

**RATIONAL APPLICATION OF FEDERAL CHARACTER PRINCIPLE IN NATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION: A PANACEA FOR NIGERIA'S  
SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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**Abstract**

*The aim of this study is to evaluate the extent of application of the federal character principle in the distribution and execution of development projects across the Nigeria federation. The study hypothesizes that significant relationship exist between rational application of the federal character principle in development administration across the federation and attainment of sustainable national development in Nigeria. The study adopts the Group theory as its theoretical framework. It employed both primary and secondary data (questionnaire, oral interviews, field observation and documented reports). Seven hundred and sixty-one (761) workers in the project implementation units of some federal ministries randomly selected constitute the sample. The relationship between the variables was established with the aid of regression analysis using SPSS 19 econometric package. Analysis of variance was employed to test whether the application of federal character principles in national development projects' implementation has been rationally complied with in order to ensure sustainable national development in Nigeria. The findings include: there is moderate positive relationship between sustainable national development and application of federal character principles in development administration across the country (correlation coefficient = 0.463); application of federal character principle account 21.5% of the variance in sustainable national development attainment across the federation; rational application of federal character in national development administration contribute significantly to sustainable national development attainment across the federation; among others. The study recommends: strict, rational and meticulous adherence to the spirit and letters of the federal character principle in the distribution and implementation of development projects across the county by the federal government; legal empowerment of the federal character commission to verify and certify the rationality and equity in the implementation of projects before their commencement and in the course of the implementation, should monitor the level of seriousness in their execution; removal of interest politics in the selection, distribution and implementation of projects by political leaders so as to avoid marginalization of some sections of the country and lopsidedness in national development administration; among others. The study concludes that the rational application of federal character principle in development administration is a panacea for attaining sustainable development in Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** Federal Character Principle Application, Development Administration, Sustainable National Development

## INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria today sustainable development is very significant as it helps to really define the concept of development and national development being the development of the entire segments or regions of the country of both the present and the future. Traditionally, the goal of public policy is progress. Progress taken to be a movement away from a less than perfect past into a future that would take people closer to an idyllic state - this state never quite defined, except in relation to the past – and hence progress is taken to be a continuous movement to a better future, with no specific end goal. Being tied to the economic state (rather than moral or philosophical), progress meant more and more growth, that is, greater goods and conveniences available to humanity not limited to tribe, region, section, state or geopolitical zone. It is unfortunate to note that over the years this aspect of national development has been grossly neglected. This gross neglect being a result of the corrupt and nepotic nature of the polity, *al biet*, the corruption and nepotism of the individuals in the political arena especially those in the position of development administration.

Successive governments in Nigeria have initiated and embarked on one development plan or developmental project or the other. Several development initiatives have been captured in the country's budget on annual basis. These projects are meant to take care of the development needs of the entire citizens, sections of the people or state. The implementation, nay, administration of these development projects has been seen to be unbalanced, ie, unevenly distributed. In the recent past, the implementation of national development projects has been seen to be concentrated on a particular part of the country. The present political leadership in the country came with a promise of balanced, fair and equitable distribution of dividends of democracy to all parts of the country when the President in his inaugural speech on 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2015 declared, "I belong to no one; I belong to everybody." This statement is today being seen as mere rhetoric as the actions of the government depicts lopsidedness in appointments and distribution of development infrastructure.

One basic problem confronting ethnically diverse federations and indeed all multiethnic countries is how to have the citizens imbued with a sense of national feelings; ensure the reduction of solidarity along primordial lines and foster increased loyalty to the nation. Equally is how to give to each citizen and groups a sense of belonging and feeling of oneness among them. In essence, it is how to ensure equity, fairness, evenness and national integration among the different segments of the country in her conduct of national affairs. Nigeria adopted the federal character principle to counteract the nationality question and the sectionalism that has been bedeviling the polity.

Nigeria is a nation state created as a result of British colonial enterprise in the territory and consists of a conglomeration of ethnic groups and fatherlands which are heterogeneous in many respects. These include diversity in socio-economic capabilities, political interests and above all, developmental needs or challenges. There are also diversities among them resulting from factors of historical evolution, disproportionate population sizes, unequal economic resource endowments and educational attainments. There are diversities too in their social wants, needs, aspirations and preferences as well as in their talents and opportunities (Agbodike, 2015). These differences tend to generate mutual competitions and misunderstandings among them which in turn give rise to conflicts and struggles for the control and use of the instruments and institutions of the state for the appropriation of the scarce national resources and common wealth possibly for the purpose of exploiting the use to ones advantage.

Ozigbo, (2010) argued that amalgamation of the Southern and Northern protectorates in 1914 by Lord Lugard did not create a national out of the distinct nations that existed. He toed the line of Obafemi Awolowo in asserting that Nigeria is not a nation but a mere geographical expression. Hence to him, there are no 'Nigerians' in the same sense as there are 'English' or 'Welsh' or 'French'. The word 'Nigeria' is merely a distinctive appellation to distinguish those who live within the boundaries of Nigeria from those who do not. In this statement Ozigbo was only being frank to the reality at hand, that is, existence of non-federal Nigeria.

The term "federal character" is one of the inventions of the Constitutional Drafting Committee (CDC) inaugurated by the late General Murtala Mohammed on 18<sup>th</sup> October 1975. It is a principal innovation intended to combat the threshold problem of competing primordial loyalties in the country, hence, to promote

national unity, integration and cohesion (Afigbo, 1989). The most easily visible feature of the federal character principles as argued by Osaghae (2017) is its application in virtually every sphere of federation operation. From the traditional institutions of the state, the cabinet, the civil service, armed forces, the judiciary, police, to the sharing of the 'national cake', etc, the principles has become the most important consideration in selecting locations of schools, industries and government agencies, in admissions, recruitment and promotion of staff of federal institutions and even, in the composition of the national team and in the distribution of national development opportunities, infrastructures and facilities.

As the principle extends, the more issues are politicized and the more interest politics comes in, in the implementation of national affairs. Thus, as the conduct of some national exercises are politicized and the misinterpretation and application of the federal character principle to ensure equity, fairness and balance especially in national development administration, many disadvantaged and aggrieved individuals are therefore led to clamouring for the total scrapping of the principle on the grounds that it has outlived its importance; and that it just exists in principle but not in practice. Others argue that the principle is only being applied where it is to favour those who are championing its course. Others have come to say that it is only a tool of marginalization and the advantaging of those who control or are in the position of exercising the powers of authoritative allocation of values or deciding who gets what, when and how in the Nigeria.

On that note, some individuals have suggested a review of the principle. Utuama (2010) submitted that the federal character commission is one of the most important institutions put in place to ensure equity and fairness and to make sure that every Nigerian or section of Nigeria counts in the distribution and allocation of opportunities, resources and amenities in this country, hence, it should not be totally jettisoned. He further argued that the federal character principle is the only way one can instill the spirit of patriotism in people especially those in position of authority because if we say we are Nigerians and we are all counted out of opportunities, benefits and dividends of democracy available, then we will be less patriotic. Some scholars have argued that the federal character principle, which is postulated to be an integrative and inclusive mechanism has disintegrated Nigerians the more due to the manner its letter and spirit is misinterpreted and misapplied by some scrupulous, sectional and nepotic leaders in Nigeria. But generally, disagreement have centered on the consideration of competence, need and capability (merit) and the need to reflect federal character or spread in appointments or the distribution of the 'national cake'.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Policy makers in Nigeria have since recognized the need to consciously put in place policies that will facilitate understanding, national integration, fairness, equity and balance in our national affairs. Towards achieving this overriding goal of integration, fairness, equity and balance especially in national development, several devices have been invented to cope with the multi-faceted diversity of Nigeria. One of them is the federal character principle. Today the problems of unevenness and lack of national spread still stares the country in the face leading to issue of ethnic loyalty, agitations against perceived marginalization, threats of secession, etc.

