



## THE APPLICATION OF FEDERAL CHARACTER PRINCIPLE IN NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR STUDENTS' ADMISSIONS INTO FEDERAL UNITY SCHOOLS

CHARLES ALEONOKHUA OSIMERAH  
&  
PHILIPS O. OKOLO

### Abstract

*This paper examined the implications of the application of the FCP for students' admissions into Unity Schools. The paper is an historical analysis that relied on secondary sources of data. The study, observed that efforts made by government to unite the nation through this policy option in its implementation in the education sector did not yield the desired result, as the principle created more distortions such as lopsidedness, outright lowering of standards, excessive wage bill and this largely created disunity among Nigerians. The study therefore, recommends among others, that its current constitutional status should be reconsidered to reposition it towards the achievement of sustainability of development efforts in this sector.*

**Keywords:** Admissions, Applications, Federal-Character, Implications, Principles, Unity-Schools

### Introduction

The heterogeneous composition of Nigeria as a nation following the amalgamation of 1914 has been the bane of successive governments in their efforts to move and develop the country while preserving the diversities that exists therein. Plural societies, all over the World, attempt to manage their diversities through combination of policy alternatives in order to achieve co-existence and peaceful living (Bodumin, 1989; Ayoade, 1998; Abdullah, 2007; Okolo, 2011). Often times, such policy turns out to be either a blessing in disguise or a curse. It provides opportunity for centre-seeking and centre-fleeing forces to interact peacefully and co-exist on agreed terms (Gberevbie, 2012). One of such policies is the Federal Character Principle of Nigeria. Federal Character Principle as a way of promoting representative democracy whereby different ethnic, cultural and language groups are fully represented in state organizations and institutions was seen as a catalyst that will promote unity and even development of the Nigerian state. There is actually no federal design that fit into any universal requirement for nations of the world. Hence, Wheare (1953) sees Federal design as a matter of constitutional arrangement and there is the tendency for nations to have different constitutions that governed them hence Okolo (2014) posits that:





Federal arrangement that a given nation or any political system adopts must be tailored to suit its own distinct social economic, cultural and political arrangement of managing diversities in a plural state like Nigeria just as the United State of America, Canada and India.

Nigeria has attempted to manage her diversities through the Federal Character Principle in its application to the collective lives of its citizens as a nation. Admission into federal government colleges (unity schools), recruitment into Federal jobs like the police force, the military and even the distribution of social amenities, appointments across the nation are all governed by the Federal Character Principle (FCP). Shastri (2001) has maintained that cleavages in a plural state like Nigeria can only be guaranteed continuous existence through Federal arrangement like (FCP) if its processes and application are faithfully adhered to. Suberu (1999) agrees that Federal arrangement like (FCP) has the tendency of encouraging even development in nations where they are clearly spelt out in the constitution. The Nigeria constitution in its section 14(3) has defined the Federal Character Principle thus:

The composition of the government of the federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affair 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 few states or from few ethnic or other sectional groups in that government or any of its agencies.

The founding fathers of Nigeria had envisioned a land of equal opportunities for every citizens and a land where no man would be oppressed. Hence, emphasis on balanced representation and power sharing was given a formal constitutional status in 1979 under the Federal Character Principle of Nigeria in section 14, subsection 3. In the application of this constitutional right, section 35 empowers the president of Nigeria to appoint at least a minister each from all the states of the federation and section 157 also compels the president of Nigeria to take due cognisance of the federal character of Nigeria in appointing persons to federal government offices in the federation such as the ambassadors, permanent secretaries of federal ministries. Section 197 (c) stipulates that the officer corps and other ranks of the armed forces must reflect the federal character of Nigeria. Afigbo (1987), identified three stages of the evolution of the federal character principle which was initially a colonial heritage. These stages includes: The period of informal Federation 1900-1946, The period of pre-independence 1946-1960; The period of independence 1960 till present day. One major difference of the periods is that the present day practice has constitutional backing while the former had none. Afigbo (1987), noted that Federal Character Principle arose out of a compromise among members of the Constitution Drafting Committee(CDC) as one way of calming down the troubled waters of the period created by the civil War and also a sure way of stabilizing and balancing the issue of political and economic instability between the North and South on one hand and other various ethnic groups in the country (which were mainly Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa) and also other minority





ethnic groups on the other hand (Nnoli, 1978, see also Okolo, 2011).

In an attempt to ensure the full implementation of the Federal Character Principle (FCP), the Federal Character Commission of Nigeria (FCC) was established by decree 34 of 1996. Mustafa (2007) summarised the powers of the FCC to include: Working out formula for sharing posts, compliance monitoring, demanding and reviewing data on staffing and institutional investigations. The (FCC) is a commission under the Presidency and its members are appointed by the president and are ratified by the senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The major objective of this paper is to assess the application of the Federal Character Principle of Nigeria (FCP) as a means of achieving balanced national unity through the education sector. The specific objective is to examine the different regimes of admission cut-off of Federal Government Colleges (unity schools) in Nigeria.

