

The Politics of Exclusion & Governance in Nigeria: A Thematic Analysis of the Buhari Administration



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ABSTRACT: This study's overarching purpose is to explore the challenges of imbalance and exclusion in our national life between/among states, social and ethnic/religious groups in light of the recent appointments made by the Buhari administration on diversity in Nigeria. This is due to the fact that people who have been excluded have continued to worry over President Muhammadu Buhari's previous nominations. It is an established fact that good governance is characterized by transparency, responsiveness, participation, the rule of law, equity, and accountability. Its fundamental beliefs consist of accommodating and tolerating the various viewpoints of political opponents through intentional inclusion in the political affairs of one's country. Since the inception of democratic dispensation in 1999, governance in Nigeria has always been based on politics of exclusion, both in terms of the opinions of individuals whose contributions are necessary for the development of the country and in terms of the political appointments of individuals from specific areas/sections. These leaders who have attained State authority, control State resources and begin to decide "who gets what, when, and how" in the political system with little or no regard for the country's overall cohesion and progress. The data in this study were analyzed using a qualitative, descriptive technique. Using elite theory, the paper discovered that unless our leaders eschew ethnic, religious, and partisan politics in governance, the clamour for disintegration and crises caused by these ethnic groups will continue to incite unnecessary distractions that will lead to disunity and underdevelopment in Nigeria.

KEYWORDS: Governance, Politics, Elite Theory, Exclusion, Disintegration.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is unquestionably one of the world's most diversified nations. With a population of more than 180 million, Nigeria is a federation comprising 36 states and 774 local governments. With 50% of its inhabitants living in multidimensional poverty and 30% in severe multidimensional poverty, it is ranked 152 out of 188 on the Human Development Index (Thompson, 2019a, p. 4; World Bank, 2018, p. 12). In Nigeria, there are about 450 ethno-linguistic groupings and over 300 ethnic groups scattered throughout six geopolitical areas (World Bank, 2018). (Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, 2017, p. 3). Large regional, ethnic, religious, and class divides also exist in the political system. Despite these traits, three primary ethnic groups—Yoruba, Hausa, and Igbo—dominate the political landscape of the nation. There are other ethnolinguistic groups, but they are marginalized. There is a fear that the big ethnic groups will dominate the minor ethnic groups because of the existence of subgroups within the large and dominant ethnic groups. In order to retain the dominance by the majority groups or to prevent and combat the domination by the minority groups, various ethnic groupings and sub-groups play politics.

In post-colonial Nigeria, presidential elections have always caused tensions, fears, and controversies, especially among the public. This is related to the fact that electioneering times are typically marked by speeches with ethnoreligious undertone. Particularly, the 2015 and 2019 presidential elections in Nigeria caused an unprecedented amount of tension and controversy. In addition to being held at a period of insecurity partly orchestrated by the Boko Haram sect, the general elections of 2015 have been hailed as the most competitive to be held in Nigeria since the country's decolonization. Prior to the elections, it was said that tensions between the north and the south had increased. This was due to the northerners' perception of a perfect opportunity to retake the presidency, which, in their view, would reverse their region's perceived economic marginalization (Olayode 2015, p. 3).

All of these reasons exacerbated the ethnic, regional, and religious divisions that have traditionally characterized Nigerian politics since its independence. In all society, there exist groups of people that are systematically disadvantaged due to discrimination. As well as in the household and the community, discrimination happens in public institutions, such as the bureaucratic, political, and security legal system or the education and health services. Discriminated-against men, women, and children are frequently excluded from society, the economy, and political involvement. They are more susceptible to poverty. Their access to political and bureaucratic positions, income, assets, and services is more likely to be refused. These individuals are socially excluded. Since 2015, these groups, particularly the largest groups, have continued to blame President Muhammadu Buhari's allegedly heavily lopsided

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top level appointments allocated to Muslim northerners as the fundamental and underlying cause of the massive disunity and divisions amongst Nigeria's diverse ethno-religious communities. For example, the political exclusion of youths, women, and individuals with disabilities has boosted political involvement but has not altered the provision of services to youths, women, and individuals with disabilities. Although regulations exist, little has been done at the national, state, and local levels to modify people's attitudes or ensure that these policies are implemented.

For instance, Dr. Joe Nworgu, the previous Secretary General of Ohanaeze Ndigbo, reprimanded President Muhammadu Buhari and charged him with nepotism three months into his first term in 2015. Nworgu asserted that Ndigbo would not fare any better under Buhari's government because of the way the latter had acted toward them as if they were not nationals of the nation. Nworgu claimed that since it was consistent with the president's character, he was not surprised. He was reacting to the over 32 appointments made by President Buhari at the time, none of whom was an Igbo person. Nworgu asserted that during his presidency, Buhari carried out similar acts with projects at the now-defunct Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF). The president recently asked the Senate for permission to borrow \$22.7 billion from China's Exim bank, and the Senate recently supported that request. According to President Buhari, the funds would be used to improve the country's infrastructure. He said that among other things, the loan's goals included "ensuring the prompt implementation of projects under the borrowing plan with specific emphasis on infrastructure, agriculture, health, education, and water supply, as well as to generate growth and employment, reduce poverty through social safety net programs, and implement governance and financial management reforms.

When the loan's details were known, it was discovered that the Southeast region was not included in the projects it was intended for. When the loan was finally obtained, none of the projects was cited in the South East zone. The outrage from the general populace over Southeast's rejection of the loan did not end there. The zone's Governors and the National Assembly factions had weighed in to try to find solutions. Following their meeting, they made contact with the National Assembly and the Presidency. They had promised to resolve any loan-related concerns and had gone back to the people to reassure them. The purpose of the essay is to discuss how governments, civic society, and donors may assist in addressing the problems caused by political exclusion in governance by utilizing Buhari's presidency as a case study.

Contextualizing Political Exclusion and Governance Exclusion from Politics

To address social isolation, it is necessary to first understand the mechanisms that lead to exclusion. Institutions and behavior that reflect, enforce, and replicate dominant social attitudes and values, particularly those of strong groups in society, exclude people. This is sometimes obvious and purposeful, as when state institutions intentionally discriminate in their laws, policies, or programs. According to the aforementioned theory, excluded groups in popular parlance refer to all marginalized groups, regardless of whether their exclusion is based on ethno-religious identities, sexual orientation, age, disability, or gender, among other factors. This is the reason Birchall (2019) define Social exclusion as the inability of individuals to fully engage in economic, social, political, and cultural life. While anybody is at risk of social isolation, certain characteristics or characteristics heighten the risks. Intra-group dynamics, institutional issues and party interests, discrimination, language obstacles, low faith in the process, financial impediments, and a lack of court facilities in the regions where they live are among the risk factors.

Available literature on the subject in Nigeria suggests that women and girls, people with disabilities, ethnic and religious minorities, migrants and internally displaced people, children and younger people, older people, sexual minorities, people without official identification, and people living with HIV are at a heightened risk of social exclusion. Individuals may also be geographically isolated. Each of these communities faces social isolation as a result of interrelated and often contradictory reasons. For this reason, the Department for International Development (DFID) has defined social exclusion as: the systematic disadvantage of certain groups due to discrimination based on ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, caste, descent, gender, age, disability, HIV status, migrant status, or place of residence. Institutions such as the home, as well as government institutions like the police and courts, are not immune to discrimination (DFID, 2005, quoted in O'Driscoll 2018, p.1).

However, there is consensus that social exclusion is multifaceted and has a variety of characteristics. In other words, it functions on various societal levels and incorporates social, political, cultural, and economic components. Additionally dynamic, it affects people through time in a variety of ways and to varying degrees. It is also relational since it is the result of social interactions that are marked by unequal power dynamics. This can lead to rifts in societal relationships that impair social participation, protection, integration, and power. We're going to concentrate on political exclusion for our purposes.

In democratic countries, political exclusion and dominance are frequent examples of discrimination. What is at risk if one or the other is selected as a conceptualization of injustice? Does the phenomenon of injustice call for a more complicated set of analytic categories, or can either idea serve as the overarching concept for all injustice? In this section's examination, a variety of thematic topics are used to explore the concepts of exclusion and domination.

For us, the issues to be analyzed are those pertaining to ethno-regional, women's, and youth exclusion. In Nigeria, the politics of exclusion have always resonated with nativist ideas. Exclusionary politics are the result of a visceral anxiety among members of the dominant group that they would lose their privileged status, particularly among voters who fear the loss of traditional Hausa-Fulani dominance. Its proponents frequently exploit national security as a cover for bigotry. In Nigeria, the appointments made by President

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Buhari since 2015 have elicited resounding disapproval from all corners of the country. People have accused him of displaying an inexplicable incapacity to view Nigeria through the lens of a nationalist and President of all. He displays insensitive ethnocentrism, sectionalism, nepotism, tribalism, parochialism, cronyism, clannishness, and favoritism by viewing Nigeria as a microscopic and atomic unit of his ethnic group.

