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By Makmis Mark Dakyen & Edmond P. Zungdet
Plateau State Polytechnic, Barkin Ladi, Nigeria

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Ethnicity, Religious Conflicts, the Citizenship Question and Nigeria's National Transformation

Makmis Mark Dakyen [α] & Edmond P. Zungdet [σ]

Abstract- Ethnicity, religious conflicts and the citizenship question are intense in Nigeria and have not only produced identity formations by individuals and groups contesting for scarce economic and political resources but demands for rights and justice or perceived injustices. Invariably, such contestations produce recurring unresolved conflicts. In this theoretical examination of the issues, the study has found out that the failure of government and constructed historical factors have failed to address these issues which continuously impede the attainment of core national objectives and policies as the national transformation programme and overall development of the country. However, with concerted policies that will create and enhance national unity and integration, including institutional reforms, strengthening and good governance, the challenges of ethnicity, religious conflicts and citizenship would be overcome for a more prosperous Nigeria.

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I. Introduction

The general formal conception of citizenship denotes judicial and political claims of membership to a State. Thus citizenship accounts of the state system globally reveal the highlighting of a sense of belonging and attachment to the state, where on the one hand, rights and other entitlements are assured members and on the hand, an expectant reciprocity in the exercise of members' duties and obligations. However, the extents to which the legal and normative boundaries of State membership are constructed and contested in Nigeria, like many African Countries, reflect a complexity and dichotomy that exacerbates conflict over diverse range of issues.

Increasingly, the wave of conflicts in Nigeria can be explained within the dimensions of ethnicity and religious intolerance, particularly with the spade of insecurity gripping the nation due to the Boko Haram terrorist insurgences, sustained attacks on innocent communities on the Plateau, the Tiv-Jukun conflict e.t.c. The common discernible denominator in virtually all these have been an ethno-nationalistic feeling that forecloses inclusive and legal connotations of citizenship as is the challenge related to religious fundamentalism especially in Northern Nigeria.

The paper examines a set of links among ethnicity, religious conflicts and the conflict of interpreting the nature and construction of citizenship in Nigeria, highlighting the importance of these links for critical and further study. Using a qualitative and descriptive theoretical approach to analyzing the issues under examination, the paper investigates the root causes of the tripartite concepts within a historical and political evolution of the Nigerian state. Drawing from sufficient literature and analysis of prevailing events and sourced data on the issues, the argument is posited in the paper that Nigerian's pre-and post-independence periods are evidently marked with the challenges of ethnicity and religious conflicts which generate the mobilization of citizens on primordial and normative basis in sharp contradiction with the legal and constitutional expectations of citizenship in the state. These have raised social, political and intellectual questions and issues that affect the functioning of the Nigerian government and society in the national transformation process.

II. The Formation and Evolution of the Nigerian State: Ethnic and Religious Relations in Perspective

The geographical area and people today known as Nigeria was a creation of the British colonial powers. Prior to the period of colonial contact, the over 370 ethnic nationalities that comprise modern Nigeria had little or no contact and it was the 1914 amalgamation by the British that foisted the formal origin of the Nigerian state.

It is argued that before the advent of colonialism that created Nigeria, some of the nationalities that today make up Nigeria had fairly inter-related in harmonious existence for centuries with historical records indicating that such relations were not chiefly on the basis of ethnicity or religion (Wada, 2006) or conflicts. However, colonialism and imperialism are blamed largely for having forcefully brought the people together, also employed divisive tactics of divide and rule to achieve their objectives of political control and economic exploitation. Through policies such as the Land and Native Right Ordinance of 1910 which attempted to separate Northern ethnic groups from those in the South, including discouraging North-South migration, ultimately created a divided society. Similarly, through the segregated residential policy and use of the Indirect Rule and Native Administration systems that were

Author α σ: Department of General Studies, Plateau State Polytechnic Barkin Ladi. e-mails: dakyenm@yahoo.com, makmism@gmail.com, eddyzungs@yahoo.com

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greatly divide and rule measures, emphasized cultural, communal and linguistic difference.

However, it would have been expected that Nigeria's independence would have charted a different path to create a new sense of national identity and nationhood. On the contrary, the newly independent Nigerian elites deepened whatever cleavages that were created for their selfish motives. Wada (2006) for instance argues that "undue antagonism and rivalries between various ethnic groups" and other divides of religion and politics have been used by the elites to polarize the citizens culminating "in persistent ethno-religious and communal conflicts across the country" with grave consequences for any form of development especially the current policy of national transformation.