This study adopted the integrative theory as an explanatory tool. Accordingly, for these theorists, the interaction among groups is the central fact of politics and an important element of the governmental process which need to be integrated. It treats group maintenance as it affects resource mobilization and the need to maintain internal democracy hence the country has tried to achieve this goal through the FCP in the education sector, distribution of social amenities and the area of employment and appointments into federal organizations.

In an attempt to ensure that the FCP is fully implemented, the integrative theory helps to explain the assumptions that there exists a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic groups in a society like Nigeria with different languages and educational attainment which needed to be integrated by providing a level playing ground for all citizenry. Political integration brings cohesiveness among members of a political community. Ake, (1967); Biuder, (1964); Morrison and Stevenson, (1972) suggest that such coalescence provides stability for political system development and continuation of legitimate decision making. Political authorities are in doubt when a nation is fragmented. Political ties may be forged through different mechanisms such as Economic, Social and Cultural exchange among the people. Foremost among these interactive and stabilizing force is the sharing of a set of common values by a wide segment of the population- Jacob and Tenue, (1964). Some of the early proponents of this theory are Anne Treisman and GanyGelade.

The thrust here is that integration would help in creating a process of homogenous progressive reduction of educational differences, cultural and regional territorial political cleavages which in the past have created boundaries in political alignment by deliberately dismantling them to allow for a more frequent contact, cooperation and co-existence of communities that make up the Nigerian nation. Its relevance in this discourse brings to the understanding the effort that has been made by the Nigerian government to create one indivisible entity of a cohesive society that will impact positively on every citizenry through the introduction and implementation of the Federal Character Principle of Nigeria (FCP) in the education sub-sector whereby candidates with differences in their academic ability learn and study together. The strength of integrative theory lies in its ability to shade individual away from focus and placed emphasis on group achievement.

From our theoretical standpoint, it becomes clear that the Federal Character Principle (FCP) was designed to ensure national representation integration/inclusiveness so that minority ethnic groups in the country can express their God given talents. But issues as to whether these aims/objectives have been achieved are yet another matter for further research/study. Preliminary





findings from the results of this study are in the negative than positive.

## Federal Character Principle in Nigeria: Meaning and Practice

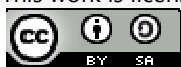
Several scholars such as Ayoade (1998), Okolo (2014), Olagunji (1987), Shatri(2001), Talih(1987) have all written about the Nigerian Federal Character Principle. Some in their definitions have described it as the character of the Nigeria federation. Afigbo (1989), Okpata (2011) sees the Federal Character Principle as the democratization of the public bureaucracy through the principle of representation. Obiyan and Akindele (2002), believes that it is the recognition of the plural nature of the country in recruitment, distribution of administrative and political offices and power as well as the resources of the country. To them, it is structured so as to address the challenges of imbalance and discrimination. Akpauabia (2012) describes the FCP as a practice whereby every nationality is represented in all government owned institutions to promote equality, fair-play among different ethnic nationalities that make up Nigeria in the distribution of resources so as to promote national harmony and loyalty for economic development in the nation.

Ekeh (1989), sees it as principle that sought to give opportunities in education and employment, usually at the point of entry to disadvantaged ethnic groups that will enable them to compete and measure up with more advanced areas and sectors of national life. Ojo (2009) says it is an integrative mechanism for effective representation of the various components of the federation in the country's position of power, status and influence while Bello (2012) agrees that it is integrative and stipulates that the Federal Character principle was a constitutionally guaranteed recipe for national integration in the country. Olagunju (1987) sees it as a deliberate design to accommodate less dominant but often forcibly expressed interest aimed at depoliticising new demand through an institutional arrangement. Usman (2004) feels that it was an effort to re-address the unbalanced structure and ethnic domination in government so that national integration could be achieved. Agbodike (1998) shares this integrative view that if criterion like merit is the yardstick solely used for employment in the federal institutions, most states of the federation may have the tendency to lose out completely. Gboyega (1989) posits that the fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy in the 1979 constitution explains Federal Character to mean that:

The composition of the federal Government or any of its agencies and the conduct of their affairs shall be carried out in such manner as to recognize the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity and to command national loyalty. Accordingly, the predominance in that government of its agencies of persons from a few ethnic or other sectional groups shall be avoided.

Agbaje, (1989) noted that the Federal Character Principle has been manipulated and channelled to serve the overall interest of the petty bourgeois ruling class who formulated and operate the principle.

