

ROTATIONAL PRESIDENCY: VEHICLE OF NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN NIGERIA

David Aniefiok Titus & Uduakobong Jimmy Udoudoh

Department of Political Science, Evangel University, Akaeze, Ebonyi State, Nigeria

Department of Political Science and Public Administration, University of Uyo, Uyo,

Email: davtitus4@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study is aimed at investigating the concept of Rotational Presidency as a panacea to the problem of national integration in Nigeria. There has been a raging argument that the position of the president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria should rotate among the various ethnic nationalities and geo-political zones that make up the country. This is not strange as the Federal character principle of proportional sharing is firmly entrenched in the 1999 constitution as amended. Three hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. A sample size of 120 was selected across the six geo-political zones on the basis of simple random sampling. Analyses of the data were done using chi-square with decisions taken at 0.05 level of significance. From the study, a number of findings were obtained. The majority of the respondents agreed that there will be national integration and socio-economic development in Nigeria if rotational presidency is practised considering the heterogeneous nature of the country; but few argued that it will promote mediocrity, ethnicity and sectional politics. In conclusion, the research joins most respondents in recommending a constitutionalized rotational presidency toward Nigeria's national integration quest.

Keywords: National Presidency, National Integration, Power Shift, Zoning, Federal Character.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is an amalgam of about two hundred and fifty-six ethnic nationalities constituting her six geo-political zones with three major ethnic nationalities, namely Igbo, Hausa/Fulani and Yoruba. Irrespective of these tribal blocs, the submission always renting the air has always been that the presidential seat should rotate among the six geo-political zones. The idea of rotational presidency arose after long years of northern dominance of the presidency during both military and civilian administrations. This agitation gained credence and gathered momentum during the ill-fated June 12th, 1993 general election which was annulled after a southerner won across ethnic and religious lines.

The first appearance of the word "rotation" in the Nigerian political landscape and lexicon was in September, 1966. This was contained in the memorandum submitted by the Northern Nigeria delegates which proposed that there should be a central legislative council to co-ordinate the affairs of Nigeria; that the four regions of Nigeria as then constituted should be autonomous and the chairmanship of the central executive should rotate among the four

autonomous states of Nigeria, namely the East, the North, the West and the Mid-West states (Ekweme, 1995).

The next appearance of the word was about a decade later in 1975/1976 when the then sub-committee on the executive and legislature of the Constitution Draft Committee (CDC) which was chaired by Late Chief Rotimi Williams (SAN) recommended that in implementing the presidential system of government, the country should be divided into four geographical zones, whereby two zones each should constitute a group (Groups A and B) and that the position of the President and Vice President should rotate among the zones/groups (Ekweme, 1995:18). The next notable use of the word was by General Sani Abacha at the inauguration of the National Constitutional Conference (NCC) in 1995 where he enjoined the delegates to "lay the foundation of an inclusive system which will guarantee a stable society with sensitive accommodation of all chapters of political opinions harnessed by the full participation of all the component units of our land" (Owunwa, 1997:13).

It can be seen from the above that the idea of rotating the presidency between the various geo-political zones of Nigeria has long been recognized as an important denominator in the history of national integration in the country. The geo-political zones, making up Nigeria are designated as North West, North East, North Central, South West, South South and South East. In this study, a case was made for rotation. The rationale for this being that the continued co-existence of the indissoluble and indivisible Nigeria rests on rotational presidency.

Statement of the Problem

One of the perennial problems facing the polity in Nigeria is how to foster unity in diversity given the country's heterogeneous character and the diversity in its socio-cultural and religious make up. The amalgamation of 1914 was a political decision which has not succeeded in uniting the various ethnic nationalities. The streams of its various ethnic groupings may run in the same direction but their waters never meet. Each ethnic grouping and indeed geo-political zones is suspicious of the other's dominance and domination. This suspicion may be historically traced to the Clifford's constitution of 1922 which brazenly instituted the divide-and-rule policy. It will be recalled that under that constitution the legislative council had no power to legislate for the Northern region. This was the exclusive preserve of the then Governor General of Nigeria who could legislate for the North by proclamation.

The historical error in the logical construction of the Nigerian state brings about the problem of group access to political power. In view of the geo-political structures of the federation, there is a feeling of domination and subjugation among some of the component units, particularly the South South. The quest to bring about a lasting solution to the leadership problem that has intermittently

threatened the existence of Nigeria necessitated this enquiry into the feasibility of rotational presidency as a means to national unity.

This is of the utmost importance considering that some parts of the country feel that occupying the office of the president is their exclusive preserve. To this end, rotational presidency appears to be a better and more reliable vehicle toward the country's national integration; not the constitutionally stated absolutism "indissolubility" and "indivisibility". To guide this study are the following research questions:

Research Questions

- i. How would rotational presidency enhance national integration in Nigeria?
- ii. What is the relationship between rotational presidency and national integration in Nigeria?
- iii. Does rotational presidency promote mediocre at the national leadership?

Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to evaluate the feasibility of rotational presidency in enhancing national integration in Nigeria.

Accordingly, the study:

- i. Examines the extent to which rotational presidency could enhance national integration in Nigeria.
- ii. Seeks to know the relationship between the two variables.
- iii. Aims at ascertaining or otherwise the notion that rotational presidency promotes mediocrity at the national leadership.

Significance of the Study

The importance of this study and its contribution to the socio-political and economic growth of Nigeria cannot be over-emphasized. It will be an invaluable addition to literature on the subject matter and a source of information to the present administrator, future administrators, politicians, law makers, decision makers, to mention just a few. Moreover, it will provide a guiding post on how to solve the lopsided power configuration in the country.

Research Hypothesis

The following hypotheses were formulated to provide guidance to the researcher:

- H_1 : Rotational presidency will enhance national integration in Nigeria.
 H_0 : Rotational presidency will not enhance national integration in Nigeria.
 H_1 : There is significant relationship between rotational presidency and National Integration in Nigeria.
 H_0 : There is no significant relationship between rotational presidency and National Integration in Nigeria.

- H₁: Rotational presidency promotes mediocre at the national leadership.
H₀: Rotational presidency does not promote mediocre at the national leadership.

