PAJRI
PAN-AFRICAN JOURNAL OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Pan-African Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Sciences and Behavioural

ISSN: 3413-9431 | Vol. 1, Issue 1 | www.pajri.com | DOI: https://doi.org/10.0000/0000

# A Discourse on the National Question and Democratic Development in Nigeria.

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| Received: 2026-09-05 | Accepted: 2026-09-12 | Published: 2026-09-15 |
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## ABSTRACT

*A country can only be referred to as a sovereign nation when there is a legitimate system of administration in place that enjoys the backing and support of all its citizens. A heterogeneous society like Nigeria has its attendant challenges arising from the diverse existing ethnic formations, which are characterized with different cultures and ideologies. It is the desire of every member of a community to be recognized, and provided with the enabling environment to carry out his/her legitimate business activities without fear, intimidation or the perceived notion of being treated as less deserving. The issues of equality, equity, freedom of movement and association are such that need not be debated nor clamoured for, as all men are created equal, and no religion, creed, tongue or tribe should be regarded as superior and the other inferior. The case for resource control, political participation and representation has further exacerbated the quest for national unity. This discourse is aimed at examining the challenges associated with the national question and democratic development in Nigeria. The study relied on the secondary sources for collection of data. The structural functional theory was employed in the research study. Findings from the study indicated the presence of division arising largely as a result of unequal distribution of state resources, and the agitation by minorities for state creation, and equal representation. The findings from the study recommended the need for inclusive government, intercultural dialogue, and peaceful conflict resolution.*

*KEYWORDS:* *National Question, Secession, Civil War, Democracy, Development, Sustainability.*

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## 1. Introduction

After Nigeria gained independence in 1960 from the British Colony, the country faced immediate challenges in addressing the needs and aspirations of its diverse and increasing population. Power struggles among the different major ethnic groups, such as the Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa-Fulani, intensified, leading to political instability, and eventually culminating in a civil war that lasted about 30 months, from 1967 to 1970. The civil war, also referred to as the Nigeria-Biafra war, was primarily driven by ethnic and political tensions between the Igbo people in the southeast and the rest of the country. This conflict highlighted the deep-seated divisions within Nigeria and the challenges associated with nation building (Falola & Heaton, 2008; Doron, 2022)

With the end of the Nigerian civil war in 1970, the country had experienced numerous struggles related to the national question, including but not limited to the issues of power-sharing, resource control, and ethno-religious conflicts. The country has experienced several military coups, with the first on 15 January, 1966, and subsequent military rule, which further complicated attempts to address the national question.

Efforts to address the national question have included the promulgation of various constitutions and the

adoption of a Federal system of government. However, these measures have not fully addressed the underlying issues and grievances of different ethnic groups, leading to continued tensions and demands for greater autonomy or secession. The adoption of the federal system of Government in Nigeria was a significant institutional response to the national question, as it sought to accommodate the country's ethnic, cultural and regional differences by ensuring the equitable distribution of political authority amongst the central and federating units (Ihonvbere, 1999)

The federal arrangements were meant to create inclusivity and reduce fears of political domination while providing diverse groups with opportunities for representation and a degree of self-government (Elaigwu, 2005).

The activities of Militants in the Niger Delta, the Boko Haram insurgency in the northeast and the movement of the actualisation of the sovereign state of Biafra in the southeast, the Oodua People's Congress (OPC) in the South west are examples of how the national question continues to be a matter of serious concern in the country. These conflicts have their roots in historical antecedence characterized with grievances, supposed marginalization, and a perception of unequal treatment amongst certain ethnic and regional groups in Nigeria. Their activities reflects varying forms of dissatisfaction with the Nigerian state and its management of political, economic, ethnic and religious affairs, over environmental degradation, underdevelopment and resource control, particularly the perceived inequality in the distribution of petroleum resources benefits. (Tantua et al.., 2018)

Boko Haram, on the other hand, represents a more complex combination of religious ideology, socio-economic deprivation, poor governance and political grievances, particularly in parts of northern Nigeria. Aghedo and Osumah (2014) argue that the Niger Delta and Boko Haram insurgencies, despite their differences in ideological orientations are connected to weaknesses in governance and the unresolved dimensions of Nigeria's national question.