Furthermore, key in the scheme of the evolution of the Nigerian state is the inability to address the question of citizenship in the midst of heterogeneity and conflict of interests. This, Alubo (2011) contends that as "the amalgamation did not itself address the issues of citizenship or a sense of belonging within the new geo-political space", post-independence is also manifest with the challenge of component units of Nigeria not feeling a part of it or "alienated and dis-enfranchised". These unresolved citizenship issues account for the upsurge of ethnic and religious conflicts and even in a democracy attributable to economic factors as well as competition "for access to political and material advantages" (Egwu, 2001; Maier, 2000; Mustapha, 1998 as cited in Alubo, 2011). The phenomenon of a fragmented Nigeria on ethnic and religious basis is therefore rooted in history and an inability to evolve statecraft to overcome such over time.

III. Ethnicity, Religious Conflicts and Citizenship: A Review of the Theoretical and Conceptual Issues

Scholarly interests in the issues of identity- be they on ethnicity, religion, citizenship or others- have increased due to the tendency for such not only to create solidarity and distinctiveness that breed exclusion, but conflict especially in Africa and Nigeria in particular. A conceptual examination of the variables under discourse is therefore of essence.

Ethnicity is a common form of social construction that distinguishes a group of people with one or more things in common such as race, religion, national origin, language and culture. According to Omu cited in Afolabi (2006), ethnicity can be said to be "the consciousness of belonging to identifying with and being loyal to a social group distinguished by shared cultural traditions, a common language, in-group sentiment and self-identity".

Clearly, ethnicity in this definition reveals a perception of group differences and so, the social boundaries between sections of a population (Tseayo, as cited in Mohammed, 1997). With exclusionary and discriminatory perceptions, ethnicity indicates a pattern of relationships between individuals and groups that Otite (1983) observes result in the promotion or rejection of ethnic-based symbols and cultural forms that serves as an instrument of social mobilization.

Furthermore, Lenshie and Abel (2012) provide useful insight on the nature of ethnicity, stating that it enforces internal mutual connection amongst people of the same ancestry, encouraging internal cohesion and solidarity and enforcing the need to provide natural security for each other and also promote a sense of identity.

Contextually, ethnicity in the sense of this paper is creating a sense of identity that can be a manipulative instrument in the hands of a class for an interest and its subjective dimension which breeds prejudices and stereotypes that are sometimes expressed in *ethnocentricism*. With this is the attendant inclination for exclusion of non-group members from certain rights, opportunities or privileges, resulting in ethnic discrimination common in Nigeria and a challenge to national unity, integration and transformation. In Nigeria, *ethnic majorities* are often pitched against *ethnic minorities* exemplified in the tripod dominance and hegemony of the Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo on the one hand, and others as minorities on the other. This has provided a basis for conflict and a challenge to legal connotation and interpretation of citizenship under discourse.

Equally important is the concept of religious conflicts in Nigeria. To properly situate this, an understanding of the idea of religion is needful. Religion from classical to modern explanations has varying degree of elements it projects to depict the existence of the unseen being (God) or the supernatural. To Marx and Durkheim, religion is society projected, as a false reflection of an alienated man and opiate of the people (Abdu, 2012). Apparently, religion, like ethnicity is also a means of identity in which it is argued is about solidarity and sets "boundaries between those who are considered to be believers and those that are not". This deals with issues of sentiments, feelings and norms that may be a result of shared experiences. This identity is used to create a sense of orders, meaning and hope to the insecurity of everyday life or to what may be perceived as unjust social order (Bangura, cited in Abdu, 2012).

It is these conceptions about the nature and character of religion that often puts it as a susceptible tool for manipulation and conflict. Mangvwat (2011) refers to this as the "inherent conflictual characteristics of religions", noting that religious conflict is a worldwide phenomenon. Considering the intensity of religious conflicts in Northern Nigeria, he also categorizes them as "Islam Muslim versus Muslim conflicts, Christian versus Christian conflicts, Muslim versus Christian

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conflicts". The first and latter are a clear manifestation of prevailing conditions of the Boko Haram terrorism recently experienced in Borno, Yobe, Adamawa, Plateau and Kaduna states in Nigeria respectively.