Victor Asal, Michael Findley, James A. Piazza, and James Igoe Walsh (2016) confirmed the findings of (Gurr 2000; Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010, Collier and Hoeffler 2004; Fearon and Laite 2003 & Ross 2012) that exclusion from the democratic system is a significant cause of armed conflict. Ethnic groups are more prone to participate in organized violence if they are excluded from the political system and unable to pursue their interests or resolve their problems peacefully, according to these studies. Asal, Findley, Piazza, and Walsh (2016) study how the presence of oil riches effects the relationship between ethnic exclusion and insurrection. Natural resource richness, particularly oil wealth, has been related to the emergence of civil strife inside nations. These two interpretations for the origin of conflict, one focusing on the exclusion of ethnic groups and the other on the existence of oil, have developed independently. They argue that study in this direction can enhance our comprehension of the relationship between ethnic exclusion and conflict.

Political exclusion is defined by Voelkel (2018) and Mbah, Nwangwu, and Ugwu (2019) as excluding and ignoring politically distinct individuals from a political dialogue. In his study, Voelkel (2018) analyzes the concept that political exclusion may enhance bias against the political out group (exclusion-divergence hypothesis). Studies (Ren, Wesselmann, & Williams, 2018) have shown that being excluded and ignored increases antisocial feelings (e.g., dislike, anger) and behaviors (e.g., aggression). Furthermore, it has been suggested that long-term rejection is one of the important reasons in explaining very violent conduct such as school shootings (Leary, et al., 2003). While there is also much data documenting pro-social aspirations as a result of exclusion (see Williams, 2015). In the case of political exclusion, however, individuals are ostracized by members of their political out-groups, who are ordinarily held in high contempt. Therefore, their drive to build relationships is likely to be low, which increases the likelihood of antisocial responses and the formation of increased bias.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of the most significant features of social exclusion:

Many argue that the value of social exclusion lies in its actor-oriented approach, which identifies who is doing what and in what relationship. It also enables us to recognize and address issues of power. In development practice, non-economic social scientists have embraced the word exclusion. This is owing to its emphasis on societal structures, actors, interactions, and processes, of which measurable economic disparity or lack of access to social services may be both an indicator and a result. The EPR dataset considers an ethnic group to be politically relevant "if at least one political organization claims to represent its interests at the national level or if its members face state-led political discrimination." Exclusion is characterized as either not having any influence or being discriminated against, which demonstrates active, purposeful, and targeted discrimination by the state against the group (Vogt et al., 2015).

- Ethnic and religious identities in Nigeria are frequently linked, generating a complicated system of social exclusion. Religious minorities endure social, political, and economic marginalization due to differences and discrimination from other religious communities, as well as state and federal government treatment. In terms of wealth, access to public services, and education, horizontal inequalities by ethnic group continue. People categorized as "non-indigenous" are prohibited from owning land and running for office, and they face difficulties to education, social protection, and public sector employment.

-Internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Nigeria endure social isolation, and particular groups of IDPs, including women, children, and individuals with disabilities, are more vulnerable and may be abused by authorities. Pastoralists, migrant farmers, and migratory fisherfolk are also vulnerable to social marginalization in Nigeria.

- Children and adolescents who lack access to education, health care, and other essential services for their well-being and involvement in society have a high risk of social exclusion. In Nigeria, young people between the ages of 15 and 29 are particularly vulnerable to economic and social isolation; while a large fraction of this age group is literate, it also has the greatest rates of unemployment and inactivity.

In Nigeria, older individuals are more likely to face exclusion in the form of loneliness, poverty, and a lack of healthcare, especially as traditional family systems deteriorate. Widows experience discrimination and exclusion, including the loss of property following the death of their husband.

-The Same Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act 2014 has further marginalized and stigmatized the LGBT people in Nigeria; because of this stigma, many LGBT persons avoid institutions and services that are essential for social inclusion.

-In Nigeria, less than half of residents have any kind of identification. Individuals who lack identification may find it difficult to obtain social assistance, education, healthcare, or financial services, and they may be unable to vote in elections or cross borders legally.

-People living with HIV and their families face stigma and discrimination from individuals, communities, and service providers, including healthcare workers' refusal to treat people living with HIV.

GOVERNANCE

The phrase "governance" is commonly used by politicians, the media, academia, development organizations, practitioners, and even the general public. As a result, the notion has grown popular and widely used among scholars and practitioners from several disciplines, including public administration, economics, political science, management, law, and sociology, as well as development organizations. The notion itself is quite ubiquitous, having become incorporated in practically every international organization and democratic government to allude to how interconnected and highly complex issues are managed. Governance can mean many things depending on who uses it and in what context. According to Levi-Faur (2011, cited in Ysa, Albareda, and Forberger, 2014, p.3), governance can take the following forms: governance as a structure referring to the formal and informal set of institutions involved; governance as a process referring to the dynamics and leading functions that take place in the policy making process; governance as a mechanism referring to the institutional procedures of decision-making, as well as compliance and control; and governance as a process referring to the dynamics and We have established from the examples above that governance is about politics and how power is allocated amongst and among various players in the public domain. It is about how people share decision-making and how this affects their ability to empower themselves and others. That is, governance refers to the different ways in which social life is managed through the use of governmental institutions such as courts, police, the army, bureaucracy, and the legislature, among others. These institutions exercise political authority on behalf of the state. Authority is a connection that occurs between and among individuals and offices in a state. In this arrangement, obedience goes upwards while command flows downwards. Their authority may be conventional, charismatic, or legal-rational. Traditional authority is based on history, charismatic authority is based on personality, and legal power is based on a set of impersonal laws known as the constitution. To study government is to study the exercise of authority. Government and politics are inextricably linked. This is because the World Bank identified three distinct aspects of governance in her documents: (a) the form of the political regime; (b) the process by which authority is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development; and (c) the capacity of governments to design, formulate, and implement policies and discharge functions. The World Bank has prioritized the second and third aspects because it is believed that the first aspect falls outside of its purview. For our purposes, we'll focus on the first issue, which we've already begun to solve. For our purposes, we will use Keping's (2018) concept of governance as our working definition. He asserts that governance is an ongoing process that enables varied or competing interests to be taken into account and cooperative action to be taken. It comprises formal regimes and institutions with the authority to enforce compliance as well as unofficial agreements that individuals and institutions have either accepted or believe to be in their best interests. The process of governance is not based on control but rather on coordination, it involves both the public and private sectors, and it is not a formal institution but rather ongoing interaction. These are its four distinguishing characteristics (See also Commission on Global Governance, 1995).

We can infer from the definitions of governance given above that, in its most basic form, governance refers to the use of power to uphold order and provide for the needs of the public within a specific framework. By utilizing the power of many systems and relationships, governance aims to direct, steer, and control citizen behavior in a way that maximizes the public interest. Political science uses the term "governance" to describe the process of political administration, including the normative basis of political authority, methods for handling political issues, and the administration of public funds. The exercise of administrative power within a specific sector and the function of political authority in preserving social order are given particular attention (Keping, 2018, p.3).

Studying politics is essentially studying how governments utilize their power, both explicitly and generally. Politics is the study of all actions related to the appropriation, enlargement, and use of state authority. The creation and implementation of collective choices by the institutions of the state is at the heart of politics. These governmental entities oversee the economic, political, and administrative aspects of a nation's affairs on all fronts. These institutions, processes, and mechanisms serve to reunite the government with the people, aiding groups in expressing their needs, asserting their legal rights, fulfilling their commitments, and resolving conflicts. Institutions are used in a polity's governance process to exercise political influence, make choices about public affairs, and advance social justice. Special attention needs to be paid to Goran Hyden's role in helping to make the concept of governance more understandable. He elevates governance to the status of a "umbrella idea to define an approach to comparative politics," an approach that closes the gaps in other people's analytical work. He emphasizes, using a governance framework, "the creative potential of politics, especially with the ability of leaders to rise above the existing structure of the ordinary, to change the rules of the game, and to inspire others to partake in efforts to move society forward in new and productive directions." He essentially believes that governance is a conceptual method that, when properly developed, may frame a comparative analysis of macropolitics. Governance entails political actors intervening creatively to alter structures that prevent the expression of human potential. Governance concerns "big" matters of a "constitutional" type that set the standards of political behavior.

Governance refers to specific types of relationships among political actors, i.e., those that are socially sanctioned rather than arbitrary (Website of South Africa's National Party, n.d., p. 1). Governance is a rational concept, emphasizing the nature of interactions between state and social actors, as well as among social actors themselves.

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In conclusion, it is evident that the idea of governance has grown in popularity and significance during the past 25 years. Governance has evolved into a valuable tool to increase the legitimacy of the public sphere in addition to being a tool for managing public affairs or a gauge of political progress. Additionally, it has evolved into a methodology or framework for comparative politics analysis.

METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

The study is designed to use a qualitative methodology and is based on a review of the literature. In order to gather information from a variety of sources, attempts have been made to keep in mind the nature of the problem and subject being researched. Consequently, there is a mix of primary and secondary sources. Documents from international agencies, books, journals, speeches, remarks, and official communications have all been used to gather and transfer information. It has been very beneficial to increase clarity in thinking about various aspects of the topic by interacting with other scholars by visiting international seminars, conferences, and workshops.

The data obtained will be analyzed using the content analysis type of qualitative data analysis. In qualitative research, this is a type of data analysis. It is used to occurrences' documented descriptions. Through the use of secondary data, this system entails researching and/or retrieving important information.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The way that political elites organize themselves elevate them above the rest of society. Therefore, elitism in governance pays no attention to the true demands of the governed. It appears to promote the interests of the elite at the expense of the wellbeing of the political space's underclass members. Additionally, it consistently prioritizes the needs—or even the greed—of a select few (the elite) over the aspirations of the majority. As a result, elitism is associated with negative traits in management, political leadership, and other contexts. As elitism is a leadership personality trait, it undermines all that is beneficial at the local governance level. One of the most fundamental representations of elitism is one that emphasizes the important connection between politics and economics, and no other place celebrates this fact more than in the writings of both classical and modern elite theorists. It is a product of any society's political-economic dynamics, which are drawn from the very political dynamics and aptitudes that underpin any social formation. In their theories of the elite, Pareto, Mosca, Michels, Mills, and Hunter have argued in various ways that the stratification paradigm is more important than pluralism for achieving social concord and that leadership issues in societies do not thrive on it. The political theory of elitism can take many different shapes. One model depicts a cohesive socioeconomic elite, a close-knit group of people who share a set of fundamental interests. Typically, these stand in for large corporations, banks, the media, established authorities, the professions, and foundations. They consistently acquire favorable government positions and choices through the use of their social clout and financial sway. Business interests hold a privileged place in the governing and policy-making processes of capitalist countries. Business interests participate in the policy-making process as necessary, while direct involvement may not be essential if the decision-makers already share their viewpoints. In fact, this point of view claims that elected officials and other government officials are only "trustworthy" because the elite has approved of them for their positions. National politics is where academics have most frequently seen this elite system. Wright Mills, on the other hand, inserted the highest levels of the military command and depicted the entire country as being ruled by this type of system. Only to the extent that policies favored by the wealthy and any other "non-elites" would also be advantageous to the elites would they be implemented. In this paradigm, government regulators would be heavily influenced by significant commercial interests because they frequently keep strong contacts with them. It is noteworthy that discussions of political elitism bring up two crucial issues: hierarchy and inequality. The former concerns the vertical division of society's population into two groups, notably the elites at the top (those in positions of power and influence) and those at the bottom (non-elites). People at the bottom are thought to be less significant than people at the top. The social hierarchies in question are thought to be pyramidal in structure. In the hierarchy, there are more persons at the bottom than at the top. The latter are the social elite and are in charge of using their social, economic, and political clout. Their abilities to communicate ideas, persuade, cajole, and coerce, mobilize, embody, and push symbols that elicit strong emotions in huge numbers of people, are what give them most of their power. This essay examines the claim that only those with political knowledge—those who understand which laws and other public policies are the best ones—are eligible for a share of political power. A similar viewpoint holds that those with superior political knowledge and judgment are presumed to be entitled to serve as the political rulers of society, with the presumption being overturned if they are corrupt or otherwise rendered ineligible by political faults that outweigh their political qualifications. When ethnic or regional dominance becomes a political problem, two main difficulties are raised. The main concern is the management of political power and its representatives, including the armed forces and the judicial system. Control over economic resources and power is the second. Both are potent tools that are employed to have an impact on the authoritative distribution of resources to organizations and people. When democratic transition and its manipulation are on the table, the issue of numbers enter the fray. Apart from ideology and interest articulation, fundamental themes like ethnicity, regionalism, and religion become important tools for political mobilization as political parties try to put together the broadest coalitions that could guarantee them access to power. The largest organizations assume a major role and are either exploited to open the doors to power or are either shut out or ostracized from it.

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The overall concept, which holds that if the Hausa control political authority, the Yoruba control the nation's banking system and civil bureaucracy while the Igbo control trade and the unofficial sector, is explained by the aforementioned information. Despite this possibility, the prevalent view in Nigeria is that political power is the most important factor, and that those who hold it have a stronghold over other sectors and can exert influence over them. In this regard, it is widely believed that the Hausa are in charge of destroying Nigeria. The Yoruba media, which is influential and dynamic, has repeatedly insulted Hausa culture, religion, politics, and leadership, according to the Hausa elites who have replied to these claims. The Yoruba domination of the important financial institutions excludes them from full economic involvement in the same way. On the other hand, they are taken advantage of by the Igbos, who rule over private companies and general commerce. By fixing prices for goods and services unilaterally, the Igbos exploit the region and its inhabitants and plunge them into poverty. In the end, the Hausa elites argued that the serious disunity and mutual mistrust between and among other ethno-religious identities is what has forced them to assume the role of leadership. The politics of exclusion in themes are covered in the following paragraph of the essay.

Appointment Lopsidedness

Appointments to institutions of the federal government are governed by two key provisions. These are the paragraphs that discuss the federal cabinet and the federal character principle in the 1999 Constitution. They serve as legal foundations for ensuring justice and equity in the Nigerian federation. Since every region of Nigeria can boast of high caliber individuals qualified to serve the nation, it is generally accepted that those responsible for drafting the Nigerian Constitution designed those safeguards that do not undermine merit, competence, and qualifications. However, the commotion and agitation brought on by President Muhammadu Buhari's initial federal appointments have persisted to cause reverberations and unease in a number of circles. The Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), the most prominent critic, charged Buhari in September 2017 with fostering inequality in the nation and thereby contributing to the rise in national insecurity. The Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), the most prominent critic, charged Buhari in September 2017 with fostering inequality in the nation and thereby contributing to the rise in national insecurity. The President Muhammadu Buhari administration's promotion of injustice and inequity, according to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), is the cause of the ongoing unrest and agitation in various parts of the country. This was stated in a statement released following the second plenary meeting of the CBCN, which took place in Jalingo, Taraba State, from September 7 to September 15. The Bishops pointed out that Buhari has fallen short of keeping his word that he will take care of all Nigerians and won't settle old scores. The Bishops claimed that on May 29, 2015, when the President of Nigeria took office as a civilian, he "sent out a message of hope and of his commitment to national integration and cohesion." "More than two years later, the reality on the ground and the judgment of the majority of our people throughout the country – regardless of religious affiliation, ethnic group, or social status – point to the contrary. A fertile ground for violent responses, protests, and agitations that take advantage of the complaints of various country segments has been created by the government's inability to address the unequal situation in the nation. The government must eliminate everything that smells of injustice in order to bring about long-lasting peace throughout the nation and to instill a sense of belonging in each and every one of its citizens (Obiejesi, 2017). The All Progressives Congress (APC) State Chairmen and even Governors who were elected on its platform have occasionally criticized Buhari's appointments for being unfairly biased. In addition, pressure groups like the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), the coalition of Southern and Middle Belt Leaders (SMBL), and others have never wavered in their demand for justice and equity in federal appointments. They had criticized President Buhari's alleged lack of inclusivity in his appointments since his first term in office, in violation of his earlier pledge, from the beginning. In accordance with Obiejesi (2018), President Muhammadu Buhari is credited with making the following infamous declaration when he took office on May 29, 2015: "Having just, a few minutes ago, sworn on the Holy Book, I intend to keep my oath and serve as President to all Nigerians." He has come into the spotlight because of his statement, "I belong to everyone and to nobody." On whether Buhari had kept his promise of belonging to everyone and nobody, Nigerians are divided. The lopsided appointment of government leaders is one of the many charges leveled against the Buhari administration. However, the administration has consistently argued that there is no disparity or inequality in Buhari's appointments. It even went so far as to release what it claimed to be a list of all the individuals who had been appointed to various government agencies as of November 2017. According to a fact-check report by BusinessDay published in November of the same year, 81 of President Buhari's 100 appointees are from the North. This list is presented in Appendix 1.