In 2003, a Lagos high court won a suit against the Ministry of Education of what she





called disparity in the admission requirements for students seeking to study in Federal Government Colleges (Unity schools) in the country. She has upheld the judgement in the case on the grounds that the different requirements set up by the Ministry of Education were against the spirit of section 42(1) of the 1999 constitution. The ministry had fixed different cut-off marks for states of the federation as a way of offering a holistic insight into the subject of Federal Character Principle in the country.

In a similar manner, the House of Representatives in a motion on Wednesday June 26, 2013 published in Vanguard Newspaper under matters of urgent national importance faulted the entry requirements into Unity Schools in favour of pupils from the North to the detriment of their counterparts from the Southern part of the country. They acknowledged that the policy run contrary to section 42(1) which states that no citizen of Nigeria shall be discriminated against on the basis of his community, ethnic group, place of origin, gender, religion or political affiliation through any law in force in Nigeria of any executive or administrative action of government.

However, some scholars have maintained that the Federal Character Principle is a good thing to have happened in Nigeria because somehow, it has brought out the good and the bad of the people. Alao, (2010) says its introduction brought unity to the country, encouraged learning and granted opportunity to states to pursue academic endeavour. Edigin, (2010) posits that: the principle has helped to protect the interest of the minority in the education sector and to address the imbalance in the states that are less educationally developed. Anya, (1998) observes thus:

Despite the utilization of the concept of educational disadvantaged states for a quarter of a century for the allocation of resources and admission into educational institutions, the so called disadvantaged states have remained disadvantaged as they in 1975 .... (The quota and federal character for admission) were clearly instruments of political manipulation which have proved ineffectual even for the purpose they were designed.

Oloapa, (2012) though sees the Federal Character Principle as an effective instrument for nation building. He however, argues that the principle has badly eroded professionalism and competency. Hence, in 2011, President Goodluck's administration appointed two Ministers from each state of the federation in a clear demonstration of its application and implementation in the Nigerian nation so that balancing and equalization can be achieved. Below is a table showing Ministry and State of origin of the Minister in the Goodluck Jonathan's ministerial dispensation.



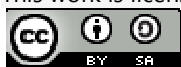


Table 1: Ministers/State of Origin in President Goodluck Administration

MINISTRY	MINISTER/STATE OF ORIGIN
Agric and Natural Resources	Borno
Attorney General, Justice	Kogi
Aviation	Anambra
Defence (state)	Kebbi
FCT (State)	Osun
FCT	Bauchi
Education (State)	Jigawa
Finance (State)	Yobe
Finance (Federal)	Delta
Foreign Affairs (State)	Ogun
Foreign Affairs (Federal)	Imo
Health (Federal)	Ebonyi
Information (Federal)	Nasarawa
Communication & Technology (Federal)	Ondo
Interior (Federal)	Benue
Labour (Federal)	Abia
Mines & Steel Development (Federal)	Kastina
National & Planning (Federal)	Kano
Niger Delta Affairs (Federal)	Delta
Niger Delta Affairs (State)	Niger
Petroleum (Federal)	Bayelsa
Police Affairs (Federal)	Ekiti
Power (Federal)	Enugu
Science & Technology (Federal)	Akwa Ibom
Sport (Federal)	Sokoto
Trade & Investment (Federal)	Lagos
Transport (Federal)	Gombe
Women Affairs (Federal)	Adamawa
Works (Federal)	Edo
Works (State)	Zamfara
Youth Development (Federal)	Kwara

Source: wikipedia org/wiki/Cabinet of President Goodluck Jonathan 2011, Retrieved 24th February @ 9:15pm

From the above, two Ministers were appointed for each ministry; the Federal stands for Senior Minister while the state denotes junior Minister in the same ministry. It could be established that the appointment of a minister from almost every state of the federation and Abuja only at best help to show the distributive tendencies of the Federal Character Principle in Nigeria. Again, it also reveals how funds are unnecessarily misappropriated through the duplication of





ministries just to justify the doctrine of the Federal Character Principle in Nigeria. Dauda, (2004) observes that its application in the Nigeria public sector in the post-colonial state is symptomatic of the desire by the political class to ensure access to and siphoning of national wealth through patron-client linkages. He also observed that in the name of representation and national unity, Federal Character Principle also enthrones mediocrity in the nation's public sector at the expense of merit and professionalism which run contrary to Max Weber's perception of "professionalism" in public organization. A clear standpoint from the extant literature reviewed here is that the Federal Character Principle was introduced into the Nigerian nation so that the strong and the weak, the intelligent and non intelligent can stay, learn and work together and this phenomenon has continued to generate mixed reactions which provides a study gap for academic analysis here.