The Oodua People's Congress (OPC) emerged in the context of Yoruba political mobilisation following the annulment of the June 12 1993 Presidential election, with the organisation presenting itself as a defender of Yoruba political interest and perceived marginalization. (Egobueze et al.., 2021)

Advertently, there have been calls from various civil society and advocacy groups for the restructuring of Nigeria's political and economic system, with the intention of addressing the national question. Advocates argue that decentralization, equitable resource distribution, and inclusive governance are necessary to foster national unity and achieve development in Nigeria.

The purported creation of the Nigerian state without due consultations or consent of the affected community by the British imperial colonial authority has monumental effects on the socioeconomic and political destiny of the over 374 ethnic groups (Otite, 1990) and macro-nationalist that were forced together to produce the conglomerate political architecture called Nigeria. With the distortion and erosion of the different existing traditional order, the justification of the rationale for political power within these social formations created a new and strange system of political authority, which was instituted based on the rationality of the superior super-power of the British. While the colonial authority through its officials controlled the new state at the macro-level of urban life, following the dictates of indirect rule system, colonial hegemony was instituted at the micro-level of traditional/rural existence through the manipulation and castration of traditional authorities in obedience to imperialist formations. This did not only produced two publics (Ekeh, 1975) but also produced a decentralized despotism under which different logic informs the existence and claims of citizens and subjects (Mamdani, 1996).

Furthermore, the colonial divide and rule system coupled with the disarticulation of the already functional and robust Nigerian traditional society and economy, which engendered uneven development amongst different peoples, and dependent development of the entire country, did not only compound the crisis of the modern state in Nigeria, but equally exacerbated the sense of division amongst the Nigerian people, and made the possibilities of creating a Pan-Nigerian identity complicated. It was the scenario that makes the national question a major political issue in the nation even before independence.

However, the national question in Nigeria has its origin in the colonial era and continues to be a significant challenge that has bedevilled the country to this very day. Historical grievances, unequal development, and power struggles among ethnic and regional groups have contributed to ongoing conflicts and demands for greater autonomy or secession. Addressing the national question requires a comprehensive and inclusive approach that recognises the diverse needs and aspirations of the Nigerian population.

## 2. Methodology

The study employed both descriptive and narrative historical research methods. The choice of the research design was informed by the nature of the study, which tends to examine the historical evidence and

arguments centred on institutional development, by examining the various perspectives of scholars in the areas of ethnicity, regionalism, political exclusion, federalism and resource control, and their implication for the sustenance of democracy. Sources of the secondary data included Textbooks, peer-reviewed journals, publications and online sources, which were used for the analysis. The secondary sources were selected based on their relevance and credibility to the research study. Particular focus was centred on existing works of scholars who attempted to address pertinent issues surrounding the national question, federalism, religious/ethnic diversity, and political participation. The historical dimensions were considered because they provided important explanations regarding the origin and how the national question affects Nigeria's democratic development. The data were analysed using the qualitative content and thematic analysis. The justification of the use of such techniques was to ensure data validity, by comparing different arguments from various authors and sources on areas or agreements and contradictions, and establish how the different views and dimensions of the national question affect democratic practice in Nigeria. The interpretation of the secondary materials was carried out in a contextual manner, by critically examining the different sources of information obtained as it relates to Nigeria's political, social and historical formations. The secondary data were used to establish the connections between the identified themes and democratic outcomes as it relates to political participation and representation, national integration, legitimacy, accountability and democratic sustainability. Arguments surrounding ethnicity and religious affiliations were considered on how they influence political participation and appointment, national cohesion and voting behaviour. The conclusion were basically drawn from multiple credible sources to determine the reliability and scholarly contributions to knowledge.