LITERATURE REVIEW/THEORETICAL MODELS

According to Kanu (2008), the “attempt to ameliorate the volatile situation created by the annulment of the 1993 general election actually led the political parties that contested the 1999 general elections to field only Yoruba candidates for the presidency”. Also, Maigadi (2010), corroborates thus: “PDP came about zoning to save democracy in Nigeria”. The committee of patriots, the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) and the Southern Senators Forum are some of the groups that have called for the practice of rotational presidency. The Southern Senators Forum even presented a ten-point agenda for constitutional review which included the practice of rotational presidency. Similarly, Ohaneze Ndigbo, a socio-cultural group has also joined the clarion agitation for rotational presidency to be enshrined in the constitution (Obeche, 2008).

Obeche (2008) further maintains that “rotational presidency is good for the country and that is what we are doing in Ohaneze and other organizations that want to build a sense of belonging among diverse groups. It will go a long way in addressing the issue of lopsided power distribution in Nigeria”. Orji (2008) holds the view that the elite in contemporary Nigeria have re-invented the practice of zoning in the context of ethno-regional struggle for power, they also strive to constitutionalize the practice. However, there have been four attempts to incorporate the principle of zoning in the Nigerian Constitution. All these have successively failed. In 1979, when a sub-committee of the Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC) proposed constitutionalization of zoning, some intellectuals within the CDC rejected the proposal. According to Panter Bricks (1978:314), these intellectuals were of the opinion that Nigeria’s constitution should, emphasize “only those ideas and values which render the areas or ethnic origin of a person irrelevant in determining his quality as an individual”.

Again, in 1986, some individuals advocated the constitutionalization of zoning in the debates coordinated by the political Bureau. These arguments were rejected by the Bureau which claimed that, “a constitutional provision for rotation tantamount to an acceptance of our inability to grow beyond ethnic views”, yet another attempt to constitutionalize zoning failed in 1997 and 2005.

In the editorial of *Newswatch Magazine*, (1997), the paper maintains the view that “one big problem Nigerians have in the 1995 draft is the provision for rotational presidency”. Although the issue of rotation appeared in every stage of the review or drafting of a new constitution in Nigeria since 1966, some Nigerians have not considered that its negligence could threaten national unity.

Such was the position of Otufodunrin of the Editorial Board of the *Nation Newspaper* of Sunday, July 11, 2010 who saw zoning as “nothing but

democratic sabotage". He went further to add that "zoning has never done this country any good, rather it has disrupted every meaningful initiative that could have rescued it from the pangs of maladministration. He cited examples of "late President Yar' Adua", a product of zoning, emerged as a candidate of his party through subversion of the process. Also, that "we are all victims of zoning in another form called Federal Character that ruined the civil service in this country" To this school of thought. Zoning or rotating "in whatever ramification undermines democracy since it prevents real competition and compromises the way candidates emerge" (Otufodunrin, 2010).

In line with the above thought, senator Okonkwo's "once the electoral system is strengthened, this question of zoning will be a thing of the past because zoning throws up incompetent persons; we should allow the electorate to elect their leaders without any sentiment attached (Okonkwo, 2010). Furthermore, Ajayi (2009:37) maintains that "as far as elders of the north are concerned, the ruler or a man in ultimate authority in Nigeria should be a Northerner and Hausa/Fulani". This partly explained why Alhaji Bashir Ottiman Tofa lost Northern support. Although he came from Kano, he was born and bred in Kebbi, a non-Hausa/Fulani town. Eventually, the Northern elders apparently willed the then military president, General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida to stop M.K.O Abiola from participating in the election or, in the alternative, to have his election nullified. To this end, Ajayi, (2009) posited that:

Due to the inequitable balance of power which the British gave in their favour from the very beginning, the North have so enjoyed the position which the power bestowed on them that they have been doing everything possible, be it by hook, crook, manoeuvres, tactics, strategy and deception to keep themselves or their own, whether civilian or military in power.

Another pro-rotating author Agbakoba (2011), stresses the importance of zoning when he posits that "the call to abolish zoning seriously underestimates and ignores the complex political character of Nigeria". There is no gainsaying the fact that Nigeria is a divided federation owing to its heterogeneity. The way out for such a country is through zoning and power shift which are capable of abating the power imbalance.

It is natural for each component of a federation to want to be at the theatre of power. As Kolawole (1997:8) rightly observes "man is by nature desirous of power. Power is powerful and sweet. Man not only likes to be at the theatre of power, he also seeks to be at its Centre". In support of the importance of rotation, Simbane (2002:34) holds that "zoning formula seems to fit into the heterogeneous and federal nature of the Nigerian state, helping to accommodate all groups as much as possible and therefore reducing complaints of domination

and marginalization.... It makes the system to be more inclusive (of identifiable groups) and therefore supportive of the democratic culture". The fact that issue of rotation and zoning is enshrined in the constitution of the People's Democratic Party, PDP, is indicative of the validity of the principle of rotation. Thus, in Article 7 (2) (c) it is provided that "in pursuance of the principle of equity, justice and fairness, the party shall adhere to the policy of rotation and zoning of party and public elective offices and it shall be enforced by the appropriate executive committee at all levels"(PDP Constitution, 2012 as amended). In pursuance of the above, the constitution of PDP recognizes Nigeria as having six geo-political zones and the party operates within this ambit.

Evolution of the Principles of Rotation in Nigeria's Political Development

The two main principles guiding the selection of political and bureaucratic officials at the federal level are federal character and zoning. These two modalities work in concert with each other. In the Nigerian context, zoning is the aggregation of states and ethnic groups into a number of regional blocs on the basis of which positions are allocated to each zone. There are two important features of zoning, namely: rotation of offices and power shift. The goal of zoning is to validate a pattern whereby the ethno-regional origin of top political office holders, including the president, alternate from one election or set of elections to another (Akinola, 1986:1). The concept of power rotation/power shift emerged in the late 1990s as an expression of the South's opposition to Northern domination of the country. In TIV land, for instance, the recurrent tension among various sub-units led to the evolution of the system in which chieftainship rotates among the sub-units based upon the principle of "eat and give your brother". Zoning was also popular in traditional Yoruba society. It was applied in the selection of the traditional rulers. The question of zoning/rotation re-emerged during the third republic. The issue of whether a Southerner or Northerner would be the president was keenly contested within the two registered political parties viz the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republic Convention (NRC). At the initial period of the republic, there seemed to be an emerging consensus that it was time to elect a president from the South. In NRC, for instance, key personalities in the party argued that the North had produced sufficient number of presidents. They therefore canvassed for the zoning of the party's presidential ticket to the South (Dode, 2010:86-87).