Conflicts refer to the overt, coercive interactions of contending collectivities (Gurr cited in Mohammed, 1997). It therefore arises when there is competition for an incompatibility in roles and interests. This angle depicts conflict as totally negative. But it can be argued that depending on how conflict is handled, it can either be constructive (positive) or dysfunctional and destructive (negative), accounting for its fluidity in conceptualization (Ademola, 2004; Otite, 2004). What is fundamental in conflict however is that it is a normal personal or group process of interaction in "complex societies in which resources are usually scarce" (Otite, 2004). Juxtaposing this with religion and ethnicity as causal or mobilizing factors already examined, conflicts are much plausible in plural or heterogeneous settings like Nigeria. Gwamna and Dayi (2011) therefore submit that many of the conflicts experienced in Nigeria have been ethno-religious, contending that: "while ethnicity has contributed to the conflicts, religion has always added enormous impetus to the conflicts". Thus, the ample and growing number of religious conflicts occasioned by ethnic divides as well are symtomic of the Nigerian polity today since the last two decades that challenge any quest for national transformation.

Citizenship, unlike ethnicity and religious conflict is a slightly different concept that is contested and historically defined by complex political, social, moral and ethical issues concerning the individual's relationship with the state and wider society (Lister, 1997 cited in Abdu, 2012). H.T. Marshall's thesis has often been considered to provide the modern conception of the idea in which he classified citizenship as consisting of civil, political and social components. But such conception treated all societies as homogenous which fails to explain the realities of ethnic, religious or racial divisions in relations to national citizenship as is evident in plural societies like Nigeria.

Kymlicka and Norman's perspective (2000, cited in Abdu, 2012) propose citizenship as legal status defined mainly by "panoply of civil, political and social rights with some responsibilities and duties like obedience of laws, payment of tax"; as an identity of an individual belonging to "one or more political community, an identity that is often contracted with other more particular identities like class, race, religion, gender profession" and as an activity or civic virtue. From this, we concluded in a study that citizenship traditionally requires some qualification and can be discriminatory or denied others (Dakyen and Zungdet, 2011) even though the dynamism and theoretical underpinnings of the idea reveals its multidimensional nature.

The connecting rod in the conceptualization of ethnicity, religious conflicts and citizenship shows that they are social constructions, having the preponderance for exclusion and differential treatments. Particularly, ethnicity and religion have been mutually-reinforcing as is the bifurcation of citizenship historically resulting in a confused sense of dual loyalty to the ethnic group as against the state. Thus, it is agreed that the interpretation of ethnicity and religion is more relevant in Nigeria, with both showing an overlap of allegiance e.g. Islam's "acculturation and assimilation of ethnic groups into Hausa and the widespread of Hausa as a *lingua franca*". (Abdu, 2012). This does not only define citizenship in ethnic terms but on religious basis.

Immense academic insight and energy have been dedicated to explaining and understanding the problems of ethnicity, religious conflict and crisis of citizenship in Nigeria. Key in the elements such scholarship have been the views that the dynamics of group relations in Nigeria relate to "claims and contestations over identity as a basis of determining who is included or excluded from participation or benefiting from opportunities in particular situations". (Alubo, 2003). This has resulted in identity-related conflicts and contestations of citizenship.

Alubo (2011) further argues that such a problem can be linked to identity contestation ingrained in the ideological overhang of the Cold War and the ideological quest for access to material advantage and exclusion. This he notes explains the reason why:

> The general rise in ethnic nationalism, mobilization and agitation, are usually in relation to some material advantage. Noticeably, the upsurge of ethno-religious conflicts or civil strife in general in Nigeria border on the "campaigns for citizenship rights and opportunities in which group(s) – ethnic or religious- identity, physical elimination, or to force relocation from a particular geo-political space. It is essentially a form of ethnic, religion and/or citizenship contestation. (Alubo, 2011:5).

It is in such true reflection of Nigeria that we find clamours for ethnic-centred issues as resource control, rotation or the zoning system, the federal character principle, for appointments, location of projects e.t.c. Evidently, such contestations amount to fractionalization of the Nigerian society on the basis, still, of ethnicity or religion and resultantly, discrimination and alienation of citizens in their own country by fellow citizens. Historically for example, minorities outside the three dominant ethnic groups in Nigeria since colonialism have suffered political exclusion and economic neglect resulting in mounting pressure for self-determination and cultural identity in some parts of Nigeria like the North. (Afolabi, 2006). Even the adoption of federalism to decentralize governmental powers and functions has not addressed this problem. Thus Nigeria's heterogeneity presents a case of a deeply divided society that is continuously prone to conflicts in those lines of identity.