President Muhammadu Buhari has been accused of nepotism and clannishness, but according to the table above, Vice President Yemi Osinbajo, the Presidency's media aides, and those who believe in the "Stockholm syndrome" have refuted these claims. They claim that Southerners and Christians have benefited more from his cabinet than Northerners and Muslims. Amazingly, a disproportionate number of southern-appointed individuals and groups will conceitedly defend and applaud this disrespectful erasure of democratic traditions and the Constitution. They are individuals afflicted by what is known as the "Stockholm syndrome" (a situation where a victim develops feelings of trust and affection towards his traducer or tormentor). Another name for it is "terror bonding" or "trauma bonding." On sophistication, education, and enlightenment, however, Southerners would stake a stronger claim. It is incomprehensible that a southern president could carry out this situation and that northerners would defend it on social media and on television, remain silent as they currently are, or take to the streets of Zamfara, Kano, Yobe, Bauchi, Kaduna, and Katsina

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to openly advocate for the southern president's reelection. For example, Osinbajo asserted that there were more Christians than Muslims in the Federal Executive Council (FEC) in an interview with online journalists from which THISDAY was given excerpts in late 2018. Osinbajo made the case that while four of the five states in the South-east have meaningful ministerial portfolios, the seven states in the North—including the president's state of Katsina—do not. The vice president claimed that only one person from the south-west currently holds all three ministerial positions for power, works, and housing, in addition to two other significant portfolios for finance and communications. This is a first in the nation's history.

The claim made in the document that President Muhammadu Buhari's political appointments have unfairly favored the country's north does not seem to be supported by the evidence. The documents obtained by "The Interview," which include every high-profile political appointment Buhari has made since taking office in 2015, demonstrate that the choices were more complex than what the general public believes. The last time these documents were updated was in December 2018. They are titled: "Compilation of Political Appointees, Heads of Parastatals and Agencies" and "Portfolios of Ministers, Special Advisors, Senior Special Assistants and Special Assistants to the President" and were obtained from a reputable source.

The documents, which comprised the first 43 pages and the following 17 pages, revealed, for instance, that between 2015 and 2018, the South West came in second place to the North Central in terms of the number of appointments made to Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), with 101 appointees, accounting for 35% or 203 of the total 567 appointments made. Along with the dates of office assumption, it also displayed the offices where the deployments were made. The South-South zone, which includes President Buhari's zone, came in third with 99 appointments, ahead of the North West, which came in fourth with 94. South East had 78, and the North East had 93. With 22 appointments, Kogi State led the North Central region, followed by Kwara State with 21, and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) received the fewest, with only two. It is telling that the former Senate President, Dr. Bukola Saraki, frequently criticized President Buhari's administration for under-representing Kwara in federal appointments despite the fact that the state ranked second in the North Central region and sixth nationwide. Ogun State in the South West, which had 31 appointments, received more appointments from the MDAs than the three North West states of Kebbi, Zamfara, and Sokoto put together. With 24, Kaduna, Kano, and Jigawa States each received 16, and Katsina State received 24, Katsina State led the North West in appointments. Imo State had 29 MDA appointments nationwide, Anambra State had 20, and Abia State had 14, even though the South East was at the bottom of the list. With eight and seven respectively, Enugu and Ebonyi States outperformed Sokoto State. In the last five years, the perception of serious bias in appointments made by the Buhari government in favor of the North has greatly dominated public opinion. However, the executive management appointment percentage in MDAs is 51% in favor of the 19 northern states and 49% in favor of the 17 southern states, a small difference that could be easily attributed to the population disparity between the two regions (Ogunmade,2018).

Religious overtones can occasionally be found in opinions about regional bias in political appointments, which are not reflected in the classified documents. Some people argue that certain regions of the country receive more "juicy" appointments than others, which raises the controversial topic of the postings' significance. The vice president characterized the accusations of racial and religious bigotry made against his boss in light of this as nothing more than a story. If you look at the cabinet, for instance, you'll see that it has an equal number of Christians and Muslims: 18 each. But we do have a Christian Head of Service and Secretary to the Government of the Federation. As a result, the cabinet is composed of 20 Christians and 18 Muslims. Therefore, if you accept that story, you could contend that maybe Christians are in the lead. That is a potential storyline. Let's dig a little deeper into that, because there are those who might contend, for instance, that the North has the upper hand or perhaps one particular section does in the cabinet. The appointments, however, also reveal a fascinating pattern. 220 or 39% of the 567 executive appointments made to MDAs came from states where Buhari lost to former president Goodluck Jonathan, which is much better than the general public's perception would imply (Ogunmade,2018).

With 99 appointments, the South-South, the opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) stronghold, is third on the list of MDAs, trailing only the North Central and the South West. For instance, the number of MDA appointments in Delta State, where Buhari lost to Jonathan by 1,162,495 votes, and Rivers State, where he lost by 1,417,837 votes (two of the states where he suffered his worst defeats), was 23 in Delta and 13 in Rivers, respectively, compared to the combined number of appointments in the three core northern states of Sokoto, Kebbi, and Zamfara, which totaled 26, but had a total margin of victory (Ogunmade,2018). He added that there are those who will argue, for instance, that if you look at how many agency heads there are, Ogun State has the most of them in our country today. Some will claim that the vice president's state is this one. So, depending on how you want to run the narrative, you can.

Nigerians have criticized President Muhammadu Buhari for his propensity to largely choose government officials, heads of security agencies, and the majority of MDAs based on his religion rather than on the principles of equity and federal character since his earliest appointments. The complete northernization of Nigeria's security system is another issue that has been brought up in opposition to Buhari's presidency. Thus, about 16 of the 17 important security hires are from PMB's region of the country. The same story applies to everyone involved, including the Attorney-General of the Federation, IGP, DG NIA, DG DIA, Chief of Army Staff, and the Comptrollers-General of Customs, Immigration, Prisons, Federal Fire Service (North, mostly Muslims). Although Nigeria is a multicultural, multireligious, and multiethnic country whose unity rests precariously on the fine ropes of fairness, justice, and

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equity, President Buhari has never expressed his perplexing preference for appointing people of the same ethnic stock and religion as him into a vast majority of national offices at the expense of the other regions and religions. For instance, all but two of the leaders of our armed forces, paramilitary organizations, and police, as well as the ministries and agencies that oversee them, are northern Muslims. This feeling was expressed between May 2015 and 2019 the list below shows it:

- Minister of Defence – Mansur Dan Ali – Northern Muslim from Zamfara State
- Minister of Interior – Abdulrahman Bello Dambazzau – Northern Muslim from Kaduna State
- National Security Adviser – Mohammed Babagana Monguno – Northern Muslim from Borno State
- Defence Intelligence Agency – AVM Mohammed Saliu Usman – Northern Muslim
- Chief of Defence Staff – General Abayomi Gabriel Olonisakin – South Western Christian from Ekiti State
- Nigerian Army – Lt Gen Tukur Yusuf Buratai – Northern Muslim from Borno State
- Nigerian Air Force – Air Marshal Sidique Abubakar – Northern Muslim from Bauchi State
- Nigerian Navy – Vice Admiral Ibok-Ete Ekwe Ibas – South Southern Christian from Cross River State
- Nigeria Police Force – Ibrahim Kpotum Idris (March 21, 2016 – January 6, 2019) – Northern Muslim from Niger State
- Nigeria Police Force – Adamu Mohammed (Currently Acting IGP) – Northern Muslim from Nasarawa State
- Department of State Services – Lawal Musa Daura (July 2, 2015 – August 7, 2018) – Northern Muslim from Katsina State
- Department of State Services – Yusuf Magaji Bichi (current) – Northern Muslim from Kano State
- Nigeria Customs Service – Hameed Ibrahim Ali – Northern Muslim from Bauchi State
- EFCC – Ibrahim MAGu – Northern Muslim from Borno State
- Nigeria Immigration Service – Muhammed Bandede – Northern Muslim from Jigawa State
- Nigerian Prisons Service – Alhaji Ja'afaru Ahmed – Northern Muslim from Kebbi State
- Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps – Abdullahi Muhammadu – Northern Muslim from Niger State

From the aforementioned, it is obvious that President Muhammadu Buhari has purposefully focused his appointments on people who share his religion and ethnicity, despite his and his acolytes' best efforts to repeatedly defend such blatant imbalance and insensitivity to the nuanced nature of our nation. The "interest of the nation" and "security and competent reasons" will be the two main justifications offered by government apologists for PMB's indecent appointments, both of which fly in the face of and turn logic on its head. In other parts of the country, there are people who are equally or even more competent. If competency were the only criterion, we could only select the president, vice president, ministers, MDA heads, and all other government officials from one state of the federation. Senator Ita Enang, the Senior Special Assistant to the President on National Assembly Matters (Senate), has made frantic attempts to quell the verbal attacks on the administration after the backlash caused by the nominations' skewed nature. He charged the opponents with making claims that could incite unrest in the nation. "I infer that they are being unfair when I witness people trying to instigate others against the President on matters of appointments," he added (Obiejesi, 2017).

President Buhari's appointments, gender inequality, and women

For instance, despite the fact that women make up over half of the voting population, Nigeria has continued to fall short of closing the gender gap in politics despite evident increases in efforts worldwide. Women made up over 40 million of the 84 million registered voters in the 2019 election (47.14 per cent). (NBS, 2018). Women still performed poorly in politics, despite increased commitments made in advance of the 2019 elections to increase female political participation. Following this year's elections, PREMIUM TIMES and the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) conducted an analysis that revealed no increase in the number of women elected to public offices in Nigeria. Instead, there was a reduction from earlier outings since the fourth republic's founding.