### **Federal Character Principle and Education in Nigeria.**

Education is the pivot that drives national development. By national development we mean the capacity for a country to engage in a sustainable, qualitative improvement in the material well-being of the people reflected in an increasing flow of goods and services and a good standard of living. Education, therefore, becomes the driving force for achieving national reconstruction and over-all development. According to Obidi (2005), it involves getting people to grasp and possess for themselves those worthwhile values which are essential and capable of leading to knowledge and achievement. It, therefore, confers broad and deep knowledge and understanding which are considered very useful for personal and societal development. Education may also be seen as the acquisition of culture for the mind because it provides the individual and by extension the society an opportunity to advance and ensure that humanity realises its limitless opportunities of progress and happiness in life. It is a public good directed at uplifting the social, scientific, technological and cultural development of a nation as well as development of the talent of individual citizens, Nigeria as a country attaches a very high premium to education.

At various times, the country has launched different policies on education such as the Universal Basic Education (UBE), the 6-3-3-4 system which was aimed at developing the country technologically so that national development can be effected. It, therefore, means that a country that is to develop technologically will not 'politicise' her educational policy, especially in this 21<sup>st</sup> century where nations of the world are doing everything within their reach to develop. The Federal Character Principle as it is applied to the education sector today raises so many questions which are evident from the 2010, 2013 and 2014 allocation of admission cut-off marks into the Federal Government Colleges (unity schools) in Nigeria.

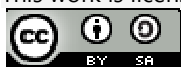




Table 2: National Common Entrance Examination Cut-off Marks for Admission into Federal Government Colleges, 2010.

STATES	MALE	FEMALE
1. Abia	93	93
2. Adamawa	60	60
3. Akwalbom	86	86
4. Anambra	101	101
5. Bauchi	60	60
6. Benue	77	77
7. Borno	60	62
8. Cross River	60	60
9. Delta	90	90
10. Edo	83	83
11. Enugu	83	83
12. Imo	101	101
13. Jigawa	60	60
14. Kaduna	60	60
15. Kano	60	60
16. Katsina	60	60
17. Kebbi	60	61
18. Kogi	82	82
19. Kwara	83	83
20. Lagos	75	75
21. Niger	64	64
22. Oguu	85	85
23. Ondo	71	71
24. Osun	88	88
25. Oyo	83	83
26. Plateau	60	60
27. Rivers	77	77
28. Sokoto	60	60
29. Taraba	60	60
30. Yobe	60	60
31. FCT	61	60
32. Bayelsa	60	60
33. Ebonyi	61	61
34. Ekiti	77	77
35. Gombe	60	60
36. Nassarawa	60	60
37. Zamfara	60	62

Source: National Examination council office (NECO), Benin City.

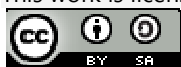






Table 3: National Common Entrance Examination Cut-off Marks for Admission into Federal Government Colleges, 2013

	STATES	MALE	FEMALE
1.	Lagos	133	133
2.	Ogun	131	131
3.	Oyo	127	127
4.	Osun	127	127
5.	Ondo	126	126
6.	Ekiti	119	119
7.	Delta	131	131
8.	Edo	127	127
9.	Rivers	118	188
10.	Bayelsa	72	72
11.	Akwa Ibom	123	123
12.	Cross River	97	97
13.	Kaduna	91	91
14.	Jigawa	44	44
15.	Kastina	60	60
16.	Kebbi	9	20
17.	Zamfara	4	2
18.	Yobe	2	27
19.	Sokoto	9	13
20.	Rano	67	67
21.	Taraba	3	11
22.	Bomo	45	45
23.	Gombe	58	58
24.	Bauchi	35	35
25.	Adamawa	62	62
26.	Plateau	90	90
27.	Nasarawa	75	75
28.	Kwara	123	123
29.	Benue	111	111
30.	Kogi	119	119
31.	FCT	90	90
32.	Niger	93	93
33.	Imo	138	138
34.	Enugu	134	134
35.	Ebonyi	112	112
36.	Anambra	139	139
37.	Abia	130	130

Source: [http://www.vanguardngr.com/2013/06/Reps fault cut-off marks for unity schools](http://www.vanguardngr.com/2013/06/Reps%20fault%20cut-off%20marks%20for%20unity%20schools). Retrieved 18th January @ 10:15pm 2015

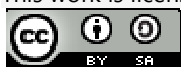




Table 4: National Common Entrance Examination Cut-off Marks for Admission into into Federal Government Colleges, 2014

	STATES	MALE	FEMALE
1.	Abia	65	65
2.	Adamawa	40	40
3.	Akwalbom	63	63
4.	Anambra	66	66
5.	Bauchi	18	18
6.	Benue	60	60
7.	Borno	33	33
8.	Cross River	54	54
9.	Delta	65	65
10.	Edo	63	63
11.	Enugu	65	65
12.	Imo	66	66
13.	Jigawa	37	37
14.	Kaduna	51	52
15.	Kano	34	34
16.	Katsina	37	37
17.	Kebbi	35	35
18.	Kogi	61	61
19.	Kwara	62	62
20.	Lagos	65	65
21.	Niger	49	49
22.	Oguu	65	65
23.	Ondo	64	64
24.	Osun	64	64
25.	Oyo	63	63
26.	Plateau	52	52
27.	Rivers	62	62
28.	Sokoto	15	7
29.	Taraba	19	19
30.	Yobe	20	20
31.	FCT	57	57
32.	Bayelsa	51	51
33.	Ebonyi	60	60
34.	Ekiti	62	62
35.	Gombe	37	37
36.	Nassarawa	42	42
37.	Zarnfara	14	12

Source: National Examination council office (NECO) Benin City.