However, the election of Tom Kimi (South) as the NRC chairman dashed the hopes of many Southern politicians. The NRC zoned its political ticket to the North, with the South getting the vice-presidential ticket. On the other hand, the SDP allocated its presidential ticket to the South. In consequence, Moshood Abiola (south) was nominated as the SDP presidential flag bearer with Baba Gana Kingibe as his running mate. He hailed from Borno state in the North. Contrary to the expectations, the hope of subsequent rotation

of the zoning arrangement was again truncated following the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election and the re-instatement of military rule in November, 1993 (Eyo, 2006:15). This one case too many of new situation creating new dynamics in the polity via proliferation of groups and, or personal interests became obvious (Barrett, 2010:17). The principle of rotation re-echoed in the 1994/1995 National Constitutional Conference (NCC) and eventually in the 1997 draft constitution. Similarly, the issue popped up during the transition to civil rule programme of General Abdulsalami Abubakar in 1998-1999. Thus in response to the increasing calls for power shift from North to South, all the three registered political parties viz: the People's Democratic Party (PDP), the All Peoples' Party (APP) and the Alliance for Democracy (AD) zoned their presidential tickets to the south (Ogbamosa, 2010:22).

Zoning was also applied in the electoral process that saw the emergence of Umaru Musa Yar' Adua as president in May, 2007 with the presidential ticket zoned to the North by the PDP. In a nut-shell, the conception, implementation and continuity of the principles of Federal character and zoning reflect elite power relations in Nigeria. Although the Northern elite are undoubtedly the leading group in Nigeria, they have been unable to dominate the entire polity. The Northern control of political power began after the Northern People's congress won the federal and regional elections. It has been extended since then to most regimes, both military and civilian. However, the efforts to develop a constitutional office distributional arrangement reveal the contradictions of the Nigerian political system and the ambivalence of the political system in Nigeria (Ogbamosa, 2010:22). The adoption and implementation of the federal character and zoning reflect attempts by the elite to avoid regional domination and to ensure the stable and equitable allocation of power. The continuity of these arrangements depends upon the preservation of the existing balance of power among regional elite groups in Nigeria. Thus, a shift in the regional balance of power would lead to changes in the country's office distribution arrangement (Federal Republic of Nigeria official Gazette (2011) constitution as Amended).

Zoning

Zoning: Political offices could be distributed on principles which do not exactly reflect ethnic population or voting strength. Thus, for instance, during the 1979 elections in Nigeria, the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) zoned the presidency to the Northern zone, vice-presidency to the South East; Party Chairman to the Western zone, senate President to Southern minorities, etc. All the parties, though not accepting zoning as a principle for sharing political posts nevertheless allocated similar offices to individuals in such a manner that discouraged ethnic predominance as demanded by the constitution. Abacha's Nigeria had recognised six (6) geo-political zones in the country (NE, NW,

NC/Middle Belt, SE, SW and South-South/South Minorities as a basis for allocation, organization etc (Eminue 2005: 234-235).

Rotation of Presidency and National Integration

The failure of the policy of federal character and zoning, as it has not prevented the feeling of marginalization in certain sections of the federation, impels a further search for policy measures to assuage Nigerians over the volatile ethnic conflict ridden policy and salvage the nation from imminent collapse. This informed the development and inclusion of the principle of rotational presidency/power shift in the 1995 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. This was to ensure national integration in the polity (Federal Republic of Nigeria official Gazette (2011) constitution as Amended). Since the amalgamation of 1914, Nigeria has witnessed several ethnic struggles and conflicts of varying magnitude. The most devastating being the thirty-months old civil war between 1967 and 1970. Consequent upon these destabilizing ethnic conflicts, various public measures have been enunciated as remedies to the nagging problem of ethnic diversity which include federal character and rotational presidency (Dode, 2010:81-82). Invariably, the intense elite struggle for power is a striking feature of Nigerian politics. The key element of struggle has been the tension between elite from the two political blocs in Nigeria (the North and South). The underlying issues behind the political tension are the fears in Northern Nigeria that the more educated southern elite would dominate state institutions whereas in Southern Nigeria there are concerns that their Northern counterparts who are more populous would have advantage during election. The principle of zoning and federal character emerged as modalities for resolving the elite conflicts over distribution of offices. These sharing arrangements express the tendency of Nigerian elite, rising to manage ethnic diversity and promote a Nigerian State Project by avoiding divisive politics and emphasizing unity in diversity – a democratic beauty.

This position shows the bases, contradictions and ambivalence that underlie the principle of Federal character and zoning as modalities for sharing power/positions among various zones in Nigeria and, on the other hand, as frameworks and process through which the elite seek to realize their interest within non-violent distributive politics. To this end, Dode (2010) opines that “there are some differences, though interconnected aspects of national intergration” viz: territorial and social integration. Territorially, regions and localities are linked closely together by economic and psychological similarities; while socially, the various sections of the society are bound together by common culture, national loyalties, functional specialization and independence. National integration is best attained where there is a proportional amount of both the territorial as well as social integration. Unfortunately, as also posited by the source, Third World countries like Nigeria “where the elites have succeeded in

manipulating the masses, using the ethnic factor to their advantage" lack the afore-mentioned propitious elements. Lamentably, the situation in the Nigerian polity is worsened by non-ideological identity in political parties (Audu, 2010).

