

## **AUTHORITATIVE ALLOCATION OF VALUES AND ETHNO-RELIGIOUS SQUABBLES IN NIGERIA: MILITOCRACY IN DEMOCRACY**

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### **Abstract**

*One of the essence of government or state is allocation of value to various sectors and groups within her jurisdiction. In multi-ethnic states like Nigeria fairness towards this, is usually questioned therefore the prevailing squabbles and conflicts. However, in democratic setting, ethos of democracy which include participation, rule of law and fairness, equity etc are expected to prevail. Thus failure of this, prompted interrogation of the reality of democracy in Nigeria or otherwise militocracy in democracy which have necessitated all sorts of ethnic rivalries: IPOB, Avengers, MASSOB, Boko Haram and etc. Pluralist theory was employed in this study, whereas qualitative method was engaged in analyzing data generated through secondary sources. It was found out that government attitude towards value allocation necessitated ethnic movements formation in Nigeria. Secondly the formation is to draw government attention to the needs of its own people. It is recommended that government should adopt democratic norms in governing Nigeria and in distribution of values among the various ethnic groups in Nigeria. Also to avoid using coercion as instrument of obtaining compliance from groups that are demanding for its attention bearing in mind that Nigeria is now a democratic state therefore consultations, negotiation, compromise and consensus should be engaged.*

**Keywords:** Democracy, Militocracy, Value Allocation, Ethnicity and Federal Character,

### **Introduction**

Conflict in human interaction has been associated with quest of man or group to have greater portion of scarce resources. Agbaenyi (2014: p9) avers that people's needs, wants, value are in conflict due to scarce resources to satisfy them. In a bid to ensure order and mutual development, state was created with primary responsibility

to engender fairness and justice in determining what Lasswell (1936) tags who gets what, when and how. The systematic investigation of state duties and interaction within it propelled Easton (1963) to define state duty as authoritative allocation of values. This singular but complex act of the state has a lot of impact in the determining development and evolution of any given society.

In advanced democracies like the United States and Britain, the state has progressively lived upto these expectations therefore maintaining order, peace, and socio-political development. However, in developing countries of Africa and Middle East, authoritative allocation of value has been a source of conflict among the citizenry and between ethnic and religious groups, such as in Sudan, Libya, Congo, Iraq etc. In multi-ethnic states like Nigeria, government is always seemed to favour a given group in her day to day activities. Subsequent upon these, agitations emanated among different ethnic and religious groups either to support or destabilize the government in power. The primary interest of this action is to be part of or to have greater influence in national resources distribution.

Ethnic group movements and militia associations in Nigeria like OPC (Odua People's Congress), MASSOB (Movement for the Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra), IPOB (Indigenous People of Biafra), MEND (Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta) Avengers, Boko Haram etc. have identified lopsidedness, marginalization and even intimidation as reasons for their agitations. They seek to attract attention of government to their needs through their activities which are usually detrimental to national development. OPC emerged to fight for Presidential election victory of Chief M.K.O Abiola which they saw as Yoruba mandate, until they got it in 1999. MASSOB emerged to contest for marginalization of Ndi Igbo and to demand for equity and inclusion. MEND and other Niger Delta militant groups are protesting against neglect of the areas by government and marginalization in governance. Boko Haram turned political to seek address of non-completion of 8 years (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> terms) tenure by the North after President Yar'dua's death according to PDP power arrangement. This protracted ethnic squabbles and attitude of government in addressing them have made Nigeria politics ethnicity driven.

Democracy and its associated norms and practice advocate tolerance, fairness, justice, political participation and equity in value distribution. These values have not been translated into reality in Nigeria setting. Democracy of Nigeria extraction favours the ethnic and religious group that controls power. Any of these groups also takes advantage of their position to oppress and suppress others. The belief is that state institutions are under the control of their own person or persons. This advantaged group outrightly breaches national laws in advancing their socio-economic well being against the interest of others even outside their geopolitical enclave. Pitiably also, the coercive arm of the state pretends to be incapacitated to tackle such or stays limbo even in midst of such atrocities like Fulani Herdsmen attacks (in Southern Kaduna, Enugu, Benue, Adamawa, Jos etc) without curtailing the tides of their mayhem. Rather a times the disadvantaged groups are blamed, denied resources allocation and prosecuted by the state.

The obvious implication of the above scenarios gave rise to the question as to whether this pattern of resource distribution is democratic or militocratic? Investigation of this was based on pluralist theory. Secondary source of data and qualitative research method was engaged in generating data and analysis respectively.

### **Conceptual Discourses**

- **Democracy**

Democracy has received multifaceted definitions and meanings from different schools of thoughts. Each of the schools and scholars associates it with their milieu, experience and ideological convictions. Be it as it may, democracy is that system of governance that harps on the well being of the majority through decision making process. This process is anchored on the principles of rule of law, equity, transparency etc. Ranney (1975) asserts that it is a form of government organized in accordance with the principle of popular sovereignty, political equality, popular consultation and majority rule. Okolie (2012) opines that the term democracy is fundamentally associated with popular rule; rule by the people; collective decision-making and implementation, consultative and dialogue-based rule, rule by majority etc. Evidence of the above definition is that democracy is governed by rules and these rules are majority based. It is not associated with imposition of ideas by state machinery but the people are the determinant of what rule state implements. Akpar (2014) maintains that democracy is a set of institutions and rules that allow competition and participation of all citizens considered as equals... characterized by free and fair and recurring elections. Akpar is suggestive of equality of all and fairness in whatever competition that state superintends. Therefore, state has a duty to see that these principles are maintained among the citizenry, where it is not, state intervenes to address it.