Substantiating the above fact, Kelechi Akubueze (2019), did not mince words in his comment about the present state of Nigeria federalism:

Evidently, the past four years have witnessed political upheavals of huge magnitude that saw the country almost tilting to breaking point, with overbearing centrifugal forces pulling on the nation's polity from regional, socio-cultural and political centers of power. This period saw political leaders, champion ethnic and regional courses as opposed to national patriotic values. Demands for secession almost drowned the political airwaves; accusations and counter-accusations dominated political discourse. Watchers of Nigerian politics began to wonder if the prophesy of ultimate collapse of the Nigerian state, which named 2015 as its activation date, only had a marginal error of a few years. At the root of all these was the issue of alleged and perceived marginalization by some sections of the country, (Akubueze, 2019:48).

Over forty years on, the relevance and acceptability of the federal character principle is being called to question especially against the backdrop of the daunting challenges especially of sectionalism, unfair treatments, unevenness, marginalization and gross neglect of some sections of the country in national development administration in the face of the existence of the federal character principle. This makes it imperative to critically examine the extent of application of the federal character principle by the present Buhari led federal government in her national development administration efforts. That is, the extent to which federal character principle has been rationally applied in her distribution and execution of development projects across the federation.

The aim of this study is to evaluate the extent of application of the federal character principle in the distribution and execution of development projects across the thirty six states and the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja that makes up the Nigeria federation. The study therefore hypothesized that significant relationship exist between rational applications of the federal character principle in development administration across the federation and attainment of sustainable national development in Nigeria.

## **CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS**

### **i. Federal Character Principle**

Federalism emerge either through coerced authority of a foreign power - institutive federalism or through voluntary agreement of the constituent units – constitutive federalism, (Nwachukwu, 2015). Nigeria federalism conforms absolutely to the former type as the Nigerian federal constitution was imposed by the British colonial power. Meanwhile, on a second look, the federalism equally suits an example of the later type of federalism as the constituting states then willfully joined without coercion the confederation and subsequently federalism, (Olagunju, 2017).

Federal character suggest “an attempt to build a nation where equal opportunities abound and where every individual must feel that he has equal chance to participate without bias of ethnic affiliations”, (Tali, 2017:2). The account of scholars like Afigbo (1989:3-18), Ekeh (1989:19-44), Uroh (2000:191-200) and Gboyega (2009:164-185) on the origin of federal character principle in Nigeria seem to be similar. Afigbo (1989:3) was however more specific, when he opined that “the term federal character is one of the inventions of the Constitutional Drafting Committee (CDC) inaugurated by the late General Murtala Mohamed on 18th October, 1975.” Other postulants merely traced the origin of federal character to the 1979 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Afigbo (1989) buttressed the assertion, when he argued that it was in the course of the debate on that section of the report of the sub-committee on the executive and the legislature which dealt with how to promote national loyalty in a multi-ethnic society that the phrase – federal character was coined. The CDC (1977: x) conceptualized federal character as referring to “the distinctive desire of the peoples of Nigeria to promote national unity, foster national loyalty and give every citizen of Nigeria a sense of belonging to the nation notwithstanding the diversities of ethnic origin, culture, language or religion which may exist and which it is their desire to nourish, harness to the environment of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.”

The above conceptualization of federal character by the CDC appears very inadequate, porous, illogical, and contentious and fall short on many counts. As Afigbo (1989:5) documented, “federal character cannot be a desire.” More still, ‘the desire to nourish’ in the definition appear very questionable. What is the desire? If the desire is known, then what is the desire attempting to nourish? It seems logical to say that the CDC only tried to highlight some issues agitating the mind of Nigerians on how to make every segment of the society to be equally represented in the formulation and implementation of government policies known in Nigeria as “the National Question.” While canvassing for support of the adoption of the federal character principle in the 1979 Nigerian Constitution as strategy for peace, equity and stability, the CDC (1977) argued unequivocally that there had in the past been inter-ethnic rivalry to secure the domination of government by one ethnic group or combination of ethnic groups to the exclusion of others. It is therefore expedient to have some provisions to ensure that the predominance of persons from a few states or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups is avoided in the composition of government or the appointment or election of persons to high offices in the state.

The phrase ‘desire of the peoples of Nigeria to promote national unity’ in the earlier definition by the CDC (1977) is an indication that there is the imperative to reappraise the Nigerian federal system, if enduring unity and sustainable development are to be achieved. Sequel to that, Afigbo (1989:6) submitted that “federal character of Nigeria must be taken to mean...the character of the Nigerian federation.” As he contended, to understand and define the character of the Nigerian federation, the following factors must be taken into account: the innate or primordial characteristics of Nigeria’s federal society going back to the days of yore; the quality and performance of the statesmanship which has sought to harness the inborn characteristics of Nigeria’s federal society to a federal constitution; the degree of harmony existing between the primordial features and usages of Nigerian society; the structure and usages of the constitution; and the fact that the character of the Nigerian federation has been rather dynamic in response to the changing perceptions of statesmanship and other relevant forces. The federal character principle is both a reaction as well as a system. It is a positive reaction to correct those practices of the past, especially in the conduct of public management which tended to exploit the diversities of the nation and by so doing cause ill will. Also, it is a reaction to those practices which tended to reflect the parochial consideration, especially those negative forces which placed the self interests above national interest. The federal character principle involves a deliberate plan to construct means of ensuring the proper distribution of amenities and government projects in the country, (Gberevbie and Ibietan, 2013). Hence, Olagunju, (2017:83) defined federal character as “a deliberate design to accommodate less dominant but often forcibly expressed interest”. Essentially, it is a design which is aimed at depoliticizing new demand through an institutional arrangement.

The import of the above exposition is that the concept ‘federal character’ becomes lucid mainly in the light of history, because the problems which federal character encapsulates has existed in Nigeria in different forms and with varying degree since the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern protectorates by Lord Frederick Lugard in 1914. Ekeh (2004:20) however asserts: “the problems that the doctrine of Nigerian federal character deals with are...partially federal in nature. The issues associated with federal character relate as much, to unitary systems of government.” As scripted in the 1979 Constitution, federal character purports to deal with distribution of privileges and benefits among the primordial components of any state organization. It is this preoccupation with sharing privileges and benefits that come with participation in government (and not in resource generation or ‘cake-baking’) that is the major albatross of the implementation or application of the federal character principle in Nigeria, (Gberevbie and Ibietan, 2013). The need therefore to tinker with this practice with a view to ensuring sustainable development administration in Nigeria cannot therefore be overemphasized.

Gboyega (2009) contends that the fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy in the 1999 Constitution explains federal character to mean that the composition of the Federal Government or any of its agencies and the conduct of their affairs shall be carried out in such manner as to recognize the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote evenness, national unity and to command national loyalty. Accordingly, the predominance in that government or its agencies of persons from a few ethnic or other sectional groups shall be avoided. The above constitutional mandate was made with a view to enhance participation of people from different segments of the Nigerian society in the process of governance.