According to a 2019 analysis by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and International Republic Institute (IRI), Nigeria's Senate has the lowest percentage of female legislators in Sub-Saharan Africa. The law requiring 35% Affirmation Action was submitted in 2017, however the 8th National Assembly rejected it. The 35 percent national gender policy was something President Buhari pledged to achieve during his reelection campaigns. Affirmative action is a commitment in the policy, and 35% of elected and appointed positions must be filled by women.

The charts below illustrate the underrepresentation of women in Nigeria's political system. The CDD developed the fact sheet. Women's Representation Trends Since 1999

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Year	Total Senators	Female Senators	Percentage of Female Senators	Percentage of Male Senators
1999	106	3	2.8	97.2
2003	105	4	3.7	96.3
2007	100	9	8.3	91.7
2011	102	7	6.4	93.6
2015	102	7	6.4	93.6

Sources: 2015 Nigeria Election Observation Report, retrieved at <http://www.iri.org/2015%20Nigeria%20Election%20Observation%20Report/1/assets/basic-html/page40.html> National Assembly Website, www.nassnig.org; and <http://www.shineyoureye.org/position/senator/>

Table 2 shows the representation of women in the Senate from 1999 to 2015.

We can get the following conclusions from table 2 above:

1. In 2015, there are seven female senators, compared to 3, 4, and 9 in 1999, 2003, and 2007 correspondingly.
2. In the Senate, women make up 6.4% of the total number of senators. The number of female representatives in 2011 was the same.
3. The 6.4% is a decline of 1.9% from the upper chamber's 8.3% female participation in the 6th Assembly in 2007 but an increase of 2.7% from the 5th Senate's 3.7% representation in 2003.
4. In terms of the total number of senators from the geopolitical zone, the South West geopolitical zone (22.2%) had the largest representation of women in 2015.
5. In 2015, there were 5.6%, 5.6%, and 5.6% female senators from the North East, South-South, and South East zones, respectively, in relation to the number of seats allotted to each geopolitical zone.
6. 2015 will see no female senators from the North Central or North West.

Table 3 shows the percentage of women in the House of Representatives from 1999 to 2015.

Year	Total Representatives	Female Representatives	Percentage of Female Representatives	Percentage of Male Representatives
1999	348	12	3.33	96.67
2003	339	21	5.83	94.17
2007	335	25	6.94	93.06
2011	334	26	7.22	92.78
2015	338	22	6.11	93.89

Sources: 2015 Nigeria Election Observation Report, retrieved at <http://www.iri.org/2015%20Nigeria%20Election%20Observation%20Report/1/assets/basic-html/page40.html> National Assembly Website, www.nassnig.org; and <http://www.shineyoureye.org/position/senator/>

DATA ANALYSIS

1. Out of 360 members of the House of Representatives, 22 are women (HoRs). As a result, women make up 6.11% of all lawmakers in HoRs.
2. Female members of HoRs increased from 3.33% in 1999 to 5.83% in 2003, an increase of 2.5%. By 2007, it had risen to 6.94%, and by 2011, it had reached 7.22%.
3. The 6.11% percentage observed in 2015 is down 0.83% and 1.11% from figures from 2007 and 2011, but up 0.28% from 2003 and 1999, respectively.
4. In 2015, South-South had the greatest representation, with 14.5% of its 55 representatives.

There are currently 469 members of the National Assembly: 109 in the Senate and 360 in the House of Representatives.

There are 22 women in the House but just seven in the Senate. As a result, there are 6.2 percent female MPs and 93.8 percent male lawmakers.

51 women out of the 990 members of the state assembly are women, which equates to 5.2 percent of the membership.

Table 4: Representation of women by geopolitical zone in the Senate

Geo-political zone	Number of available seats	Number of seats occupied by women	The percentage in Proportion allocated seats to
Northern Region			
Northern	58	1	1.7%
North Central	19	0	0%
North West	21	0	0%
North East	18	1	5.6%
Southern Region			
Southern	51	6	11.8%
South-South	18	1	5.6%
South West	18	4	22.2%
South East	15	1	6.7%
TOTAL	109	7	6.4%

Source: CDD 2018

Table 5 shows the representation of women in major party elected office, candidates, and positions in 2019

Table 5. Female elected positions, candidates and representation by major party in 2019

Positions	Total Number of candidates	Number of Position	Number of Women	%	APC Female Candidates	PDP Female Candidates	Total Women Elected
President	73	1	6	8.22%	0	0	0
Vice President	73	1	22	30.13%	0	0	0
Senate	1,904	109	235	12.34%	7	10	62
House of Rep	4,680	360	533	11.39%	15	16	11
Governor	2,412	36	74	3.07%	0	0	0
Deputy	2,412	36	275	11.49%	2	3	3
State Assembly	14,583	944	1,825	12.51%	28	39	373
Total	26,137	1,487	2,970	11.36%	52	68	57

Source: CDD, 2019.

The purpose of this fact sheet, according to CDD (2018), was to revisit and discuss women's representation in elected offices in Nigeria by offering trustworthy data on the trends and sparking lively debates about the problems as the nation gets ready for the 2019 elections. But when the political events of 2019 passed, nothing changed. This is due to the Buhari administration's unjust treatment of women who were appointed to important positions in his administration. Former President Jonathan received plaudits for appointing more women to positions of responsibility than any other Nigerian president, despite the fact that this has been a significant characteristic of the past administrations. Many believed that the APC's change slogan and arrival would bring better days for Nigerian women in the form of stronger representation at the top. Only six women were among the 36 ministers that President Buhari first appointed in 2015. Amina Mohammed left to accept the position of Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations, increasing their number to five.

Winifred Oyo-Ita, the former head of the federation's civil service, is the other female resident in the federal capital territory. Apart from the cabinet members, Hadiza Usman, the managing director of the Nigerian Ports Authority, and Patience Oniha, the director general of the Debt Management Office (DMO), are the two other powerful women in the Buhari administration. In terms of ministerial appointments in Nigeria, the low representation of women in political office suffered setbacks in 2019. Only seven women, or around 16% of the total 43 ministerial nominees for the Senate by President Muhammadu Buhari, were on the list. This was comparable to President Buhari's appointment of six women out of 42 nominees in 2015.

Former finance minister Zainab Ahmed of Kaduna, former deputy governor Paulen Talen of Plateau, executive secretary of the Pension Transitional Arrangement Directorate (PTAD) Sharon Ikeazor of Anambra, and permanent representative of Nigeria to UNESCO Maryam Katagun of Bauchi are the new women ministers. Others include Sadiya Umar Faruk (Zamfara), the Federal Commissioner of the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants, and IDPs, Ramatu Tijjani (Kogi), a former All Progressives Congress (APC) woman national leader, Gbemisola Saraki (Kwara), a former federal lawmaker, and (NCFRMI).

full list of those appointed:

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COMPLETE LIST OF APPOINTEES

- 1) Dr. Uchechukwu Ogah – Abia, Mines and Steel Development, State
- 2) Muhammed Musa Bello – Adamawa, FCT
- 3) Sen. Godswill Obot Akpabio – Akwa Ibom, Niger Delta
- 4) Chris Ngige – Anambra, Labour & Employment
- 5) Sharon Ikeazor – Anambra, Environment, State
- 6) Adamu Adamu – Bauchi, Education
- 7) Amb Maryam Katagum – Bauchi, Industry, Trade and Investment, State
- 8) Timipre Silva – Bayelsa, Petroleum, State
- 9) Sen. George Akume – Benue, Special Duties
- 10) Mustapha Baba Shehuri – Borno, Agriculture, State
- 11) Godwin Jedi-Agba – Cross River, Power, State
- 12) Festus Keyamo – Delta, Niger Delta, State
- 13) Ogbonnaya Onu – Ebonyi, Science and Technology
- 14) Dr. Osagie Ehanire – Edo, Health
- 15) Clement Ikanade Agba – Edo, Budget and National Planning, State
- 16) Otunba Adeniyi Adebayo – Ekiti, Industry, Trade and Investment
- 17) Geoffrey Onyeama – Enugu, Foreign Affairs
- 18) Dr. Ali Isa Pantami – Gombe, Communication
- 19) Emeka Nwajuba – Imo, Education, State
- 20) Suleiman Adamu – Jigawa, Water Resources
- 21) Zainab Shamsuna Ahmed – Kaduna, Finance, Budget and National Planning
- 22) Dr. Mohammad Mahmoud – Kaduna, Environment
- 23) Mohammed Sabo Nanono – Kano, Agriculture
- 24) Maj. Gen. Bashir Magashi (rtd) – Kano, Defence
- 25) Hadi Sirika – Katsina, Aviation
- 26) Abubakar Malami – Kebbi, HAGF and Minister of Justice
- 27) Ramatu Tijani Aliyu – Kogi, FCT, State
- 28) Lai Mohammed – Kwara, Information and Culture
- 29) Gbemisola Saraki – Kwara, Transportation, State
- 30) Babatunde Raji Fashola – Lagos, Works and Housing
- 31) Adeleke Mamora – Lagos, Health, State
- 32) Mohammed A. Abdullahi – Nasarawa, Science & Tech, State
- 33) Amb. Zubairu Dada – Niger, Foreign Affairs, State
- 34) Olamilekan Adegbite – Ogun, Mines & Steel Devpt
- 35) Sen. Omotayo Alasuadara – Ondo, Labour, State
- 36) Rauf Aregbesola – Osun, Interior
- 37) Sunday Dare – Oyo, Youth and Sports
- 38) Dame Pauline Tallen – Plateau, Women Affairs
- 39) Rotimi Amaechi – Rivers, Transportation
- 40) Mohammed Maigari Dangyadi – Sokoto, Police Affairs
- 41) Engr. Sale Mamman – Taraba, Power
- 42) Abubakar D. Aliyu – Yobe, Works and Housing, State
- 43) Sadiya Umar Faruk – Zamfara, Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development