From Ancient Greek perspective, democracy meant that the people themselves made the laws, set the goals, and distributed the social benefits of the government (Terkula, 2014); likewise in ancient and even some part of present Igbo society. Odofin (2005) maintains that democracy enables the people to govern themselves through constant interactions and discussions of common issues, voting in election and running for public office. Advancing practically on this, Terkula (2014) projects that democracy makes sense when it is used as a process for promoting equal access to good things of life, and promoting fundamental human rights including most importantly the right to dignity; when it is used for attacking poverty in all its ramifications, investing heavily in people's basic needs of security, food, health, education etc, so that the people cannot only participate effectively but also defend democracy when necessary.

The reality of the Terkula argument was experienced in Turkey citizenry collective devotion to fight against military rule in defence of democracy with their lives even without any leader. The military commands display of sophisticated military arsenal could not deter them. This was as a result of gains of democracy which no other system of governance can afford to them, that is why Ake (1996) argues authoritatively that democracy makes sense only when it guarantees freedom,

liberty and economic emancipation. Therefore democracy is not all about civilian rule rather adherence to rules and human value and development. Democracy is about quality leadership that translates into accelerated development and growth in all areas of human aspirations. Democracy goes beyond just having civilians in government (<http://victormediaempire.blogspot.com.ng/2012/11/between-military-government-and.html>. retrieved 25/09/2016/1.40pm). Actually democracy has been misconstrued especially in third world countries to simply mean having civilians in government. The ways through which leaders come to power hardly matter, adherence to rule while governing is often not necessary, participation of the citizenry, equality, equity, competition and human development are not considered but at the discretion of those in governance. This is abusive democracy or more or less militiocracy.

### **Features of Democracy**

Democracy is rooted in several key values or norms (Frank and Ukpere, 2012). According to Bealey, Chapman and Shechan (1999: pp 47-48) characteristics of democracy include:

- Inclusiveness: in democracy no part or persons are excluded from any activities or programmes of the state.
- Public contestation: elections should be open for every adult and qualified member to contest likewise any other public activities so far the person is qualified.
- Civic freedom or civil liberties: citizenry should be allowed to enjoy their human rights both universal and others provided by the law of their country. State should not infringe on citizens rights rather provide and protect it when trampled upon by any other person or group.
- Government accountability: government should be accountable to the citizens through transparent governance. Citizens can also by themselves or representative demand for answer(s) from government over any matter of their concern. In other words sovereignty belongs to the people.
- Periodic free and fair election: governance and access to power should not be a birth right. Elections should be conducted from time to time for the public to choose who will govern them. Not only that rather election(s) itself should be free to all and fair in all manifestation and practice. Election is the time citizens actively participate en mass in decision making of government
- Majority rule: decisions of government should be on the interests and decisions of the majority. It should not be based on parochial or prebendal interest.

In addition, Sodoro (2008) posits that values and norms of democracy include: freedom, inclusion, equality, equity, welfare, negotiation and compromise. Primary objective of these features is to actualize human development and eliminate abuse of power and human right as associated with other systems of government. However, most importantly rule of law or justice is the foundation upon which democracy is built. Simply put, democratic state without independent and virile

judiciary that stand for justice is not democracy because citizens well being and rights are not guarantee. This rather is vital in democracy

- **Militocracy**

Militocracy is pattern of governance that blends military and democratic characteristics together. Simply put, it is a military system of governance in a democratic setting. In this instance ethos of democracy are underplayed. This breeds confusion on whether military rule or democracy is being practiced. When democracy came in vogue, many military regimes transformed themselves into democratic regimes without allowing rudiments of democracy to determine the processes of decision making and execution. Rather elections were conducted under military controlled setting to announce military leadership winners of elections in other to control democratically designed government. Military uniform and other practices were dropped but the real essence of democracy is not promoted. In this regard, power is centralized, opposition is not tolerated, one party or state party system is established, rule of law is neglected, sit-tight mentality is supreme, public participation is restricted, right is by association with government in power not by law. While painting the real picture of militocracy, Nnoli (2003:p 63) argues “the political and psychological distortion under military rule gave rise to new political conditions. Under the new political condition, democratic values and institutions became luxuries. Political actor’s ambition to remain in power is boundless and he is determined to survive, even at all cost. Therefore, he must trust only himself or his blood relations. Others become objects of control, a control that must be total within the limits of the resources available in the society for domination. The arbitrariness in the exercise of power replaces respect for the nation’s laws, norms, values and procedure. He abandons the search for legitimacy and relied on naked force. Dissenters are imprisoned. Rivals are repudiated. Anyone that stands up for the people is his enemy and must be destroyed”.

