2015 general elections.

Closely related to the above is the internal wrangling within political parties and the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in particular. It is alleged that President Jonathan signed an agreement to serve for only one term and not seek re-election in 2015 so that a Northerner can emerge as President. It is the purported repudiation of the so-called agreement that has made some Governors of PDP extraction to leave the party and team up to form the All Progressive Congress (APC) that is poised to challenge the ruling PDP in the forthcoming elections. Some other bigwigs politicians have followed suit. At the root of this is power sharing or rotational presidency. It has also percolated to governorship race in states, senatorial slots, House of Representatives, Assembly Seats, Councils Chairmanship and Councillorships. This has constituted a web sort of. However, it is not yet certain whether the defection of politicians is occasioned by absence of internal democracy or their loss in the power game. Whatever may be the case, it will have interplay in 2015 general elections in the country.

Corruption, to say the least is one of the major challenges to democratic consolidation in Nigeria and by extension good governance. In the United State Reports, part of which states that ... the law provides criminal penalties for official corruption; however, the government did not implement the law effectively and officials frequently engaged in corrupt practices with impunity. Massive, widespread and pervasive corruption affected all levels of government and the security forces. (Punch, 2013). Small wonder or no wonder the World Bank described Nigeria as a study in contradiction "so rich, yet so poor indeed. (EFCC Magazine, 2010). For a country that has over the years earned billions of dollars from crude oil, the inequitable distribution of wealth amongst its teeming population continues to stun the world. Failure to address this by the president and near-celebration of alleged persons and granting of amnesty to Diepreye Alamieyeseigha, former governor of Bayelsa State and sundry other cases have been frowned at, thus likely to change the course of events in the 2015 elections. Whether this is borne out of sincerity is another matter entirely.

Finally, there exists overwhelming lack of political literacy and sophistication among the followers in Nigeria; hence, the political elites have become so adept at playing up certain mundane sentiments to position themselves as champions of the political interest of their people (Ekweremadu, 2014). The Holy Bible equally acknowledges that "my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge (Hosea 4: 6as)

This may not be unconnected with the deliberate pauperization of the citizenry, unemployment, frustration, e.t.c, making the people willing horse to whatever they are being offered. The above, no matter how marginal have a role to play in who gets what, when and how in the 2015 general elections.

Justification of the Study

- The work is an attempt at establishing how rotational presidency could stabilise or balance the political leadership of Nigeria and free it from its lopsidedness.
- It is equally meant to contribute to existing scholarly work regarding power sharing and provide an insight for researchers who will be interested in this area in the future.
- The work will be of immense help to political actors, policy-makers, e.t.c that are saddled with the responsibility of re-ordering Nigerian society towards national integration.
- It assessed the reality of power rotation and sensitized Nigerians on the needed sacrifice in the task of nation building.
- It offered a clear departure from the palliative approaches adopted in the past.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The centrality of power irrespective of climes is globally acknowledged. This reinforces the truism in its pursuit desperately by all sections of the country. There is equally the undeniable relationship between political stability and democratic consolidation. That Nigeria is going through a tortuous journey is almost visible to the blind and the deaf can hear of it. At the centre of it all is the power rotation arrangement that is perhaps the explanatory factor for the gamut of challenges shaking the nation to its root, most especially as the country approaches elections year. However, whatever anybody may want to say, Nigeria's case is not beyond redemption. While not outrightly rejecting power rotation, the paper is skeptical of the intention behind it. In the light of the above, the following recommendations are made inspite of the fact that they are not exhaustive:

- Single term for all executive political office holders as the fastest panacea to the challenges of succession in the country.
- Building of Institutions that would sustain democracy, rule of law and end the vicious circle of impunity than pay attention to political succession.
- Making political offices to be part-time arrangement, particularly the legislative arm as a way of reducing the unhealthy rivalry associated with such offices.
- Evolving a power rotation arrangement that is home-grown, appealing to majority and touching on all elective positions at local government level, state level and national level.
- Emergence of political elites who are statesmen and detribalized whose main focus is nation-building not necessarily perquisites of office.
- Embracing of devolution of power as a way of reducing the concentration of power at the national level with over-bearing influence.
- Encouragement of political parties that have bias for ideologies as opposed to those that operate like business concerns.
- Appealing for spirit of accommodation, tolerance, brotherliness e.t.c as our watchword because life is ephemeral.

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