Lamenting the non-compliance with this principle in our national affairs, Nwachukwu (2015) decried that in today’s Nigeria, about 70% of Nigeria foot soldiers are of Hausa and Fulani extraction; about 80% of all Permanent Secretaries in the Federal Ministries are also from the Hausa and Fulani extraction. Also about 80% of those given oil wells presently in the Niger Delta region are Hausa–Fulanis; about 60% of Generals in the Nigerian military are from the Hausa and Fulani extractions; about 60% of the Heads of federal parastatals are from the Hausa and Fulani extractions; about 90% of the employees in the JAMB offices are of the Hausa, Fulani and Yoruba tribes; about 95% of the Professors and workers of the Nigeria Universities Commission (NUC) are from the Hausa, Fulani and Yoruba tribes; about 70% of all Ambassadors and High Commissioners are from the Hausa, Fulani and Yoruba extractions, among others. Hence the question as to whether the federal character principle is still being applied in all these places or whether it was set aside or suspended in these cases or even whether it still exists at all in totality.

It is as if Onyeoziri, (2002:17) foresaw this when he earlier hinted: “the implementation of the federal character has caused a lot of tension among the different federating units in the country.” The reasons

for the tension has been traced to the fuzziness that pervades its application in certain areas; the arbitrariness that seems to accompany its application even in areas where the application seems straight, especially during the military regimes; lack of political will from the leading elite to employ sanctions when the rules are breached; and lack of definite guideline in achieving balance between equity and efficiency in the application of the principle. These factors tend to highlight the liabilities to the judicious practice of the principle and poses serious encumbrances to the realization of sustainable national development in Nigeria, (Onyeoziri, 2002:18).

It has been observed from the application of the federal character principle that “rather than ameliorate, it provokes ethno-regional division. Furthermore, it suffers from a fundamental contradiction as a policy option for managing the national question in Nigeria” (Onyeoziri, 2002:18). This is so because rather than the principle to treat the Nigerian citizen as an individual in his/her own rights, it considers the individual as a member of an ethno-linguistic group within the state, thus reinforcing the integrity of those sub-structures instead of the general structure (nation), and make them attractive to the individual. It is logically inconsistent that a policy directed at strengthening loyalty to the nation-state is anchored on primordial sentiment and cleavages as basis for recognition, (Gberevbie and Ibieta, 2013).

## **ii. Development**

The concept ‘development’ is as complex as life itself. In the past development is often expressed in terms of growth of output. In recent times, other indices such as the availability of work, the distribution of income and the quality of life has come to be seen as the determinants of development. That is why Okoye (1985:9) observes that real development involves “a structural transformation of the society, economy, politics, and culture among others that permits a redistribution of science and technology, the self generating and self-perpetuating use, and improvement in the machinery of administration and production institutions to meet the rising need or demand of the society. It involves a fair and equitable distribution of social wealth and the presence of a ruling class that is strong enough to eliminate the corrupt elements in its own rank, and is relatively competent and devoted to public welfare and the reform of existing inequalities.” Ali (2014:7) sees the concept of development as referring to “a concerted effort in bringing about a quantitative change in the quality of life of most members of the society.” To Berger and Neuhaus (1984) development implies good growth and desirable modernization. Todaro and Smith (2003:43) conceive it as “the sustained elevation of an entire society and social system towards a better or more humane life.” To Ake (1992) development in our context will denote an act of ensuring that the quality of life of the people reaches an acceptable minimum standard through structural and role differentiation, cultural secularization, equality and capacity. Development would also mean creating institutional opportunities for power distribution. What kind of development, and for whom and how are all questions of politics. Development policy formulation and its implementation are virtually connected with the political processes of a society. Hence to divorce the issue of development administration from politics would be shortsighted and incomplete (Basu, 2012).

## **iii. Development Administration**

Basically, there are two schools of thought with regards to the conceptualization and scope of development administration. Montgomery and Fainsod represent the school of thought which defines development administration in a narrow sense. Montgomery and Siffin (1966) posits that it connotes carrying planned change in the economy or capital infrastructure and to a lesser extent in the social services, especially health and education. Likewise to Fainsod (1963), it embraces the array of new functions assumed by developing countries embarking on the path of modernization and functional specialization. In this light, development administration ordinarily involves the establishment of machinery for planning and executing development projects and mobilizing and allocating resources to achieve that. According to this school of thought, development administration means merely a programme-oriented approach to administration which is concerned with the resolve to mobilize existing and new resources to achieve the developmental goals of the state.

The other school of thought which is represented by Lucian Pye, Fred Riggs and Edward Weidner, uses the term development administration in a broader sense. According to them, development

administration refer to the process of guiding an organization toward the achievement of progressive political, economic and social transformational objectives that are authoritatively determined in one manner or the other. As observed by Riggs (1979), it refers to the administration of development programmes, as well as the methods used by large scale organizations such as government to implement policies and plans designed to meet their developmental objectives. As observed by Ibodje (2009), development administration has come to be seen as concerned with the formulation and implementation of plans, policies, programmes and projects aimed at transforming the society and meeting the developmental needs of the people. Development administration is concerned with attaining the goal of national development. The goals, values and strategies of change may vary but there are always generic processes through which agreements on goals is reached and plans, policies, programmes and projects - the carriers of the development - are formulated and implemented. Mba (2018) summed it up by noting that development administration is primarily concerned with the task and process of formulating and implementing the 4ps (plans, policies, programmes and projects ) in respect to whatever mixture of goals and objectives may be politically determined.

The management of development has been the central focus of development administration. It connotes planned institutional capacity to accomplish the specific goals of development through the formulation of appropriate policies, programmes and projects and their successful implementation (Basu, 2012). Participative, responsive and accountable management constitute the essence of development administration. As observed by Gant (2014), development administration is characterized by its purpose, its loyalties and its attitudes. The purposes referring to change, progress and innovation as against purposes of maintaining the status quo; the loyalties, referring to its being goal-oriented, client-centered, accountable and responsive to public wishes and demands rather than to any vested interests – President, sectional groups or ethnic loyalties; and its attitudes referring to its being flexible, adaptable and result-oriented.

#### **iv. National Development and Sustainable National Development**

National development is conceptualized as the overall development or a collective socio-economic, political and technological advancement of a country or nation (Ekundayo, 2015). It is also the ability of a country or countries to improve the social welfare of their people through the provision of social amenities like quality education, good roads, efficient railway system, portable water, transportation infrastructure, housing and electricity, among other basic needs of the people (Lawal and Oluwatoyin, 2011). For Dibia (2012), it refers to a state of maturity which characterizes a nation-state which results from the interplay of all plans, strategies and efforts aimed at improving the socio-cultural, political and economic life of a country. Ogai (2007:27) contends that national development is “the gradual manifestation of positive changes in the economic, industrial, political, social, cultural and administrative life of a country. It refers to a sustainable growth and development of a nation to a more desirable one”.

Onuoha (2010) conceptualized national development as:

the unending process of qualitative and quantitative transformation in the capacity of a state to organize the process of production and distribution of the material benefits of society in a manner that sustains improvement in the well being of its individual members in order to enhance their capacity to realize their full potentials, in furtherance of the positive transformation and sustenance of their society and humanity at large, (Onuoha, 2010:120).

It is deducible from the above definition that national development entails sustained improvement in the political, social, economic, health, technological and environmental aspects of any organized or well ordered society. A further explication of the above definition imply that the political ingredients of national development comprises political stability, free and fair electoral process, representativeness in political institutions and sanctity of the rule of law. The economic indicators include GNP, GNI, and nature of income distribution and pattern of resource management. The social aspects encapsulate gender equality, social justice, living standard of citizens as measured by Human Development Indicators like access to social services (potable water, education, health, security, electricity and good roads and efficient railway services,

among others). The environmental dimension reflects the character of resource exploitation, nature of environmental degradation, and environmental friendly practices among citizens.