Problems and Prospects of Rotation and National Integration in Nigeria

Rotational presidency and national integration are basic concepts relevant to the sustenance of true federalism in Nigeria. But the non-recognition of rotational presidency by the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the domineering role of ethnicity within the party as well as non-commitment of political will on the part of leadership constitute major impediment or problem to the realization of rotational presidency and national integration in Nigeria. Several political groups, tribes and interest groups have been shouting that the next president come from here or there. It should be noted that rotational presidency is in itself an aberration or a confirmation of the failure of the political process. It is a confirmation that the best candidate for an election will be sidelined for tribal choices. Egboosiuba (2013) asserts that:

Rotational presidency is limiting, ill-advised and potential descent to mediocrity. It is imperative for Nigerians to come to the realization that we can only succeed if Nigerians conduct general elections in a manner that will produce the most qualified and forward-looking candidates...a lot of Nigerians may not be able to look past ethnicity, race, religion or region when they get into the election booth, but electoral behaviour of such people will change with time for the better.

The reality is that we may have much better options from other regions. Why settle for less in such situations? The issue of better representation in government should not be targeted alone at the angle of where the president comes from. Rather the focal point should be representation of the various ethnic groups in ministerial and parastatal appointments. However, the patriots, the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), Ohaneze Ndigbo (An Igbo socio-cultural organization) and a host of other groups have all advocated for rotational presidency. This may have been because from 1984 upwards, it was perceptible to acute southern observers that the north was beginning to dominate the government. Under the general Buhari's regime (1984-1985), "Thirteen of the nineteen members of the ruling Supreme Military Council (SMC) were Northern Muslims, most of whose families are related to powerful local emirs (Ekwe-Ekwe, 1985:625). Nigerians should draw what happens in other climes like the United States of America. As an illustration, President Barack Obama, a Kenyan, contested for and won election into the White House as the president of the United States of America. Observably, those clamouring for rotational presidency are making an open declaration of their intention to use the post of the

president to advance sectional and regional interest rather than the interest of the whole Nigeria. This has the potential to bring about disintegration.

From the foregoing discussion, it is glaring that there is overwhelming support for the practice of rotational presidency. The two opposing camps are Northerners and Southerners. Whereas the Southerners are pushing for power shift, the Northerners maintain an atavistic power, claiming leadership position as a birth right. Their (the Northerners) position is therefore to maintain the status quo. It can be deduced that those who wish to maintain status quo are antagonistic to popular sovereignty which is an entrenched right of the people under the constitution. Power, they say, belong to the people; where they are robbed of their power, no national integration and identity can emerge in Nigeria. In recapitulation, democratic practices which presupposes imminent challenges to all policy decisions from various elements of the society, deserves tolerance as well as fair play.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework adopted in this study is the system theory. According to Ikpe (2010:III) "A system is a group of subjects or elements standing in some characteristic structural relationships to one another and interacting based on a certain characteristic process". He goes further to aver that when we talk of a political system, reference is being made to a pattern of human relationship which involves to a significant extent, power, rule and authority. This study also has a background, theoretical framework, the group theory of politics which is a system in which all interests organize and compete freely in such a way that no one group is able to dominate another. Viewed against this background, the Nigerian Society is a compendium of many ethnic and social groups each competing for power; and indeed, each is entitled to do so as against the belief that leadership is the birth right of some sections of the country.

It can therefore be gathered that political life therefore concerns groups competing to acquire the political authority to make and implement authorities, policies for society. The process involves fierce competition involving the employment of tactics, propaganda and manoeuvres to win popular support. Suffice it to add that the system theory of Easton (cited by Ikpe 2010:III) implies that a system involves a vast conversion process which takes the inputs of demand and support from the environment in which it is embedded and which may either terminate if acceptable, or if not accepted, are sent back as new demands and support. The conversion process moves toward the authorities who by virtue of their status have the responsibility for converting those demands into outputs; for without output, the work done by a system is unidentifiable.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND ANALYTICAL METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research work made use of descriptive statistical technique. Specifically, the study involved survey of views and opinions held on Rotational Presidency and National Integration in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. Accordingly, for the purpose of this study, the researchers choose the six (6) geopolitical zones — North Central, North East, North South, South east, South West and South South, to represent the entire country. Among the 6 zones, we choose "South South" which constitutes 6 states -Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Edo, Delta, Cross River and Rivers States. Out of the 6 states, Akwa Ibom was selected to represent the entire zones. In Akwa Ibom, we selected Uyo Local Government Area to represent the entire states as well as the zone. Then in Uyo LGA, University of Uyo was chosen for the study. Thus, the study sample was student of University of Uyo who constituted a microcosm of the state and indeed Nigeria. These students were selected to represent the entire 6 zones of the country. Consequently, a structured questionnaire was used to obtain data needed for the study. Thus, a survey research design was adopted for the study. Also, the analytical method used in the study is chi-square test.

Characteristic of the Study Population

According to Umoh (2005) population is a sample of individual that is representative of the entire population. For instance, if a researcher is to study the attitude of students in Nigerian University, it may not be possible for him/her to collect the views of all students that studied in the Nigerian Universities hence a sample population is instrumental. Therefore population is individual who can fit specifications. However, the study population consists of students from Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo etc. from the various zones of the country. The characteristics of the population are students in University of Uyo who were between the ages of 18 and above from the 6 geopolitical zones. Opinions were collected from students with SSCE, OND/HND, B.Sc., M.Sc. and above on the subject matter.

Sampling Design Procedure

The random sampling technique was adopted as the appropriate technique for obtaining the study sample. This sampling technique gives every support in the study population an equal chance of being selected and included in the sampling. It ensures a bias free selection (Umoh 2005). Consequently, 120 students were used as a study population. The students were chosen within the University of Uyo community which had students from all the 6 geo-political zones of the country.

Instrument/Validity and Reliability

Questionnaire was the major instrument used in obtaining data for the study. The questionnaire covered twenty (20) items. Questions 1-6 focused on socio-economic and demographic characteristics of respondents, while 6-20 dealt with issue on rotational presidency and national integration in Nigeria's fourth republic. The twenty items questionnaire was administered to one hundred and twenty-five respondents. The questionnaire is believed to be satisfactory as it captures the objectives of the problem under study. The questions used touch all the facets of the problem. Therefore, it remains valid and reliable for the study.

Administration of Data Collection Instrument

The instruments (questionnaire) used in gathering data for the study were administered to the respondents drawn from the 6 geo-political zones of 20 each who are aware of the contending issues of rotational presidency. The instrument was administered to students within the University of Uyo ambient.