Similarly, in view of the method of data collection, it became unnecessary to obtain consent on ethics approval as only published secondary materials were used in the research study.

**Theoretical Framework**

The study adopted the Structural-Functional theory, which is also referred to as functionalism, which sees society as a structure with interrelated parts designed to meet the biological and social needs of the individuals in that society. Functionalism grew out of the writings of English philosopher and biologist, Herbert Spencer (1820 – 1903), who saw similarities between society and the human body. He argued that just as the various organs of the body work together to keep the body functioning, the various parts of society work together to keep society functioning (Spencer 1898). The parts of society that Spencer referred to were the social institutions, or patterns of beliefs and behaviours focused on meeting social needs, such as government, education, family, healthcare, religion, and the economy.

Emile Durkheim, another early sociologist, applied Spencer's theory to explain how societies change and survive over time. Durkheim believed that society is a complex system of interrelated and interdependent parts that work together to maintain stability (Durkheim 1893), and that society is held together by shared values, languages, and symbols. Durkheim believed that individuals may make up society, but in order to study society, sociologist have to look beyond individuals to social facts. Social facts are the laws, morals, values, religious beliefs, customs, fashions, rituals, and all of the cultural rules that govern social life (Durkheim 1895). Each of these social facts serves one or more functions within a society. For example, one function of a society's laws may be to protect society from violence, while another is to punish criminal behaviour, while another is to preserve public safety.

**Criticism.**

One criticism of the structural-functional theory is that it can't adequately explain social change. Also problematic is the somewhat circular nature of this theory; repetitive behaviour patterns are assumed to have a function, yet we profess to know that they have a function only because they are repeated. Furthermore, dysfunctions may continue, even though they don't serve a function, which seemingly contradicts the basic premise of the theory. Many sociologist now believe that functionalism is no longer useful as a macro-level theory, but that does serve a useful purpose in some mid-level analyses.

**Theoretical Framing on the National Question and Democratic Development in Nigeria**

Despite the call for unity and the various agitation from different quarters for secessions, the Nigeria can only thrive if it comes together and keep religious or ethnic sentiments aside. The structural functional theory explains the need for various state and regions to harmonize its resourcefulness by actively contributing to the growth of the entire nation, regardless of their ethnic or religious affiliations. Increased productivity can only be experienced when there is a collective effort, and political participation in the operational capacity of the various units of any society. The emphasis on the need for unity in diversity can only be manifested in

the aspect of inclusiveness, which is informed by the interrelatedness and interdependence of the different parts and regions of the country. No part is or should be considered more important than the other, as all parts work for and in union with other parts for the general good. When state and regions work to keep themselves functioning, the various regions must equally work together to make the country functioning, which invariably translates to national development. And this can only be achieved when all the six (6) geo-political zones acknowledge their differences and importance to the nation's growth, and deliberately cooperate with other regions of the country in nation building and democratic development.

**Empirical Review**

Etim, Urama, Mohammed and Asa (2023) investigated the nexus between democratic governance and sustainable development in Nigeria using quantitative indicators of governance and development. Findings from their study indicated that weak democratic institutions, corruption, and poor governance are the negative factors that have effected socioeconomic development and citizens' confidence in democracy. Based on their findings, the study recommended institutional reforms, accountability and inclusive governance as a means of strengthening democratic sustainability.

The scholar's argument took account of the factors of corruption and bad governance as the major challenges affecting socioeconomic development and democratic sustainability, they however, did not address the issue of national question and the clamour for equity and equal representation in democratic activities in Nigeria.

Brigevich and Oritsejafor (2022) examined the relationship between ethnic identity, national identity, and the citizens' satisfaction with democracy in Nigeria with the use of survey data as their methodology. Their findings revealed that, although ethnic identity remains politically relevant, stronger national identity is associated with higher levels of democratic satisfaction. The study concluded that strengthening national identity and inclusive governance can reduce ethnic polarization and promote democratic sustainability.