These are best achieved through development planning which can be described as the country's collection of strategies, policies, plans, programs and projects and others mapped out by the government. It equally involves the adoption of a framework of inclusive growth, which is, high growth that is sustained; can generate mass employment; and reduces poverty. With good governance and anti corruption as the over arching theme of each and every intervention, the plans translated into specific goals, objectives, strategies, programs and projects, can be accomplished in a short, medium or long terms (Onah, 2012).

The concept "sustainable development" on the other hand, refers to the continuous and sustained qualitative improvement in the overall standard of living of people in a society or nation and the structural transformation/changes in the productive and distributive input and output systems of the economy (Ollawa, 1977; Ojobo, 2005). Springett and Foster (2005) opine that sustainable development has to do with the well-being of all people in a particular society or community. A nation or community could be said to have attained or be on the part of sustainable development when members of that community or society could boast of improved condition of living on a continuous basis over a reasonable period of time. In the light of the above, "sustainable development advocates focus mostly on how nations, organizations, communities, individuals and other global stakeholders could meet their developmental needs in ways that will not conflict with the needs or well-being of others." (Sampson, 2013:26).

Sustainable development as a goal therefore entails the eradication of poverty in terms of physical and non-physical needs; and quality of life beyond mere sustenance which implies human dignity and liberty. Development as capacity combines private and public sectors of the economy in implementing developmental policies, projects and programmes. To this end, methods, systems and activities oriented towards development are executed in order to achieve specific goals of development. Hence, organizations, agencies and institutions in the private and public sectors are involved and are required to sustain and support developmental processes since it is expected to be a cooperative joint endeavour (Egonmwan and Ibodje, 2001). It is essential to reiterate that the availability of competent administrative capability and delivery system in the social, economic and political institutions cannot be overemphasized in achieving sustainable development in a society. This is the interface between the need for proper application of the federal character principle and development administration effectiveness for sustainable development.

The object of development is people; any development initiative and process that is not people-centered misses the point. Nwanegbo, (2016:5) posits that "development is the process by which people create and recreate themselves and their life circumstances to realize higher levels of civilization in accordance with their own choices and values".

It is therefore right to conclude in the light of the foregoing discussions that national development is a multi-dimensional national process involving major changes in national social structures, popular national attitudes and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of national economic growth, the reduction of national inequality and the eradication of national poverty. It must represent the whole gamut of change by which an entire social system in the country, tuned to the diverse basic needs and desires of individuals and social groups within that system, moves away from a condition of life widely perceived as unsatisfactory toward a situation or condition of life regarded as materially and spiritually better for the entire citizens of the country as a whole.

The comprehensive nature of the above definitions and issues involved in development is not in doubt and bears testimony to the fact that national development must be people-centered and sustained for it to be meaningful. Going by the above indicators of development and sustainable national development, it may not be far from the truth to conclude that Nigeria is yet to attain sustainable national development in all ramifications.

#### **v. Theoretical Framework**

This study adopts the Group theory as its paradigm of analysis. The Group theory developed within the context of the pluralist paradigm of politics. Pluralism argues essentially that power in most societies is widely distributed among groups or the component units which make up the society. According to this



paradigm, no group is without power to influence decision making and equally no group is dominant. It is a major premise of pluralism that any group can ensure that its political preferences and wishes are adopted and reflected in governmental action with sufficient determination and the deployment of appropriate resources at her advantage.

Pluralism is a theory of representation in a democracy. It gives a pride of place to distinct groups and the representation of specific interests by these different groups is the hallmark of liberal democracy. In another sense the theory legitimizes the role which these distinct groups play in the conduct of government business such as administration of national development by emphasizing the mutuality of obligation which exists between these groups and government.

The starting point of this theory is the proposition that interaction and struggle among groups is the central fact of political life. As it postulates, individuals are important in politics only when they act as part of, or on behalf of, group interests. A group in the view of this theory is a collection of individuals that may, on the basis of shared attitudes or interests make claims upon other groups in the society. In this light, the different ethnic groups that make up Nigeria – Igbos, Yorubas, Hausa-Fulanis, Ijaws, Tivs, Nupe, etc, can be represented here as groups. They assume political character when they make claims through or upon institutions of government such as the legislature or executive.

As the exponents of this theory contend, politics is the struggle among groups to reflect their interests in public policy. Conflict often results from the interplay of group forces. Consequently, as noted by Dye (2004), the task of the political system is therefore to manage group conflicts by establishing the rules of the game in the group struggle; arranging compromises and balancing interests; enacting compromises in the form of public policy; and, enforcing these compromises. The federal character principle formulated for ensuring equity and balance in the distribution of ‘national cake’ in Nigeria aptly comes to focus here.

Public policy will reflect the equilibrium reached in the group struggle, ie, the balance which the contending factions or groups constantly strive to tip in their favour. Public policy will, however, reflect the interests of dominant groups defined as those groups gaining in influence, in other words, those who have the requisite resources such as size, finance, political opportunities, or hold of political positions and power to authoritatively allocate the national values.

The relevance of the postulations of this theory in explaining the national development administration issues in the face of the federal character principles in Nigeria under the present Buhari led government cannot be overemphasized. By insisting that public policy is a product of group struggle, group theory introduces a dynamic element into the understanding of how policies are made and implemented. The novelty is that in its pluralist context, (referring to Nigeria) group theory views public policy as the negotiated settlement reached between government agencies and the various contending groups organized into policy communities. This presumes that all the component groups in Nigeria ought to be recognized equally, fairly and equitably in the development project policy formulation and implementation process. On the converse, there are nonetheless, basic and substantive defects in the analysis of the policy process offered by group theory as it applies to the Nigerian situation that necessitates the calls for an examination of the extent of application of this federal character principle.

First is the obvious uncausal explanation of politics and public policy from the perspective of group struggle alone. This is an exaggerated claim which overlooked the independent role of individual actors (such as the President, the Chief of Staff, the Secretary to the Federal Government, the Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, Directors, among others) in the policy process. As is the case with the issue in discourse here, the role of individuals like the president, Buhari himself, those who were his present and immediate past secretary to the federal government, his religious interest and former carrier colleagues, among others, as above mentioned, in influencing the lopsided administration of national development irrespective of the federal character principle, were neglected by this theory. Second, it is an empirical question as to whether indeed, power is as widely distributed in society as group theory claims and more important, whether the voice of the least powerful is ever audible as to make it significant in the decision making and implementation process. This is very true regarding the fact that in Nigeria today political and economic powers are not evenly distributed among the ethnic nationalities in Nigeria and as well, the voice of the least and

marginalized are not made to bear in the policy process necessitating the incessant, insuppressible and unquenchable agitations against marginalization and calls for the restructuring of the Nigerian federation and federalism or outright secession in Nigeria today, even in the face of the existing federal character principle and the negatively interpreted and misapplied quota system and disadvantaged policy, which were supposed to ensure equity, balance and fairness.