Research Assumptions

Firstly, marginalization of the minority groups by the majority groups in Nigeria brought about the agitation for rotational presidency in the Fourth Republic. Secondly, if zoning system is brought to bear in Nigeria, it will certainly resolve the political rancor in the country.

Lastly, power shift and good governance will help Nigerian in the Fourth Republic to solve the problem of political instability and ethnic conflict in the country. It will also enhance national development and integration.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Sample Size and Sample Technique

The sample size for the study was 125 person obtained through multistage random sampling. Out of 125 questionnaires sent out only 120 were correctly filled and returned. This however formed the basis upon which the respondent responses was calculated and tested.

4.2 Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 4.1: Showing the six Geo-Political Zones

NORTH CENTRAL	NORTH EAST	NORTH WEST	SOUTH EAST	SOUTH SOUTH	SOUTH WEST
Benue	Adamawa	Jigawa	Abia	Akwa Ibom	Ekiti
Kogi	Bauchi	Kano	Anambra	Bayelsa	Lagos
Niger	Borno	Kaduna	Ebonyi	Edo	Ogun
Kwara	Gombe	Kebbi	Enugu	Rivers	Ondo
Nassarawa	Taraba	Sokoto	Imo	Delta	Osun
Plateau	Yobe	Zamfara		Cross	Oyo

				River	
Katsina					

Source: Authors

The table above outlines the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria and the number of state in each zone.

Table 4.2: Sex Distribution of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	74	61.67%
Female	46	38.33%
Total	120	100%

Source: Field Work

The table indicates that out of the 120 Respondents, 74 (61.67%) were males while 46 (38.33%) were females.

Table 4.3: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18-23	52	43.33%
24-29	35	29.17%
30-35	20	16.67%
36-41	10	8.33%
42 and above	3	2.5%
Total	120	100%

Source: Field Work

From the table 52 respondent representing 43.33% were between the age of 18-23, 35 respondent representing 29.17% were between the age of 24-29, 20 respondents representing 16.67% belong to the 30-35 aged group, 10 respondents representing 8.33 belong to the age group 36-41 while 3 respondents representing 2.5% were 42 and above.

Table 4.4: Educational Qualification of Respondent

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
SSCE	55	45.83%
OND/HND	34	28.33%
B.Sc	26	21.67%
M.Sc. and above	5	4.17%
Total	120	100%

Source: Field Work

The above table shows that 55 (45.83%) of the respondents had SSCE, 34 (28.33%) had OND/HND, 26 (21.67%) had B.Sc. while 5 (4.17%) had M.Sc. and above.

4.5 Religious Status Distribution of Respondent

Religious Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Christianity	81	67.5%
Islam	38	31.67%
Traditional Worshippers	1	0.83%
Total	120	100%

Source: Field Work

The above table indicates that 81 respondents representing 67.5% were Christina, 38 respondents representing 31.67% were Muslims while only 1 respondent 0.83% was a traditional worshipper

Table 4.6: Distribution of Responses on Geo-political Zone

Religious Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
North Central	15	12.5%
North East	13	10.83%
North West	18	15%
South East	27	22.5%
South West	17	14.17%
South South	30	25%
Total	120	100%

Source: Field Work

Table 4.6 above shows that out of 120 respondents, 15 (12.5%) were from North Central, 13 (10.83%) were from North East, 18 (15%) were from North West, 27 (22.5%) were from South East, 17 (14.17%) were from South West while 30 (25%) were from South South.

Table 4.7: Questionnaire Distribution

Question	SA	A	SD	D	Total
5	60	38	12	10	120
6	55	37	8	20	120
7	36	65	10	9	120
8	64	30	20	6	120
9	65	20	10	25	120
10	50	34	17	19	120
11	15	42	45	18	120

12	50	38	12	20	120
13	65	28	14	13	120
14	60	30	12	18	120
15	95	15	10	-	120
16	38	52	18	12	120
17	32	44	20	24	120
18	49	34	19	18	120
19	78	15	14	13	120
20	62	42	12	4	120
Total	874	564	253	229	1920

Source: Compiled from questionnaire collected

The table above presents analysis of respondents to items in the questionnaire. From the analysis, 874 respondents strongly agreed to the items, 564 agreed, 253 strongly disagreed while 229 disagreed.

Restatement and Analysis of Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1; Ho: Rotational Presidency Residency will not enhance national integration in Nigeria.

H₁: It will

Hypothesis II

H₀: There is no significance relationship between Rotational presidency and socio-economic development of Nigeria.

H₁: There is

Hypothesis III

H₀: Rotational presidency does not promote mediocres at the national leadership

H₁: It does

Testing of Hypothesis

In testing of hypothesis, questions 5, 6, 7 and 8 were selected from table 4.7 to test for hypothesis 1; testing hypotheses 2 using questions 9, 10 and 11, while questions 12, 13 and 14 were selected to test for hypotheses 3.

The chi-square (χ^2) was used in testing the entire hypothesis as follows:

$$\chi^2 = \frac{\sum (fo - fe)^2}{fe}$$

where χ^2 = Chi-square

fo = Observed frequency

fe = Expected frequency

Table 4.8: Observed frequency for Hypothesis 1

Question	SA	A	SD	D	Total
5	60	38	12	10	120
6	50	37	8	20	120
7	36	65	10	9	120
8	64	30	20	6	120
Total	215	170	50	45	480

Source: Field Work

Calculation of expected frequency

Q5. SA = $\frac{215 \times 120}{480} = 53.75$
 A = $\frac{170 \times 120}{480} = 42.5$
 SD = $\frac{50 \times 120}{480} = 12.5$
 D = $\frac{45 \times 120}{480} = 11.25$

Q6. SA = $\frac{215 \times 120}{480} = 53.75$
 A = $\frac{170 \times 120}{480} = 42.5$
 SD = $\frac{50 \times 120}{480} = 12.5$
 D = $\frac{45 \times 120}{480} = 11.25$