The observations made by the scholar's in their study on the need to strengthen national identity is a key and vital issue that must be encouraged by policy makers. As when national identity is considered above ethnic or religious dimensions, it will create a more united and mutually beneficial society, which will consolidate for democratic sustainability.

**3. Discussion**

**Historical background on the National Question**

The issue of the minorities' problems in Nigeria is one that has its roots from the formation of the Nigerian State. State creation emerged partly as a response to the fear of domination by Nigeria's three major ethnic groups and the demand of minority communities for greater political autonomy. Oworibo (2001) notes that the 1967 state-creation exercise created 12 states from the former regions, while subsequent exercises increased the number to 19 in 1976, 21 in 1987, 20 in 1991 and 36 in 1996. The early desires were particularly associated with the aspirations of minorities to escape the domination by larger ethnic groups.

At some point, it wasn't really clear as to what constitute the criteria's for states creation. As Momoh (2005) raised some questions and concerns thus,

"Can it be said to be dispersing the centres of development and bringing government closer to the people. Giving other supposedly minority group some sense of belongings? Yet several of the states are now of doubtful viability. When, for example, will Jigawa become viable and Dutse play the role of a centre of development? Is Nigeria trying to resolve the fears of minorities?

However, each time a new state is created, new animosities are equally created, such that people from Osun State are no longer welcome in Ibadan, or people from Akwa Ibom are seen as foreigners and not a product of Cross River Calabar, and even school children must be pushed out of school to follow their parents involuntarily. Such concerns begs for answers as whether Nigeria can ever solve the problem of minorities by the creation of new states, considering that even with the creation of new state, the newly created state will equally have its minorities.

The Ijebu of Ogun State, want a state of their own, the Idoma's in Benue want their own state, the Eastern part are clamouring for additional states to equal the remaining geopolitical zones, citing an imbalance and unequal representation. And more recently is the clamour by the Ogoja people of the Northern Cross River

for the creation of Akwa Abasi State Republic. The moment they all achieve their concerns, another set of minorities will certainly emerge, and the cry for marginalization will be on the national discourse again.

The main effect of having so many states is that the states are now no longer centres of development, and so do not bring anything tangible nearer to the people, other than to act as channels for receiving Federal allocations without investing in local capacity building, and generating internal revenue for its sustenance. Most of the states are more or less liability to the centre as they hardly produce, generate or have the capacity to sustain themselves without allocation from the Federal Government. The ripple effect therefore is that the Federal Government tends to have more power than the States, which makes effective governance unrealistic. In fact there seems to be a clear policy of reducing the power of the states and promoting centralism. This is found not only in the formula for revenue allocation, but also in the creation of Local Governments as a third tier of government, funded directly from the Federal Government.

There are now 774 local governments, and even though they have been granted autonomy in theory, it has not been implemented in practice, and many of them are financial liabilities, considering the huge presence of government officials and salary bills without any viable source of generating income to manage their capital and recurrent expenditures.
Consequently, state creation can be viewed as an attempt to accommodate Nigeria's pluralistic character and promote national integration. However, its effectiveness remains debateable, as the creation of more states has clearly not eliminated the demands for additional states, resource control and equitable representation. The 1999 Constitution has taken cognizance of the growing concerns, hence its projection for federal character in Nigeria to promote national unity, while encouraging the state governments to recognise the diversity and foster a sense of belonging among citizens (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, Section 14(3)-(4))

**The Political background on the National Question**
The National Question constitute different perceptions and opinions in national discussions, and it is more or less a code name for all the controversies, doubts and misgivings that surround the search for stability, legitimacy and development in Nigeria. Essentially, the National Question is associated with the fundamental aspect of the country's political and democratic existence, with the Constitution as the key and basic instrument, which governs the co-existence of Nigerians as individuals and cultural groups within its political dispensation.