The above figures presented in the three tables 2, 3 and 4, of course, displays the current admission pattern of Nigeria children into the Federal Government Colleges (unity schools). A nation's education system helps to build her present and future leaders which supposedly mean that they are the ones to develop the nation through the education they have acquired. However, there are issues that emanates from the above figures.

## Discussion of Findings

The above cut-off marks are based on scores from three subjects namely English Language, Arithmetic and social studies all at 1000/0. The disparity created by the different cut-off marks is so wide that one is compelled to ask if there are no more standards in our education system. From the figures, it is observed that in 2010, candidates from mostly Eastern states need to score as high as 34% in each subject for them to secure placement as against candidates from North-East who only need to score 20% in each subject for all admission. This differences cut across all regions of the federation even in 2013. The Eastern states were again mostly affected by this lopsidedness that a candidate from Anambra state was expected to score 46% in each subject as against candidates from some of the Northern states with 0.7% for Yobe and 1.3% for Zamfara in the same country. The story was not completely different in 2014 as some selected Northern states of Zamfara, Sokoto, Yobe, Taraba and Bauchi were also favoured. This seeming discriminating practice of allocating highly variant cut-off marks across states, led to the 2013 Lagos High Court suit against the Ministry of Education and also the faulting of the admission process by the House of Representatives which the study discussed earlier.

According to Bodunrin (1989), "choices are often made on the basis of criterion other than merit". In the application of this principle to our lives, certain standards have been slaughtered all for the deceit of nationhood or statism. Federal Character Principle has helped to lower the standards as against national goal of providing qualitative education for the youths. In 2013 and 2014, the three states of Yobe, Sokoto and Taraba had terrible cut-off marks yet their candidates were admitted as clearly shown from the years under review. This may be argued as being a compensation for the high security challenges which these states and others in the region are facing from the Boko Haram insurgency since 2009. But the scores are rather astronomical to be accepted within the context of the Federal Character Principle. Before the introduction of the Federal Character Principle (FCP) in 1979, admission into these schools were guided by three basic requirements viz-a- viz (a) Merit (b) Catchment area and (c) State quota, but today other requirements such as locality and educationally less developed (ELD) are used which is considered as not capable of developing the best hands in the system. It then becomes worrisome on why such criteria should be used, considering their negative impact on the issue of national unity of the Nigerian state. The Nigerian government has again in 2011 announced the creation of nine new Federal Universities and three more in 2013. The history of Federal Universities creation in Nigeria has been predicated on the need to develop manpower for development of the nation hence, the earliest Universities were created with this ideology and not to balance up the state/regions that have no Federal University. However, scholars like Ekeh(1989) had noted that the concept of Federal Character Principle was introduced because of the need to give opportunity to every Nigerian in the education sector. This position was also adumbrated by





Obiyan and Akindele(2002) that balancing and accessing education was one of the germane reason for the introduction of the FCP inNigeria. Accordingly, Akpanabia (2012)noted that these approvals in 2011 and 2013 were done merely to achieve equalization in fulfilment of Federal Character Principle in the education sector because of the disparity that exists between the north and south.

Table 5: The twelve new Universities established between 2011 and 2013 and their regions

University	State	Region
Federal University of Dutse	Jigawa	North-West.
Federal University of Dutsin-Ma	Kastina	North-West.
Federal University of Kashere	Gombe	North-East
Federal University of Lokoja	Kogi	North-Central
Federal University of Wukari	Taraba	North-East
Federal University of Lafia	Nasarawa	North-Central.
Federal University of Oye-Ekiti	Ekiti	South-West
Federal University of Otuoke	Bayelsa	South-South.
Federal University of Ndufu-Alike	Ebollyi	South-West.
Federal University of Gusau	Zamfara	North-West
Federal University Birnin Kebbi	Kebbi	North-West
Federal University Gashua	Yobe	North-East.