Many African countries experienced and are still experiencing this pattern of governance. It breeds conflict and wars. Ethnic rivalry and squabbles are so rampant due to exclusion and intimidation of opposition and minority groups. Citizens are not considered in decision making. Position of the government over collective and national interest is final. Anyone who says otherwise is tagged enemy of government or instrument of external forces to destroy the state. Therefore should be imprisoned. Unfortunately, the judiciary which is the last hope of the oppressed is also hijacked and manipulated. Nnoli (2003: p168) maintains that “political tin gods, the life presidents, the political sit-tighters, the ubiquitous one party system, the muzzling of the press, the arrest of the opponents, the disappearance of political dissenters, the capricious desire to control what books are read in schools etc are all factors which singly or in various combinations characterize most of the African states”. Judges play to gallery in order to retain their jobs. Radical judges who stand against all these undemocratic rules of military gestapo-style are tagged corrupt. They are arrested, demoted, molested, sacked or even killed. Libya, Sudan, Cameroun, Gambia, Uganda, Congo, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Burundi, Nigeria etc are centre stage of this

type of political activities. In recent time in Nigeria, residences of Federal High Court Judges and Supreme Courts Justices were invade and burgled by Department of State Security Services in pretence of looking for evidence of corruption leveled against them (The Authority Daily, October 11, 2016). No matter how morally sound this may seem, it is a crude breach of constitutional provision of division of powers between arms of government. In the same state of Nigeria, the same executive that is executing this investigation has severally disobeyed court orders and judgments with impunity.

Pitiably, some civilians and former military leaders who were democratically elected still get to power and transform themselves to autocratic leaders. Democratic principles that brought them to power are out rightly abandoned. Power becomes infused in one arm of government (executive). The most painful thing is that citizens who owe governance under democracy are quailed with military might. Internal and Police matters are now handled abusively by the military which derogates democracy. Militocracy simply put is an adulterated or frustrated democracy. It is a derivation from military tendencies found in democratic environment. It may not have been practice as a system of government but quite apt to describe current prevailing abuse of democracy being found in many developing societies which Nigeria represents.

#### **Authoritative Allocation of Values**

Authority in democratic system is that constituted institution or person that has the mandate of the people or backing of the law to exercise influence or power over a given people in given issues as stipulated by law or agreed among them. In this instance, authority is power backed by mandate of the people. According to Nnoli (2003: pp 97, 98, 101) “political authority is that whose power derives from state power...it is the constitution that indicates how state power is to be organized as a system of authorities...legitimate authority is that which operates essentially through the prong of justice...it refers to positive attitude of the population towards authority positions and those who occupy them. In essence authority should be exercised for the collective well being of the majority of the populace. Authoritative expresses exercise of authority. It is authority in action”.

Value is that commodity which is placed appreciable interest on by the people. It is also usually in limited quantity thereby necessitating struggle for it. Struggle associated with the limitedness or scarcity of value gave rise to the establishment of the institution that determines process of its allocation. Agbaenyi (2014:p10) posits that “struggle for the scarce resources has been an age long phenomenon. Order and manner by which the resources should be shared have become the function of those who find themselves in positions of authority with the right to decide the way production and distribution of wealth of the society goes”. State core responsibility is to allocate value through its machineries. Value allocation by the state can be in areas of award of contracts, appointment, employment, promotion, constitutional provisions as regards rights and privileges, formulation and execution of policies especially budget, granting of amnesty, national honours (awards), etc.

Ideally, authoritative allocation of values by the state should be based on

- Justice
- Rule of law
- Collective development
- Security
- National interest
- Consultation
- Equity

Non-adherence to these principles has resulted to a lot of social disharmony especially in democratic societies. All inclusive value allocation is *sin qua non* to democracy. It allows participation, dialogue, compromise, justice, equity and fair play. If otherwise, such system will be associated with autocracy, militarism, even militocracy if it is in a claimed democratic environment. Experience has shown that most of inter-state crises are as results of the inability of the state to fairly distribute its resources among its components parts or among its elites. Fairness in resource allocation made Easton to define politics as authoritative allocation of value” (Chikendu, 2002). In discharging this duty there is also serious need to accommodate diverse interest. Therefore politics is all about mutual negotiation, discussions, dialogue, adjustment, compromise and conciliation in order to accommodate conflicting interests. Partiality in value production and distribution breeds suspicion, unpatriotism, rancor, aparty, political instability and socio-economic underdevelopment. Citizens see the state as an enemy to avoid, hate sections that benefit from such unjust wealth distribution. For any society to develop, value which is focal thing in politics must be fairly distributed among citizens, classes and groups especially in a multi-ethnic society and developing democracies.

### **Ethnicity**

Ethnicity is identity symbol created for itself by group of people with closely related culture, value, religion, language and history. It serves as medium to differentiate self from other people or attach value and recognition to self especially in a multi-ethnic society where competition and rivalry is pronounced. Okeke (2017) avers that ethnicity attempts to represent the self-identity of various human societies. It is a comprehensive whole presenting a people’s historical experience, aspirations, and worldview. Nnoli (1978) argues that ethnicity is a social phenomenon associated with interactions among members of different ethnic groups. Therefore they are social formations distinguished by the communal character and boundaries associated with language, culture or both. It is behavioural in form and conflictual in nature especially where state recognizes it as a means of distributing and allotting values. Recognition of such by state lays foundation for ethnic identity, regrouping, fortification and subsequent contentions and competitions among ethnic groups in such state. Ethnic group permeation into state institution and recognition of one against another in value allocation has been responsible for destructive crisis in

Congo, Sudan, Somali, Iraq, Nigeria, etc.