Q7. SA = $\frac{215 \times 120}{480} = 53.75$
 A = $\frac{170 \times 120}{480} = 42.5$
 SD = $\frac{50 \times 120}{480} = 12.5$
 D = $\frac{45 \times 120}{480} = 11.25$

Q8. SA = $\frac{215 \times 120}{480} = 53.75$
 A = $\frac{170 \times 120}{480} = 42.5$

$$SD = \frac{50 \times 120}{480} = 12.5$$

$$D = \frac{45 \times 120}{480} = 11.25$$

Table 4.9 Chi-square Calculation for Hypothesis I

R-C	Fo	Fe	Fo-Fe	(Fo-Fe) ²	(Fo-Fe) ² Fe
R ₁ -C ₁	60	5.75	6.25	39.06	0.73
R ₁ -C ₂	30	42.5	-4.5	20.25	0.48
R ₁ -C ₃	12	12.5	-0.5	0.25	0.02
R ₁ -C ₄	110	11.25	-1.25	1.56	0.13
R ₂ -C ₁	55	53.75	1.25	1.56	0.03
R ₂ -C ₂	37	42.5	-5.5	30.25	0.71
R ₂ -C ₃	8	12.5	-4.5	20.25	1.62
R ₂ -C ₄	20	11.25	8.75	76.56	6.80
R ₃ -C ₁	36	53.75	-17.75	315.06	5.86
R ₃ -C ₂	65	42.5	22.5	506.25	11.91
R ₃ -C ₃	10	12.5	-2.5	6.25	0.5
R ₃ -C ₄	9	11.25	-2.25	5.06	0.45
R ₄ -C ₁	64	53.75	10.25	105.06	1.95
R ₄ -C ₂	30	42.5	-12.5	156.25	3.68
R ₄ -C ₃	20	12.5	7.5	56.25	4.5
R ₄ -C ₄	6	11.25	-5.25	27.56	2.45
Calculated value = 41.82					

$$d/f = (R-1) \times (C-1)$$

$$= 4-1 \times 4-1$$

$$= 3 \times 3$$

$$= 9$$

Using X² table of value at 0.05 level of significance with degree of freedom of 9=16.9

Decision Rule

Since the calculated value is greater than the table value, we reject the null hypothesis (H₀) and accept the alternate hypothesis (H₁) which states that rotational presidency will lead to national integration in Nigeria.

Table 4.10: Observed frequency for Hypothesis II

Question	SA	A	SD	D	Total
9	65	20	10	25	120
10	50	34	17	19	120

II	15	42	45	18	120
Total	130	96	72	62	360

Source: Field Work

Calculation of Expected Frequencies

Q9. SA = $\frac{130 \times 120}{360} = 43.33$
 A = $\frac{96 \times 120}{360} = 32$
 SD = $\frac{72 \times 120}{360} = 24$
 D = $\frac{62 \times 120}{360} = 20.67$

Q10. SA = $\frac{130 \times 120}{360} = 43.33$
 A = $\frac{96 \times 120}{360} = 32$
 SD = $\frac{72 \times 120}{360} = 24$
 D = $\frac{62 \times 120}{360} = 20.67$

Q11. SA = $\frac{130 \times 120}{360} = 43.33$
 A = $\frac{96 \times 120}{360} = 32$
 SD = $\frac{72 \times 120}{360} = 24$
 D = $\frac{62 \times 120}{360} = 20.67$

Table 4.II: Chi-square Calculation for Hypothesis II

R-C	Fo	Fe	Fo-Fe	(Fo-Fe) ²	$\frac{(Fo-Fe)^2}{Fe}$
R ₁ -C ₁	65	43.33	21.67	469.59	10.84
R ₁ -C ₂	20	32	-12	144	4.5
R ₁ -C ₃	10	24	-14	196	8.17
R ₁ -C ₄	25	20.67	4.33	18.75	0.91

R_2-C_1	50	43.33	6.67	44.49	1.03
R_2-C_2	34	32	2	4	0.12
R_2-C_3	17	24	-7	49	2.04
R_2-C_4	19	20.67	-1.67	-2.79	0.13
R_3-C_1	15	43.33	-28.33	802.59	18.52
R_3-C_2	42	32	10	100	3.12
R_3-C_3	45	24	21	441	18.37
R_3-C_4	18	20.67	-2.67	7.1	0.34
Calculated value = 68.09					

$$\begin{aligned}
 d/f &= (R-1) \times (C-1) \\
 &= 3-1 \times 4-1 \\
 &= 2 \times 3 \\
 &= 6 \text{ at } 0.05 = 12.59 \text{ (table value)}
 \end{aligned}$$

Decision Rule

Our calculated value (68.09) is greater than table value (12.59). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected at 0.05 while the alternative hypothesis (H_1) which states that there is a significant relationship between Rotational Presidency and national integration, is accepted.

Table 4.12: Observed Frequency for Hypothesis III

Question	SA	A	SD	D	Total
12	50	38	12	20	120
13	65	28	14	13	120
14	60	30	12	18	120
Total	175	96	38	51	360

Calculation of expected frequencies

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Q12. SA} &= \frac{17 \times 120}{360} = 58.33 \\
 \text{A} &= \frac{96 \times 120}{360} = 32 \\
 \text{SD} &= \frac{38 \times 120}{360} = 12.67 \\
 \text{D} &= \frac{51 \times 120}{360} = 17 \\
 \text{Q13. SA} &= \frac{175 \times 120}{360} = 58.33 \\
 \text{A} &= \frac{96 \times 120}{360} = 32
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 SD &= \frac{38 \times 120}{360} = 12.67 \\
 D &= \frac{51 \times 120}{360} = 17 \\
 \text{Q14. SA} &= \frac{175 \times 120}{360} = 58.33 \\
 A &= \frac{96 \times 120}{360} = 32 \\
 SD &= \frac{38 \times 120}{360} = 12.67 \\
 D &= \frac{51 \times 120}{360} = 17
 \end{aligned}$$