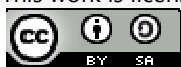
Source: fieldwork, 2015

Politicizing the education sector by creating more Universities in each region will not bring the much needed best hands that will build the nation in all facets of endeavour that she desired from this option. One of the challenges of the Federal Character Principle (FCP) is the lack of adequate representation by the federating states in Nigeria. This constitutes the greatest threat to national unity and integration hence there is the choking of socio-economic competition among the ethnic groups which manifest in ethno-regional conflicts and tension that characterize Nigeria since 1960 (Kukah,2003). Thus, the relationship between these group is characterized by the fear and suspicion of domination of one state or ethnic group by another (Okolo, 1997, 2014). This leads to national disintegration and consequent canonical under-development of the nation. Hence, a foremost scholar Adamolekun(2008) in discussing the challenges of Federal Character Principle has asked thus:

Has the Federal Character Principle promoted or retarded national loyalty and stability? or has the area or ethnic region of a person become the key factor in determining his quality as an individual?

He concluded by saying that the introduction of the FCP was morphed into the practice of politicization. Accordingly, the Transformation Agenda of President Jonathan of (2011-2015)

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)





was a fall-out product of Nigeria's inability to attain sustainable educational system in the past which would have addressed the developmental challenges of poverty, unemployment, corruption and general security that is ravaging the Nigerian nation at present- Gberevbie (2010).

## 1. Concluding Remarks and Recommendations

### i) *Conclusion*

Managing diversity using the instrument of the Federal Character Principle (FCP) that is being applied to our national lives has helped to achieved national integration on one hand, and created more distortions rather than national unity in different aspects of our lives. Federal Character Principle is both a reaction as well as a system. It is a positive reaction to correct those practices of the past, especially in the conduct of public management which tended to exploit the diversities of the nation and by so doing cause disharmony. Also, it is a reaction to those practices which tended to reflect selfish and parochial considerations, especially those negative forces which placed the self interests above national interests.

Some of the critics of the (FCP) doctrine like Ayoade (1998), Suberu (1999), Olagunji (1987), Mustafa (2006), and Okolo, (2011; 2014) and Okolo, & Etekpe, (2015) respectively have argued "that there is no greater inequality than the equal treatment of unequal". This is so because in the application of this principle, the population of the state and eligibility of the candidates per state does not count. In fact, competent hands are sidelined who may have made the difference in their different professions. Afigbo (1989) also affirms that the Federal Character Principle (FCP) suffers from overgeneralization because there are areas where inter-ethnic group conflict and attachment did exist, with all sense of fair judgement the FCP encourages and promote mediocrity at the expense of merit which go contrary to Max Weber's concept of bureaucracy.

### ii) *Recommendations*

The following constitutes the recommendations of this research paper.

- a) The inclusion of the Federal Character Principle in the 1979 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria that made its application to national lives of the citizens mandatory is all but a drain pipe, considering the revelations on this study. It is recommended that its continuous inclusion in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria should be revisited and reviewed even though this may not go down well with some quarters who have unequally benefited from the lopsided policy over the years, The fact has to be clearly stated if the country must be on the path of sustainable development.
- b) There is the need for the 8th National Assembly currently in session to warm up for serious business that includes the general overhaul of aspects of the country's constitution that relates to the Federal Character Principle and all its related policies that were put in place to cover the real dung and project the false belief that all Nigeria is one in thinking.

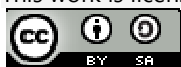




- c) Liberal democracies in the post war period face the need to choose the direction of the common lives of the people which are necessarily drawn from the systematic and critical reflections on the values governing their choices. Developing nations like Nigeria should try to address issues of co-operation and co-existence without tempering with education sector in the name of unity and balancing.

### References

- Abdullah, S.A(2007).*The Civil Service Reforms* In H, Saliu; Amali, E; Olawepo, R.(Eds) Nigeria's Reform programme: Issues and Challenges, Ibadan: Vintage publishers Ltd
- Adamolekun, L. (2008). Let us Debate Federalism. The Vanguard Newspaper, (March 11th pp-17)
- Afigbo, A. (1987). Federal Character, its meaning and history Quoted in I. Ukwu federal character and national integration in Nigeria. NIPSS conference proceeding *Character and National Integration*
- Agbaje, A. (1989). Mass Media and the Shaping of Federal Character: A content Analysis of four Decades of Nigeria Newspapers 1950-1984 in P.P. Ekeh and E. E. Osaghae (Eds) *Federal Character and Federalism in Nigeria*, Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited.
- Agbodike, C.C. (1998).*Federal Character principle and National Integration* in Amuwo, K. et.al (Eds), *Federalism and Political Restructuring in Nigeria*. Ibadan spectrum Books Ltd.
- Akers, R. and Seller C. (2004).*Criminological theories, Introduction, Evaluation and Application* 4th (ed). Los Angeles Roxbury.
- Akpanabia, N. H. (2012).*Federal character principle as a pitfall for national development in Nigeria: A historical perspective*, Elixir Human resource management 47 A: 9155-9158
- Alao, M. (2010).Federal Character Blessing or Curse?(online) Available from: <http://john-emmanuel.blogspot-com>.Retrieved February, 2015@ 10.00pm.
- Anne, T. and Garry G.(1980).*A feature-integration Theory of Attention cognitive psychology* vol. 14 pp 107-114, Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia.
- Anya, A. (1998). Re- educating Nigerians for the 21st Century. 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Lecture of the inner Circle, University of Ibadan, Nigeria
- Ayoade, J. A.(1998). *Nigeria and the squandering of Hope, Being an Inaugural delivered at lecture the University of Ibadan on Thursday 16 October*, Ibadan: publishers. Vantage
- Bello, M. L. (2012).*Federal character as a recipe for National integration: The Nigerian paradox*, International Journal of politics good governance 3 (3) 1-13