Hence, the market place paradigm on which group theory is anchored raises the significant question about parity, as the federal character principle advocates, in the process of competition since we are made to understand by this theory that the sources of power available to groups may not be equal. This is apt in the Nigerian situation where the North has overwhelming advantage and the East and South South, inestimably disadvantage in terms of power sources brought to bear in the implementation of national development projects in Nigeria under the Muhammadu Buhari-led federal government. The advantage, which some groups especially the North and to a lesser extent the South West, enjoy on account of superior resource endowment (population size, land mass, greater number of states and local governments, more political office holders, political power dominance, etc.), might be the factor in the dominance of their interests in public policy *albeit* national development projects implementation. This is more so as they are always and ably deploying their advantage positions to secure their interests through, (as is the issue here), the manipulation of the rules of competition (equity and fairness as the federal character principle advocates). Finally, the assumed neutrality of government in the clash of partisan groups in the value allocation process is questionable if not doubtful. As we can see, this is glaringly typified in the actions of the federal government in her implementation of development projects across the federation since 2015.

#### RESEARCH METHOD AND PROCEDURE

The data employed in this study were collected by the use of both survey (Questionnaire, Oral Interview and Field Observation) and secondary data on the development projects implemented across the six geopolitical zones of the federation by the Buhari-led federal government from 2015 to 2019 and how federal character principles application were reflected in the implementation of the development projects across Nigeria. The questionnaire is designed to elicit information from workers in the project implementation units of some federal ministries on the extent of and rationality in the application of federal character principle in national projects implementations and how that affects sustainable national development in Nigeria. The study area is divided into strata with each geopolitical zone forming a stratum. In each stratum, workers of the federal ministries of power, works and housing, transport, education, health and trade and investment, constitute the elements for investigation. The relationship between proper or rational application of federal character principles in national development projects administration and sustainable national development was established with the aid of regression analysis using SPSS 19 econometric package. Furthermore the analysis of variance was employed to test whether the application of federal character principles in national development projects' implementation has been duly or rationally complied with in order to ensure sustainable national development in Nigeria.

**Table 1. Major ongoing and completed projects by the Buhari Administration across Nigeria by Geographical Zones, 2015-2018**

S/ N	Project	States Covered	Status	Remark
<b>South East</b>				
1	Rehabilitation of Section 1 to 4 of the Enugu- PH Expressway	Enugu, Abia	Ongoing Since 2017	Sukuk Bond
2	Rehabilitation of Amansea - Enugu Border Section of Onitsha – Enugu Expressway	Anambra, Enugu	Ongoing Since 2017	Sukuk Bond
3	Rehabilitation of 18km Critical stretch of Onitsha-Awka Road	Anambra	Ongoing since 2016	Inherited from past admin.

4	Construction of Second Niger Bridge: Completed design of the Approach roads from Onitsha and Asaba; Award of main Construction contract to Julius Berger and funding of the project by the Presidential Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF)	Anambra, Delta	Ongoing (Inherited from past administration of GEJ)	In Aug. 2018, PIDF paid N33b (US\$90m)
5	Rehabilitation of Arochukwu –Ohafia Bende Road	Abia	Ongoing Since 2017	
6	Ariaria Market Electrification Project (The FG is implementing its Energizing Economies programme, which will bring stable and reliable electricity to all the 37,000 shops in Ariaria market by providing the market with a gas-powered independent power plant (IPP)).	Abia	Ongoing	Commissioned Uncompleted in 2019
7	Federal Government Energizing Education Programme is being implemented in Federal University Ndufu-Alike Ikwo and Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka Campus. The programme will provide these Universities with an IPP as well as upgrade existing distribution infrastructure.	Ebonyi, Anambra	Ongoing	Street lighting will also be provided.
8	Ikot Ekpene – Alaoji – Ugwuaji switching station and transmission line	Cross River, Abia, Enugu	Completed	
9	Construction of modern Medical Diagnostic Center at Fed. Med. Center Umuahia.	Abia	Ongoing	
10	Nnamdi Azikiwe Mausoleum (Contract originally awarded in 1996, abandoned at various times. Buhari administration revived the project.	Anambra	Completed	Project revived in 2016
11	Enyimba City Special Economic Zone: Definitive agreement signed between FG, Abia state government and Enyimba City Dev. Co. Ltd.	Abia	Ongoing	MOU signed on 7 <sup>th</sup> Dec. 2018
12	Presidential Fertilizer Initiative: Has led to the revival of the Ebonyi State Fertilizer & Chemical Co. Ltd. Creating jobs and boosting the supply of fertilizer in the South East.	Ebonyi	Completed	
13	Social Investment Programme: 68,000 N-Power beneficiaries across 5 states of the South East. The school feeding programme kicked off in all 5 South East states.	Anambra, Abia, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo.	Ongoing	Started in 2017
14	Pensions paid to retired war-affected (Ex-Biafran) Police. Buhari administration paid N500m to clear pension arrears that had not been paid since their Presidential pardon in 2000.	Anambra, Abia, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo, Delta, Rivers	Ongoing	The N500m was paid in 2017
<b>South West</b>				

1	Rehabilitation and Expansion of Lagos – Ibadan Expressway: the project is now being funded by the PIDF established by President Buhari in 2018 to fund critical infrastructural projects.	Lagos, Ogun, Oyo	Ongoing	Started in 2018
2	Rehabilitation of outstanding sections of Sagamu – Ore Expressway	Ogun, Ondo	Ongoing	
3	Construction of 158km Lagos-Ibadan Standard Gauge Rail with 10 stations – Apapa, Ebute Metta, Agege, Agbado, Kajola, Papalanto, Abeokuta, Olodo, Omi-Adio & Ibadan.	Lagos, Ogun, Oyo	Ongoing	About being completed and test-runed
4	Reconstruction of Apapa-Tin Can – Mile 2 – Oshodi – Oworonshoki Expressway. This is the first full reconstruction of the road since it was first constructed in the 1970s.	Lagos	Ongoing	Commenced Nov. 2018
5	Dualization of Oyo-Ogbomoso Rd. Funded by the N100b Sukuk Bond issued by the Federal Government.	Oyo, Osun	Ongoing	Commenced in 2017
6	Rehabilitation of Lagos-Otta-Abeokuta Road	Lagos, Ogun	Ongoing	
7	Rehabilitation of Ikorodu-Sagamu Road	Lagos, Ogun	Ongoing	
8	Construction of US\$10m Cancer Treatment Center at Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH).	Lagos	Ongoing	Commissioned uncompleted 2019
9	A \$21m project funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA): Will stabilize power supply to more than 200,000 people in and around Apapa.	Lagos	Ongoing	Almost completed
10	Energizing Economies Programme: Electrification of Sura Shopping Complex (1000 shops), Shomolu Printing Community (4000 shops), Gbaji Market Oyo (7872 shops), Ita-Osun market Ogun (2814 shops), Nnamdi Azikiwe market Lagos (3091 shops), Balogun market Lagos (1662 shops), Iponri market Lagos (1305 shops), UMBC Oyo (700 shops), Isikan market Ondo (277 shops), Bariga market Lagos (390 shops), Erinwe Ogun (1280 fish ponds).	Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo	Ongoing	Some already completed
11	Social Investment Programme: 96,000 N-Power beneficiaries across the six states of South West.	Lagos, Oyo, Ogun, Osun, Ondo, Ekiti.	Ongoing	
12	School feeding going on in 4 South West states.	Oyo, Ogun, Ondo, Osun.	Ongoing	
<b>South South</b>				
1	Afam Fast Power Project: Construction of US\$186m 240MW expansion for the existing Afam Power Plant.	Rivers	Ongoing (Almost completed)	Commenced 2016