Table 4.13: Chi-square Calculation for Hypothesis III

R-C	Fo	Fe	Fo-Fe	(Fo-Fe) ²	(Fe-Fe) ² Fe
R ₁ -C ₁	50	58.33	-8.33	69.39	1.19
R ₁ -C ₂	38	32	36	36	1.12
R ₁ -C ₃	12	12.67	0.45	0.45	0.03
R ₁ -C ₄	20	17	9	9	0.53
R ₂ -C ₁	65	58.33	44.49	44.49	0.76
R ₂ -C ₂	28	32	16	16	0.5
R ₂ -C ₃	14	12.67	1.77	1.77	0.14
R ₂ -C ₄	13	17	16	16	0.94
R ₃ -C ₁	60	58.33	2.79	-2.79	0.05
R ₃ -C ₂	30	32	4	4	0.12
R ₃ -C ₃	12	12.67	0.45	0.45	0.03
R ₃ -C ₄	18	17	1	1	0.06
Calculated value = 5.47					

$$\begin{aligned}
 d/f &= (R-1) \times (C-1) \\
 &= 3-1 \times 4-1 \\
 &= 2 \times 3 \\
 &= 6 \text{ at } 0.05 = 12.59 \text{ (table value)}
 \end{aligned}$$

Decision Rule

Since our calculated value is less than the table value we reject the alternate hypothesis and accept the Null hypothesis which states that rotational presidency does not promote mediocres at the national leadership.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The issue of rotational presidency has been a recurring decimal at several national conferences organized in Nigeria. Although, several attempts to incorporate the principle of zoning in the Nigerian constitution prove abortive, most Nigerians as shown by the result of first hypothesis, are supportive because to them, rotational presidency leads to national integration. A practical example of this position is the People's Democracy Party, PDP, which provided that "In pursuance of country's first in history nineteen (19) uninterrupted years of democratic governance at the instance of the constitution of the principle of equity, justice and fairness, the party shall adhere to the policy of rotational and zoning of party and public elective offices and it shall be enforced by the appropriate executive committee at all levels", and that of its successor, All Progressive Congress, APC – though not clearly stated in their constitution as does in PDP. It equally tends to affirm the position of Maigadi (2010), who argued that in his own view, zoning has come to assist "in stabilizing the polity".

In hypothesis two, in a bid to ascertain whether there exists any relationship between rotational presidency and national integration in Nigeria, it was discovered that there is significant relationship between them. This fact then justifies the system theory which Obeche (2008) corroborating, maintains that rotational presidency is good for the country and that is what is being practised by Ohaneze and other organizations that want to build a sense of belonging among diverse groups. Also, Agbakoba (2011), stresses the importance of zoning when he posits that "the call to abolish zoning seriously underestimates and ignores the complex political character of Nigeria". In other word, the political vision of rotational presidency (as it is conceived and developed within current Nigerian political discussion) emphasizes more of politics of representation. Thus, the focus is to ensure that the different zones in the country occupy the exalted and powerful office. In this case, representation will touch a sensitive aspect of human life – the psychological.

For hypothesis three, it was revealed that rotational presidency does not promote mediocres at the national leadership. This result affirms the position of Azeez (2009) who opines that ethnicity is a bane to Nigeria's national integration and political stability – not rotational presidency. It is therefore an aberration on the tenets of democracy which Nigeria is practicing and those glamouring for rotational presidency are driven by sectional and regional interest rather than the interest of the whole country.

SUMMARY

This study was aimed at examining or investigating the concept of rotational presidency and national integration in Nigeria with Nigeria's Fourth Republic as a case study. In carrying out this research, three hypotheses were formulated. The survey design was used and the data collected with the use of

questionnaire and interview scheduled from 120 respondents were adopted in order to give the study a scientific base. All these gave the study the impetus to be objective and reliable. Accordingly, the research affirmed that there will be national integration in Nigeria if rotational presidency is practised considering the heterogeneous nature of the country. And in the spirit of equity, justice and fairness, the country will developed socially, politically and economically. And these could be achieved if there is a level of compromise reached between the North and South to alternate the office of the presidency between them.

Nevertheless, it was also revealed that rotational presidency will evolve serious feelings of ethnicity, which could lead to unhealthy rivalry among ethnic groups in the country. The above facts were arrived at because the responses of the respondents were tested using the chi-square test of distributions. The calculated values were found to be much greater than the table values of the first two hypotheses. While the computed value of the third hypotheses was lower than the table value thereby compelling the researcher to reject the Alternate hypothesis and accept the Null hypothesis. Therefore, Nigeria will solve her political and leadership problems if the recommendations that follow are taken into full cognizance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Nigeria as a heterogeneous society can solve her political impasse if adequate measures are taken to address the identified controversial issues that threaten her unity. Accordingly, the researcher makes the following recommendations that:

1. Rotational presidency should be constitutionalized to solve the minority questions in Nigeria, thereby creating a real sense of equality.
2. Every section of the country should be allowed to taste the highest office in the land (presidency) for equity and fairness.
3. No ethnic group in the country should be marginalized as presidency is not the monopoly of one section. It should therefore be rotated between the 6 geo-political zones.
4. Government at all levels should embrace rotation in order to reduce conflict.
5. The five (5) years single term should be adopted for various reasons:
 - a) It would ensure a complete rotation in thirty (30) years, when the circle would start again.
 - b) It would also solve the desperate tendency of incumbents wanting to retain power at all cost (second term) which would further divide and impoverish the country.
6. Adoption of this system would allow the federation to solve it political power problem and enable the country and its leaders to concentrate on

- nation building. That is improving the economy and standard of living of the citizens without distraction.
7. Mediocrity should be discouraged and only credible candidate should be elected to govern the country irrespective of ethnic affiliations.

CONCLUSION

The concept of rotation is by no means an exclusive monopoly of Nigeria. It equally applied to some countries and international organizations owing to the fact that the agitation for presidency generated some adverse criticism. However, Nigeria as one indivisible state is to a greater extent threatened by the issue of rotational presidency. This could be seen in the lopsided balance of political power in the polity. To ensure the unity in diversity in the country, there must be a compromise consented to and respected by all segments of the societies. A sort of time table should also be created to incorporate all the six geo-political zones, each taking its turn at the expiration of 5 years single term respectively. Finally, the issue of rotation should be seen as a Nigerian-styled democracy in order to curb militancy, injustice, insecurity, underdevelopment and fear of marginalization at all levels.