Ethnic identity has a compelling force for unity among members. This gives it great impetus to mobilize and compete with external environment (other ethnic groups). Political elites in a state like Nigeria, utilize this unique character and force to negotiate their interest in national politics. In this instance where there is disagreement among the political elites they resort to ethnic forces to demand for attention. Unfortunately, when settled, the mass of the ethnic group will be left at their woes, pains and poverty while the elite class unites again to share their political and economic bounty without any serious attention paid to the needs of the populace. This has turned ethnicity to instrument for national disintegration instead of force for unity and mass mobilization. In other words ethnic group is different from class (whether political, economic, social or otherwise) likewise ethnic conflict and class conflict are not the same. However, ethnic group has become instrument for class struggle. Resource allocation in Nigerian state has taken the shape of ethnic compensation no longer on the basis of national unity and development. Any ethnic group that makes most noise gets better attention and bigger share of national resource. The resultant effect of this is emergence of several ethnic militia and militant groups like Avengers, MEND, MOSSOP, MASOB, IPOB, Arewa Youth, OPC etc. all engage in activities that destabilize Nigerian state just to get national attention on the need of their ethnic group. Worryingly, ethnic group in power uses the state machinery to empower and settle his/her ethnic group. Nigerian state is at her level of underdevelopment as a result of intricate and complex ethnic political intercourse. Unless the level of emphasis and recognition placed on ethnic groups while carrying out national issues is reduced ethnic struggles and associated conflict will continue. Therefore disposing ethnic groups, militia and militants as available political instrument for political elites to struggle for power and national resources.

### **Federal Character**

Federal character is arrangement in Nigeria for authoritative allocation of value. It is a creation in Nigeria political system to address inequality, marginalization, discrimination, domination etc among the various ethnic groups or federating units in Nigeria especially in value allocation. This principle was first introduced by 1979 constitution and retained by 1999 constitution. According to Sec. 14 of 1999 constitution “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 few states or few ethnic or other sectional groups in that Government or in any of its agencies”. It was in the process of vigorous determination to ameliorate and control the potential of ethnicism, disintegration, domination, marginalization, unnecessary strife and instability in Nigeria political interaction that it was designed. Therefore it was designed to promote national unity, foster national loyalty and give every citizen of Nigeria a sense of belonging to the



nation notwithstanding the diversities of ethnic origin, culture, language or religion which may exist (Olugbeni, 1987). Federal character inspires and inculcates the impulse of national identity to all Nigeria citizens; due to minority-majority dichotomy, leadership-followership dichotomy, and north-south dichotomy etc. It makes provision for bridging these gaps. Okorie and Esheya (2013) assert that Federal Character is introduced for purposes of ensuring ethnic balancing. Pitiably, there is still nagging questions on whether Federal Character has been able to address this ethnic imbalance in the management of Nigerian common wealth. According to Agbodike in Nonyelu (2001) Federal Character is put in place to balance the distribution of power and wealth, and other national beneficiaries among various Nigerian people through the quota system. In other words the composition of the federal government or any of its agencies and conduct of their affairs shall be carried out in such manners as to recognize divergent of people within areas of authority and need to promote a sense of belonging and loyalty among all the people of Nigeria (Nnoli, 1978). Political appointment, recruitment, admission, promotion, budgeting and budget implementation etc must represent at least every ethnic and religious groups; and by extension every state of the federation and at equal proportion. It is essentially developed in order to avoid ethnic or religious domination among the peoples of Nigeria. According to Bello (2012) the principle of federal character was formulated and put into use in Nigeria to address and hopefully mitigate the problem of diversity so as to ensure a peaceful, stable and united Nigeria. This was assumed to help enrich Nigerian democracy, end political, religious and ethnic crises, uphold national integration and unity. Above all to ensure equitable distribution of common wealth of Nigeria. Surprisingly though more than 3 decades after its introduction, Nigeria state is still bedeviled with all sorts of political turmoil associated with marginalization, domination, discrimination as a result non-inclusiveness in value allocation, federal character notwithstanding.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Pluralist theory is a theoretical framework chosen for investigation of this paper. The theory advocates against monistic theory of state sovereignty. The monistic theorist postulates unlimited authority of the state over individuals and groups. This implies unlimited political obligation. The state assumed the nature of supreme, absolute and unlimited authority over citizens, without considering the interest of individuals and groups in the state. Therefore pluralist theory sought to redefine the nature of the state as one of the social associations of human beings operating in society to secure the multifarious interests of individuals. It envisages a new role for the state as an arbiter over conflicting claims of different associations (Gauga, 2003). Therefore, the theory maintains that state control over other groups in the society should be reduced. Likewise these groups should be allowed to interact with the state on matters of interest without the state imposing its will on them. State should be more democratic, liberal and accountable.

State is an association for resolving the conflicting claims of these associations by evolving a common basis of their functioning, not by imposing its

own will or regulations on them, but by harmonizing and coordinating their several interests so as to secure “common good”, the common interest” or the “public interest”. This role of the state is essential for maintenance of order in society. In discharging this duty of arbiter, the state must demonstrate that it is not dominated by any special interest or vested interests; otherwise it would betray the confidence reposed on it. Benn and Peters argued that state as an arbiter of conflicting claims must demonstrate that it is not dominated by any special or vested interest while exercising its authority, otherwise it would betray the confidence reposed in it (Gauga, 2003: p 155). The exponents of this theory include: Leon Duguit, Hugo Krabbe, Ernest Barker, Harold Laski. The theory does not accept the state as a Leviathan that lord it over all units and persons in the society.