The National question is concerned with the management and sharing of power and resources in terms of access, control and distribution. It therefore involves not only such issues as revenue allocation and the creation of states, local government and development areas, but also on issues of education, religion, defence, language and cultural policies.

Basically, the Constitution is supposed to reflect the consensus agreement and concerns of these fundamental issues, comprising of power sharing and management of human and natural resources. The government that emerges from such consensus are meant to reflect the common interests of the people, and by so doing enjoy their legitimacy, providing them with the needed stability, and mobilization of their resources for growth and development to thrive. Unfortunately, that has not been the case, and it is against this backdrop that the issue of National Question and democratic sustainability tends to dominate this discussions.

The speed and frequency with which the legislatures amend or rewrite the Nigerian constitution is partly evidence of a lack of consensus, which is partly a major cause of the political instability witnessed. Constitutional changes in Nigeria have constitutes important attempts to address the national question by restructuring the distribution of political authority and regional diversity. Since independence, the constitutions have experienced four new Constitutions (1963, 1979, 1989 and 1999), which reflects the continuing efforts to balance national unity with regional autonomy, minority protection and equitable political participation. There have been records of five suspensions or modifications each time there is a change of government due to a coup d'état (January 1966, July 1966, July 1975, January 1984, August 1985), and five other modifications due to the creation of states and or local government areas which affect the balance of intergroup relationships (1963, 1967, 1976, 1989. 1991). This is in addition to other modifications from time

to time during the latter stages of the transition programme. Nevertheless, the persistence demands for restructuring and true federalism suggests that constitutional engineering has managed but not completely resolved the national question (Okpanachi & Garba 2010).

Such instability promotes controversies, creates tensions, doubts and anxieties, which are summed up within the expression of the National Question. National because of the underlying assumption that though Nigeria may not be a nation yet, her goal is to become a nation state. Thus, the Nigerian movement towards the securing of independence from the British is described as a nationalist struggle, within the ideology of nationalism. At independence, Nigeria was accepted as a member of the United Nations. And her main task since independence was anchored on nation-building, with the solemn objective of wielding the different ethnic and cultural groups in Nigeria into a nation state.

The National Question therefore is the fundamental debate on how to organize and harmonize the relations between the different ethnic and cultural groups in Nigeria, in order that they would have the same rights and privileges, the same access to power, and equitable share of her national resources. The continuous debate as to whether Nigeria is on the right course towards attaining the goal of nationhood, or perhaps basting in the euphoria of the idea of nationhood has continued to shape the political phase of the country. Similarly, the debate on whether the Nigerian constitutions facilitate or inhibit her journey to nationhood still experience the frequent call for constitutional amendments. As to whether Nigeria should seek redress, and design other political arrangements that will facilitate her quest for legitimacy and development, leaves much to be debated and hoped for.

**The National Question and the Implication for Democratic Development in Nigeria.**

The issues surrounding the national question has generated a negative affront to the advancement of democracy in Nigeria. Nevertheless, certain positive projections have been examined which if appropriately considered, and properly implemented might help reinforce the issues of legitimate authority in Nigeria's democratic sustainability.

First to be considered is that, the Nigerian populace should regard politics as the core and central point of fostering supreme sovereignty. In the sense that matters of personal concerns as regards the welfare and wellbeing of the people should be of paramount importance, and the basis for any political discourse. All encumbrances and challenges limiting the people's political effectiveness must be addressed headlong. Cases of mass poverty, illiteracy, disease, and underdevelopment must be given the needed attention, and holistically mitigated. The issue of democracy can only thrive when the people are politically, economically and socially empowered. Suffice to mention that the most cherished and absolute wealth of any nation lies in her human capital development index and not on natural resources.