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However, treating or reducing the ethnic and religious variables as exclusively accountable for conflicts in Nigeria by many scholars sometimes underplays the significant realities of other key factors. Ukiwo (2003), for example posits that "unbridled competition for power and the failure of government to deliver democratic dividends have resulted in violent conflicts especially between ethnic and religious groups". This supports the interconnectedness of the causative or mobilizing nature of this in the continuum of the problems under study, including economic and other issues identified by Adekanye (2007).

In the final analysis, Dakyen and Zungdet (2011) contend that "the scores of ethnic conflicts in Nigeria, including the civil war, were offshoots of the contestations of groups and what lies in the question of who constitutes a Nigerian citizen" that also reflect a perennial citizenship crisis which divides the citizens from perceived strangers. Kymlicka (1999); Mamdani (1998) and Nnoli (1978) have made useful contributions in this debate. Adejumobi (2001) agrees no less in depicting the predicament, viz:

…underlying most of these conflicts…is also the issue of citizenship and rights. The construction and nature of the state which is rooted in the colonial pedigree, lend toward the institutionalization of ethnic entitlements, rights, and privileges which create differentiated and unequal status of citizenship. This tendency de-individualizes citizenship and makes more of a group phenomenon. Rather than the state providing a common bond for the people through the tie of citizenship, with equal rights, privileges and obligations, both in precepts and practice, people's loyalties are bifurcated.

The result is usually tension and contradictions in the public sphere as claims of marginalization, exclusion, injustice and others.

IV. Ethnicity and Religious Conflicts in Nigeria: The Challenge for National Transformation

Nigeria has had so many ethno-religious conflicts due to already identified factors of contested demands on access to scarce resources, deep seated cleavages and what Otite (2004) describes as man-made conflicts be they ethnic, communal, religious (most times laced with political and economic issues) and other forms of civil upheavals.

The problem of ethnicity and religious conflicts are not new and peculiar to Nigeria but their expression in the Nigerian polity were pre-conditioned by faulty historical foundations of the Nigerian state. However, the 1970s have been identified as the period when particularly, religion became a challenge to national unity (Best, 2011) especially with its greater concentration in Northern Nigeria, including the areas of the Middle Belt (North Central Nigeria). Already, many causal factors have been identified, including that of the general issue of ethnicity in all parts of Nigeria that result in discrimination of majority ethnic groups against the minorities. Though the extent and consequences of such may not be fully measured, its manifestation in dominance of one group against the other in public and private institutions, employment, and government presence in terms of project locations e.t.c. makes national integration, unity and the question of transformation an illusion.

On the other hand, religious conflicts, mostly manifest between Islam and Christianity have always been intense and have defined most conflicts in Nigeria. They are classified as:

Intra-religious disturbances which occur between different denominations or sects; inter religious violence between adherents of different religious beliefs but capable of assuming socio-economic dimensions; and inter-religious violence which have socio-economic origin, end up in the form of religious conflicts (Alanamu, Muhammed and Adeoye, 2006).

Many of such typified religious conflicts are dysfunctional due to the recourse to violence championed by fundamentalists, fanatics, jihadists, terrorists, crusaders, revolutionarists e.t.c. It is such thinking for instance that Mangvwat (2011) identifies intra-Islamic conflicts, traceable to the Sokoto Jihad in which immigrant Fulanis overthrew the Habe *sarauta* (or ruling) system, replacing it with the emirate system of the Sokoto Caliphate. The resurgence of similar Islamic movements in the 1980s include the Maitasine in Kano city (December 1980, later in 1982); the same movement in Maiduguri (Bulunkutu) and Kaduna in 1982, Maitasine disciples in Jimeta-Yola (1984), same group in Gombe (1985) and other volatile eruptions to the current manifestation of Boko Haram attacks that began in Maiduguri and Bauchi (2009) and Kala Kato in Niger state (2009). (Mangvwat, 2011; Alanamu, Muhammed and Adeoye, 2006). These are clear cases of intra-Islamic revolts that have always also engulfed other citizens especially the recent widespread Boko Haram attacks that has had death tolls on both Islamic and non-Islamic adherents than its own.