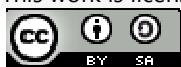
- Bodurin, P. (1989). Federal Character and Social Justice in Ekeh P. P and Osaghae E. E (Eds) *Federal Character and Federalism in Nigeria*, Ibadan. Heinemann Education (Nig) Ltd.
- Constitution Drafting Committee.(1977). Report of the Constitution drafting committee vol. 1 Lagos, Ministry of information, printing division.
- Duruji, M. M, Segun, J. and Olarewaju, 1. P. (2014).*Ethnicization of University Education and National Development: The Nigerian Experience*, 8th International Technology, Education and Development Conference (INTED), Valencia Spain.
- Edigin, L. U. (2010). Federal Character and National Stability in Nigeria,1979-2010, Journal of Research in National Development. 8(2): 1 – 6, doi: 10.4314/joindv8i2.66799.
- Ekeh, P. P. (1989).*The structure and meaning of federal character in the Nigerian system* In Ekeh P.P, Osaghae E.E (Eds) "*Federal character and federalism in Nigeria*: Ibadan Heinemann Educational Books
- Gberevbie, D. E. (2013).*Federal Character Principle and Administrative Effectiveness in the Nigerian Public Service: Challenges and Prospects for Sustainable Development, 1999-2012*. Journal of sustainable Development in Africa Vo1.15, N06.
- Gboyega, A. (1989). The Public Service and Federal Character. In Ekeh, P .P and Osaghae.E E eds. *Federal Character and Federalism in Nigeria*. Ibadan, Heinemann Education Books
- Gboyega, A.(2003).*Democracy and Development: The imperative of local Government*, An inaugural lecture, University of Ibadan. <http://www.vanguardngr.com>JReps fault cut-offmarks for unity schools. Retrieved 18tJanuary@ 10:30pm.
- Jacob. P. E.&Teune, H. (1964).*The Integrative Process: Guidelines for Analysis of the Bases of Political Community in* Jacob, P.E. &Toscano, 1.v. (eds) *integration of Political Communities*. New York: J.P. Lippincott Company.
- Jhingan, M. L. (2007).*The Economics (if Development and Planning*. Delhi: Vrinda Publications Ltd.
- Kukah, M. H.(2003).*Democracy and civil Society in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Ltd.
- Morrison, D. &Stevenson, H. M. (1972).*Integration and Stability*: American Political Science Review 66:902-07.
- Mustafa, A. F. (2006).*Ethnic structure, inequality and governance of the public sector in Nigeria*. UNRISED programmed on democracy, governance and Human right. paper number: 24
- Mustafa, A. F. (2007). Institutional Ethnic Representation: *How effective is the Federal*





*Character Commission in Nigeria?* CRISE working Paper NoA3 Department of international Development University of Oxford, United Kingdom.

- Naomi, O. (1995). *Towards an integrative of Human Rights*, Hunger Teach Net, 6(3) 6-7.
- Nnoli, O. (1978). *Ethnic politics in Nigeria*. Enugu fourth Dimension Publishers.
- Obi, E. A. and Nwanegbo, C. L. (2006). *Development Administration: Theory and Applications*. Onitsha Bookpoint, Ltd.
- Obidi, S. S. (2005). *Culture and Education in Nigeria: An historical Analysis*, Ibadan University press.
- Obiyan, A. S. and Akindele, ST. (2002). *The federal character principle and gender representation in Nigeria*, Journal of Social Sciences, 6(4):241-246
- Ojo, E. (2009). *Federalism and the search for National integration in Nigeria in African: Journal of Political Science and International Relations* vol.z. Available online at <http://www.academicjournals.org/AJPSIR>
- Okolo, P. O. (1997). *Nigeria Police (NPF) & Corruption: A Case Study of Rivers State Police Command 1990 – 1996*. Being a B.Sc Project Submitted to the Department of Political and Administrative Studies, Faculty of Social Science, University of Port Harcourt, Choba, Port Harcourt, Nigeria. 1997. Pp. 183
- Okolo, P. O. (2014) *Federal Character, Nation Building and National Integration Niger Delta Research Digest (NDRD)*. ISSN: 2141 – 1468. Journal of the Center for Niger Delta Studies, Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State. volume 8, Number 1, June 2014. Pp. 65 – 118
- Okolo, P. O. (2014) *Influence of the Federal Character Principle on National Integration in Nigeria*. American International Journal of Contemporary Research. Vol. 4, No. 6; Center for Promoting Ideas, USA. [www.aijernet.com](http://www.aijernet.com). Pp. 121 – 138
- Okolo, P. O. (2014). “Managing Minority Problems in Nigeria: The Case of the Ethnic Minorities of the Niger Delta Region”. 2014 Vol. 5, No. 6, ISSN 2222-1700 (Paper) ISSN 2222-2855(Online). IISTE USA. <http://www.org/journals.index.php/JEDS/article/view/11938> or [www.iiste.org](http://www.iiste.org). Pp. 91 – 99
- Okolo, P. O. (2014). *Influence of federal character on national integration in Nigeria*: American journal of international Research vol. 4 No 6
- Okolo, P. O. and Akpokighe, R. O. (2014). *Federalism and Resource Control: The Nigerian Experience*. *Journal of Public Policy and Administration Research*. Vol. 4, No. 2. USA.