Furthermore, the state should be given more responsibilities, starting from the issue of security and the defence of its territorial integrity. State police must be considered, and states allowed to manage their security forces as the situation demands. The State is the leading frontiers of national development. The national can only make projections based on its micro policies, but it is at the state and local level that the macro indices will be tested and the dividends of democracy enjoyed. The western world despite capitalism gave the state an important role in the process of their development. The situation presently in Nigeria is similar to those that necessitated the Marshall Plan in Europe after the World War II, and this was championed by the state. The dependent and neo-colonial nature and orientation of the Nigerian state cannot promote development, neither can it endanger democracy and popular choice. There is therefore the urgent need to democratize the state and its institutions. This is a call for the negation of market democracy, which is a democracy of disempowerment and popular impoverishment.

The large concentration of powers in the centre is a contributing factor to the legitimacy problem in Nigeria. The over-centralization and monopolization of power at the centre and by certain sections of the nation is conterminous with authoritarianism, injustice, and fuels the crisis of legitimacy. More responsibilities and power sharing should be devolve to the lower levels of government. Functions that appear closer to the people should be given to the level of government that is closest to the people. People should be given power to determine the direction they see best for their state to follow. Centralization of power promotes corruption, lack of transparency, irresponsibility and irresponsive governance.

Consequently, constitutionalism and the rule of law must be fully implemented. Equity and justice should be at the front burner. As this factors are necessary to foster the relationships between the different nationalities in the Nigerian state. The different nationalities should be allowed and given some sense of control in managing their natural resources subject to their making, while certain agreed contributions are to be

remitted to the common purse of the nation. The practice of discriminative citizenship, nepotism, etc. must be discouraged.

As Lipson (1976, p.284) rightly observes, all individuals and groups in society must be treated according to a common standard of justice, with their substantive rights respected and enforced.

According to Carl J. Friedrich (1970), every community should be a community of law and order, organic and purposive, and existential and voluntary. As he further asserted, “a community does not come into existence merely by existing, nor does it come into existence merely by being willed. Here, too, the two distinct elements have come together and interact in order that a community may emerge”. These requirement are presently lacking in the case of Nigeria, and until it becomes embedded in the consciousness of the leaders and those in constituted authority, crisis and uprising will continue to manifest. Consequently, deliberate pragmatics actions must be taken to address the fears and suspicion amongst Nigerians. A sense of common nationality and citizenship must be consciously promoted through government actions, policies and pronouncements. Issues bordering on appointments, recruitments and promotions must be equitably distributed. Every Nigerian must be made to feel at home, without prejudice, bigotry, selective justice and preferential treatment regardless of one’s ethnic or cultural lineages nor affiliations. A sincerity of purpose must be seen to be manifesting in promoting the culture of one nation, a people united with one identity, “all for one and one for all” mantra must be consciously articulated, and developed in the minds and actions of the Nigerian leaders and its people. This calls for a radical formation of political-statesmanship, particularly on the part of the political gladiators.

It is paramount to note that the issue of corruption and abuse of office must be giving a more deserving attention than the selective judgement that is presently obtainable. The cost-benefit of corruption should be negatively weighed against corrupt practices. Stiff and decisive actions must be matched with severe sentencing of corrupt leaders, without fear or favour.

Nigerians have been living in complete hopelessness, and have lost confidence on the ability of the government to deliver on its mandate, hence the issue of legitimacy and democracy continues to be losing moral grounds. Such tends to foster a lack of a common vision, and patriotism can only be envisioned but not realized. Nigeria and Nigerian’s must have a shred believe that will strengthen mutual co-existence, and these can only be achieved when fairness, justice and brotherhood is embedded in the minds and actions of every citizen. As Friedrich (1970) argued, “a political community, must, like an individual human being, need a certain amount of hope in order to exist. Hope in the political community embodies itself in a utopian conception as to what the community should be like”.