2	Dualization of Yenegoa Road junction-Kolo-Otuoke-Bayelsa Palm	Bayelsa	Ongoing	Sukuk Bond
3	Rehabilitation of Section 1-4 of Enugu-PH Expressway	Rivers, Abia, Imo, Enugu	Ongoing	Listed under S/E
4	Construction of N120b Bonny-Bodo road in Rivers state. (Jointly funded by the Fed. Govt. & the Nig. Liquifies Natural Gas Company Ltd (NLNG)	Rivers	Ongoing	
5	New Port Harcourt International Airport Terminal.	Rivers	Completed	Commissioned 2018
6	Construction of East-West Road	Cross-River, Akwa Ibom, Rivers, Ogun, Bayelsa, Edo, Delta, Ondo, Ogun, Lagos	Ongoing	Inherited from past administrations
7	60km Alesi-Ugep road (Contract awarded for 72km section from Odukpani junction to Ugep)	Cross-River	Completed	
8	Rehabilitation of Calabar-Itu-Odukpani road that links Akwa Ibom to Cross-River	Cross-River	Ongoing	
9	Niger Delta New Vision (Federal Maritime University in Delta State Licensed by NUC and commenced academic activities in 2018; Modular refineries in Delta, Rivers and Akwa Ibom states; Ogoni clean up in Rivers)	Rivers, Delta, Akwa Ibom	Ongoing	
10	Financial Close of Azura Power Plant in Edo state. (The necessary FG approvals for the US\$900m private sector investment were given by President Buhari, paving the way for financial close in Dec. 2015 & the commencement of construction in Jan. 2016. The 459MW project was completed	Edo	Completed	The 459MW completed in May 2018, 7months ahead of schedule
11	Water Project: (a) Ogwashi-Ukwu Dam	Delta	Completed	
	(b) Ekeremor Water supply project	Edo	Completed	
	(c) Northern Ishan Regional Water Supply project serving Ugboha & Uromi communities	Edo	Completed	
	(d) Rehabilitation of Ojirami Dam Water supply project	Edo	Completed	
	(e) Central Ogbia Regional Water project	Bayelsa	Completed	
12	Social Investment Programme: 85,000 N-Power beneficiaries in the South South	Delta, Rivers, Bayelsa, Edo, Akwa Ibom, Cross-River	Ongoing	
13	School Feeding Programme kicked off in 3 of the 6 South South states	Akwa Ibom, Cross-River, Delta	Ongoing	
<b>North Central</b>				

1	Construction of Oju/Loko-Oweto bridge over River Benue to link Loko (Nasarawa state) and Oweto (Benue state) along route F2384	Benue, Nasarawa	Ongoing	Almost completed
2	Dualization of Abuja-Abaji-Lokoja road Section 1 (International Airport link Road junction-Sheda village)	FCT, Kogi	Ongoing	Inherited from past administration.
3	Dualization of Suleja-Mina road Phase II	Niger	Ongoing	
4	Dualization of Abuja-Abaji-Lokoja road. Section IV Kotonkarfi-Lokoja	Kogi	Ongoing	
5	Dualization of Lokoja-Benin road: Obajana-Okene	Kogi	Ongoing	
6	Rehabilitation of Enugu-Makurdi road: Otukpa-Otukpo Section	Benue	Completed	
7	Rehabilitation of Enugu-Makurdi road: Otukpa-Enugu/Benue Border & Otukpa-Aliade Section	Benue	Ongoing	
8	Construction of Otukpo-Owote road	Benue, Nasarawa	Ongoing	Almost completed
9	Construction of 93km Ilorin-Jebba road	Kwara, Niger	Completed	2018
10	Dualization of Abuja-Keffi-Lafia-Makurdi road	FCT, Benue, Nasarawa	Ongoing	
11	Rehabilitation of Suleja-Mina road	Niger	Ongoing	
12	Construction of Nigeria's Central Rail line (Itakpe-Ajaokuta-Warri Standard Gauge line) Tracks and Communication systems completed, station construction ongoing	Kogi, Edo, Delta	Ongoing	
13	Rehabilitation of the Abuja International Airport Runway and construction of New Abuja International Airport terminal	FCT	Completed	Major expansion done
14	Completion of abandoned Bill Clinton Drive Interchange Bridge along the Umaru Musa Yar'Adua road (Airport road) in the FCT.	FCT	Completed	
15	Construction of Apo-Wasa-Karshi Dual Carriageway. Part of the Outer Southern Expressway (OSEx) in the FCT.	FCT	Ongoing	
16	Construction of the Inner Southern Expressway (Goodluck Jonathan Way) in the FCT (Some sections has been completed and opened in the last three years).	FCT	Ongoing	Partly completed
17	Mangu Regional Water Supply Scheme	Plateau	Completed	
18	Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi Water Supply Project	Benue	Completed	
19	Construction of 30MW Gurara Power Plant	Niger	Ongoing	
20	Construction of 700MW Zungeru Hydro Power Plant	Niger	Ongoing	Completion target 2020
21	Transmission Grid:			
(a)	A \$12.4m Project funded by the Japanese Government for the upgrading (installation of Power Capacitor Banks) of two	FCT, Nasarawa	Completed	The project commenced in 2016 & was

	Transmission Sub-stations in APO, FCT & Keffi, Nasarawa respectively to stabilize power supply to 7,000 households.			completed in 2018
(b)	150MVA 330/132//33KV Power (Transformers at Kainji (Fakun), added capacity 120MW	Niger	Completed	2016
(c)	2x60MVA Power Transformer at Lokoja, added capacity 96MW	Kogi	Completed	2016
(d)	1460MVA 132/33KV Power Transformer at Kontagora, added capacity 48MW	Niger	Completed	2016
(e)	60MVA 132/33KV Power Transformers at Okene, added capacity 48MW	Kogi	Completed	2016
(f)	2x40MVA 132/33KV Power Transformer at Kainji (Dogon Gari), added capacity 64MW	Niger	Completed	2016
(g)	2x60MVA 132/33KV Power Transformer at Kukuaba, added capacity 96MW	FCT	Completed	2017
(h)	60MVA Transformer in Karu Substation	FCT	Ongoing	
21	Energizing Education Programme: An initiative of the FGN to provide sustainable and Clean Power Supply to Federal Universities and University Teaching Hospitals across Nigeria, is being implemented in the Federal University of agriculture Makurdi.	Benue	Ongoing	
22	Social Investment Programme: (a) 98,700 N-Power beneficiaries across the seven states of the North Central	All the 7 states in the N/ Central	Ongoing	
(b)	School Feeding currently ongoing in 3 States of the North Central	Benue, Niger, Plateau	Ongoing	
<b>North East</b>				
1	Dualization of Shuarin-Azare Section of Kano-Maidugri Rd linking Kano-Jigawa-Bauchi-Yobe (Section II)	Kano, Jigawa, Bauchi, Yobe	Ongoing	
2	Dualization of Azare-Potiskum Section of Kano-Maidugri Rd linking Kano-Jigawa-Bauchi-Yobe-Borno states (Section III)	Kano, Jigawa, Bauchi, Yobe Borno	Ongoing	
3	Dualization of Potiskum-Damaturu Section of Kano-Maidugri Rd linking Kano-Jigawa-Bauchi-Yobe-Borno states (Section IV).	Kano, Jigawa, Bauchi, Yobe, Borno.	Ongoing	
4	Dualization of Potiskum-Damaturu Section of Kano-Maidugri Rd linking Kano-Jigawa-Bauchi-Yobe-Borno States (Section V).	Kano, Jigawa, Bauchi, Yobe, Borno.	Ongoing	
5	Reconstruction of Gombe-Numan-Yola Road	Gombe, Adamawa, Taraba	Ongoing	Gombe-Kaltungo section completed
6	Reconstruction of 122Km Mayo Belwa-Jada-Ganya-Toungo Road		Ongoing	Commenced in 2018