For instance, women in Nigeria have recently experienced legal disadvantages. Without their husbands' consent, they were not permitted to inherit land or other assets, hold a job, or enter into a contract. Other times, inflexible social structures, like the Igbo Osu caste system, determine a person's place in society based on their birth and family history. Institutions more frequently support exclusion on an unofficial basis.

Laws in Nigeria are also written in a gendered and insensitive manner toward women. For example, the Electoral Act of 2010 (as Amended) and the 1999 Constitution (as Amended) both contain around 66 and 68 instances, respectively, of gender-insensitive language. These instances largely institutionalize various forms of discrimination.

Buhari's Presidency and People with Disabilities (PWD)

In Nigeria, People With Disability (PWD) are conspicuously underrepresented in politics and public offices. Despite the nation's anti-discrimination law supporting those with disabilities. Following nine years of tenacious advocacy by disability rights groups

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and activists, Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari signed the Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, 2018, into law on January 23. The legislation forbids discrimination based on a person's disability and punishes those who violate it with fines and jail time. A five-year transitional period is also specified for upgrading public buildings, structures, and vehicles so that they are accessible to and useable by people with disabilities.

A National Commission for Persons with Disabilities will also be created by the law, whose job it will be to make sure that people with disabilities have access to housing, healthcare, and education. Along with other responsibilities, the Commission will have the authority to receive complaints of rights abuses and assist victims in seeking legal remedies. Nigeria has obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the adoption of the Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act is merely the first step towards fulfilling those commitments (CRPD). For its full implementation to ensure the equal treatment and inclusion of individuals with disabilities throughout Nigeria, authorities need now put in place appropriate measures.

Similar to this, Section 42 of the Federal Republic of Nigeria's 1999 Constitution grants every person the right to be free from discrimination, and Section 12 of the Electoral Act 2010 (as modified) outlines the requirements for registering and casting a vote. Nigeria is legally required to establish standards for the full and equal participation of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in public life because it has ratified a number of pertinent international and regional agreements, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

In an effort to embrace these concepts and ideals, Nigeria's electoral administration agency, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), has made a number of changes to the voting procedure. Given that 25 million people in Nigeria are thought to live with disabilities, this is an issue of even more importance. 3,253,169 Nigerians, 1,708,751 males and 1,544,418 females, are disabled in some way, according to the Center for Citizens with Disabilities. These individuals experience difficulties with their vision, speech, hearing, movement, and brain, to name just a few.

Mr. Cosmos Okoli, a person with a disability (PWD) who unsuccessfully ran for office on the Labour Party platform, is the only significant politician with a handicap who has sought office. Additionally, Chief Otunba Ajomale, the former chairman of the APC in Lagos State, stated that, to his knowledge, only two PWDs had sought political office under the banner of the APC (then known as the Action Congress of Nigeria—ACN), and both candidates had advanced only as far as the election primaries. He was unable to confirm the overall number of people with disabilities who are now registered with His party or whether any PWDs wanted to run for office in the upcoming 2015 general elections on the APC platform. He nevertheless emphasized that his party ran on an equal opportunity platform for everyone and that it was cognizant of the difficulties PWDs experience.

PWD participation in Nigeria's 2015 election campaigns has improved, notably between the two major political parties, the All Progressives Congress (APC) and People's Democratic Party (PDP). PWDs do not currently have representation in the decision-making structures of the parties, in contrast to women and youth organizations, and they are not likely to run for elected or appointed posts inside the party or the government. Political party leaders frequently hold the idea that PWDs experience difficulties with mobility, financial resources, and conflicts of interest with other PWDs, which explains their unwillingness to incorporate PWDs in party operations.

The lack of cooperation among prominent PWD members as a result of mistrust on both sides brought on by the sheer number of PWD groups registered with parties and campaign organizations is another obstacle. Prior to the 2015 general elections, the APC had two disability support organizations within its organization, making it challenging for the party to work with each group independently. As a result, Senator Lawal Shuaibu, the APC's deputy national chair for the North, asked IRI to help merge the party's two PWD organizations into a one organization. PWD are currently solely incorporated into the APC's decision-making process.

Exclusion of Nigerian youths from politics

All of President Muhammadu Buhari's nominations for ministerial positions are by no means young people. The argument that the youth lack the experience to serve as federal cabinet members immediately obscured any discussion of the reasons for this obvious exclusion of the young. Unfortunately, this problem cannot simply be ignored. The Federal Republic of Nigeria's Constitution is the main cause of young people's absence from prominent political posts in that country. Nigeria's constitution sets a minimum age of 40 for president and 35 for senator. The constitutional age restriction in Nigeria is unworkable when compared to industrialized nations like France, where the age requirement to run for president is 18, or the United States, where a candidate must be 35 years old. The prime minister in India, the largest democracy in the world, cannot be older than 35.

Other significant obstacles to youth leadership include economic, institutional, and cultural impediments, in addition to high levels of corruption in almost every aspect of democratic institutions. Economic obstacles, in my opinion, are related to elements that restrict or lessen the inclination of Nigerian youth to engage in politics. Spending enormous quantities of money to sway support for one's political goal has become necessary since Nigeria's democracy is so heavily commercialized. The majority of young people in Nigeria find it extremely difficult to participate in democracy as candidates for a political party because of the country's difficult economic and living conditions and high unemployment rate.

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Additionally, youths are purposefully kept out of crucial responsibilities and leadership positions in the nation's democratic institutions. Despite the political parties in the country creating places for youth leaders, most of the time the people who hold these posts are older than the average youth. According to the UN, anyone between the ages of 17 and 35 are considered youths.

The national youth leaders of the nation's two largest political parties, the People's Democratic Party (PDP), Rt. Alhaji, and those of Hon. Ude Okoye and the All Progressives Congress. Ibrahim Dasuki, who is 41 and 48 years old, respectively, highlights a troubling trend of young people being excluded from the political institutions of the nation. We can't even persuade young people to fill party posts that are intended for them because youth participation in politics isn't embedded in our system. Prior to them, the PDP had elected Mallam Umar Garba Chiza, 60, as its National Youth Leader, while the All Progressives Congress named Ibrahim Jalo, 52, in that position.

One of Nigeria's premier youth organizations is the Youth Initiative for Advocacy Growth and Advancement (YIAGA). Together with the Youngstars Development Initiative (YDI), YIAGA has successfully advocated for lowering the age requirement for candidates for political office in Nigeria. The #NotTooYoungToRun campaign, which had modest beginnings, has developed into a widespread movement and produced fruitful outcomes. By removing one obstacle, the #NotTooYoungToRun bill aims to increase the representation of young people in political leadership. The bill wants to change the constitution to lower the eligibility age for the positions of president, governor, senator, house of representatives, and state house of assembly from 40 to 30, 35, and 25, respectively. The amendment was enacted and became law thanks to YIAGA's diligent work.

As a result of a national campaign organized by a group of young Nigerians calling for a reassessment of the age requirements for important electoral offices, President Muhammadu Buhari signed the Not Too Young To Run Bill into Law in 2018. The law produced some favorable outcomes, including the emergency appointments of Seun Fakorede, 27, as Commissioner in Oyo State, Adebo Adedoyin, 39, as Speaker of the House of Assembly of Oyo State, Mahdi Gusau, 35, as Deputy Governor of Zamfara State, and Nasiru Magarya, 31, as Speaker of the House of Assembly of the same State. In Kwara State, a female serving corps member, 26, was nominated

In Anambra, Governor Willie Obiano broke the curse by having the youngest crop of aides in office, which culminated with the appointment of Mr. Mark Okoye as Commissioner for Economic Planning, Budgets, and Development Partners in 2016, who was at the time the youngest person to hold the position in the Fourth Republic of Nigeria. In 2018, Bonaventure Enemali, 32, was then named as Commissioner. It is noteworthy that Mr. Uche Okafor, the current speaker of the Anambra State House of Assembly, was appointed to the position in June 2019 at the age of 39.