## 4. Conclusion

Attempts have been made by revealing certain historical antecedents, as it relates to the Nigerian African state, and the global foundations culminated to the evolution of Nigeria as a nation-state, having a federal structure, and within the context of the Pan-African ideology. It is never a done deal when it comes to nationalism, and perhaps no nation-states can be said to be without underlying, and always evolving challenges. It can be seen as soil that must be watered, tendered and trimmed, and nurtured properly to provide good vegetation and fertile ground for production, which without will make room for weeds in the form of greed, and injustice that will hinder its proper growth and nourishment. Despite the experience Nigeria had garnered in the events of the Civil War, it is yet to provide and arrive at sustainable and consistent policies that can harmonize, and foster its national integration. It goes without saying that Nigeria needs to survive, and Nigeria must survive. There are conspiracy theorist that harbour the notion that as long as Nigeria manifest a federal structure, there will always be the problem of nationalities. Stressing that Nigeria is too wide, and its people are difficult to govern, and that they would be better off if every region is left on their own, independent of the federal structure. In as much as the implementation appears easy, getting it done possess a bigger challenge.

The need and importance for unity and collective action cannot be overemphasized, as likened to the popular historical maxim associated with John Dickson’s 1768 ‘The Liberty Song’, “United we stand, divided we fall”.

The Nigerian position particularly its foreign policy must be well structured and consciously implemented. Especially its role in Africa, and the African diaspora. Nigerian nationalism is meaningful only within the Pan-African context. The Nigerian state must as a matter of necessity seek stability and legitimacy in the pursuit of its social, cultural and economic development. In this modern day and times, when the world is largely determined by the European Common Market, and their progress towards strengthening the European Community, Nigeria as the most popular, and largest black nation in the world does not need the creation of more states to thrive and be stronger, but the restructuring, and strengthening of the existing states towards

creating a more formidable and united Nigeria. Focus should be seen in the hope that when Nigeria succeed as a Federation, it will serve as a model, and a catalyst for the restructuring and harmonization of the entire Africa states.

**Recommendations**

Finding a lasting solution to the issues associated with the national question is a continuous process, and a search that must be reviewed over, again and again. However, based on the findings of the study, the following remedial measures were proposed;

i. **Government of inclusivity must be encouraged:** the system of the nature of politics practice in Nigeria, where winner takes it all must be discouraged. When it comes to issue of governance, no one knows it all, everyone, winner or loser has something to offer, and must be allowed to contribute their quota towards national growth and development. The decision-making process must involve diverse opinions from different regions, ethnicities, and religions. Hence, the need to encourage national convention and town hall meetings in order to address issues of national concern. And this can be made possible through policy formulations that will promote equal representation and promote collaborative participation by all citizens.

ii. **Intercultural integration must be strengthened.** The National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) is one of the good policy of the Government that is geared towards fostering social and cultural integration, even though it is gradually losing its relevance due to poor implementation and the challenges associated with insecurity. Institutional and educational programs that directs more emphasis on impacting knowledge based on the rich and diverse cultural heritage and traditions of the country must be instituted and embedded in the syllabus of educational institutions. This move when initiated will encourage, and create mutual respect and recognition of the numerous greatness and differences that binds Nigeria together.

iii. **Dialogue and peaceful disputes resolution must be encouraged**: a platforms that takes cognizance of the diverse nature of the Nigerian state must be created, and all concerns and opinions of aggrieved communities must be well considered. Open dialogue between various groups must be promoted as this could build trust which is key in settling any impending grievances among Nigerians.

iv. **Political will:** Nigeria has some of the most effective and remarkable policies that any nations requires to be strong, united, and successful, but the issues has always been around its implementation. Issues of combating corruption is very central in promoting good governance and ensuring democratic sustainability. The Nigerian state is in dire need of a leadership with example, and a proactive and incorruptible Judiciary, that will be ready to name and shame any political figure accused and indicted of corrupt related activities. The issue of corruption must be tackled at all levels of government, as this action is what can guarantee and translate all the aforementioned recommendations into democratic development and sustainability.

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