<http://www.iiste.org/journal/index.php/PPAR/article/view/11092>. Pp. 99 - 109

- Okolo, P. O. and Etekpe, A. (2015). Petro-Economy and Corruption in Nigeria: Issues, Challenges and Lessons for the Future. *Archives of Business Research*. Vol. 3, No. 1. 25<sup>th</sup> February 2015. Pp. 246–266. <http://scholarpublishing.org/index.php/ABR/issue/view/49>
- Okpata, F. O.(2011). *Politics of Staff Recruitment and Development in Nigeria service* in Onwe S. O. and Dum G. J(Eds) *Reading in Modern public Administration* Enugu Nigeria: Jones Communication publishers.
- Olagunji, T. (1987). *Federal Character and National Integration* NIPSS Conference Proceeding.
- Oloapa, T. (2012). Nigeria Public Service and the Udoji Reform; A Review; Daily Truth Newspaper April 10<sup>th</sup> pp-56.
- Report of the constitution drafting committee (1977) vol. 1
- Richard, J. A. (1991), Democracy and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria: *The Rise and fall of the second Republic*. Ibadan spectrum Books Ltd.
- Rodney, W. (1972). *How Europe underdeveloped Africa*. Dakar: Bogle L. Ouverture.
- Sen. A. (1999). *Development as freedom*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Shatri, S.(2001). *Changing Contours of Comparative Federalism: Understanding the Indian Experience*, Ibadan Archers (publishers) ltd programme on Ethnic and federal studies, Department of Political Science, 0.1.
- Suberu, R. T.(1999). *Ethnic Minorities and the Crises of Democracy Governance in Nigeria* In Dele Olowu et al. Ibadan University press
- Talih, A. (1987). Keynote Address of the NIPSS Conference on *Federal Character and National Integration?* NIPSS Conference proceeding.
- The 1979 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Lagos: Federal Ministry of Information;
- The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Abuja: A publication of the Federal Ministry of Information.
- Truman, D. (1971). *The Governmental Process: Political Interest and Public Opinion*. Knopf Publishers, USA
- Usman, Y. B. (2004). *National Cohesion, National Planning Rind the Constitution* in Suleiman Kumo and Abubakar Aliyu (Eds) *Issues in Nigerian draft constitution*, Zaria Bakara Press





Ltd.

Wheare, K. C.(1964).*Federal Government*, London oxford university press  
4<sup>th</sup>Edition.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Cabinet of President Goodluck Jonathan: Retrieved 24th  
February @ 9: 15pm.

## Authors' Profile

**Mr. Charles A. Osimerah** holds an MSc Degree in Public Administration (MPA) and also in Political Science from the Delta State University, Abraka, where he is currently, a Doctoral- Research student. Mr. Osimerah can be contacted via email at [osicharly@yahoo.com](mailto:osicharly@yahoo.com)

**Dr. Philips O. Okolo** holds a B. Sc. (Hons) degree in Political and Administrative Studies (Pub. Admin) from the University of Port Harcourt; a Master of Arts degree in Peace and Conflict Studies from the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria; and a PhD in Political Science from Delta State University, Abraka. Philips O. Okolo is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Political Science, Faculty of the Social Sciences, Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State, Nigeria. Okolo is the Executive Director of Fun-Ebi Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution (Research!) and the Pioneer National Publicity Secretary Society for Peace Studies and Practice (SPSP) Nigeria. He has written and published extensively on Peace, Conflict, Federal, Governance, Environmental and Sustainable Development issues amongst others. Okolo can be contacted via email: [philipsobolo@gmail.com](mailto:philipsobolo@gmail.com) or [philips.okolo@ndu.edu.ng](mailto:philips.okolo@ndu.edu.ng)