Some young people gained multiple elective positions in elections at various levels as a result of persistence and consistency, but given the proportion of young people in the population of the nation, those accomplishments were rather insignificant.

The All Progressives Congress (APC) youth wing only publicly expressed their opposition to the appointments last year. They surrounded the party's national secretariat in Abuja to express their outrage over the biased appointments. The teenagers asked that the president honor them by ensuring a fair distribution of federal appointments on the grounds that they had made an immeasurable contribution to the president and his party's electoral win. They requested that Buhari make at least 40% of all appointments. Sadiq Abubakar, the party's national youth head, claimed that they had expressed their complaints and demands to the president. "The executive has appointed the council, which consists of the ministers. As the party's youth wing, we haven't found much of our own representation there," added Abubakar. However, we have informed the authorities of our stance. I believe something will be useful to us. We anticipate appointing new parastatal and agency leaders (Ozekhome,2018)

It is imperative to apply the idea of federal character in nominations to Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), as stated in Section 14(3) of the 1999 Constitution. The main goal of the clause is to ensure justice, fairness, and equity among the federation's member states. According to the notion, in order to foster and retain inclusivity, the nation must preserve a delicate balance in the allocation of power and resources. "The composition of the federal government 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 protect national unity, as well as to command national loyalty, thereby ensuring that there shall not be any predominance of persons from a few states or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that government or any of its agencies," the provision states.

Many concerned people and organizations believe that President Buhari has regularly shown significant non-compliance with the federal character principle in all federal appointments, as they are frequently skewed in favor of the North. Even some of the observers said that a specific area and ethnic group in the North were favored in the bulk of the selections. Because the nominations varied from the Nigerian constitution's letter, in their opinion, the president failed to prioritize inclusivity.

The unbalanced, clannish, sectarian, nepotistic, and ethnocentric appointments made by President Buhari, as seen above, are a flagrant violation of this revered clause. Under Section 143 of the 1999 Constitution, it is unquestionably an impeachable offense for severe wrongdoing. There is a large body of case law on this topic of what constitutes "gross misconduct," which Ozekhome(2018) humbly contend, PMB's serial violation of Section 14(3) of the Constitution and the Federal Character Commission Act, No. 34 of 1996, constitutes. In fact, Section 143(11) defines "gross misconduct" as "a grave violation or breach of the provisions of this Constitution or a misconduct of such a nature as amounts in the opinion of the National Assembly to

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CONCLUSION

A number of conclusions can be reached from the sets of analyses used in this study. First, we repeatedly discover that the political exclusion of ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic groups increases the risk that a conflict between those groups will break out. This is in line with a lot of the literature on political exclusion and ethnic grievances. Second, the increased number of female candidates in the 2019 general elections reached a new record. However, greater political involvement did not result in greater power for women. In actuality, throughout the course of the last two election cycles, the electoral gains won in 2011 have been gradually lost. As has historically been the case in Nigeria, women lost in 2019 as a result of the country's failure to achieve the minimum one-third (30%) female participation required by a number of regional and international accords to which Nigeria is a signatory. This is frequently the case in the absence of systems that have been purposefully set up to lower entry fees and safeguards against the culture that views politics as a matter of life and death. Instead, an ever-growing number of structural, functional, and personal barriers hampered women's advancement in gaining access to political power yet again.

The fact that only seven women were chosen ministers in August 2019, or 17% of all appointments, was not surprising given this electoral experience. Third, regardless of their number, we discover the clearest correlation between young exclusion and the exclusion of individuals with disabilities from national politics. Furthermore, political parties are where significant choices are made, thus it is crucial for young people who want to take part in the democratic process to locate and join one. The high cost of nomination forms within political parties, the seeming independence of electoral agencies like INEC, the high expense of running political campaigns, intervention from the executive branch of government, and the use of young people as political thugs are still difficulties.

Last but not least, the decline of national identity, national integration, togetherness, and cohesiveness has been brought on by Buhari's administration and appointment since 2015. This paradox is related to the existence of powerful political elites or cabals that grant privileges to particular ethnic, religious, and societal elite groups based on primal tendencies. Following the 2015 elections, separatist agitation and associated political violence have risen.

Recommendations

In light of the aforementioned, some of our policy suggestions are:

We propose a robust political affirmative action that entails the introduction of formal or informal structures to guarantee that each group participates in political power and decision-making. This refers to mechanisms in a democratic system that make sure minorities participate in power and decision-making. For there to be full participation and empowerment, major decisions must be initiated and controlled at all relevant levels and across all branches of government. It suggests an empowering role for the military, police, and civil service in addition to the overtly political branches of government.

We examined attitudes toward female leadership and discovered that current tendencies toward greater representation for women do not always rest on solid or unchanging egalitarian principles. Instead, support for female leadership, particularly from men, is context-dependent, reversible, and influenced by cues from the elite. Affirmative action must be domesticated through legislation or executive order in order to address this. We request that our budgetary process be reviewed so that it is more responsive to the needs of women, young people, and people with disabilities. This should incorporate a democratic and inclusive budget allocation process that considers the needs of women, girls, and other underrepresented groups. Additionally, we call on lawmakers to ensure that all programs for their economic empowerment include skill development and capacity building to ensure that the funds that have been appropriated are used wisely.

Furthermore, only a small number of women, young people, and people with disabilities have the resources necessary to compete for executive positions due to the massive monetization of politics. The government must regulate political finance laws and electoral laws that touch on these issues in order to address this. It is important to address electoral violence against PWD and women. Building strong institutions that will outlive leaderships, be simple to operate, free from ethnic and religious bias is necessary if we are to maintain and expand our democracy and take Nigeria to new heights. Finally, you must exert effort in the direction of inclusive and participatory government in line with SDG 10.2 This will assist in bridging the gaps produced since 2015.

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Appendix 1

Table 1 below is a full list of appointments made by Buhari from the 36 states and FCT, as provided by the presidency and the one from *BusinessDay*.

S/N	Name	Portfolio	Region	Notes	Confirmed
1	Tukur Buratai	Chief of Army Staff	North East		Y
2	Babagana Monguno	National Security Adviser	North East		Y
3	Abubakar Lawal	Aide de Camp	North West		Y
4	Femi Adesina Special	Adviser Media and Publicity	South West		Y
5	Garba Shehu SSA.	Media and Publicity	North West	Wrongly identified as SA	Y
6	Sunday Dare	EC, NCC	South West	Not included with board members	Y
7	Lawal Kazaure	State Chief of Protocol	North West		Y
8	Ahmed Idris	Accountant General	North West		Y
9	Antony Ayine	Auditor General	South South		Y
10	Abayomi Olonishakin	Chief of Defence Staff	South West		Y
11	Ibok-Ete Ekwe Ibas	Chief of Naval Staff	South South		Y
12	Sadique Abubakar	Chief of Air Staff	North East		Y
13	Monday Morgan	Chief Defence Intel	North Central		Y
14	Lawal Daura	DG, State Security Services	North West		Y
15	Mahmood Yakubu	INEC Chairman	North East		Y
16	Hadiza Bala Usman	MD, NPA	North West		Y
17	Paul Boroh	SA, Niger Delta Amnesty	South South		Y
18	Dakuku Peterside	DG, NIMASA	South South		Y
19	Sen Olabiyi Durojaiye	Chairman NCC	South West		Y
20	Umaru Dambatta	Chief Executive, NCC	North West		Y
21	Babatunde Fowler	Chairman, FIRS	South West		Y
22	Maikanti Baru	GMD, NNPC	North East		Y
23	Boss Mustapha	SGF	North East		Y
24	Abba Kyari	Chief of Staff	North East		Y