7	Construction of 40MW Kashimbila Dam and Hydro Power Plant. Construction of transmission infrastructure to connect the plant to the National Grid.	Taraba	Ongoing	Dam & Power Plant completed
8	Construction of 29MW Dadin Kowa Hydro Power Plant.	Gombe	Ongoing	
9.	Takum Water Supply Project	Taraba	Completed	
10	Construction of 3050MW Mambilla Power Plant. (\$5.8b EPC Contract awarded and Signed in 2017; negotiation for the financing by the China Exim Bank)	Taraba	Ongoing	
11	Energizing Education Programme: An initiative of the FGN to provide Sustainable and Clean Power Supply to Federal Universities and University Teaching Hospitals across Nigeria is being implemented in the Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Gubi Campus.	Bauchi	Ongoing	
12	Transmission Infrastructure:			
(a)	330/132KV Molai Transmission Sub-station in Maidugri.	Borno	Completed	Energized in 2018
(b)	330/132KV Damaturu Transmission Sub-station	Yobe	Completed	Energized in 2018
(c)	60MVA 132/33KV Power Transformers at Bauchi, added capacity 48MW	Bauchi	Completed	2017
(d)	40MVA Mobile Sub-station at Damboa, added capacity 32MW.	Borno	Completed	2017
(e)	28/40MVA Mobile Sub-station at Mayo Belwa, added capacity 22.4/32MW.	Adamawa	Completed	2017
(f)	30/40MVA Mobile Sub-station at Gombe, added capacity 24MW.	Gombe	Completed	2017
13	Social Investment Programme: (a) 74,000 N-Power beneficiaries across the 6 states of the North East	All the 6 states of the North East	Ongoing	
(b)	School Feeding Programme, currently ongoing in all 6 states of the North East.	Bauchi, Taraba, Borno, Gombe, Yobe, Adamawa	Ongoing	
<b>North West</b>				
1	Construction of Abuja-Kaduna-Zaria-Kano Highway. The project is being funded by the PIDF established by the PMB in 2018 to fund critical infrastructure project.	FCT, Kaduna, Kano	Ongoing	
2	Dualization of Kano-Wudil-Shauri section of Kano-Maidugri Rd linking Kano-Jigawa-Bauchi-Yobe-Borno states (Section I)	Kano, Jigawa, Bauchi, Yobe, Borno	Ongoing	
3	Dualization of Kano-Katsina-Rd Phase I Kano town (Dawanau roundabout to Katsina boarder Kano).	Kano, Katsina	Ongoing	
4	Construction of 135 Km Sokoto-Tambuwal-Jega road.	Sokoto	Completed	



5	Construction of Kano Western Bypass as an extension of dualization of Kano-Maidugri road Section I.	Kano, Jigawa, Borno, Bauchi, Borno	Ongoing	
6	Construction of Kaduna Eastern Bypass	Kaduna	Ongoing	
7	Construction of Modern Diagnostic Center at the Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital (ABUTH).	Kaduna	Ongoing	
8	Sabkie Water Supply Project	Katsina	Completed	
9	Shagari Irrigation Project	Sokoto	Completed	
10	Galma Dam project	Kaduna	Completed	
11	Energizing Education Programme: An initiative of the FGN to provide Sustainable and Clean Power Supply to Federal Universities and University Teaching Hospitals across Nigeria is being implemented in the Bayero University New Campus, Kano & Usman Danfodio University Main Campus.	Kano, Sokoto	Ongoing	
12	Transmission Infrastructure:			
(a)	60MVA Transformer in Dan Agundi Substation Kano.	Kano	Completed	
(b)	2x60MVA Transformer in Kakuri Sub-station Kaduna	Kaduna	Completed	
(c)	60MVA Transformer in Katsina Sub-station	Katsina	Completed	
(d)	40MVA Mobile Substation at Zaria, added capacity 32MW	Kaduna	Completed	2017
(e)	2x40MVA 132/33KV Power Transformers at Daura, added capacity 64MW.	Katsina	Completed	2017
(f)	60MVA 132/33KV Power Transformer at Hadejia, added capacity 48MW.	Jigawa	Completed	2017
(g)	60MVA 132/33KV Power Transformer at Funtua, added capacity 48MW.	Katsina	Completed	2017
(h)	60MVA 132/33KV Power Transformers at Sokoto, added capacity 48MW.	Sokoto	Completed	2016
13	Social Investment Programmes: (a) 95,900 N-Power beneficiaries across 7 states of the North West.	All the 7 states of the North West.	Ongoing	
(b)	School Feeding Programme currently ongoing in 5 states of the North West.	Kaduna, Katsina, Kano, Zamfara, Sokoto	Ongoing	
14	Sabon Gari and Kantin Kwari market Electrification Projects. The FG is implementing its Energizing Economies Programme which will bring stable and reliable electricity to the 13,000 shops in Sabon Gari market and 7,700 shops in Kantin Kwari market.	Kano	Ongoing	
15	Construction of 215MW Kaduna Power Plant.	Kaduna	Ongoing	

16	Construction of 10MV Katsina Wind Power Plant. (As of Q1 2018, 15 of the 37 Turbines had been installed and put into use.	Katsina	Ongoing (almost completed)	Producing about 4MW
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Source: Damsyjay Movement December 31, 2018

Note has to be taken here of the nature and number of projects, how critical the projects are to development, and their relevance to the people's needs, the level of implementation of these projects since they were started or the status of each project as well as the number of states it covers. Across the geopolitical zones, it could be observed that the South East and South South has been least attended to. This is what has led to the incessant agitations for resource control, restructuring and at extreme disintegration of the country. More so, an examination of the projects distribution and implementation as shown above would show the level of lopsidedness in favour of the North as being here alleged which is an unfair treatment despite the existence of the federal character principle.

**Table 2: Sample Size Distribution by Federal Ministries**

	Transport		Health		Education		Trade & Investment		Power, Works & Housing		Total	%
	No. of Resp.	%	No. of Resp.	%	No. of Resp.	%	No. of Resp.	%	No. of Resp.	%		
Interest Politics/Nepotism	41	28.0	48	33.6	69	50.0	40	27.8	61	32.1	259	34.0
Disadvantagedness/Backwardness	30	20.6	54	37.8	29	21.1	50	34.7	55	29.0	218	28.7
Balance/National Spread	6	4.1	6	4.3	5	3.6	6	4.2	6	3.2	29	3.8
Special Need	19	13.0	12	8.4	9	6.5	12	8.3	29	15.3	81	10.6
Equity/Fairness	11	7.5	5	3.5	9	6.5	7	4.9	9	4.7	41	5.4
Pol. & Econ. Capability	39	26.7	18	12.6	17	12.3	29	20.1	30	15.8	133	17.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Authors' Fieldwork 2018-19

## V. Result Presentation and Discussion of Findings

The presentation of results begins with a tabular presentation and analysis of respondents' opinions on the contributions of rational application of federal character principles in national development administration to sustainable national development in Nigeria.