REFERENCES

- Abushiya, M. (1995) "Federal Character, Twin Sister of Rotation". A Constitutional Drafting Committee (CDC), Preview.
- Aghakoba, o. (2011) "Understanding Constitutional Zoning, Power Rotation" The Punch, June, 20, p.10.
- Ajayi, K. (2007) "Election Administration in Nigeria and the Challenges of the 2007 Elections". *Midweek Journals*, vol. 2(2) 142-151.
- Akindla, A. A. (1986) *Rotational Presidency*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books.
- Anudu, I. (2010). 2011 Presidency and Zoning Propaganda. *Daily Sun Newspaper of Wednesday September, 29, p.19.*
- Azeez, A. (2009) *Ethnicity, Party Politics and Democracy in Nigeria: People's Democratic Party as Agent of Consolidation* (www.krepublishers.com/02.pjournals). Retrieved on 23/01/2016.
- Barrett, L. (2010). *Nigeria's Democratic Future: Raising the Bar*. *Daily Sun Newspaper of Thursday, February, 25, p.17.*
- Dode, R. (2010) *Nigerian Political Parties and Pressure Groups*. Uyo: Minder International Publishers.
- Egbosiuba, M. (2013). "Argument Against Rotational Presidency in Nigeria". Retrieved from <http://www.allthingsnigeria.com/2013/argument-against-rotational-presidency-in-Nigeria> Retrieved on 23/10/2016.
- Ekwe-Ekwe, H. (1985). "Nigeria's Plight: From Shagari to Buhari". *Third World Quarterly* 7(3):610—625.

- Ekweme, A. (1995) "Keynote Address to Pan South Conference" held at Hotel Presidential, Port Harcourt. July 27.
- Eminue, o. (2005) Introduction to Political Science, Calabar: Clear Lines Publishing Ltd.
- Eyo, I. (2006) From Zone to Zone Weekend Pioneer of Friday, March, 31, p.15. Federal Republic of Nigeria Official Gazette 2011 Constitution (As Amended) with the National Industrial Court.
- Ikpe, U. (2010) State-Society Interactions: A Conceptual and comparative Introduction to political sociology, Lagos: Concepts Publications Limited.
- Kanu, D. (2008) "Recurring Quest for Rotational Presidency" Daily Independent. October 30, 2008. Online: <http://www.allafrica.com/stories/200810301266.Htm/>. (eds) Retrieved on 23/01/2016.
- Kolawole, D. (1997) Readings in Political Science Ibadan: Dakaal Publishers.
- Maigadi, Z. (2010). Maigadi: Zoning has come to stay. The Nation Newspaper of Thursday, September 2, p.52.
- Newswatch (1997) "Rotational Presidency: Which Zone Gets it First?" Vanguard September 7, p.34
- Obeche, o. (2008) "Ohaneze Backs Rotational Presidency" Africa News Service. <http://www.business.highbeam.com/ohanezebacks-rotational-presidency>. Retrieved on 23/01/2016
- Ogbamosa, M. (2010). The Substance of Zoning. The Nation Newspaper of Tuesday October 5, p.22.
- Okonkwo, A. (2010). Zoning is Undemocratic. Daily Sun of Monday, May 24, p.34.
- Orji, N. (2008) Power Sharing: The Element of continuity in Nigerian Politics. Ph.D Dissertation. Budapest: Central University.
- Otufodunrin, L. (2010) No to Zoning. The Nation Newspaper of Sunday, July 11, p.13.
- Owunwa, S. C. (1978) Comparative Federalism. An Unpublished Lecture Module.
- Panther-Bricks, K (198) "The Constitutional Drafting Committee" in Keith Panther-Bricks (ed.) Soldiers and Oil: The Political Transformation of Nigeria. London: Frank Cass.
- Simbane, A.(2002) Minority and Power Sharing in Nigeria. Ibadan: NISER Monograph Research.
- Suberu, R. J. (1988) "State Creation and Political Economy of Nigerian Federalism" in K. Amuwa, A. Agbaje, et al (eds.) Federalism and Political Restructuring in Nigeria. Ibadan: Spectrum Books.
- The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

International Journal of Social Sciences and Conflict Management
Volume 3, Number 3, September 2018
ISSN: 2536-7234 (Print) : 2536-7242 (Online)
<http://www.casirmediapublishing.com>

Umoh, E. D. (2005) Statistics and Application in Social Sciences Research.
Ibadan'' University Press PLC.

<https://www.peopledemocraticparty.com.ng/...PDP-CONSTITUTION...pdp>
file (2012 as amended). Retrieved on 29/6/2018.

APPENDIX

PERSONAL DATA

1. **Sex:** Male () Female ()
2. **Age:** 18-23 () 24-29 () 30-35 () 36-41 () 42 and above ()
3. **Educational qualification:** SSCE () DND\HND () B.Sc. ()
M.Sc and above ().
4. **Geo-political zone:** North Central () North West () North East ()
South South () South East () South West ().

SECTION B:

Key: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Undecided (Und).

S/N	Items	SA	A	SD	D	Und
5	The marginalization of the minority groups brought about the issue of rotational presidency.					
6	Rotational Presidency will promote socio-economic development					
7	Political stability in Nigeria can only be attained if the presidency is rotated among the 6 zones					
8	Rotational presidency will bring forth national integration in Nigeria.					
9	Rotational Presidency is not the only solution to power problem in Nigeria					
10	The candidate with the majority support from the people should be allowed for Presidency notwithstanding the zoning system					
11	Rotational Presidency will promote ethnicity/mediocrity					
12	Rotational Presidency would only serve the interest of privileged few.					
13	Rotational Presidency is not democratic					
14	Rotational Presidency is unconstitutional and can lead to national disunity if practiced.					
15	Rotational Presidency would lead to sectional politics in Nigeria.					
16	Rotational system would correct imbalances in power sharing in Nigeria.					
17	Tribal politics is one of the factors that					

	influence inter-group relation in Nigeria.					
18	Zoning system is the major means of addressing some political conflict in Nigeria.					
19	Rotational system would enhance effective representation.					
20	Sectional politics hampers national integration in Nigeria.					