In Nigeria some of these associations which state relates with are mostly ethnic and religious groups. They command influence over their members like state. Members are more loyal, patriotic and committed to these groups than state. Unfortunately state has not superintended fairly enough on issues of conflicting interest among other associations. Rather most often it is accused of taking side with one against others thereby breeding conflict. Ethnic and religious crises that have troubled Nigerian state are as result of the state inability to unbiasedly reconcile conflicting interest. This even prompts groups to take arms against the state and state institutions. Others agitating for freedom from Nigerian state on the ground that state have lost its essence under Nigeria arrangement. Part of the problems of Nigerian state is not only its bias nature, inability to reconcile conflicting interest as arbiter rather also its assumption of monistic posture in a plural society which undermines democracy. Worrisomely, Nigerian state like other African states has taken side with some of the conflicting associations in the state therefore breeding more confusion. It has failed to appreciate the multi-ethnic nature of Nigeria state and its role as an arbiter.

### **Nigerian State and Ethno-Religious Crisis**

Many crises in Nigeria have either been state engineered or emanated out of state policies, activities or inaction over issues that are of vital interest to one group or the other. In other word, state has been accused of being responsible for misunderstanding among ethnic and religious groups. This is in connection to act of marginalization, abuse of law, application of coercive instruments over democratic issues, injustice, and non-inclusive governance. Ironically, this is a total contrast of essence of state. The state by social contract theorist is to end social anarchy by providing security, justice and fair play (Nwoye, 2003). In essence state should be fair to all component parts. Inability of state to play these roles has led to struggle to control state institutions by various ethnic groups in Nigerian state. Relevance of any ethnic group is usually based on its connection to those in power. The undemocratic disposition of this practice inevitably prompts other neglected groups to articulate destructive approaches to first attract government attention over their needs. Secondly to distract government from performing. Ethno-religious crises have dominated Nigerian politics and political landscape since independence (Nnoli, 1978). Every

activity both by government and groups in Nigeria is given either ethnic or religious interpretation. Each of the groups fights hard to protect the image and interests of its group against national integration and growth. Nigeria had experienced civil war (1967-1970), ethno-religious crises in the north since independence, political crisis in the south-west especially 1993 Abiola crisis, socio-economic quagmire in the Niger Delta since fourth republic and reprisal attacks in the south-east.

Division and suspicion among groups in Nigeria emanates out of quest to get fair share of national wealth. This should not have been the case if the state had in all fairness just to all, not minding ethnic or religious affiliation. Unfortunately in all these maladies, government which is supposed to superintend and meditate over this squabble has been engulfed in it and became a serious party. In a bid to maintain control over its stand even in a democratic system; the political actors have adopted harsh military system contrary to the provision of the law to manipulate the agitations and agitators. This has created undemocratic experience like inequality, injustice, domination, rancor and socio-economic upheaval. The citizenry seem to have taken heed to Nnoli's advice that "the people must struggle for democratization of access to the ownership of the means of production and wealth in order to ensure full political equality. They must struggle for universalization of the systems of education, health, social welfare, legal etc in order to abolish the political inequality... after all "democracy is a product of sweat, toil and sacrifice of millions of people in the long history of man's struggle for a better life" (Nnoli, 2003: p 169). In midst of these scenarios we have a lot of ugly experience of whole lots of groups mostly ethnic in nature struggling against undemocratic disposition of Nigerian leaders in a democratic system (Nwagbo and Eze, 2015).

### **MASSOB and IPOB in Igbo Nation**

Marginalization of the Igbo nation in socio-economic and political scheme of things in Nigeria led to emergence of MASSOB, IPOB etc. These groups kept lamenting over marginalization of their tribe by government, injustice against them by both government and other ethnic groups, wanton destruction of lives and properties of their people even in non-provocative issues. Government inability to address this, has kept the agitation high. It creates feeling of exclusion by the people of Igbo nation. Sequel to this came unpatriotic behaviour by some people towards the state. IPOB spokesman Chief Clifford Iroanya appeal to President Buhari to explain to Ndigbo why he abandoned the zone in terms of appointment and project execution, and why businesses owned by Ndigbo are allegedly being frustrated by his administration (Odogwu, 2016).

MASSOB and IPOB gave instances of these wrong doings to include

- No president of Igbo extraction after civil war (see table 3).
- No Chief of Justice from Igbo nation (see table 4).
- Poor state of federal government presence in the region like roads, rail stations, industries, sea ports, power station, refineries etc.

- Wanton destruction of lives and properties of members in other parts of the country without government protection and compensation.
- Non reflection of federal character in appointment at federal level especially in the present Buhari administration (see table 4).
- Imbalance in creation of states and local governments (see table 2).
- Unfavorable resource distribution pattern/formulae (see table 1).
- Skewed constitution of security/ military heads under Buhari administration (see table 4)
- Non compliance to court judgments in matters that concern the people like in Nnamdi Kanu case and other cases associated with the groups (IPOB and MASSOB).