**Table 3: Contributions of rational application of federal character principle in national development administration 2015-2018**

Performance in Nat.al Dev. Admin.	Transport		Health		Education		Trade & Investment		Power, works & Housing		Total	
	No. of Resp.	%	No. of Resp.	%	No. of Resp.	%	No. of Resp.	%	No. of Resp.	%	No. of Resp.	%
Less than 20 percent	7	4.8	5	3.5	6	4.4	9	6.3	25	13.2	52	6.8
21-40 percent	19	13.0	24	16.8	22	15.9	17	11.8	11	5.8	93	12.2
41-60 percent	28	19.2	60	42.0	33	23.9	72	50.0	48	25.3	241	31.7
61-80 percent	70	47.9	44	30.7	52	37.7	40	27.8	80	42.0	286	37.6
81 percent & above	22	15.1	10	7.0	25	18.1	6	4.1	26	13.7	89	11.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Authors' Fieldwork 2018-19

**Table 4: Sustainable National Development attainment through National development project administration 2015-2018**

Performance	Transport		Health		Education		Trade & Investment		Power, Works & Housing		Total	
	No. of Resp.	%	No. of Resp.	%	No. of Resp.	%	No. of Resp.	%	No. of Resp.	%	No. of Resp.	%
Less than 5 Percent	17	6.8	8	5.6	65	47.1	5	3.5	60	31.6	148	19.5
5-10 percent	39	26.7	87	60.8	47	34.1	62	43.0	90	47.3	325	42.7
11-20 percent	56	38.4	4	2.8	9	6.5	70	48.6	10	5.3	149	19.6
21-30 percent	31	21.3	9	6.3	13	9.4	3	2.1	20	10.5	76	10.0
31 percent & above	10	6.8	35	24.5	4	2.9	4	2.8	10	5.3	63	8.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Authors' Fieldwork 2018-19

**Table 5: Model analysis report on the relationship existing between sustainable development attainment and rational application of federal character in national development administration**

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>											
Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change statistics						
					R. Change	Sq. Change	F. Change	df1	df2	Sig. Change	F.
1	.463 <sup>a</sup>	.215	.214	.630	.215		207.573	1	.759	.000	.048

a Predictors (Constant) Sustainable National Development

b Dependent Variable: Rational Application of Federal Character Principle

**Source: Author's Computation Using SPSS 19 Output**

Table 5 provides the Correlation Coefficient, and  $R^2$ , Coefficient of determination values. The R value represents the simple Correlation Coefficient and is 0.463 which indicates a fair degree of positive relationship. This means that any increase in the rational application of federal character principle in national development administration brings about increase in the attainment of sustainable national development. The inference is that when federal character principle is rationally applied in national development projects implementation, sustainable development will be attained. The  $R^2$  value indicates how much of the total variation in the dependent variable (rational application of federal character principle in national development administration) is explained by the independent variable (performance in national development project implementation). In this case, 21.5% of the variance in sustainable development attainment nationwide is explained by the extent of the rationality in the application of federal character principle in the implementation of national development projects across the federation. In other words, the residual of 78.5% of variation in sustainable development attainment across the federation is due to other variables. The inference is that rational application of federal character principles in national development administration is a very strong variable which should be rationally, carefully, strictly and meticulously adhered to if Nigeria is to attain sustainable development across the federation.

To push the analysis further, the analysis of variance model is introduced. It was hypothesized that significant relationship exist between rational applications of the federal character principle in development administration across the federation and attainment of sustainable national development in Nigeria. Subjecting the data to the ANOVA model, the processed output shown in Table 5 indicates that the F. Statistic is 207.573. Table 6 is the ANOVA Table which shows how well the regression equation fits the data (that is, predicts the dependent variable).

**Table 6: ANOVA Table which indicates that the regression model predicts the dependent variable**

ANOVA <sup>b</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean of Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	82.277	1	82.277	207.573	.000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	300.848	759	.396		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>383.125</b>	<b>760</b>			

a Predictors (Constant) Sustainable National Development

b Dependent Variable: Rational application of federal character principle

**Source: Author's Computation using SPSS 19 output**

Table 6 shows the ANOVA result which indicates that the regression model predicts the dependent variables significantly well as the result has a p-value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05, confirming that jointly, all the independent variables in the model statistically significantly predict the outcome variable (that is, it is a good fit for the data). Testing at 95% confidence limit at one degree of freedom, the critical value

is found to be 161.4. Since the F-statistic of 207.573 is greater than the critical value of 161.4, the null hypothesis is rejected, it is therefore affirmed that the extent of application of federal character principles in national development administration by the Buhari-led federal government significantly generates variation in the attainment of sustainable national development across the federation. This result affirms that rational application of federal character principles in national development administration plays a significant role in attaining sustainable national development across the federation. It is interesting to note in Table 7, Coefficient Table, that Beta Coefficient of 0.463 is exactly the same as Pearson's R.

**Table 7: The Coefficient Table**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					
Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	3.731	.076		49.157	.000
Sustainable National Dev.	.311	.022	.463	14.407	.000

a Dependent Variable: Rational Application

Source: Author's Computation using SPSS 19 output

From Table 7, it is seen that under One tailed t-test, the extent of rational application of federal character principle in national development administration contributes significantly to the attainment of sustainable national development across the federation. Table 7 provides the necessary information needed to predict the rational application of federal character principle in national development project distribution and implementation, as well as determine whether sustainable national development contributes statistically significantly to the model. The ensuring regression model is defined by:  $y = \alpha + \beta (x_1) + r$ . Therefore, the model is redefined as rationality in federal character principle application =  $3.73 + 0.463x$ ; where x is sustainable national development, and 0.463, the coefficient of x; 3.73 is the constant.

### Summary of Findings

The hypothesis posits that there is a significant relationship between sustainable national development and the rational application of federal character principle in development administration across the federation. The findings resultant from the testing of the hypothesis includes:

- There is moderate positive relationship between sustainable national development and application of federal character principles in development administration across the country to the tune of 0.463 as the correlation coefficient.
- There is moderate positive relationship between sustainable national development and application of federal character principles in development administration across the country to the tune of 0.463 as the correlation coefficient.
- Application of federal character principle motivates variation in sustainable national development across the federation.
- Rational application of federal character in national development administration contribute significantly to sustainable national development attainment across the federation, and by implication, strict rational application of federal character principles in national development projects' distribution and implementation is a panacea for Nigeria's attainment of sustainable national development.

The study therefore recommends among others that:

- (i) The Buhari-led federal government has not been rationally applying the federal character principle in her distribution and execution of development projects across the geopolitical zones of the country.

- (ii) There should be strict, rational and meticulous adherence to the spirit and letters of the federal character principle in the distribution and implementation of development projects across the county by the federal government.
- (iii) The federal character commission should be legally empowered to verify and certify the rationality and equity in the implementation of development projects by the federal government before their commencement and in the course of the implementation should monitor the level of seriousness in their execution.
- (iv) Interest politics should be removed in the selection, distribution and implementation of development projects by political leaders so as to avoid the marginalization of some sections of the country and lopsidedness in national development administration.
- (v) The federal character principle should be reviewed and the terms strengthened so as to avoid its misinterpretation and misapplication by selfish, corrupt, nepotism and ethnic minded government officials who would always interpret the principle to suit their selfish interests.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the application of federal character principle in national development projects' distribution and implementation motivates variation in sustainable national development attainment. Hence, the practice of rationality in the federal character principle's application contributes significantly towards achieving balanced, uniform and equitable distribution of development in the Nigerian federation and by implication rational application of federal character principle in development administration is a panacea for attaining sustainable development in Nigeria.

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