On the other hand, inter-Christian conflicts have been limited if not unheard of especially in Northern Nigeria where religious conflicts are pronounced. This is attributable to the fact that various Christian missions in the region and other parts of West Africa was 'to check the further advance of Islam into the Sudanic belt or Savanna region of Africa' (Maxwell, 1952 cited in Mangvwat, 2011) and so could not jeopardize that goal by any internal conflicts but rather encouraged cooperation among denominations.

The obvious manifestation of religious conflicts often accompanied by ethnic conflicts is that involving the two dominant religions in Nigeria (Islam and

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Christianity), especially in Northern Nigeria. This is because it is believed that the two sides of the divide coincide with geo-ethnic as well as socio-economic divides (Mangvwat, 2011:57), in which the far North dominated by Islam is always more advantaged politically and economically while the middle belt or the North Central region (with pockets of settler far Northern migrants) is mostly Christian-dominated and less-advantaged in Nigeria's economic and political equation. Thus many violent inter-religious conflicts on that divide in cities such as Kaduna (1980), Adamawa (1986-88), Kafanchan, Kaduna and Zaria (1987), Bauchi (1991,2000-2001), Zangon Kataf (May 1992), Jos Plateau (1991, 1994, 2001-2002, 2004, 2008, 2009, 2010) and Gwantu (Kaduna State) in 2001(Mangvat, 2011) including the Shar'ia crisis in many parts of the North between 2000-2001 have remained intractable and deepened ethnic and religious intolerance particularly in Northern Nigeria.

In their various studies, Ndu (2012), Best (2011), Alubo (2011), Alanamu (2004) have identified recurring ethno-religious conflicts as a bane to the unity, integration and development of the Nigerian State.

Another grave challenge has been the fractionalization of the citizenry on the basis of indigenes versus settlers that has questioned the notion of Nigerian citizenship.

V. The Settler-Indigene Dichotomy and the Citizenship Question in Nigeria

Closely knit to the analyzed ethno-religious challenge is the unresolved question of citizenship which continuously generate ethnic suspicions, tensions and conflicts among groups classified as 'sons of the soil' or indigenes and migrants or settlers. According to Alubo, cited in Dakyen and Zungdet (2011: 190): Across the land, a sense and indeed the practice, of belonging to one country is spurred for the more exclusive and exclusionary criteria such as indigene, native, autochthon, and son-of-the-soil. These criteria actually spell inclusion and exclusion with regards to citizenship rights and privileges both in general terms but especially in a given geo-political space.

This approximates what Mangvwat (2011) describes as the theory of settler phenomenon that derives from migration of groups over time and space. The concept of *indigeneship* and *settlersship* in Nigeria is associated with primordial identity where as Alubo (2011) notes, that "anyone born outside the native home of the ethnic group is regarded as a settler with no provision for converting to an indigene", hence, inclusive citizenship is "discounted for narrower concept of indigeneity". This process appropriates opportunities and privileges to indigenes while non-indigenes are denied such.

The issue of certificates of indigeneship, quota system, catchment areas (for admissions into schools), the federal character principle, present the semblance of trying to forge a false sense of belonging on the basis of indigeneship which in its essence is discriminatory and a contradiction. For example, the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria implores the President to appoint at least one Minister from each state, who shall be an indigene of such state (Section 147(3)). President Goodluck Jonathan had appeared to be expressing his dismay and frustration about such provision of the constitution when clamours were made for him to appoint a lesser executive cabinet to reduce the cost of governance; he said he was constrained by that provision of the Constitution and so had to appoint over forty Ministers excluding Special Assistants/Advisers.

The point being made here however is that the indigenes versus settlers phenomenon in Nigeria creates a challenge for national integration and transformation; and the contestation over citizenship rights that balkanizes ethnic groups as a source of conflicts as is evidenced by the Jos crisis and other conflicts earlier identified. As Alubo (2011) concludes:

Experiences with civil disturbances invariably relate to the question, who is a citizen? What are his/her rights and entitlements? Do these vary from to location in the country to the other? They also illustrate that citizenship in Nigeria is tenuous and varies with space and time. Thus, an ethnic and religious group may be persecuted from a particular region and told to "go home", indicating that such groups do not belong in the particular space and time. This situation also affects the nature of participation and sense of belonging, and hence one requires some certification, of which the certificate of state indigene is illustrative, to participate or even benefit from available resources and opportunities.