Madubuko (2008) cited in Agbaenyi and Nwagbo (2016) provided comprehensive facts on some of these claims. These are illustrated in the tables below:

**Table 1: Federal Allocation to States 1999-2005 in Billions of Naira**

Group 1		Group 2		Group 3		Group 4	
Delta	387.4	Ondo	165.2	Ogun	134.4	Ekiti	102.0
Rivers	357.6	Niger	164.5	Edo	131.5	Plateau	101.9
Akwa-Ibom	313.6	Imo	155.5	Anambra	130.2	Gombe	99.6
Bayelsa	285.6	Jigawa	151.8	Cross River	126.7	Nassarawa	96.7
Kano	254.4	Bauchi	146.0	Zamfara	125.6		
Lagos	226.6	Sokoto	146.0	Yobe	121.8		
Kastina	192.9	Osun	143.5	Abia	120.6		
Oyo	180.3	Adamawa	136.9	Taraba	119.0		
Kaduna	177.4	FCT	136.2	Enugu	117.0		
Borno	165.6	Kebbi	134.6	Kwara	122.5		

Source: Madubuko, (2008) in Agbaenyi and Nwagbo (2016)

**Table 2: States and Local Government Distribution among Nigerian Regions**

Zones	No of States	No of L.G.A
South East	5	95
South West	6	137
South South	6	122
North East	6	186
North West	7	112
North Central	6	121

Source: Madubuko, (2008) in Agbaenyi and Nwagbo (2016)

**Table 3: Power Distribution in Nigeria since Independence**

<b>North West</b>	<b>Year</b>
Gen Murtala Mohammed	July 29 1975- Feb 13 1976
Alhaji Shehu Shagari	Oct 1, 1979- Dec 31, 1983
Maj Gen Muhammadu Buhari	Jan 1, 1984- Aug 27, 1985
Gen Sani Abacha	Nov 17 1993-June 8 1998
Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua	May 29 2007-2009
Muhammadu Buhari	May 29 2015-Date
<b>North East</b>	
Alhaji Abubakar Balewa	Oct 1, 1960-Jan 16 1966
<b>North Central</b>	
Gen Yakubu Gowon	July 29, 1966-July 29 1975
Gen Ibrahim Babangida	Aug 27 1985-Aug 26 1993
Gen Abdul salami Abubakar	June 9, 1998- May 29 1999
<b>South East</b>	
Gen Aguiyi Ironsi	Jan 16 1966- July 29 1966
<b>South West</b>	
Gen Olusegun Obasanjo	Feb 14 1976-Oct 1, 1979, May 29, 1999- May 29, 2007
Chief Ernest Shonekan	Aug 29 1993- Nov 17 1993
<b>South South</b>	
Goodluck Jonathan	2009-May 29 2015

**Source:** Madubuko (2008) in Agbaenyi and Nwagbo (2016)

**Table 4: Names AND Dates of Justices of Supreme Court of Nigeria**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>Year</b>
1	Hon. Justice Stafford Foster Sutton	1956-1958
2	Hon. Justice Adetokunbo Ademola	1958-1972
3	Hon. Justice Taslim Olawale Elias	1972-1975
4	Hon. Justice Darnley Arthur Alexander	1975-1979
5	Hon. Justice Atanda Fatai-Williams	1979-1983
6	Hon. Justice George Sodeinde Sowemimo	1983-1985
7	Hon. Justice Ayo Gabriel Irikefe	1985-1987
8	Hon. Justice Muhammed Bello	1987-1995
9	Hon. Justice Muhammadu Lawal Uwais	1995-2006
10	Hon. Justice Salisu Modibo Alfa Belgore	2006-2007
11	Hon. Justice Idris Legbo Kutigi	2007-2010
12	Hon. Justice Aloysius Iyorgyr Kastina-Alu	2010-2011
13	Hon. Justice Dahiru Musdapher	2011-2012
14	Hon. Justice Aloma Mariam Makhar	2012-2014
15	Hon. Justice Mahmud Mohammed	2014-2016
16	Hon. Justice Walter Samuel Nkanu Onnoghen	2016-Date

**Source:** [Supremecourt.gov.ng](http://Supremecourt.gov.ng) and [www.naij.com](http://www.naij.com) (29<sup>th</sup> August, 2017).

The above lopsided history and imbalance in value allocation is what ethnic movements of Igbo extractions are holding claims on to demand for secession from Nigeria political entity. For instance since independent of Nigeria from her else while colonial master in 1960, the southeast (Igbo ethnic group) held the post of Head of State/ President for 6 months, whereas other zones and ethnic groups have held it for than 6 years at least (see table 3). More pitiable is the case of the Supreme Court of the Federation, where no Southeast person has been appointed as the Chief Justice of the federation (see table 4). Those that made it to the Supreme Court retired without such consideration. Also no serious effort is being made for balancing of this cry of marginalization. Furthermore since 4<sup>th</sup> Republic power sharing especially the offices of President, Vice President, President of the Senate and Speaker House of Representatives have been a reflection of three ethnic groups or zones in Nigeria (North: Hausa, Southwest: Yoruba, Southeast/Southsouth: Igbo). But the present dispensation totally ignored this prevailing political culture of Nigeria political arrangement thereby breeding ethnic rancor, suspicious and contention which is seriously destabilizing the socio-political sphere of Nigeria. One of the claims for political agitation of the Igbo ethnic group in recent time is in appointment of the Head of Defence/Security agencies in Nigeria where no person of the ethnic extraction was considered. In other words, security meetings will be held and decisions taken without anybody representing the interest of the group, worrisomely in an ethnic competition and contention riddled Nigeria (see table 5). Also the Igbo ethnic group/Southeast zone has only 5 states and 95 local governments in 36 states and 994 local government areas in Nigeria (see table 2). Whereas other zones have at least 6 states and not less 110 local government areas, in as much as Igbo is among the three dominating and ruling ethnic group in Nigeria and since independence respectively.