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25	Ade Ipaye Deputy	Chief of Staff	South West	Not included with board members	Y
26	Hameed Ali	CG, Nigerian Customs	North West		Y
27	Mohammed Babandede	CG, Nigerian Immigration	North Central		Y
28	Ita Enang	SSA, National Assembly	South South		Y
29	Suleiman Kawu	SSA, National Assembly	North West		Y
30	Babafemi Ojodu	SA Political	South West	Not included with team members	Y
31	Adeyemi Dipeolu	SA Economy	South West	Not included with board members	Y
32	Ahmed Lawan Kuru	MD, AMCON	North East		Y
33	Mohammed Kari	Insurance Commission	North East		Y
34	Ibrahim Magu	Acting Chairman EFCC	North East		Y
35	Abike Dabiri	SSA, Diaspora	South West		Y
36	Abdullahi Muhammadu	CG, NSCDS	North Central		Y
37	Winifred Oyo-Ita	Head of Service	South South		Y
38	Aishah Ahmad	Deputy Gov. CBN	North Central		Y
39	Mary Ekpere	DG, NCWD	South South		Y
40	Funso Doherty	DG, PENCOS	South West		Y
41	Dikko AbdulRahman	Chairman, BOI	North East		Y
42	Olukayode Pitan	MD, BOI	South West	Not included with board members	Y
43	Mr Adebayo Somefun	MD, NSITF	South West		Y
44	Kemi Nelson	ED, NSITF	South West		Y
45	Lady Azinge, Azuka Obiageli Ag.	Registrar General, CAC	South East		Y
46	Ahmed Dangiwa	MD, Federal M.Bank	North West		Y
47	Melville Ebo	ED, Federal M.Bank	South East		Y
48	Dankane Abdullahi	ED, Federal M.Bank	North West		Y
49	Alex Okoh	DG, BPE	South South		Y
50	Ibrahim Goni	CG, National Park	North Central		Y
51	Nasiru Ladan	DG, NDE	North Central		Y
52	Saliu Alabi	DG, MINILS	North Central		Y
53	Jeffery Barminas	DG, RICT	North East		Y
54	Folarin Gbadebo Smith	DG, NISER	South West	Wrongly Identified as Haruna Yerima	Y
55	Mohammed Tukur	Secretary FCC	North East		Y
56	Shettima Abba	Chairman FCC	North East		Y
57	Tunde Irukera	ES, CPC	North Central	Wrongly identified as CPP	Y
58	Umar Gambo Jibrin	ES, FCDA	North East		Y
59	Roli Bode George	CEO, NDLEA	North East	Wrongly identified as Muhammad Abdullah	Y
60	Garba Abari	DG, NOA	North East		Y
61	Sule Kazaure	DG, NYSC	North West		Y
62	Jelani Aliyu`	DG, NADDC	North West		
63	Bayo Onanuga	MD, NAN	South West		
64	Ibrahim Idris	IGP	North Central		Y
65	Ghaji Bello	DG, NPC	North East		
66	Saleh Dunoma	MD FAAN	North East		Y
67	USA Sadiq Dir	Security, FAAN	North West		
68	Rabiu Yadudu Dir	Operations, FAAN	North West		Y
69	Salisu Daura Dir	Maintenance, FAAN	North West		

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70	Nike Aboderin Dir	Finance & Accounts FAAN	South West	Not included with board members	Y
71	Norris Anozie Dir	HR FAAN	South East	Not included with board members	Y
72	Clifford Omozeghian	Company Secretary, Legal Adviser FAAN	South South	Not included with board members	Y
73	Rahimatu Aminu Aliyu	ED, Federal Mortgage Bank	North West		
74	Melville Ebo	ED, Federal Mortgage Bank	South East	Not included with board members	Y
75	Julie Okah-Donli	DG, NAP TIP	South South		Y
76	Bello Rabi	COO NNPC	North West	Not included with board members	Y
77	Henry Ikem Obih	DG, COO NNPC	South East		Y
78	Bello Gusau	ES PTDF	North Central		Y
79	Isiaka Abdulrazak	CFO NNPC	North Central		Y
80	Isa Inuwa	COO NNPC	North West		Y
81	Saidu Muhammad	COO NNPC	North West		Y
82	Babatunde Adeniran	COO NNPC	South West		Y
83	Anibor Kragha	COO NNPC	South South	Not included with board members	Y
84	Chidi Momah	Secretary NNPC	South East		Y
85	Modecai Baba	Ladan Dir DPR	North Central	uplicated	Y
86	Eberechukwu Uneze	ED, AMCON	South East		Y
87	Aminu Ismail	ED, AMCON	North West		Y
88	Kola Ayeye	ED, AMCON	South West	Not included with board members	Y
89	Ishaq Oloyode	Registrar, JAMB	South West		Y
90	Chidi Izuwah	DG, ICRC	South East		Y
91	Bolaji Owasanoye	ICPC	South West		Y
92	Lenrie Aina	National Librarian	South West		Y
93	Charles Uwakwe	NECO	South East		Y
94	Umaru Maza Maza	Chair, REA	North West		Y
95	Damilola Ogunbiyi	MD REA	South West		Y
96	Sanusi Ohiare	ED, REA	North Central		Y
97	Yewande Odia	ED, REA	South West	Not included with board members	Y
98	Fola Akinkuotu	MD, NAMA	South West		Y
99	Sani Abubakar Mashi	DG, NiMet	North West		Y
100	Abdusalam Mohammed	Rector, NCAT	North Central		Y
101	Akinola Olateru	Commissioner, AIB	South West		Y
102	Abubakar Rasheed	ES, NUC	North West		Y
103	Abdulkadir Umar	ES, PPPRA	North West		Y
104	Elias Nwalem	RMAFC	South East		Y
105	Marilyn Amobi	NBET	South East		Y
106	Faisal Shuaib	ES, NPHCDA	North Central		Y
107	Umaru Ibrahim	NDIC	North West	Reconfirmed by Buhari Admin	Y
108	Uja Tor Uja	NCPC	North Central		Y
109	Isa Pantami	DG, NITDA	North East		Y
110	Patience Oniha	DG, DMO	South South		Y
111	Nnenna Akajemeli	CEO, SERVICOM	South East		Y
112	Folasade Joseph	MD, NAIC	North Central		Y
113	Cecilia Gaya	DG, ASCON	North East		Y

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114	Luci Ajayi	ES, LITFMB	South South		Y
115	Lanre Gbajabamila	NLRC	South West		
116	Usman Abubakar	NRC	North West		Y
117	Chiedu Ugbo	NDPHC	South South	Not included	Y
118	Osita Okechukwu	DG, VON	South East	Not included	Y
119	Eze Duru Ihioma	Chair, NPC	South East		Y
120	Bisi Adegbuyi Postmaster	General, NIPOST	South West	Not included	Y
121	Yewande Sadiku	DG, NIPC	South West	Not included	Y
122	Princess Gloria Akobundu	CEO, NEPAD	South South	Not included	Y
123	Olagunsoye Oyinlola	Chairman, NIMC	South West	Not included	Y
124	Umana Okon Umana	Oil & Gas Free Zone	South South	Not included	Y
125	Sharon Ikeazor	DG, PTAD	South East	Not included	Y
126	Ben Akabueze	DG, Budget Office	South East	Wrongly identified as Aliyu Gusau	Y
127	Yemi Kale	DG,NBS	South West	Reconfirmed by Buhari Admin	Y
128	Folorunsho Coker	DG,NTDC	South West	Not included	Y
129	Waziri Adio	ES, NEITI	South West	Not included	Y
130	Alh Adebayo Thomas	DG Film and Censor's Board	South West	Not included	Y
131	Maryam Uwais	SA Social Investment	North Central	Not included with board members	Y
132	Jumoke Oduwole	SSA Trade and Investment	South West	Not included with board members	Y
133	Emeka Nwapa	CHAIRMAN, CPC	South East	Not included with board members	Y
134	Ife Oyedele	ED, NDPHC	South West	Not included	Y
135	Alhaji Ali Usman	Chairman, PENCOM	North West	Not included	Y
136	Manase Benga	EC, PENCOM	North Central	Not included	Y
137	Zaki Magawata	EC, PENCOM	North East	Not included	Y
138	Ben Oviosun	EC, PENCOM	South South	Not included	Y
139	Nyerere Ayim	EC, PENCOM	South East	Not included	Y
140	Sanusi Garba	NERC COMMISSIONER	North West	Not included	Y
141	Dafe C. Akpeneye	NERC COMMISSIONER	South South	Not included	Y
142	Musiliu Olalekan Oseni,	NERC COMMISSIONER	South West	Not included	Y
143	Professor Frank N. Okafor	NERC COMMISSIONER	South East	Not included	Y
144	Ituah Ighodalo National	Council of Privatisation	South South	Not included	Y
145	O. Olaoye National	Council of Privatisation	South West	Not included	Y
146	Yinka Amosun	FRCN (Lagos)	South West	Not included	Y
147	Femi Odumosu Ogun	Osun RBDA	South West	Not included	
148	Jide Zeitlin	Chair, NSIA	South West	Not included	
149	Uche Orji	CEO/MD, NSIA	South East	Not included	
150	Stella Ojekwe-Onyejeli	ED, NSIA	South East	Not included	
151	Urum Kalu Eke	NSIA	South East	Not included	
152	Nathan Rogers Shatti	NERC COMMISSIONER	North East	Not included	
153	Dr Moses Arigu	NERC COMMISSIONER	North Central	Not included	
154	Lois Laraba	Machunga-Disu NSIA	North Central	Not included	
155	Asue Ighodalo	NSIA	South South	Not included	
156	Halima Buba	NSIA	North East	Not included	
157	Bello Machido	NSIA	North WeSt	Not included	



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