This clearly indicates a contradiction and dilemma of citizenship that continuously occasions the spate of ethnic and religious conflicts and the attendant consequences of national transformation.

There is certainly no gainsaying that the constitution in principle provides for full inclusive citizenship rights as earlier conceptualized. In its third chapter, the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in Sections 25 to 32 that address the question of Nigerian citizenship, clearly state persons to be citizens by birth aside acquiring it by registration or naturalization. Section 25 (1) (a-c) states:

a) every person born in Nigeria before the date of Independence, either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents belongs or belonged to a community indigenous to Nigeria: Provided that such a person shall not become a citizen of Nigeria by virtue of this section if neither of his parents nor any of his grandparents.

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b) every person born in Nigeria after the date of independence either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents is a citizen of Nigeria; and
c) every person born outside Nigeria either of whose parents is a citizen of Nigeria. (The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria).

And in line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Nigerian Constitution has appropriately included the fundamental human rights of citizens, among which are the right to freedom from discrimination (Section 42) and the right to acquire and own immovable property anywhere in Nigeria (Section 43).

Despite these lofty ideals of the Constitution with regards to the idea of citizenship, aliens appear to be less discriminated than Nigerians who share different indigeneship in their places of residence. In reality, the realization of the ideals of the Constitution are far from the truth as while for example, citizens may own immovable property in any part of Nigeria, such are usually targets of attack for destruction in the volatile environment of civil disturbances in the country. In fact, ethno-religious conflicts such as the Boko Haram attacks being experienced in Nigeria result to wanton destruction of lives and property. These are clear cases of the violation of the rights of individuals and of citizenship rights as well.

VI. Conclusion

The recurrence of the conflicts in Nigeria can largely be associated with the question of ethnicity, religion and citizenship. The ventilation of such conflictual occurrences cannot be separated from the identity problem of groups having greater sense of attachment to their primordial affiliations that produce ethnic nationalism as against the inclusive conception of citizenship that is universal. Colonialism built such faulty foundations of the Nigerian state and post-independent Nigerian elites have not abetted the situation. Issues of governance are many a time at the heart of these challenges especially in the failure to deliver public goods in terms of democratic dividends to the citizenry. Increased corruption has reduced the ordinary citizen to penury and hopelessness with rising unemployment of the youth that continue to be a challenge to the initiatives of government such as the national transformation agenda. With greater governmental, institutional and constitutional arrangements put in place to provide justice and equity to citizens, Nigeria can indeed come close to overcoming the challenges of ethnicity, religious conflict and the question of citizenship.

VII. Recommendations

In view of the findings that the dysfunctional recurrence of ethno-religious conflicts and unbridled citizenship contestation have mitigated and challenged national unity, integration, transformation and general development of Nigeria, the following recommendations are proffered:

1. Inclusive citizenship rights should not only be clearly defined but enforced, with de-emphasizing of attachment to primordial and discriminatory programmes such as the quota system, discriminatory admissions/payment of tuition fees, neglect of merit for sectional or discriminatory reasons or the federal character principle e.t,c. This also implies amending the constitution to expunge certain provisions such as that on indigeneity.
2. Integration and policies that promote national unity should be put in place by the government to enhance tolerance and peaceful co-existence. It is opined for instance that the rights of residency that ensure full rights of citizens be upheld (Alubo, 2011). This will not only confer political rights to citizens but ensure greater unity for national development.
3. It is also necessary that good governance especially accountability, transparency and equity be ensured to restore governmental legitimacy, inter-ethnic and religious harmony and promote democratic consolidation. This is essential as government's failure to deliver resources equitably or the *dividends of democracy* have often aggravated conflict situations in Nigeria.
4. Greater and mass enlightenment or the education of the citizenry is also proposed. Citizenship education programmes need to be adopted at all levels of education with emphasis on socio-cultural understanding and exchanges in Nigeria.
5. The constitution and laws of the land should be proactive and respected by all shades of citizens across the social, economic and political divide. Functional laws that punish offenders irrespective of their statuses will be upheld by all. The security agencies, judiciary and those in authority can ensure that laws are very functional by setting clear examples of respect for the rule of law. This will engender respect for the rights of others, equity and justice.

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