Failure of government to address some these maladies has made every effort to uphold Nigeria entity difficult. Government of every regime keep spending resources it would have used to develop the nation in quailing conflict. Onuko (2016) extended the argument to present Buhari administration. He illustrated that the appointment of the present federal government is lopsided and have necessitated ethnic agitation that have aggravated Nigeria state disintegration. Rev Fr Aghaulor advised federal government to address inequality in appointments in the security sector which gives impression in the current arrangement that military and other security agencies belong to a particular region of the country (Ojo, 2016).

**Table 5: Appointments into sensitive security posts by Buhari led Federal Government**

	Office	Name	Region/State	Religion
1	Chief of Air Staff	Air Vice Marshal Sadique Abubakar	North, Bauchi	Muslim
2	Chief of Army Staff	Lt. Gen. Tukur Burutai	North, Borno	Muslim
3	Naval	Real Admiral Ibok-Ete	South, Cross	Christian

		Ekwe Ibas	Rivers	
4	Chief Of Defence	Gen. Abayomi Olonisakin	South, Ekiti	Christian
5	Minister of Defence	Brigadier Gen. Mansur Mahammed Dan Ali	North, Zamfara	Muslim
6	DS DSS	Lawal Daura	North, Kastina	Muslim
7	IG of Police	Ibrahim Idris	North, Niger State	Muslim
8	Comptroller Imigration	Mahammed Babandede	North, Jigawa	Muslim
9	Comptroller Custom	Col Hameed Ibrahim (Rtd)	North, Kaduna	Muslim
10	Civil Defence	Com. Gen. Abdullahi Muhammadu	North, Niger	Muslim
11	Minister of Interior	Maj. Gen. Abdulrahman Dambazau	North, Kaduna	Muslim
12	National Security Adviser	Maj. Gen. Babangida Munguno	North, Borno	Muslim
13	Minister of Police Affairs	Alhaji Oyewele Adesiyan	South, Osun	Muslim

Compiled by the Researchers in 2016.

In midst of this, government has failed to adopt democratic means of dialogue and compromise to address these groups agitation for Biafran state rather coercive instrument which is precipitated on abuse of rule of law is usually adopted. Under this ugly situation Okorie and Esheya (2013) maintain that the beauty of democracy globally lies in equity. They suggested its applicability in Nigeria, infers equitable representation of the ethnic nationalities in political appointments, career positions and such other positions of national representation or significance. But this suggestion has not been in any way adhered to, thereby causing political suffocation and socio-economic instability.

### **MEND, Avengers and Other Militant Groups of Niger Delta**

Agitations and destruction of national assets in the Niger Delta region is based on non-inclusive resource allocation formula. The people of the region argue that the region produces resources that sustain the economy but they are neglected in its distribution. Worryingly, people from other zones benefit more from the resource whereas her people bear the destructive impacts of the resource production. Some of the factors they point at are environmental and aquatic lives destruction, high mortality rate due to pollution, unemployment, poor infra-structure, poor political appointment at federal level and non- compensation by both MNCs in the area and federal government. In an effort to address these, Obasanjo regime established Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) to address some of the socio-economic

problems of the area. Obasanjo revenue allocation formula increased to 13% later to 20% on derivation to assuage the militants and stakeholders from Niger-Delta. This served as palliative measure. It reduced pressure on federal government but did not adequately solve problems of the area. They kept agitating for more federal government investment to alleviate socio-economic effects of oil exploration activities in the area.

More so, Yar'Adua and Jonathan administration intervened through Amnesty Programme, appointment, award of contracts and etc. Tempo was reduced and relative return of peace was experienced in the area during the period especially when one of their own became President of Nigeria (Goodluck Jonathan). However, status quo ante was re-established when Buhari government decided to suspend some of these projects with view of reviewing the processes of their establishment and execution. This led to destruction of oil facilities and companies in the area on daily basis. Nigeria as a mono-economy nation that depends majorly on oil for her foreign exchange is seriously being challenged by the activities of these militants. In recent times, Federal and some state governments have not being able to meet up with their social responsibilities due to low volume of oil production. Oil production drastically reduced from 2.1million barrels in 2015 to 850,000 barrels per day in 2016 when militants' attacks on oil facilities became intense. Likewise 2016 budget has not been implemented as a result of paucity of fund. In recent times Nigeria economy went into recession as a result of some of these activities. Economic effect of this act has been quite destructive especially in this era of economic recession. The MEND, Avengers, Joint Revolution Council, Niger Delta People Volunteer Force etc maintain that marginalization of the area as the main reason for their actions.

The groups and people of this area posit that federal government spends billions of naira rehabilitating North-East destroyed by its own people (Boko Haram) whereas Niger Delta Amnesty programme was revoked. Destructions and poverty in the area are effects of MNCs activities and neglect of government to rebuild the area. They maintained that this is just robbing Peter to pay Paul. There has been accusation in recent times that 85% of oil wells in the region are owned by the people from north as a result of lopsided value allocation system in a militocratic state like Nigeria. Worse this zone is politically marginalized in appointment, promotion and recruitment into federal government institutions which negates the principle of federal character as established.

### **Fulani Herdsmen**

Outside of conflicts as a result of marginalization of groups by the state, the favoured group, atimes exhibits attitude of superiority against other groups. States inability to rise upto its responsibility of bringing every group to order, gives impetus to this assumed connected group to take laws into their hands. Fulani Herdsmen in recent time advanced their business interest outside the provisions of the law without the state and its institutions intervening to stop such a breach. Human rights and business activities of other Nigerians are being abused and destroyed respectively. The argument has always been that power belongs to the North having been born to



rule. On this basis, the state (federal government) cannot rise against them. Rather covertly support these atrocities by keeping mute. Due to monistic nature of Nigerian state, sub-units, like state government authorities (governors) who should rise to provide security to their people are also incapacitated. That is why pluralism theorists argue that state should not be invested with absolute power to avoid abuse or become instrument of oppression by the ruling group.

Fulani Herdsmen while rearing their cattle from North down to South have invaded farmlands of communities on their ways. They rape, maim, kill even destroy communities that try to protest these unlawful activities of invading farms, homes, streams, sacred places in their communities. These are against the law of the land. The perpetrators are not controlled by the law and its agents. Rev Fr Aghaulor decried “we are tempted to wonder if Nigeria is on the verge of collapse. All over the country, women are being raped, intimidated, innocent Nigerians are being slaughtered and property worth billions of naira are being destroyed by hoodlums suspected to be Fulani Herdsmen” (Ojo, 2016). It is also recurrent especially in states like Plateau, Benue, Adamawa, Enugu, Imo etc. The group bears arms that are by law meant for the security agents of the state. This raises suspicion that state or its institution gives assistance to the group. One could easily ask how could such illiterate nomad acquire such sophisticated arm like AK47 and other associated raffles? How did they gain the training on her to bear arms? How do they maneuver security agents in their movement from North down the East? Why is it that many years of these atrocities they have not been brought to book? If the state could fight Niger Delta militants, MASSOB, IPOB agitators and Boko Haram group and other security challenges, why is it that Fulani Herdsmen who are identifiable have not been able to be checked? Innocent Nigerians are left unprotected while there are military wares and personnel protecting pipelines in Niger Delta, this gives impression that oil is more important than human lives (Ojo, 2016).

According to AIT 8pm News of 14<sup>th</sup> September between 2014 -2016, 12 out of 24 local government areas in Benue state have been attacked by Fulani herdsmen. 1800 persons were killed, 500,000 people displaced, still both federal and state governments who are in charge of security have not been able to do anything serious to curtail this. The statistics and havocs are higher in Plateau state than Benue. Socio-economic effects of this are quite colossal, among which is social disharmony, suspicion and security tension. Worryingly, it makes citizens to feel unsecured, kills patriotic spirit, and necessitates self- security and taking of arms against the state. For instance Ekiti state government has promulgated an act banning grazing in the state. A jail term of 2 years for anyone caught. It is an effort to secure Ekiti state. Other states may take recourse to this, even on other matters outside herdsmen activities especially to target business of other social groups. Nigeria social harmony and security is threatened everyday as a result of federal government inability to effectively act as arbiter in reconciling conflicting interests of groups within the state.

## **Conclusion**

Conclusively, in Nigeria value allocation by government has created serious disharmony among members of Nigerian state. Federal government has not also been fair and just in this act therefore prompting every ethnic group to struggles to get its fair share from the allocation. Rev Jasse Jackson argued that “lack of economic justice is the most potent factor causing social tension in Nigeria...there would be continuous agitation and unrests in Nigeria until the country’s system was able to guarantee economic justice” (The Authority Daily January 4, 2017). To avoid these ugly occurrences, the 1979 and 1999 constitutions created federal character principle. This was with a view to avoid domination, marginalization and inequality in the distribution of the state resources. However, this principle has created more confusion as a result of flagrant abuse of the principle by power holders. The minority and deprived always keep crying for justice. Beneficiaries of power structure do also molest and exploit other members of the state in the course of carrying out their own business. The resultant effect of government’s inability to address this leads to the formation of ethnic movements and militant groups to destabilize the system in order to gain needed attention, where attention is denied, destruction of lives and property is resorted to. Nigeria state should obey rule of law and ensure equity in its effort to govern the state, if not, peace cannot rein among its citizens. Inability of government of previous regime to adhere to federal character in discharge of it activities has hindered every effort to national integration. Therefore, democratic norms remain the only thing that can promote national harmony, unity and development. Application of coercive instrument cannot work. It is obvious that militocracy has failed Nigeria. It has created more confusion, conflicts and mistrust among Nigerians. Nigerian state should henceforth adopt democratic norms in her principle of value allocation and conflict resolution.

Sequel to the above we recommend as thus

1. Fairness and justice should be adopted by the federal government of Nigeria in the day to day governing of the state especially in area of value allocation (appointment, budget allocation, citing and award of contracts etc)
2. True federalism of fiscal decentralization should be adopted. This will enable the sub-units of the federal system to look inward to discover and develop their own endowment and potentials. Most importantly it will reduce the monistic disposition of the federal or central government to the level of arbiter amongst other associations in the state which it is part of as proffered by pluralist theorist. Therefore power should be decentralized.
3. Negotiation, compromise and tolerance should be used in addressing contentious issues of national interest. Militocratic projections of force and military wares seriously distort democratic psychology of Nigeria citizenry. This approach always promotes violence among groups in Nigeria and against the state as if in a state of nature where anarchy prevails
4. Judicial system should be encouraged to rise up to its duties and also adhere to equity, fairness, quick delivery of judgment in discharge of its duties.

Attainment of this height will restore confidence of aggrieved parties thereby resorting to court to settle their grievances rather than taking laws into their hands.

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